Public Document Pack

Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

CABINET

7.30 pm	Wednesday 18 September 2024	Council Chamber - Town Hall

Members 9: Quorum 3

Councillor Ray Morgon (Leader of the Council), Chairman

	Cabinet Member responsibility:
Councillor Gillian Ford	Lead Member for Adults & Wellbeing
Councillor Oscar Ford	Lead Member for Children & Young People
Councillor Paul McGeary	Lead Member for Housing & Property
Councillor Paul Middleton	Lead Member for Digital, Transformation & Customer Services
Councillor Barry Mugglestone	Lead Member for Environment
Councillor Natasha Summers	Lead Member for Housing Need & Climate Change
Councillor Christopher Wilkins	Lead Member for Finance
Councillor Graham Williamson	Lead Member for Regeneration

Zena Smith
Head of Committee and Election Services

For information about the meeting please contact:
Bernadette Lynch tel: 01708 434849
e-mail: bernadette.lynch@havering.gov.uk

Webcast

Please note that this meeting will be webcast.
Members of the public who do not wish to appear in the webcast will be able to sit in the balcony, which is not in camera range.

Under the Committee Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution the Chairman of the meeting may exercise the powers conferred upon the Mayor in relation to the conduct of full Council meetings. As such, should any member of the public interrupt proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room and may adjourn the meeting while this takes place.

Excessive noise and talking should also be kept to a minimum whilst the meeting is in progress in order that the scheduled business may proceed as planned.

Protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings of the London Borough of Havering

Members of the public are entitled to report on meetings of Council, Committees and Cabinet, except in circumstances where the public have been excluded as permitted by law.

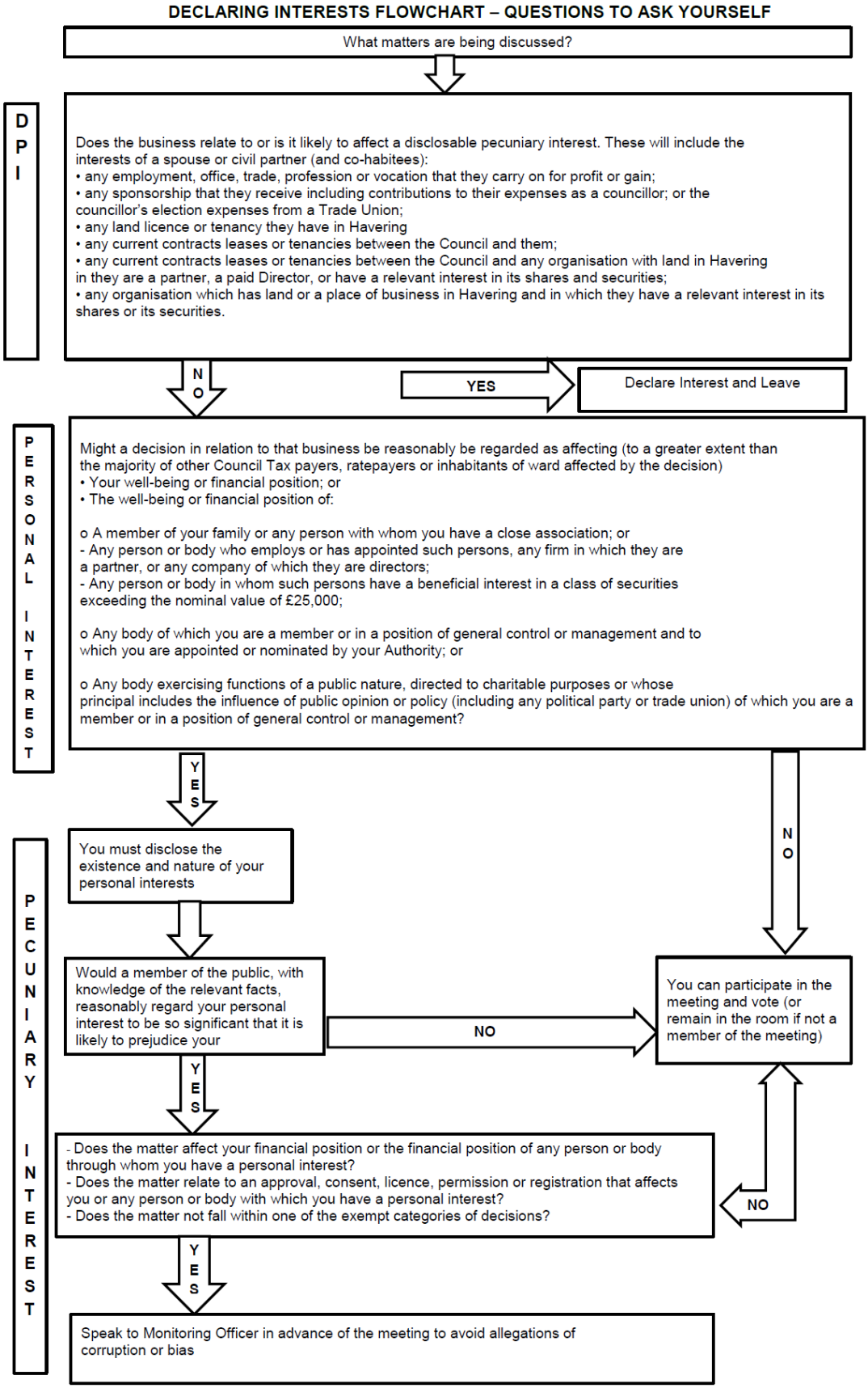
Reporting means:-

- filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
- using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
- reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if the person is not present.

Anyone present at a meeting as it takes place is not permitted to carry out an oral commentary or report. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.

Anyone attending a meeting is asked to advise Democratic Services staff on 01708 433076 that they wish to report on the meeting and how they wish to do so. This is to enable employees to guide anyone choosing to report on proceedings to an appropriate place from which to be able to report effectively.

Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting as standing up and walking around could distract from the business in hand.


DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF
What matters are being discussed?
DPI
Does the business relate to or is it likely to affect a disclosable pecuniary interest. These will include the interests of a spouse or civil partner (and co-habitees):
• any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation that they carry on for profit or gain;
• any sponsorship that they receive including contributions to their expenses as a councillor; or the councillor's election expenses from a Trade Union;
• any land licence or tenancy they have in Havering
• any current contracts leases or tenancies between the Council and them;
• any current contracts leases or tenancies between the Council and any organisation with land in Havering in they are a partner, a paid Director, or have a relevant interest in its shares and securities;
• any organisation which has land or a place of business in Havering and in which they have a relevant interest in its shares or its securities.
NO
YES
Declare Interest and Leave
PERSONAL INTEREST
Might a decision in relation to that business be reasonably be regarded as affecting (to a greater extent than the majority of other Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of ward affected by the decision)
• Your well-being or financial position; or
• The well-being or financial position of:
o A member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or
- Any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
- Any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000;
o Any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your Authority; or
o Any body exercising functions of a public nature, directed to charitable purposes or whose principal includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management?
YES
NO
PECUNIARY INTEREST
You must disclose the existence and nature of your personal interests
Would a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, reasonably regard your personal interest to be so significant that it is likely to prejudice your
NO
You can participate in the meeting and vote (or remain in the room if not a member of the meeting)
YES
- Does the matter affect your financial position or the financial position of any person or body through whom you have a personal interest?
- Does the matter relate to an approval, consent, licence, permission or registration that affects you or any person or body with which you have a personal interest?
- Does the matter not fall within one of the exempt categories of decisions?
NO
YES
Speak to Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting to avoid allegations of corruption or bias

AGENDA

1 ANNOUNCEMENTS

On behalf of the Chair, there will be an announcement about the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(if any) - receive

3 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Members are invited to disclose any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still disclose an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

4 MINUTES (Pages 7 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14th Augst 2024, and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

5 ROMFORD MASTERPLAN FORMAL CONSULTATION (Pages 15 - 576)

Documents attached

6 HOUSING SERVICES - HATE CRIME POLICY (2024) (Pages 577 - 608)

Documents attached

7 HOUSING SERVICES - DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY (2024) (Pages 609 - 646)

Documents attached

8 HOUSING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY (2024) (Pages 647 - 690)

Documents attached

9 SEND & ALTERNATIVE PROVISION STRATEGY (Pages 691 - 732)

Documents attached

10 ENERGY CONTRACTS 2024-28 - RENEWAL (Pages 733 - 746)

Documents attached

11 COUNCIL'S COMMERCIAL STRATEGY (Pages 747 - 800)

Documents attached

12 NORTH EAST LONDON JOINT SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH STRATEGY (2024 – 2029) (Pages 801 - 918)

Documents attached

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MINUTES OF A CABINET MEETING
Council Chamber - Town Hall
Wednesday, 14 August 2024
(7.30 - 9.45 pm)

Present:
Councillor Ray Morgon (Leader of the Council), Chairman

	Cabinet Member responsibility:
Councillor Gillian Ford	Lead Member for Adults & Wellbeing
Councillor Oscar Ford	Lead Member for Children & Young People
Councillor Paul McGeary	Lead Member for Housing & Property
Councillor Paul Middleton	Lead Member for Digital, Transformation & Customer Services
Councillor Barry Mugglestone	Lead Member for Environment
Councillor Christopher Wilkins	Lead Member for Finance
Councillor Graham Williamson	Lead Member for Regeneration

214 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On behalf of the Chairman, there was an announcement about the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

215 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Councillor Natasha Summers.

216 **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

217 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2024 were agreed as a correct record and the Chair signed them.

218 A GOOD LIFE - DRAFT CULTURE STRATEGY

Report: **Cabinet approval of the A Good Life – Draft Culture Strategy report**

Presented by**: Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Care Services**

Summary

1. On 13 March 2024, Cabinet agreed to the incorporation of a company limited by guarantee wholly owned by the Council for the purpose of delivering the London Borough of Culture (LBOC) year (if awarded) and/or realising and delivering other cultural and place making opportunities. The application to be LBOC was unsuccessful.

2. During the application process for the LBOC, there were positive conversations with external funders who have expressed a desire to reverse the Borough's lower investment through external funding per head compared to other London Boroughs. These conversations have continued since the outcome for the LBOC.

3. A draft cultural strategy, A Good Life was appended to the report (Appendix A), has been written based on the LBOC application. Projects from the LBOC application have formed the focus of the strategy. This was following consultation with over a thousand people and over fifty groups and organisations.

4. The strategy has been developed by the public, private and voluntary sector in Havering, and represents the planned strategic work of a broad range of organisations and groups. It is a consortium strategy designed to act as a three -year catalyst for nurturing and growing the cultural life of a rapidly changing place. It is designed to be used by anyone developing, making and building cultural activity in Havering. It supports a shared vision across a networked borough.

5. A Good Life has the following vision:

   A Good Life is a transformational approach to the long-term wellbeing of Havering's residents within a radically changing place. Empowering communities, nurturing social connectivity, addressing inequality, building a
   sustainable creative ecology, and promoting good physical and mental health are foundations of the strategy.

6. A Good Life has five principles:

   Developing a creative health borough;
   Intricately weaving the concept of long-term wellbeing through cultural activity.

Transforming the cultural ecology;
Capacity building to benefit from growth and seeking a levelling up in investment.
Redefining heritage for the 21st Century;
Rebalancing the widest definition of heritage, to better include the borough's new population.

Every child and young person engaging in culture;
Uniting education and arts partners to empower young people and make them feel proud.

Addressing social and environmental justice;
Helping lead the way in dismantling inequalities and addressing the climate emergency.

7. The principles are followed by a number of objectives:

    - A bold new identity for Havering that celebrates all our people, places, and heritage.
    - Harness culture to embrace and champion the fast changing nature of Havering's communities ensuring representation for all.
    - Transform our cultural ecology, addressing structural inequalities, building new artistic legacies for Havering.
    - Engage all people in culture, enabling access physically and digitally across every part of the borough.
    - Empower talent and provide new opportunities for underserved and underrepresented communities, prioritising social justice and equity.
    - Address health inequalities and the physical and mental wellbeing of all our residents.

8. It is recommended that progress with drafting a cultural strategy involving extensive consultation is noted and that the Council 'signs up' to endorsing the draft strategy.

9. There have been positive conversations with a number of strategic funding partners following the outcome of the LBOC application. One such conversation with Arts Council England (ACE) has resulted in an expression of interest being submitted. Subject to a successful outcome of the expression of interest, a full funding application will be submitted to ACE to part fund the delivery of A Good Life.

10. Arts Council England expect other funding to be secured as match funding for their contribution if successful. As such, other funding applications to a range of funders are also being prepared to raise sufficient funding to deliver all of the projects within A Good Life. It is

expected funding applications will be submitted to Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, National Lottery Communities Fund, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, City Bridge Trust amongst others.

11. By delivering these projects subject to successful funding applications, the Council will be adhering to the Vision: The Havering You Want to be Part Of, and the principle, Place – a great place to live, work and enjoy. Outcome – Improve Havering's art, history, leisure and culture offer.

12. This decision is required as external funding applications and the acceptance of the terms and conditions of any grants if successful require the sign off from the S151 Officer.

Cabinet:

1. Approved the draft Culture Strategy for 2025-2028, 'A Good Life' as attached at appendix A of the report.

2. Delegated to the Head of Leisure and Culture, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing the ability to amend and update the Culture Strategy from time to time, provided that such changes do not contravene the principles detailed in this report.

3. Delegated to the Head of Leisure and Culture, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing the ability to take all steps necessary to deliver the Culture Strategy including (but not limited to) applications for, acceptance of and spending of external funding.

219 THE COUNCIL'S CONSULTATION POLICY

Report: **Cabinet approval of the Consultation Policy**

Presented by**: Councillor Ray Morgon, Leader of the Council**

Summary:

The aim of the policy was to provide guiding principles and quality standards for consultation activities thereby promoting best practice to those officers engaged in consultation and ensuring that there was a consistent approach to these activities across the Council.

Within the overall aim, the following were the key objectives:

- To maximise stakeholder engagement by making consultation activities as inclusive as possible.

- To develop the Council's services to meet the range of needs of our residents, businesses, communities and service users.

- To co-ordinate consultation, develop best practice and centralise data and information.

- Through better co-ordination, reduce repetition, duplication and consultation fatigue.

- To develop the Council's ability to make effective use of consultation techniques.

- To maximise equality of consultation.

- To maximise opportunities for consultation.

- To better engage with groups we seldom hear from or those we may find hard to reach.

- To comply with the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation.

Cabinet Approved the Consultation policy.

220 **EXTENSION OF THE JOINT SEXUAL HEALTH CONTRACT**

Report: **Cabinet approval of the Permission to enact the final two year extension for the Integrated Sexual Health Service**

Presented by**: Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Care Services**

Summary:

The report seeks the approval of the final extension of the Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge Integrated Sexual Health Services Contract for the remaining 1+1 years for a maximum cost to Havering Council of £2.594 million up until 30th September 2026. It was noted that this would ensure continuity of service provision and stability within Havering, Barking & Dagenham and Redbridge and provide sufficient time to complete service recommissioning under new Provider Selection Regime (PSR) arrangements.

Cabinet:

- Approved the annual extension and agreed in principle to the final year extension of the Integrated Sexual Health Services Contract for the remaining 1+1 years available up until 30th September 2026, with a cost of £2.594m in total.
- Delegated to the Director of Public Health to agree the final year extension to the Contract subject to good performance

221 **HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

Report: **Cabinet approval of the Home to School Transport Policy**

Presented by**: Councillor Oscar Ford, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People**

Summary:

The Department for Education (DfE) recently updated the statutory guidance replacing the previous Home to School Travel and Transport guidance from 2014. As a result changes to Havering's Policy were to fall in line with the new statutory guidance.

In response to the changes to the government guidance, Havering Council undertook a consultation on a new Home to School Transport policy. There was a good response rate to the consultation made over the statutory consultation period with a total of 575 individuals responding.

The new Home to School Transport policy was presented to Cabinet in May where it was agreed and endorsed based on the understanding everyone had been consulted with.

It was later discovered that a cohort of schools had not been included within the consultation. These were schools where parents were taking their children to school and reclaiming a fuel reimbursement.

There were 16 schools that had been omitted from the previous consultation due to internal systems recorded these recipients in a different database and were overlooked.

Parents and Carers brought these flaws in the consultation process to officers attention and the service has addressed these concerns.

A repeat of the consultation was undertaken with out of borough schools that supported Havering children and not just the 16 omitted schools from the initial consultation.

The consultation was carried out between 15 June 2024 and 14 July 2024. A total of 79 email invitations went out to individual schools and they were given 28 days to respond to the questionnaire of the consultation.

The consultation resulted in receiving 5 responses from the 79 invites a response of 6.3%

The consultation now shows overall 580 responses with the vast majority were from Parents/Guardians accounting for 82 % of the responses, followed by school or educational settings at 7%, the general public at 4% and children under 16 offering a 3.5% contribution.

Cabinet Agreed:

1. To quash the decision, it made at its meeting on 15 May to approve the Home to School Transport Policy
2. To conscientiously consider the further representations that have been received in the additional consultation exercise described in the report.
3. To take a fresh decision based on the totality of the consultation responses set out in this and the previous report.
4. To adopt the revised Home to School Transport policy attached at appendix A of the Cabinet report.
5. To not introduce a charge for Post 16 Travel at this time.

222 **CHILDREN IN CARE SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY**

This item was deferred for consideration at a later meeting.

223 **1ST QUARTER REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2024/25**

Report: **Cabinet approval of the 1st Quarter Revenue and Capital Monitoring Report 2024/25**

Presented by**: Councillor Chris Wilkins, Cabinet Member for Finance**

Summary:

The report provided an update on Period 3 revenue and capital monitoring position of the Council and included commentary on the variances to budget by service. The report also included an update on corporate items and progress on delivery of savings. The report included a section that outlined the progress on the capital programme as at 30th June 2024.

Cabinet:

1. Noted the revenue monitoring position for the Council and the financing of the overspend (section 8 of the report).
2. Noted the Capital monitoring position for 24/25 as set out in section 9 of the report.
3. Noted the progress towards delivery of the 2024/25 savings as set out in section 6.4 of the report.

Chairman

Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

CABINET

Subject Heading:	Romford Masterplan Formal Consultation
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Graham Williamson, Cabinet Member for Regeneration
ELT Lead:	Helen Oakerbee, Director of Planning and Public Protection
Report Author and contact details:	Lauren Miller, lauren.miller@havering.gov.uk 01708 433051
Policy context:	- National Planning Policy Framework 2023 - London Plan 2021 - Havering Local Plan 2016-2031
Financial summary:	The limited costs associated with this decision will be met within the existing Regeneration budget.
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes (c) Significant effect on two or more Wards
When should this matter be reviewed?	September 2027
Reviewing OSC:	Places overview and scrutiny

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well	x
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy	x
Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council	x

SUMMARY

1. This report seeks approval to consult on the Draft Romford Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Consultation is proposed to start in late September and run for a minimum of 6 weeks, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Cabinet is recommended to agree the publication of the Draft Romford Masterplan and associated documents as set out below for a minimum 6-week period of statutory public consultation under regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, with an anticipated start date in late September 2024.

3. The following documents will be published:

- Final Consultation Draft Romford Masterplan (Appendix 1)
- Romford Masterplan Baseline Report (Appendix 2)
- Romford Masterplan Baseline Report Appendix – Heritage Audit (Appendix 3)
- Romford Masterplan Engagement Summary Report 2024 (Appendix 4)
- Romford Masterplan Engagement Summary Report 2019 (Appendix 5)
- Romford Masterplan Health Impact Assessment 2024 (Appendix 6)
- Findings of No Significant Effect Report (Appendix 7)

REPORT DETAIL

Background

4. The Council has prepared a draft Romford Masterplan in conjunction with consultants Maccreanor Lavington. The Masterplan has emerged over a number of years, with extensive early community engagement taking place in 2019. Further community engagement took place earlier this year in order to underpin and inform the preparation of a full draft Masterplan.

5. This report seeks Cabinet approval to publish the draft Masterplan for formal consultation with residents, stakeholders and statutory consultees.

6. Subject to consideration of the consultation representations and any subsequent amendments, the final Masterplan will then return to Cabinet for adoption and publication. The Masterplan will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document that supports the Council's adopted Local Plan 2016-2031.

7. The Havering Local Plan sets out detailed policy for Romford and commits to the delivery of a Supplementary Planning Document for the area, recognising the significant opportunities that Romford offers. The Masterplan develops and supplements the Havering Local Plan and sets out a framework to shape and guide development in Romford over the next 15-20 years.

Purpose of the Romford Masterplan

8. Romford is the borough's primary centre and supports a vibrant mix of shopping, employment, leisure, night-time economy and housing, and is identified as a Metropolitan town centre in the London Plan. It is a key transport hub within the borough and benefits from improved accessibility since the Elizabeth Line opened.

9. The Masterplan will be instrumental in guiding Romford's ongoing evolution over the next 15-20 years. Its aim is to draw on Romford's unique character and to continue to evolve it into a place which respects and reveals its history whilst looking forward to deliver growth and opportunities that will benefit the entire community.

10. Romford offers exciting regeneration and development opportunities and is expected to accommodate significant levels of housing and economic growth in the coming years. It is identified as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan and a Strategic Development Area (SDA) in the Havering Local Plan. A Masterplan is needed to guide these opportunities in a way that respects Romford's qualities and history, strengthens pride in the town, and makes it a distinct and attractive place to live, work, and visit.

11. The Masterplan does not repeat policies in the Local Plan, and should be read in conjunction with it. As an SPD the Masterplan cannot introduce new planning policies but will shape and guide future development. The Masterplan will be a material consideration when determining planning applications. This means that in addition to satisfying the requirements of national, regional and Havering's local planning policies, development proposals will also need to demonstrate how the guidance in the SPD has been considered.

Previous Community Engagement

12. The Masterplan has been influenced by an extensive engagement process both for the initial development of the Masterplan in 2019 (see appendix 5) and for the Masterplan refresh in 2024 (see appendix 4). Throughout the development of the Masterplan, feedback from the engagement process has been incorporated to create and refine the vision, objectives strategies and site guidance.

13. In April and May 2024, the engagement included:

- A digital launch and online survey on www.yourromford.co.uk
- Five pop up engagement events in the town centre
- Five workshops with children and young people
- A stakeholder workshop

14. Overall, the sentiment about the Masterplan was positive, reflected in 73% of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreeing with the principles of the Masterplan. The ideas with the most public support were:

- The Market place: focusing on the Market as a key transformation area for Romford
- The River Rom: opening up the Rom and creating a high quality, exciting pieces of public realm
- Public Realm: creating improved public realm so people want to dwell in the town centre
- Behaviour: The above goals were identified in the context of addressing challenges with antisocial behaviour in the town centre.

15. Preparation of the Masterplan has also included engagement with a range of partners and stakeholders including landowners, developers and statutory consultees such as the Greater London Authority (GLA), Transport for London (TfL) and the Environment Agency.

Summary of Masterplan Content

16. The Masterplan sets out a vision for Romford, supported by objectives, strategies and site guidance. The full Masterplan is out in Appendix 1. A summary of the vision, key spatial moves and key themes is set out below.

Vision for Romford:

'Building on its unique character and history, Romford will be a mixed, vibrant and distinct regional town centre. It will consist of a refined retail offer complemented by a rejuvenated market with a focus on local goods and services, maintaining its role as a major leisure destination with an enlarged employment offer, an early evening food and beverage offer and new residential community supported by additional health and school facilities'.

17. The Masterplan proposes a series of key spatial moves that establish the physical structure and interventions to achieve the long-term vision for Romford town centre:

- **Opening up the River Rom -** The River Rom will be deculverted and partially renaturalised through the town centre to create an ecological linear park.

- **Recharacterising the ring road –** creating an active travel corridor with at-grade crossings, planting and an urban boulevard character, better integrating the town centre with the surrounding neighbourhoods.

- **Celebrating Romford Market** - Reinforcing the importance of the market place as a key civic space by upgrading the public realm improving frontages and introducing spaces that can support a variety of events and gatherings.

- **Reinstating the historic urban grain -** Introducing new streets and spaces that reflect the finer historic urban grain of the town centre with smaller, more walkable blocks with varied and engaging building frontages.

- **Wider green links** - Introducing new green links that can act as walking and cycling corridors both through the town centre and connecting to wider key public green spaces and parks.

- **New and improved station entrances** - Creating a new station entrance that acts as a gateway to the town centre and improving the existing station entrance with public realm enhancements, seating and wayfinding.

18. The Vision is expanded through seven key themes and objectives to guide its delivery.

Key themes:

- **Space and landscape** - The Masterplan promotes a wide range of public spaces including high quality streets, pocket parks, squares and roof gardens. Blue and green networks through the town centre will be strengthened. The River Rom will be the centre piece of these networks as a new linear riverside park.

- **Movement and Connectivity -** The Masterplan improves access, connectivity and permeability across Romford. Public transport and active travel choices, such as walking and cycling, are promoted to encourage

healthy lifestyles and considered equitably with other modes of travel. Reconfigured streets and public realm will create a more attractive, safe and inclusive Romford.

- **Sustainability** - ensuring growth is built on a platform of sustainable infrastructure with environmental and wellbeing benefits. Environmental, social and economic sustainability is a golden thread that runs through the Masterplan.

- **Inclusivity, Health and Wellbeing -** all developments, public realm, transport and projects will have inclusive design at their heart. The Masterplan provides guidance to promote social cohesion and to create opportunities to diversify and to also improve health and wellbeing through better accessibility, infrastructure and resources.

- **Character and Townscape -** The Masterplan draws on the existing qualities and unique assets of Romford. The setting of Romford's historic places and buildings will be enhanced. New developments will contribute by positively supporting existing or evolving character areas through new and enhanced buildings, streets and spaces.

- **Uses and Mix -** The Masterplan promotes a diverse Romford that is active throughout all times of the day. In the central area smaller shops and a more varied food and drink offer will support the vibrancy of the centre and an enhanced early evening economy. Employment and business space will be enhanced. Key locations and public spaces will be anchored by cultural and leisure uses to drive footfall. New residential within the town centre will support existing and new businesses but will also require corresponding social infrastructure including schools, public spaces, heath facilities and transport.

- **The Economy -** The Masterplan capitalises on Romford's unique position at the interface between Essex and London to promote Romford as a destination, to support existing businesses and attract new occupiers. The Masterplan seeks to broaden the early evening and night-time economies, revitalise Market Place and enhancing retail, business and residential offers. This diversification will create new jobs and support the vitality and long-term viability of Romford.

Site Guidance

19. The Masterplan sets out specific site guidance for key areas that offer the most potential to deliver positive, transformational changes and are instrumental in the delivery of the overarching objectives and vision for Romford. Guidance is provided for the following areas:

- Market Place
- Civic Campus

- Liberty
- Mercury
- Brewery
- St Edwards Way
- North Street
- Station Gateway
- Rom Valley
- Crow Lane

Next Steps - Statutory Consultation

20. Further to the extensive community engagement that has been already undertaken (refer to paragraphs 12-15) the following stage of consultation will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to review the Masterplan in full and provide consultation feedback.

21. Statutory consultation will be carried out in accordance with planning regulations and Havering's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The consultation will run for a minimum of 6 weeks (commencing in late September) and will include:

    - A dedicated Citizen Space page where documents can be viewed online and comments can be submitted (proposed consultation questions are set out in Appendix 8).
    - A hard copy of the Masterplan available to view at the Town Hall reception.
    - Email notifications to registered consultees and statutory consultees
    - Publicity on social media and in the 'Living in Havering' newsletter,
    - Statutory notice placed in the Romford Recorder.
    - Two in person drop in sessions at Romford Library for consultees to ask questions and seek clarification on any aspects of the Masterplan.

22. Subject to consideration of all consultation representations and any necessary amendments, the final Masterplan SPD would then be returned to Cabinet for adoption and publication.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision: Undertaking statutory consultation is the only option available to be able to progress the Romford Masterplan towards adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Other options considered:

1. Do not consult. This option was rejected as it is a statutory requirement to consult on Supplementary Planning Documents under the Town and Country Planning (local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Adoption of the Masterplan as a supplementary planning document is dependent on progressing through the statutory consultation process.

2. Do not continue with the production of the Romford Masterplan. This option was rejected as there is significant development pressure within Romford and there is currently a lack of specific planning policy for Romford to be able to guide and influence future development.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are minimal costs associated with the publication of this Masterplan consultation, estimated at £600. This will be funded through the existing Regeneration (Capacity and Feasibility) budget.

The Masterplan itself sets out a set of principles for the vision for Romford, which will be used to inform future development, it does not commit any funding.

The vision will be achieved through a mix of private and public funding any council investment will be considered in future decision papers.

Legal implications and risks:

The preparation and adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents is governed by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (“ the 2012 Regulations”).

Regulation 5 of the 2012 Regulations specifies what documents are local development documents. Regulation 6 defines a Local Plan as any document referred to in regulation 5(1)(a)(i),(ii) or (iv) or 5(2)(a) or (b). A SPD is a local development document that is not a Local Plan and is limited to including statements, as specified in Regulation 5(iii), that describe any environmental, social, design and economic objectives which are relevant to the attainment of the development and use of land specified in the Local Plan. SPDs do not form part of the development plan, they cannot introduce new planning policies into the development plan. Once adopted, the SPD will be a material consideration in decision making to which regard will have to be had when considering any planning application.

Part 5 of the 2012 Regulations sets out the procedure to be followed prior to the adoption of SPDs. The Council must prepare SPDs in accordance with its Statement of Community Involvement (section 19(3) PCPA 2004).

This decision seeks approval for commencement of consultation only. Further authority will be sought from Cabinet in event that the consultation is approved and we progress to adoption of the Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Under regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) a strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.

Before deciding whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority will need to take into account the criteria specified in schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and consult the consultation bodies.

The Council has consulted the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England who have all confirmed that they agree with the Council's view that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the Romford Masterplan SPD.

A Findings of No Significant Effect Report, containing a statement of reasons has been prepared and will be published alongside the Romford Masterplan (Refer to Appendix 7).

Human Resources implications and risks:

The consultation process will be managed internally by the Planning Service using existing staff resources. Therefore there are no HR implications or risks from this decision.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

(i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
(ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
(iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

An EHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) is usually carried out and on this occasion an EQIA (Equalities Impact Assessment) isn't required.

The Romford Masterplan is a Supplementary Planning Document that provides guidance and advice on the policies in the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031). Supplementary Planning Documents do not form part of the Development Plan and therefore cannot introduce new policies. A full Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken of the Local Plan and is available on the Council's website here. As the Masterplan cannot set new policy a full EQIA has not been carried out. However, the Masterplan will play an important role in ensuring that future development in Romford contributes positively to ensuring equality and improving the quality of life of all residents including those with protected characteristics.

In particular the Masterplan supports:

- The delivery of a range of high quality, mixed tenure dwellings
- Improved accessibility in and around Romford and active travel options
- The delivery of social infrastructure including education, healthcare and community facilities.
- Improved public realm and physical environment and designing out crime.
- A mix of uses and vibrant town centre, improving safety and security
- Enhanced employment opportunities for all

In conclusion there are no equalities and social inclusion implications and risks associated with this decision.

Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks

The built environment (including homes, green spaces, transport, places of education and places of work and leisure) is a fundamental determinant of the health and wellbeing of local populations. Embedding health and wellbeing considerations into planning design and policy provides a vital opportunity to maximise positive health and wellbeing benefits arising from new developments or regeneration and mitigate against any potential negative impacts.

The Masterplan recognises the importance of wider health determinants, as evidenced in one of the seven strategic objectives undersection 5.5. Inclusivity,

Health and Wellbeing. Commitment to promote and factor health and wellbeing into the RMP are also covered under the following sections:

4.4.3: Active travel via healthy streets approach

- 5.7.2. 5: Green strategy - establishing a network of primary, secondary and tertiary green corridors and spaces, new street tree planting and necklace of green space connecting cotton spark with lodge farm park.
- 5.2.2.2: Blue Strategy of re-establishing the River Rom, maximise the experience and ecological potential of existing waterways through naturalisation, de-culverting, landscaping, and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) feature.
- 5.2.2.3 Public Realm strategy-ensuring all new major development bring significant public space encouraging cultural events and community activity
- 5.5.2.2 Commitment to schools' provision, social amenities to improve air quality including through changes to Ring Road and improved bus service connections.

The Romford Masterplan is accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment (Appendix 6). The Masterplan was assessed as largely having a positive impact on health.

The HIA is an iterative, dynamic process and a number of recommendations were made to ensure that the Masterplan fully addresses any health and wellbeing implications, while also identifying opportunities to further enhance positive impacts:

- Assess demand for healthcare services and set out how healthcare infrastructure will be provisioned including the ambulance station location in the proposed Bridge Close Development working in partnership with NHS
- Identify location for a secondary school and ensure educational needs of children within the area are met.
- Enhance open space and access to ensure safety and accessibility for all including women and the disabled
- Ensure the maintenance and management responsibilities of new open space is clarified and factored into development applications to retain the benefits
- Enhanced accessibility to buildings and places through the reprovision of public toilets, changing places and provision of cycle parking for accessible cycles
- Identify childcare facilities to further maximise positive impacts of access to work
- Enhance the positive impact of social cohesion through provision for voluntary and community sectors and additional space for civic functions
- Consider the provision of community gardens and food growing space to enhance access to healthy food

These recommendations have been taken on board and reflected in the final consultation draft Masterplan with the detail recorded in the Health Impact

Assessment, Appendix 5: Romford Masterplan Actions in Response to the July 2024 HIA Recommendations. The HIA will be reviewed in light of these responses and feedback from the public consultation.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Romford Masterplan is a Supplementary Planning Document which builds upon and provides more detailed advice and guidance on policies in the adopted Havering Local Plan 2016-2031. As SPDs do not form part of the Development Plan, they cannot introduce new planning policies. The Masterplan does however provide the opportunity to guide development in Romford to have a positive impact on climate change, carbon emissions and biodiversity.

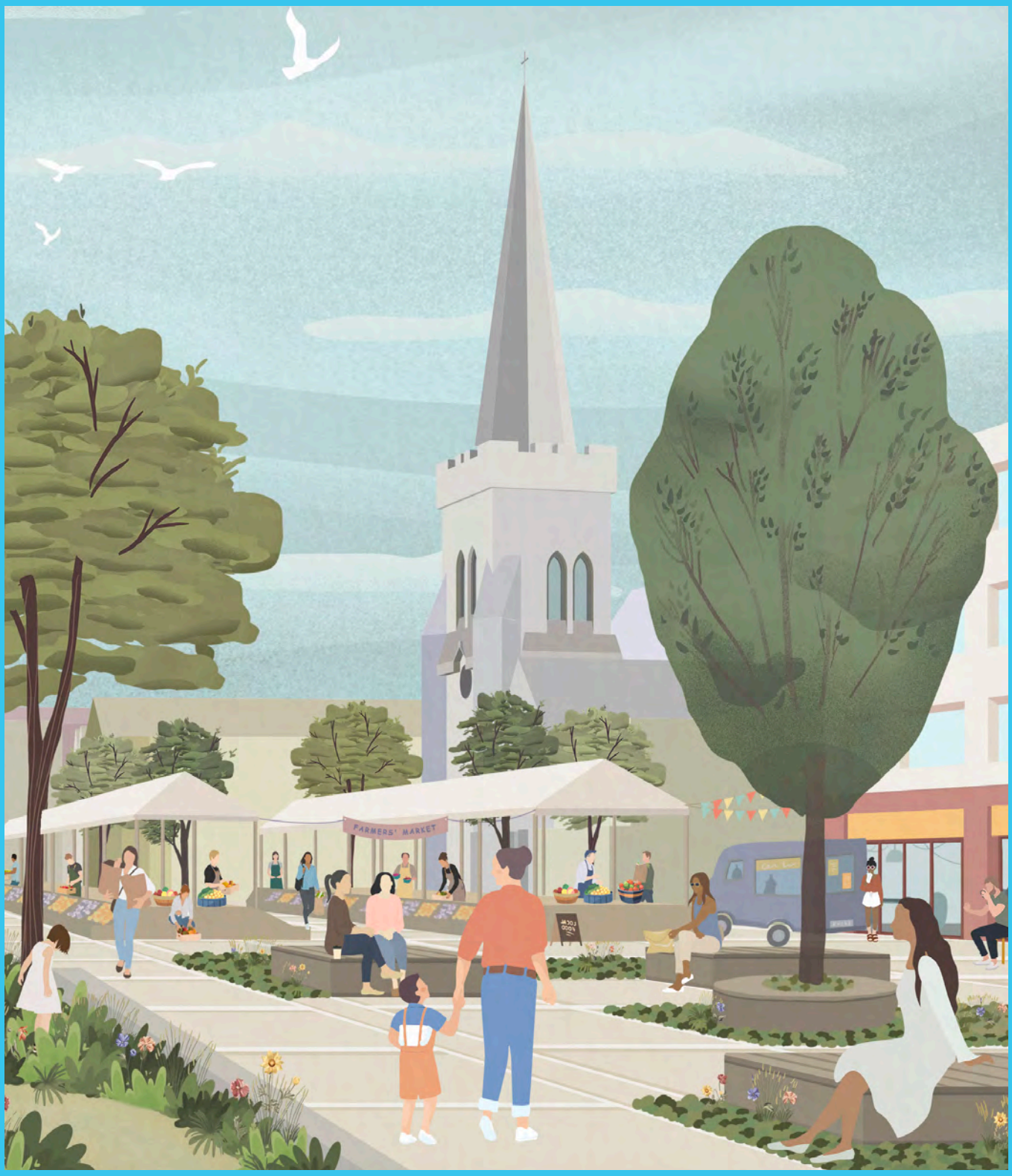
The Masterplan seeks to ensure that the redevelopment of Romford captures the opportunity to transform the town centre into a sustainable and resilient place through four strategies:

- **Environment resilience** - Creating a town centre that is resilient to changes in climate
- **Biodiversity Net gain and urban greening factor** - Showcasing Romford as a forward thinking town centre that champions biodiversity and urban greening
- **Energy and Carbon** - Setting a pathway to zero carbon though the design of buildings and infrastructure
- **Circular economy and materials** - Maintain materials at their highest values through construction and operation, by reuse and repurposing, and avoiding waste.

The draft Masterplan has been reviewed by the Council's planning sustainability panel as well as the Quality Review Panel, which has helped embed climate change guidance within the Masterplan.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None



Romford Town Centre Masterplan

Final Consultation Draft
22nd August 2024

Maccreanor Lavington | Avison Young | GHPA | Periscope | Civic Engineers | make:good | Useful Projects | Robert Bevan

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Fig. 01. A vision and framework for future infrastructure and development in the town and surrounding area – Illustrative view of Romford town centre, looking north towards St Edward the Confessor Church

Foreword from the Leader of the Council

This Masterplan showcases the potential that Romford has to offer and will help us to set out our vision and framework for future infrastructure and development in the town and surrounding area.

Romford has a rich heritage and a strong identity, which must be protected, nurtured and celebrated. Working with residents and stakeholders on this programme for over two years, we know that there is ambition and appetite to see improvement to our town and community, but that will not be at the expense of the uniqueness, history and heritage of our historic market town.

Romford has many celebrated assets and much heritage, such as the Market Place and its market, St Edward the Confessor Church, and a conservation area at its heart. Enhancing character and reinforcing heritage is a key part of the Masterplan, and its low to mid-rise townscape is a major ingredient that should be maintained.

Romford is for everyone and it should offer positive experiences for all. The community is the most important part of it and makes the place what it is. It will continue to accommodate the elderly, families, and young people alike, offering a liveable setting, with additional infrastructure to support new and existing communities.

Set out in this Masterplan are the vision, objectives and strategies to direct Romford's future for us all.

There are several key components to this, forming the backbone of what the Masterplan strives to achieve in the coming years:

- Key public realm interventions, particularly in the Market Place, can help to enhance Romford, as well as improve the setting of its heritage. Creating a positive setting for the future of Romford's market is a key component of Romford's identity and culture.
- The town centre sits in the centre of a particularly green borough, surrounded by fantastic green spaces and parks, and situated on the River Rom. It has the potential to bring these natural assets into the town centre, greening the town centre, enhancing, and highlighting these assets. We want to put the 'Rom' back in Romford and there are plans to improve its setting as part of the town.
- Romford uniquely sits between Essex and London, and can integrate with both. There is potential to broaden the offer of the town centre to support its future and attract growth and investment. This has the potential to attract a greater variety of retail, restaurants, cafes, leisure and cultural uses to sit alongside the existing amenities, such as Sapphire Ice and Leisure.
- Further, positive growth and investment can introduce new social infrastructure in the form of education, community and healthcare facilities, alongside new employment opportunities. We will ensure that Council infrastructure investments continue to support Romford's future.
- Public transport enhancements, such as improved station entrances coinciding with the arrival of Crossrail, and continued bus hub improvements, form part of this and are vital to support sustainable travel. There is also opportunity to take advantage of what Crossrail brings – attracting investment in Romford and greater improvements to the area.
- Improving health and wellbeing for all, improving the lives of everyone, and as part of Havering's Healthy Weight Strategy to reduce obesity, a corporate priority for the Council. This includes improving streets, spaces and facilities for active travel – cycling and walking – and enhancing public spaces for recreation, including seating.
- Sustainable development will support the local economy and local businesses. To be 'Made in Romford' can be something unique and high quality; it will support the local community with new social infrastructure, and community initiatives for energy; and will help to target being zero-carbon by 2030 through building design and construction, promoting public transport and active travel, and ensuring sustainably-sourced energy powers Romford.

I want Havering to be a destination of choice and for Romford to continue to be the beloved historic market town that protects our community, celebrates our history and heritage and is somewhere that people can live well, visit, work and enjoy. This Masterplan for Romford is one-step closer to us protecting and fulfilling that bold ambition.

Councillor Ray Morgon

1 MASTERPLAN INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains why Romford needs a Masterplan, how it will create a framework for good growth to guide future development and interventions, and the current status of this document.

1.1 A MASTERPLAN FOR ROMFORD

1.1.1 Aim & Purpose

Romford town centre has undergone a continual and impressive evolution over time, being a market town since the 13th century, and becoming the civic and cultural heart of the London Borough of Havering. This Masterplan will be instrumental in guiding Romford's ongoing evolution over the next 20 years. Its aim is to draw on Romford's unique character and to continue to evolve it into a place which respects and reveals its history whilst looking forward to deliver growth and opportunities benefiting the entire community.

Romford is the borough's primary centre and supports a vibrant mix of comparison shopping, employment, leisure, night-time economy, and housing, and is identified as a Metropolitan town centre. It is a key transport hub within the borough and benefits from improved accessibility since the Elizabeth Line opened. The Council has continually invested in the town centre and wider communities. Most recently, this includes improving public realm in the Market Place and Western Road, upgrading its public transports hubs, and delivering improvements to the ring road through the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme.

Romford offers exciting regeneration and development opportunities and is expected to accommodate significant levels of housing and economic growth in the coming years. It is identified as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan and the town centre has been designated both as a Housing Zone[1] and is at the centre of a Strategic Development Area (SDA) in the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031). A Masterplan is needed to guide these opportunities in a way that respects Romford's qualities and history, strengthens pride in the town, and makes it a distinct and attractive place to live, work, and visit.

1 A 'Housing Zone', is an area identified in the GLA's Housing Strategy which can bring accelerated housing development.

Romford Market

1.1.2 Masterplan Scope

The Havering Local Plan sets out a comprehensive policy for Romford, Policy 1. The Masterplan develops and supplements this by creating a framework for the delivery of good growth[1] over the next 15-20 years, setting out a vision for Romford supported by objectives, strategies, and site guidance. The Masterplan does not repeat policies in the Local Plan, though some specific references are made. For example, policies on affordable housing are covered only by the Local Plan. The Masterplan focusses on a core area in and immediately around the town centre, with some strategies covering the SDA area, as shown in Fig. 02. It is important to note that all supporting drawings, including the Masterplan in Chapter 4, are illustrative, and represent one way to translate the Masterplan vision and objectives into a coherent, inclusive and well-designed plan for the area.

1 The concept of Good Growth – growth that is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable – underpins the London Plan and ensures that it is focused on sustainable development – The London Plan, 2021

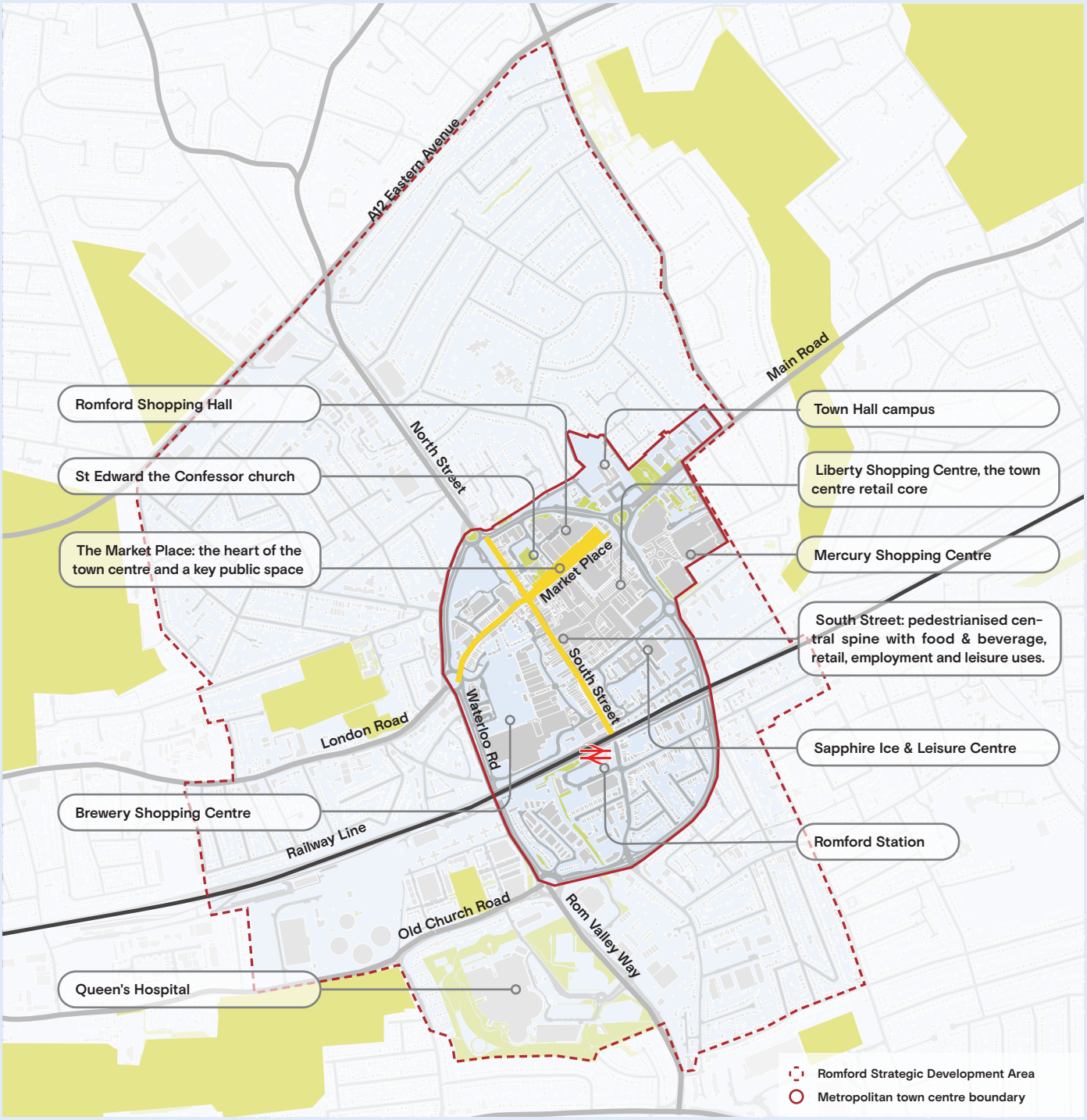


Fig. 02. Study Area - map showing Romford SDA boundary and Metropolitan town centre boundary

1.1.3 Masterplan Structure

This document comprises the following chapters:

Chapter 1 — Masterplan Introduction
An overview of the Masterplan, policy context and status of this document.

Chapter 2 — Romford in Context
A summary of the existing and emerging physical, social and economic contexts.

Chapter 3 — Romford in Context
A summary of the public and stakeholder engagement undertaken, and key learnings from this, and how this has shaped the Masterplan, from the vision through to site guidance.

Chapter 4 — A Vision for Change
The overarching spatial vision for the future of Romford together with the objectives to deliver this vision, grouped into eight themes – Character and Townscape, Movement and Connectivity, Space and Landscape, Uses and Mix, The Economy, Sustainability, Inclusivity, Health and Wellbeing and Delivery.

Chapter 5 — Masterplan Themes
Thematic guidance for delivering the objectives and making good growth happen through infrastructure, interventions and development.

Chapter 6 — Site Guidance
Design guidance for ten opportunity sites: the Market Place, St Edwards Way, the Brewery, Station Gateway, Rom Valley, the Liberty, the Mercury, North Street, Civic Campus and Crow Lane.

Chapter 7 — Implementation
How and when good growth is going to be delivered.

The Masterplan is supported by the following documents:

- A Baseline Report – provides a detailed analysis of the existing context and sets out objectives and options for growth.
- A Consultation Report – summarises the consultation methods, extensive range of events, written comments received, and how this feedback has been incorporated into the Masterplan.

1.1.4 Status

This Masterplan is a Supplementary Planning Document, subject to consultation, that sits alongside and supplements the Havering Local Plan. The guidance within this document provides a material consideration to help determine planning applications within the masterplan area. That means that in addition to satisfying the requirements of national, regional and Havering's Local Planning policies, proposals will also need to demonstrate how the guidance in this SPD has been considered.

1.1.5 Growth

The London Plan sets a minimum target of 5,000 new homes and 500 new jobs for Romford by 2041. The Havering Local Plan requires a minimum of 5,000 homes over the first 10 years of the plan period and calls for over 6,000 new high-quality homes in the Romford Strategic Development Area (SDA) over the plan period, alongside a significantly enhanced retail offer and the infrastructure to support the increased residential population.

Crucially, this growth is expected to be delivered over time – as outlined in Chapter 4 Vision for Change and Chapter 7 Implementation.

2 ROMFORD IN CONTEXT

This chapter sets out Romford's strategic and local context alongside the current character and composition of the town centre.

2.1 WIDER CONTEXT

2.1.1 Intersection of Essex and London

Romford is the administrative and cultural heart of the London Borough of Havering, located at the edge of London bordering Essex. A pivotal node along a historic east-west trading route and the contemporary Thames Estuary corridor, its identity has evolved from this juxtaposition between its origins as an Essex market town and an extension of the growing metropolis of London. As a result, Romford's mix and character is uniquely East London and aptly summarised by the famous architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner:

Romford's immediate context, and the majority of Havering, is characterised by suburban development. Almost half of the borough is green space, a large portion of which is designated as Green Belt land. Identified in the London Plan as a metropolitan centre, Romford has grown as the area's primary centre to become one of the largest commercial, retail and leisure areas in east London drawing residents and visitors locally and from Greater London, Essex and beyond.

"...the character of its buildings is shared equally between the suburbia of its western neighbours and the rural vernacular of the Essex countryside. This mix is unique in East London, comprising still remote medieval parish churches along the Thames marshlands, tiny rural villages, farmhouses set in open fields, a scattering of mansions, leafy Edwardian suburbia, and at its heart the brash commercialism of Romford."

– Cherry, O'Brien, Pevsner: The Buildings of England: London 5: East (Penguin, 2005)

2.1.2 Connectivity

Romford is well connected by rail, bus, and car, particularly with excellent east-west public transport connections. The centrally located Romford station sits on a busy east-west railway with National Rail services into Essex and London, as well as Overground services to Upminster. The arrival of the Elizabeth Line has further improved east-west connectivity services to Shenfield and through central London. However, north-south public transport connections are less well supported.

With numerous bus stops across the town centre, travelling by bus is often the preferred local public transport method.

The A12 to the north provides good regional road connections, and easy access to the M25.

2.1.3 Romford Strategic Development Area

In part due to its strategic location and accessibility, Romford has experienced increased interest from landowners and developers. Consequently, it is identified in the Havering Local Plan as one of two Strategic Development Areas (SDA) alongside Rainham and Beam Park. The SDA is focused on Romford Metropolitan town centre but covers approximately 346ha. This area is also identified in the London Plan as an Opportunity Area and is one of outer London's major growth and regeneration areas.

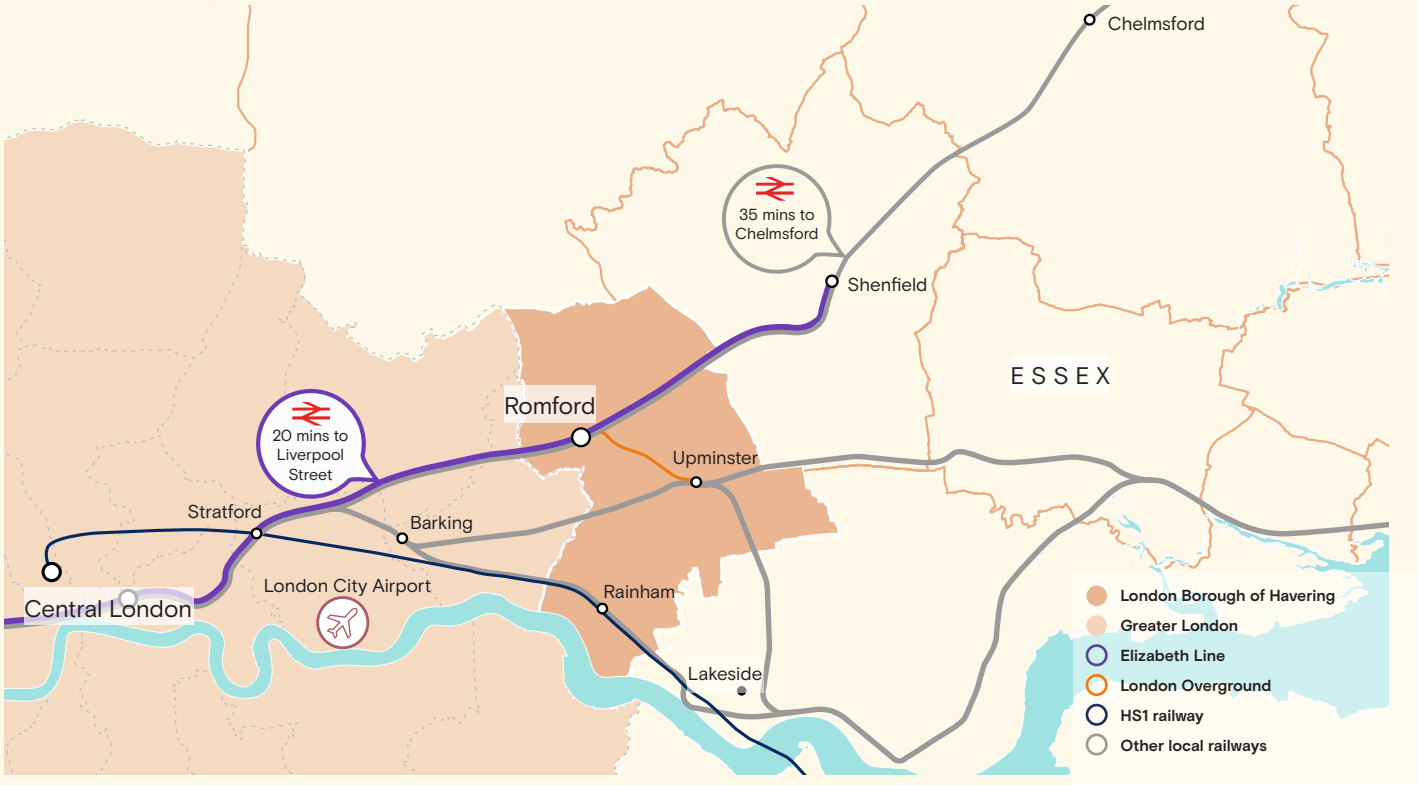


Fig. 03. Romford's context and connectivity

2.2 EXISTING CHARACTER

2.2.1 Romford's Character

Romford's character has emerged from its strategic location at the intersection of Essex and London. Originating as a crossroads at a ford on the River Rom, Romford grew as a market town and still maintains some distinct characteristics of an Essex market town. During the 20th century, Romford was met by the expanding London Metroland and underwent substantial transformations into the lively commercial and civic heart of Havering it is today.

Both the historic and existing character of Romford are detailed further in the accompanying Baseline Report, available on the London Borough of Havering's website. The following is a summary of key aspects to help contextualise the Masterplan Themes and interventions.

Romford Market

2.2.2 Historic Context and Morphology

Romford grew up linearly as a market town along the route of the old Roman Road between London and Colchester. It obtained a Market Charter in 1247 and is one of the few market towns which have continuously retained trading, with the historic market in the same location as Market Place today.

For much of its existence, Romford was a substantial village centred around the market. Unusually, it grew without a tangle or grid of streets beyond its main crossroads, which still form the central spines of activity along Market Place and South Street. By the early 1800's it was estimated there was still only a population of approximately 3,000, but the arrival of the railway in 1839 was the tipping point for rapid growth. By this time Romford had expanded into a settlement of four quadrants around the crossroads and the station's arrival on South Street stimulated further southward growth. The town continued to expand primarily along the central cross until the early 1900s, reaching a population of more than 40,000 by the inter-war period.

The inter-war period was a defining time of expansion and physical change. In the spirit of the age, Romford modernised demolishing historic buildings in the process. South Street was widened to usher in a new and brighter shopping era. The Romford Arcade, The Quadrant and Romford Shopping Hall led the transformation of Romford into a modern retail and leisure destination.

The spirit of renewal returned in the 1960s and was accompanied by rapid expansion on the town's periphery. Proposals for a new major shopping centre, the Liberty, were realised in conjunction with most of the ambitious 1976 County Plan for Essex. The plan radically altered Romford with the introduction of the ring road, pedestrianisation of the central crossroads and Market Place, use of large-scale zoning, and segregation of vehicles from pedestrians. A vision of its time, it strengthened shopping and office functions of the town centre but at the expense of heritage assets, housing, green space and some of the positive historic defining qualities of Romford.

Map of Romford 1777, Chapman and Andre. Romford's early linearity is beginning to expand into a settlement of four quarters around a crossroads although the expansion is chiefly along the north arm as well as east-west.

Gotto map of Romford, 1848. Romford is becoming a small town but building along South Street is still very limited despite the arrival of the railway embankment. The Market Place is still the main feature along with the crossroads.

The 1976 County Plan for Essex showing areas identified for redevelopment.

2.2.3 Key Heritage Assets

Though much of Romford's historic built fabric has been lost, tracing its morphology helps to identify important surviving historic elements. Celebrating and revealing these will be central to planning the next phase of development of the town in order that Romford evolves as a layered place whose evolution can be read through remaining architecture and infrastructure fragments.

Romford still has a concentration of heritage assets around the Market Place and High Street, particularly at the crossroads with South Street. These buildings form the heart of the Romford Conservation Area and contribute positively to the character of Market Place. Of particular significance are the Golden Lion Pub and St Edward the Confessor Church.

There exists a secondary pocket of Locally Listed buildings lining South Street that contributes to its traditional shopping street character.

Although the current boundary of the Conservation Area is drawn only along building frontages, a Conservation Area Appraisal is currently underway. A key consideration is whether to extend the boundary of the Conservation Area further down South Street and to incorporate buildings in their entirety.

In addition to the historic centre around Market Place and South Street, the Grade II listed Havering Town Hall forms the attractive centrepiece of a number of civic buildings.

The Market Place itself is a key asset, as is the market itself. The Market Place is the foundational space of Romford, it developed to about 400 by 50 metres (one of the largest near London). A complexity of yards and alleys, many of which connect with the Market Place, once added variety, depth, and lengthened the active frontages, and some of these still remain.

Romford has an unusually extensive collection of inter-war buildings and these offer a positive component of the town centre, reflecting also an expression of a desire that the town reinforce its sense of itself as a market town separate from London's Metroland.

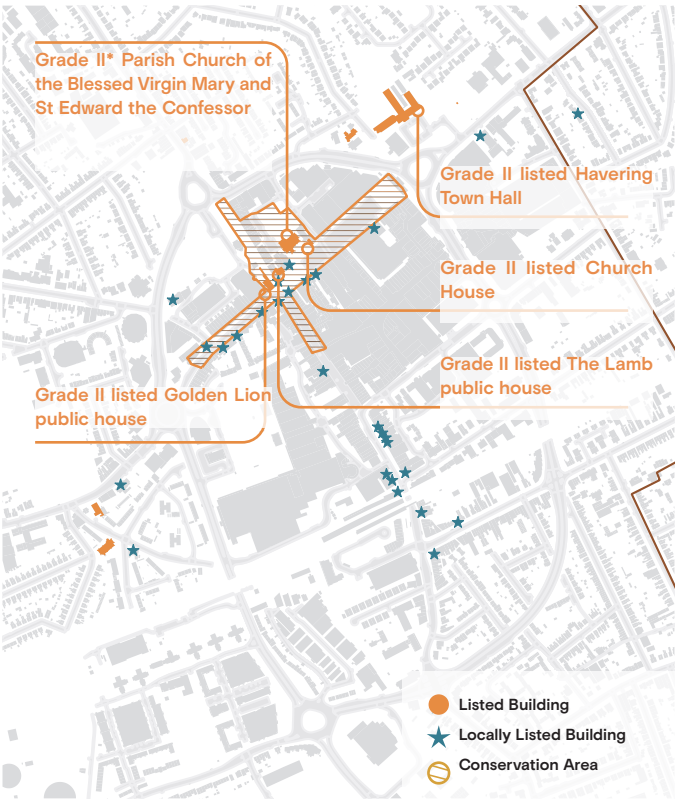


Fig. 04. Key Heritage Assets at the core of the town centre

An iconic landmark in Romford's townscape and skyline, the Grade II* Parish Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Edward the Confessor was built in 1849 by John Johnson. Its churchyard is included in the London Parks & Gardens Trust's London Inventory of Historic Green Spaces

Romford has lost almost its entire collection of Georgian buildings including many frontages on the north side of Market Place

The Golden Lion Public House is a Grade II listed building dating from the 17th century. Coaching inns and public houses, especially those on the Market Place and High Street were defining and prevalent much loved features of Romford before redevelopment in the 1930s and 1960s.

Romford's Market Place and Conservation Area

The Grade II listed Havering Town Hall

2.2.4 Existing Structure and Townscape

Romford is a vibrant and varied Metropolitan town centre that can be characterised by its historic core, Market Place, retail and leisure offer, civic functions, and attractive suburban context. The urban structure and townscape of Romford can be largely categorised into three distinct characters:

Historic core, Market Place and traditional shopping streets

The heart of Romford is still defined by the historic cross-roads formed by the Market Place, South Street, North Street and the High Street. Frontages of plots along these routes still often reflect the finer, historic urban grain of Medieval burgage plots.

The traditional shopping streets along South Street, North Street and the High Street are made up of predominantly 2-4 storey buildings and many attractive façades. Active frontages here create a generally positive and engaging environment supported by pedestrianised areas.

Central Romford's public realm and active frontages today remain essentially those leading off the crossroads, with pubs, cafes and retail forming the predominant focus of activity. Arcades and lanes also still provide some of the town centre's retail component.

The Market Place remains Romford's largest civic space and is arguably the most important public space containing some of Romford's most historic and recognisable architecture including St Edward the Confessor Church. It is a unique, wide space originally formed to one side of London Road. Despite some redevelopment, including the Liberty shopping centre, it is defined like South Street by a fine urban grain of 2-4 storey buildings with active frontages. On Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays the Market Place still hosts the vibrant Romford market. Although the space is used for car parking on other days, it is also used for events throughout the year.

Romford Market with the church as a backdrop

Several Art Deco buildings were built along South Street in the 1920s-30s which contribute to its distinct character

Modern retail core and shopping centres

The remainder of the town centre is predominantly defined by larger footprint buildings and a coarser urban grain that resulted from the consolidation of plots over time. While the introduction of several large shopping centres and car parks established Romford as a satellite destination it also eroded much of the historic character and public realm. These buildings are typically characterised by large footprints with internal active frontages. Apart from the Brewery, the shopping centres are closed to the public outside operational hours creating barriers to movement.

Although the shopping centres draw residents and visitors, contributing economic vibrancy, they present large amounts of service frontages which contribute to poor quality public realm.

Residential areas

Romford town centre's immediate context is predominantly comprised of two-storey housing in a uniform style typical of 1930s suburbia. Houses are set back from the street with clearly defined plots and a fine urban grain. These residential areas are separated from town centre uses by the four-lane ring road.

The realisation of the ring road was an ambitious project that successfully rerouted traffic from Market Place and parts of North Street and South Street. However, it also created a physical barrier to the town centre, restricting integration with the surrounding residential areas.

There are still some remaining pockets of residential areas within the ring road. The introduction of the railway bisected the southern quadrants of the town, limiting connectivity and redevelopment. Thus, the urban grain south of the railway typically remained of a finer grain. In particular, the south-east quadrant is predominantly suburban housing with active, high street uses concentrated along Victoria Road. The southwest quadrant has undergone more recent redevelopments and comprises a mix of scales and uses including housing, light industrial and commercial.

The Liberty Shopping Mall provides internal frontages and is a significant attractor but also creates disconnected public realm, particularly after closing

Typical 1930s residential architecture on Kingsmead Avenue in the south of the town centre

2.2.5 Heights

Romford town centre is predominantly low-rise, around 2-6 storeys, though there are a handful of taller buildings – the tallest of which are along Mercury Gardens. Outside the town centre is predominantly 2-3 storey housing, with some newer developments of 4-6 storeys, as well as 10-11 storeys along Union Road and the now demolished Waterloo estate. Some taller buildings are also coming forward in the development pipeline including hybrid planning permision on the former Waterloo estate for development varying in height from 3-16 storeys as well as proposals along North Street for development up to 7 storeys.

Market Place and South Street are characterised by lower rise buildings predominately between 3-6 storeys

Mercury House is one of the tallest buildings in Romford

Fig. 05. Existing Heights

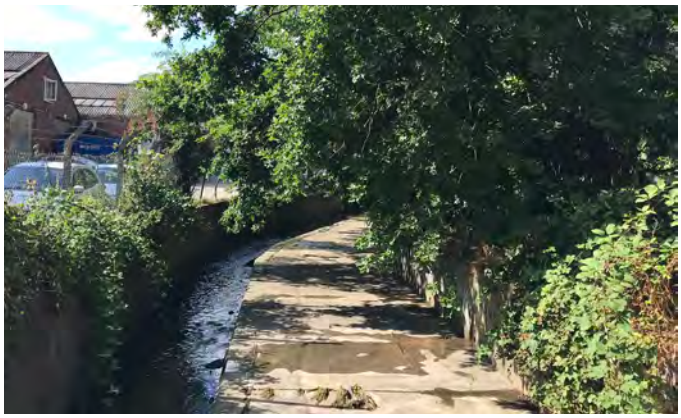
- Predominantly 1-3 storey context
- Predominantly 3-5 storey context
- Predominantly 5-8 storey context
- Predominantly 8-10 storey context
- Predominantly 10-14 storey context

2.2.6 Landscape and public realm

Beautiful green spaces and parks such as Raphael Park and Cottons Park are within easy reach of the town centre. Public spaces within the town centre are characterised by hard landscaping with limited greenery. The Market Place is the most significant public space within the town centre, with South Street also performing an important role as a linear, largely pedestrianised public space linking Market Place with Romford station. The Market Place varies greatly in character between market and non-market days, with its car park use on non-market days posing a barrier to safe pedestrian movement and enjoyment of the space.

Although surrounded by Green Belt land and attractive parks, the town centre is lacking in green spaces, planting and seating. The churchyard adjoining the Market Place is an important green space, though is very compact in size. The River Rom runs north-south through Romford with a section culverted under the Brewery, and large sections canalised. It offers an opportunity to create a new public linear park, improving the ecology and providing an attractive, waterfront public space that is distinctly Romford.

Cottons Park is the closest park to Romford town centre and an attractive and actively used green space



Canalised section of the River Rom that could be renaturalised to form an attractive, linear amenity space running through the town centre

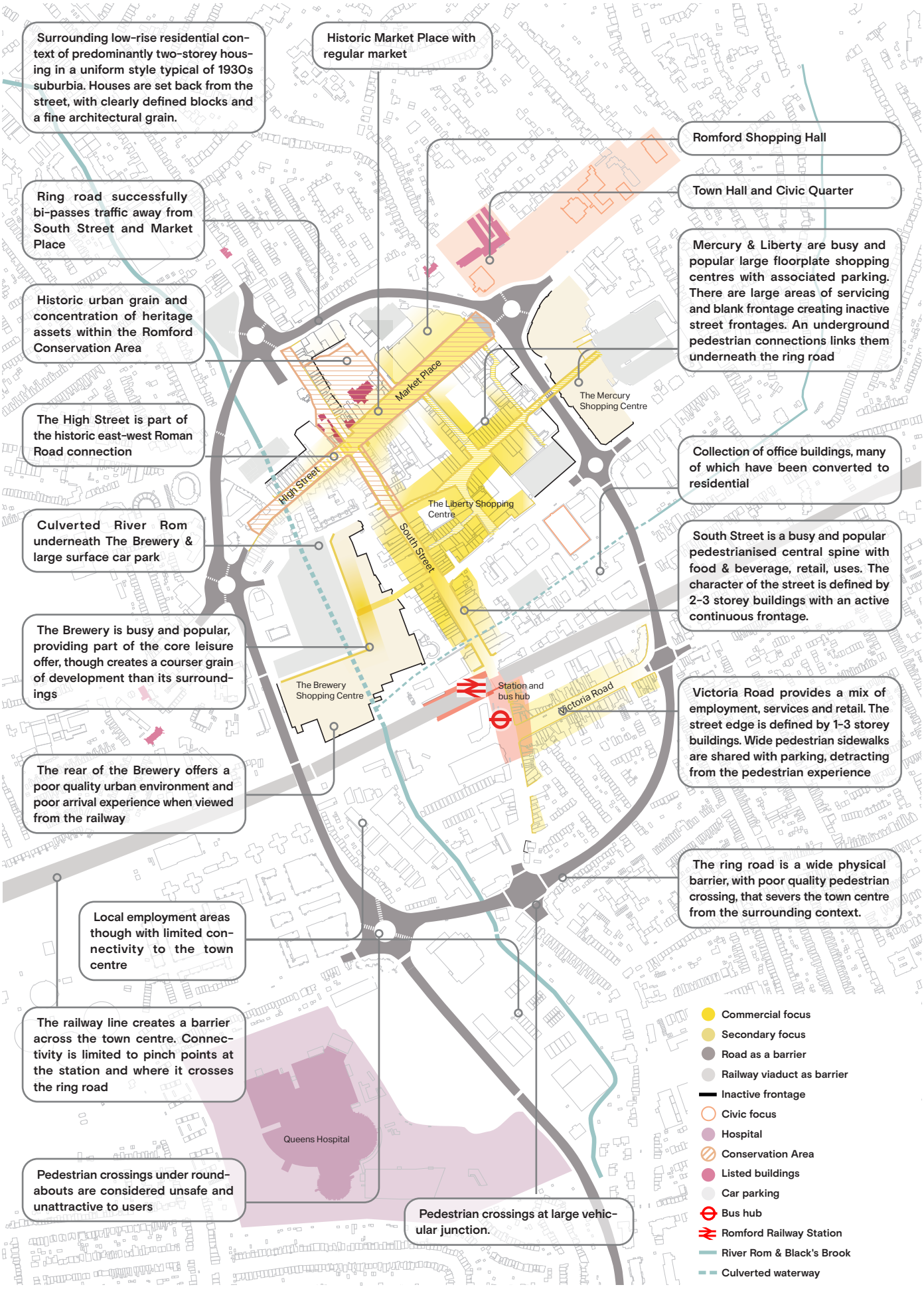


Fig. 06. Existing character and opportunities

2.3 USES

Town centres across the UK have been through un-precedented levels of change and challenge in recent years. Fundamental shifts in consumer behaviour and preferences have destabilised many established businesses, with high streets across the country losing many household names and brands as well as smaller independent retailers.

Romford market

Fig. 07. Existing uses within SDA boundary

2.3.1 Current & Future Trends

2.3.1.1 Retail and Leisure

Whilst the contraction of the retail sector in a store format has been declining for a reasonably long period (albeit at a faster rate in recent years) as people switch to online shopping the decline in the food and beverage sector has been a more recent challenge. Whereas 3-4 years ago the casual dining sector was growing rapidly, many businesses have now ceased to exist, leaving further voids on the high street.

However, as these trends have challenged the traditional high street offer, new activities and offers have grown, again driven by consumer tastes. Competitive socialising concepts, such as 'Escape Rooms', have injected new life into the leisure sector, often populating former retail units with new activities, whilst an increased focus on health and wellbeing has seen a rapid expansion of active leisure uses. Greater interest in differentiated and / or personalised products has driven renewed interest in independent retail, or more customised product lines in existing stores. A greater interest in food provenance, healthy living and sustainability has supported a range of food retail offers.

South Street is a focus of activity in the town centre

2.3.1.2 The Commercial context

Throughout these volatile conditions the Romford commercial market has remained relatively stable, with a significant retail provision remaining to provide a diverse offering including national retailers present and more locally focused independents. In the main it provides a mid-tier retail offering, which aligns well with its immediate (and most regular) catchment. The Market is an attractive component of this.

The nature of the market in Romford is heavily influenced by the competition it faces from easily accessible retail mega-destinations to the east and west, in particular Westfield Stratford, Bluewater and Lakeside, which both offer more than just shopping with a greater array of food and beverage choices, and leisure options. Further competition is provided by the likes of Chelmsford, which has seen significant investment and extensions to its retail provision, including an increase and diversification of its restaurant / dining offer.

2.3.1.3 Evening and Night time Economy

Beyond retail Romford has an established late night economy, with a number of bars, clubs and late-night venues. However the offer is relatively narrow and targeted at alcohol orientated entertainment, which causes a series of anti-social behaviours issues which affect the perception of the town centre.

The wider leisure market is therefore relatively underserved, with a limited evening economy offer, modest levels of cultural activity and little (if any) alternatives to stand up drinking establishments. Current cultural / leisure provision is focused on the Brookside Theatre, Sapphire Centre, Retailery and the town centres two cinemas. Looking forward this would appear an area of opportunity, particularly as the town centre population grows - with both existing and new residents could be attracted to spend their leisure time in Romford rather than travelling to some of the competing centres highlighted in our analysis.

2.3.1.4 Offices

The office market in Romford has fared less well than the core retail market. Where once the town centre was a major office location in East London a high number of permitted developments undertaken after occupiers left the town centre have depleted stock, with a lack of demand seeing values stagnate. Unlike it's competitors, Romford has seen no office development in a number of years and there is none in the current pipeline despite its accessibility and cost advantages. Many office buildings around Eastern Road have also seen conversion to residential through permitted development rights.

Whilst larger offices have struggled there are signs that small offers can be successful. There are a number of relatively new workspace schemes in the town centre, reflecting more strategic trends in the office sector as businesses move towards smaller, more flexible space. The introduction of this workspace into the town centre mix is positive and is helping to build back the town centre workforce across a range of sectors. Ultimately, building on this foundation and improving the commercial offer to attract new businesses to Romford would help to generate greater use of the town centre throughout the day and evening.

2.3.1.5 Residential

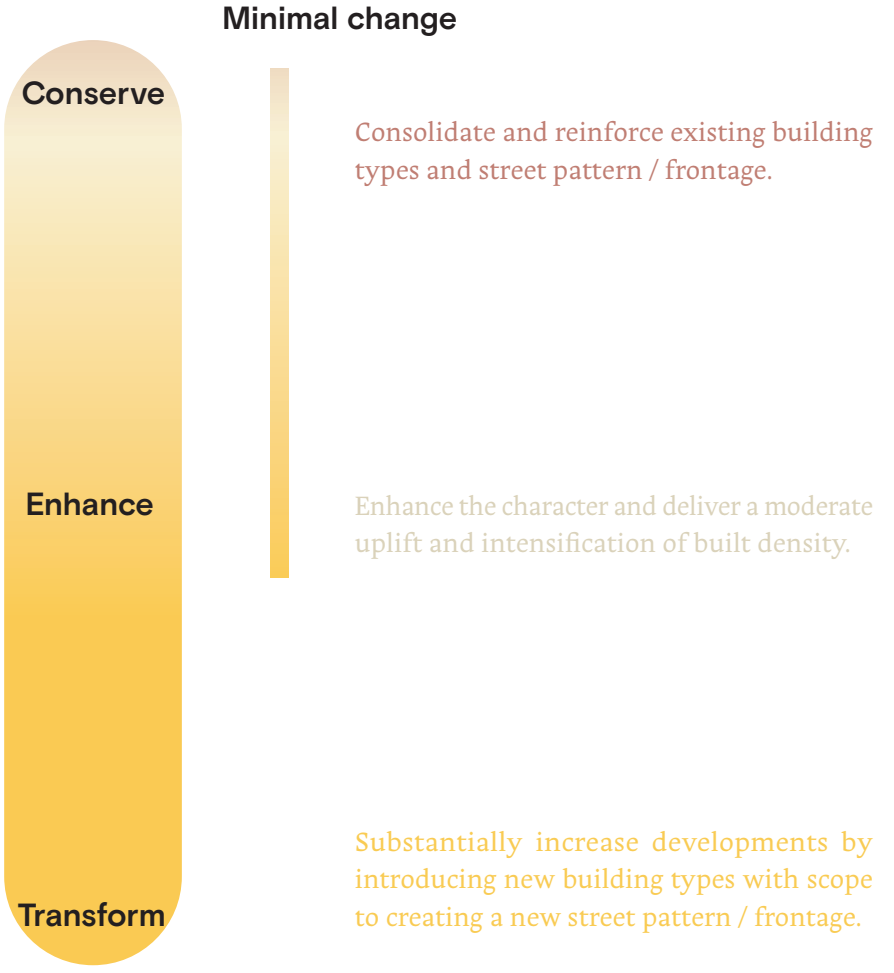
Unsurprisingly given the housing pressures in London, the offer of Romford and its connectivity, the residential sector has continued to perform well in the town centre. There are a number of large scale residential-led schemes which have been recently completed or are under construction in and out of the town centre.

Values are still relatively modest in London terms, and new build schemes are cheaper on average in Romford compared to neighbouring boroughs such as Redbridge, and parts of Barking and Dagenham. This has supported predominantly flatted development in the town centre itself. Connectivity has supported a broadening of the tenure offer, with a significant pipeline of Build to Rent units coming forward. The commencement of Elizabeth Line services has further increased the attractiveness of Romford as a place to live and work, and will likely continue to generate additional residential demand.

2.4 TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

2.4.1 Opportunities for change

Romford town centre has significant potential for transformational change over time. The opportunities for change, however, vary in relationship to many factors including the quality of existing development, landownership, heritage value, vacancy levels, plot coverage and appetite for change. These factors have been considered in identifying which plots should form part of the 'Site Guidance Areas' in Chapter 6, or areas which are capable of delivering significant opportunities. An illustrative diagram opposite sets out these areas broadly which has informed the approach and level of intervention set out in the Masterplan.



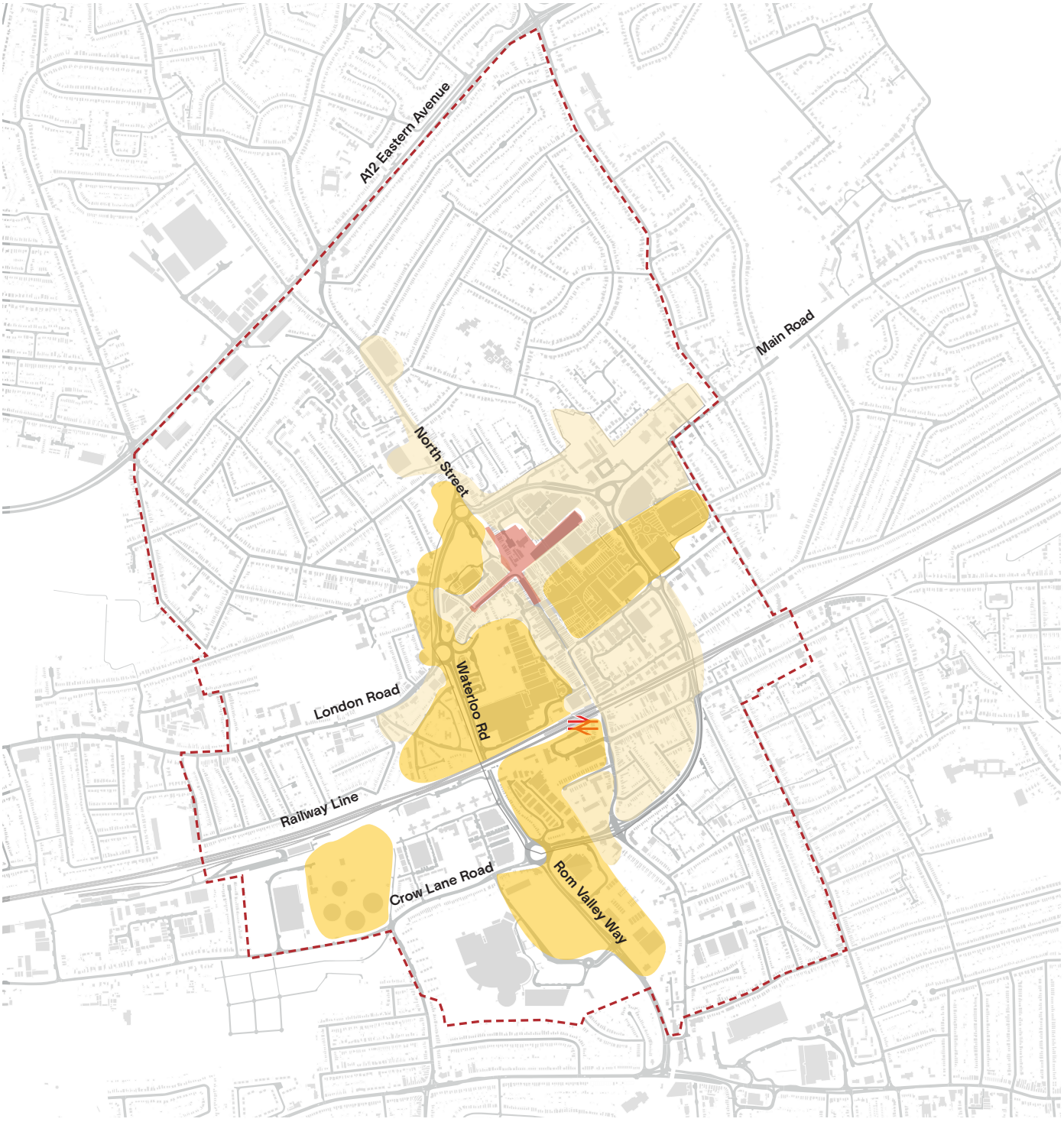


Fig. 08. Identifying opportunities for transformational change

3 ENGAGEMENT

This chapter sets out how public and stakeholder engagement has been used to shape the Masterplan, from the vision through to site guidance.

3.1 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

3.1.1 Engagement process

The Masterplan has been informed by an extensive engagement process both for the initial development of the Masterplan in 2018-2019 and for the Masterplan refresh in 2024.

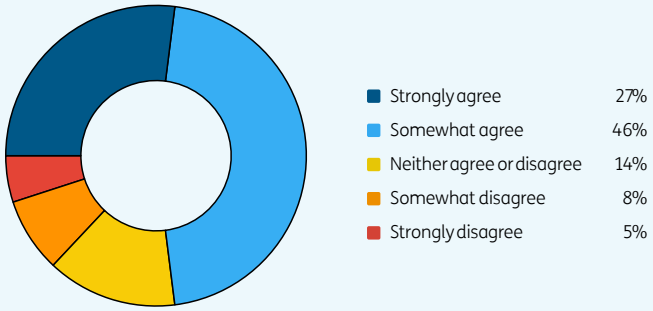
2018-2019 Masterplan Engagement

- Member walkabouts
- 1:1 workshops with landowners developers
- 'Your Romford' website with +6000 visits
- 55,000+ e-newsletters and 100,000 households informed through the Living in Havering magazine
- Pop-up engagement around the town centre
- Quality Review Panels and regular Member Workshops
- Public design workshops and exhibitions

2024 Masterplan Refresh Engagement

- Digital launch on YourRomford.co.uk
- Pop-up engagement around the town centre
- Instagram posts and 62,000+ e-newsletters
- Stakeholder round table
- Tagging onto activities
- Member workshops and Quality Review Panel

Overall the sentiment about the Masterplan was positive, reflected in 73% of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreeing with the principles of the Masterplan during the recent Masterplan Refresh Engagement.



Headline sentiment 2024 engagement

A more detailed breakdown of the engagement process can be found in the 2019 and 2024 Engagement Summary Reports with a brief summary of the engagement learnings and how these have informed the Masterplan presented opposite.

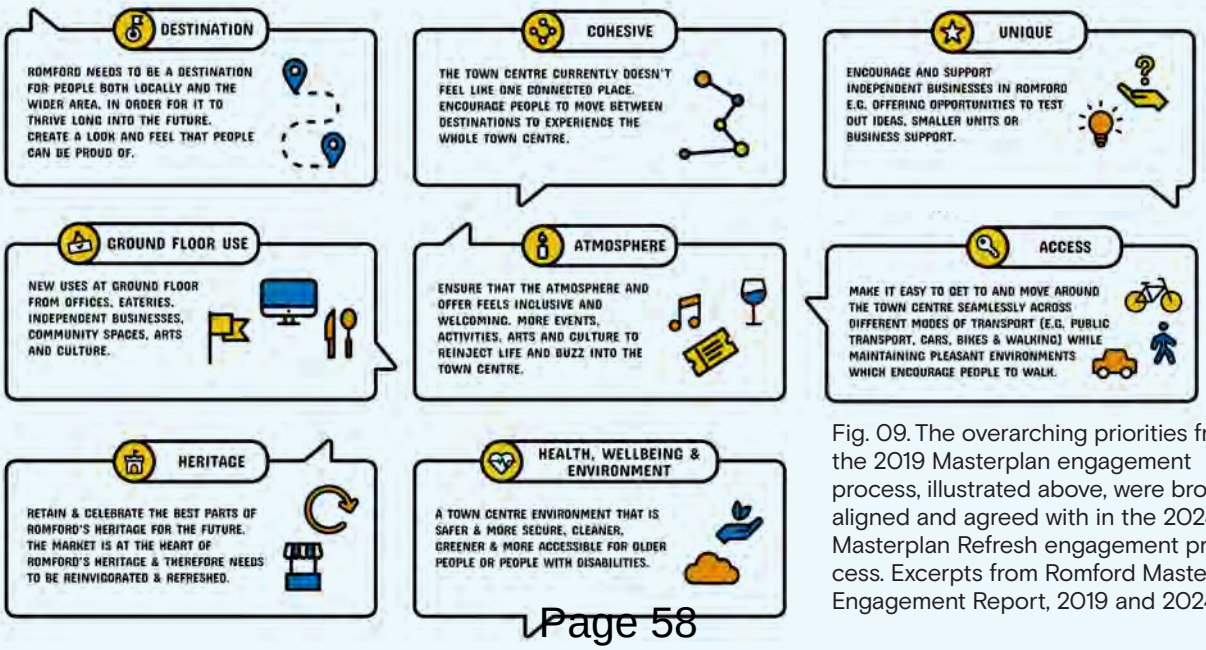


Fig. 09. The overarching priorities from the 2019 Masterplan engagement process, illustrated above, were broadly aligned and agreed with in the 2024 Masterplan Refresh engagement process. Excerpts from Romford Masterplan Engagement Report, 2019 and 2024.

3.1.2 Learnings from the Engagement Process

Throughout the development of the Masterplan, feedback from the consultation process has been fed into and used to create and refine the vision, objectives, strategies, and site guidance. In both the 2024 Masterplan Refresh Engagement and the 2019 initial Masterplan engagement work, the following ideas received the most public support and have been used as the foundation for the major spatial moves of the Masterplan.

In addition to the key moves below, the Masterplan vision and objectives were developed collaboratively with Members through extensive iterative workshops. Following public engagement, these were refined further to better align with the feedback and local community vision(s) for Romford town centre.

Aligning with 2019 key supported moves

- Improving the Market Place and supporting a rejuvenated market
- Opening up the River Rom and delivering a new major piece of green public realm
- Overall improvement to the public realm to increase attractiveness and footfall in the town centre

Ideas with most public support 2024

- The Market Place: focusing on the Market as a key transformation area for Romford
- The River Rom: opening up the Rom and creating a high quality, exciting pieces of public realm
- Public Realm: creating improved public realm so people want to dwell in the town centre
- Behaviour: The above goals were identified in the context of addressing challenges with antisocial behaviour in the town centre.

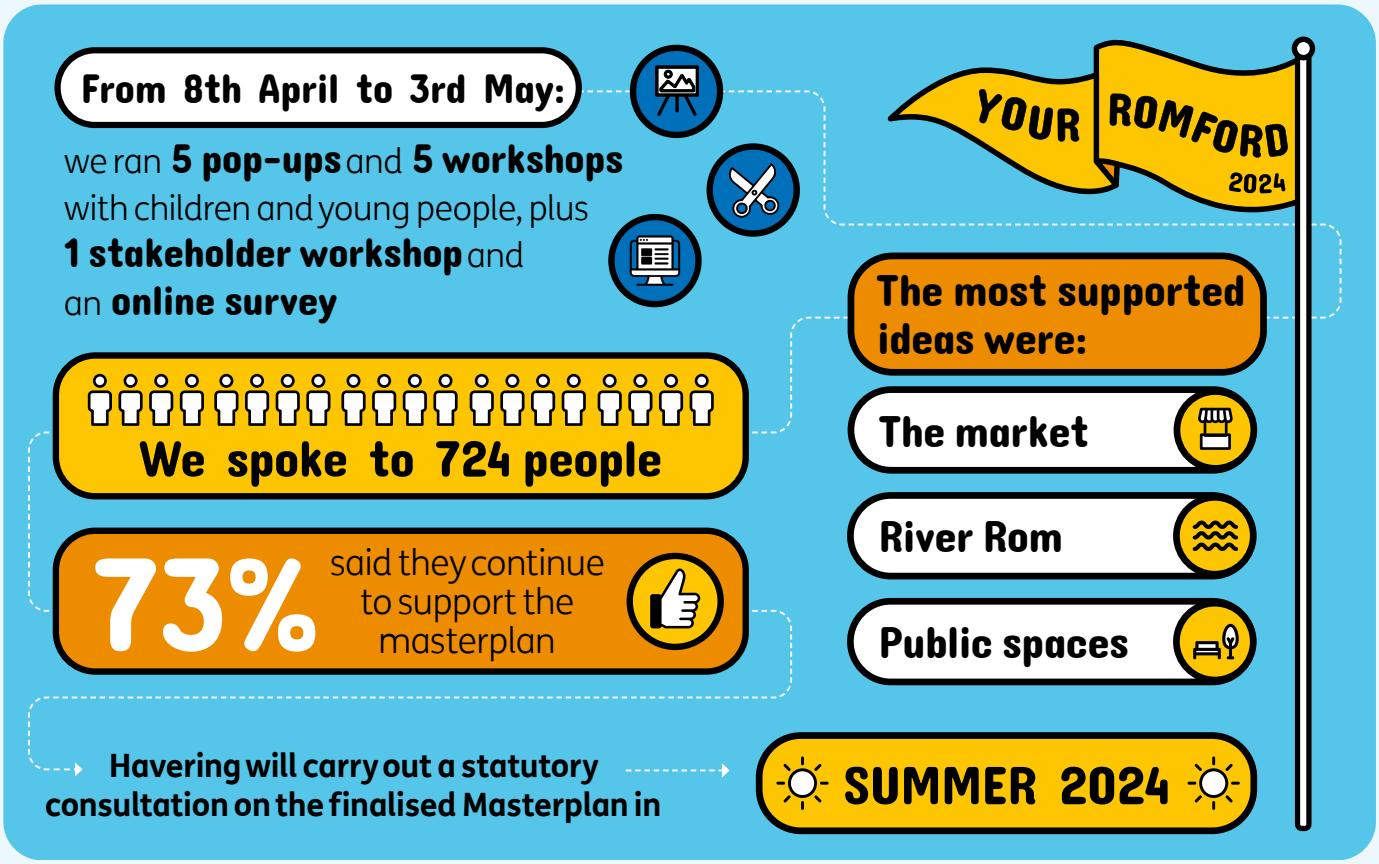


Fig. 10. Summary of consultation process and feedback from the Masterplan Refresh 2024. Excerpt from Engagement Report.

4 A VISION FOR CHANGE

This chapter sets out the vision and overarching objectives of the Masterplan.

4.1 THE VISION FOR ROMFORD

Building on its unique character and history, Romford will be a mixed, vibrant and distinct regional town centre. It will consist of a refined retail offer complemented by a rejuvenated market, with a focus on local goods and services, maintaining its role as a major leisure destination, with an enlarged employment offer, an early evening food and beverage offer and new residential community supported by additional health and school facilities.

Fig. 11. An infrastructure-led approach – Illustrative view of Romford station and public space on South Street

Fig. 12. Illustrative Masterplan principles

4.2 BUILDING A RESILIENT FUTURE

The vision draws on the vision for Romford set out in the Havering Local Plan, as well as an extensive consultation process, reflecting a truly collaborative foundation for the Masterplan.

4.2.1 Masterplan key moves

A series of key spatial moves have been developed based on the objectives and vision. These key moves, illustrated in the illustrative Masterplan, are wider spatial principles that establish the physical structure and interventions to achieve the long-term vision for Romford town centre.

Opening up the River Rom

The River Rom will be deculverted and partially renaturalised through the town centre to create an ecological linear park.

Recharacterising the ring road

Transforming the ring road along its length into an active travel corridor with at-grade crossings, planting and an urban boulevard character, better integrating the town centre with the surrounding neighbourhoods and improving the experience of pedestrians and cyclists.

Celebrating Romford Market

Reinforce the importance of the market place as a key civic space by upgrading public realm, ultimately removing car parking, improved frontages and introducing spaces that can support a variety of events and formal and informal gatherings.

Reinstating the historic urban grain

Introducing new streets and spaces that reflect the finer historic urban grain of the town centre with smaller, more walkable blocks with varied and engaging building frontages.

Wider green links

Introduce new green links that can act as walking and cycling corridors both through the town centre and connecting to wider key public green spaces and parks.

New and improved station entrances

Creating a new station with an attractive public spaces that acts as a gateway to the town centre and improving the existing station entrance with public realm enhancements, seating and wayfinding.

4.2.2 An infrastructure-led approach

Bringing new and improved infrastructure to Romford as part of its growth over time through an infrastructure-led approach is of key importance to the Masterplan. The Masterplan advocates bringing forward infrastructure enhancements for the town centre collectively, as well as using growth to bring infrastructure with it alongside other resources.

Supporting community is a primary concern for the Masterplan. Enhancing and providing infrastructure over time such as schools and healthcare, public realm enhancements, (in particular those for the Market Place), and public transport and active travel facilities, (such as Liveable Neighbourhoods improvements to the ring road), all play a role in providing such support.

4.2.3 Growth over time

The illustrative Masterplan shows the combined potential of the interventions proposed throughout this Masterplan, showcasing the scale of the opportunity. This is just one way in which the Masterplan's vision and objectives could be translated into a coherent and well-designed plan for the area. Importantly, the Masterplan advocates for growth and change over time, looking at a 15-20 year trajectory for Romford to ensure the current vibrancy and successes are maintained and enhanced by future development. The illustrative timeline in Fig. 13 indicatively shows how mixed-use development might occur during the Masterplan period. This also shows how growth could be larger than outlined through the Havering Local Plan in response to increased development interest, highlighting how imperative the Masterplan is in guiding that growth. This growth will also unlock opportunities to help fund public realm enhancements and other infrastructure projects that will support the future of Romford.

The selected development sites and interventions have significant potential to enhance and benefit Romford but may not all come forward. Equally, further opportunities, sites and interventions may come forward, and these too can be guided by the Masterplan's vision, objectives and strategies. Trigger points such as infrastructure improvements to the ring road and measured shifts to active travel can also be used to determine appropriate points to commence development in certain locations.

Acknowledging evolution will happen incrementally, the illustrative Masterplan includes for context the consented schemes for land at Rom Valley Way and Waterloo Road. Although not consented, the emerging Bridge Close proposals have also been included given their advanced stage, degree of public consultation and level of agreement between the Local Planning Authority and prospective developers on principles of layout and scale.

The Masterplan illustrates that development will need to be multi-use to support the vision, and in tandem with an increase in population and jobs comes improved retail space, an expanded leisure / cultural offer, a broadening of the business / economic base as well as further enhancements such as new and improved public spaces.

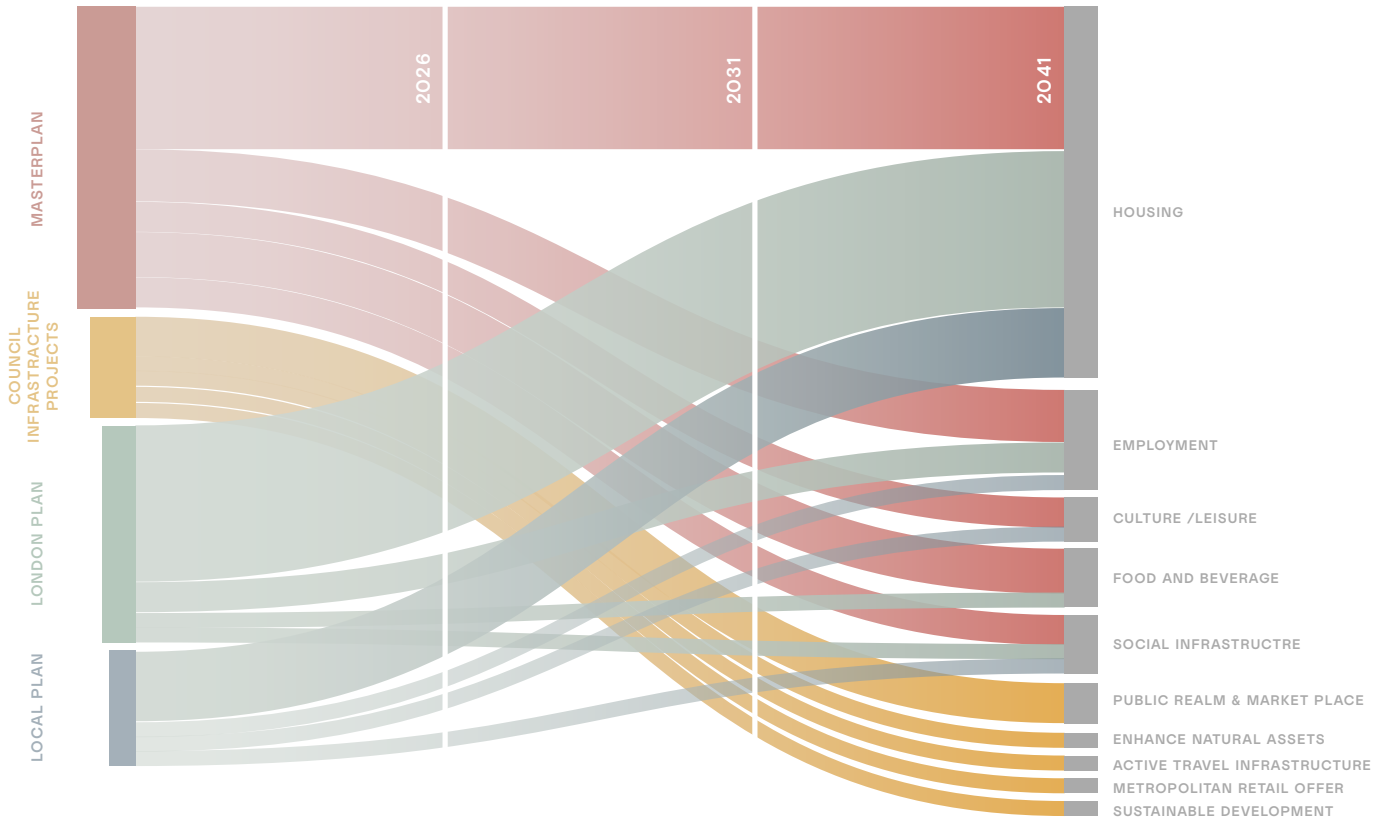


Fig. 13. Illustrative timeline of Masterplan interventions and growth in addition to commitments in the Havering Local Plan

4.3 KEY THEMES & OBJECTIVES

4.2.4 Seven key themes

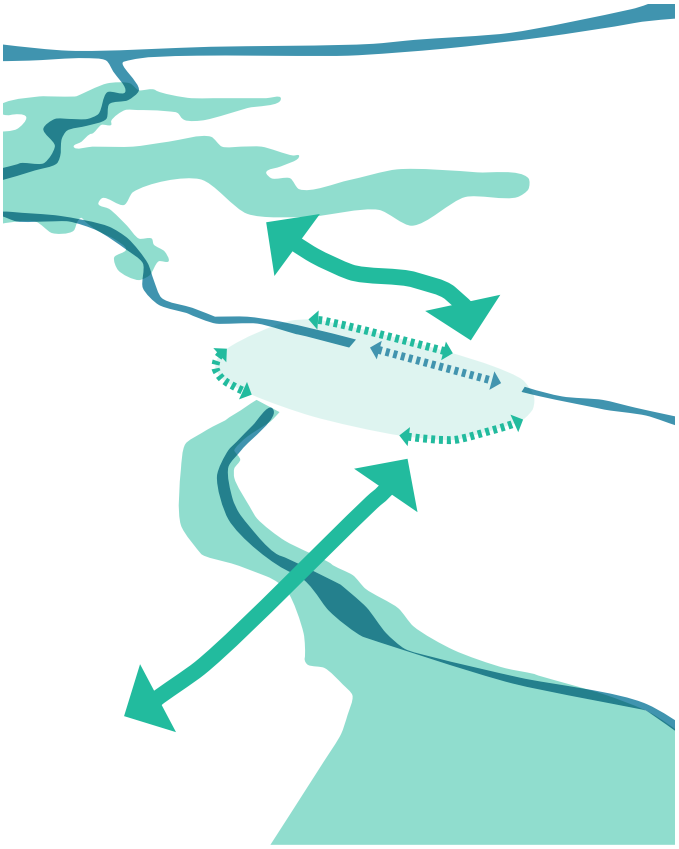
The vision informs all guidance set out in this Masterplan and is expanded through seven key themes, which categorise a list of objectives to guide its delivery. These objectives relate to the overarching policy objectives in the Havering Local Plan. Each objective is in turn supported by strategies in Chapter 5 which provide guidance on implementing these objectives and delivering good growth. The relationship between the vision, themes, objectives and strategies is illustrated in Fig. 14.

These objectives have been developed collaboratively, and have been informed by the extensive engagement process. The themes were introduced at the start of the engagement process to help categorise Masterplan ideas and feedback, and in line with this, breaking the objectives down into these seven key themes is intended to allow them to be more easily navigated here.

Fig. 14. The relationship between the vision, themes, objectives and strategies

4.3.1 Space & Landscape

The Masterplan promotes a wide range of public spaces including high quality streets, pocket parks, squares and roof gardens. Blue (water) and green (ecological) networks through the town centre will be strengthened. The River Rom will be the centre piece of these networks as a new linear riverside park. The river will be partially deculverted and renaturalised, celebrating this important asset, improving water quality, enhancing ecology and creating an attractive public space. New street tree planting and pocket parks will offer a necklace of green spaces linking larger parks and gardens, ensuring a greener Romford.



Objectives

SL1. Link the town centre with existing nearby green spaces in order to improve habitat linkages and increase urban greening to encourage walking and cycling.

SL2. Create new green spaces and enhance existing spaces to support a family friendly town centre and larger resident population and to help people adopt healthy lifestyles and to better connect them with nature.

SL3. Design safe, inclusive, clean, usable and engaging public spaces that are actively managed and take account of on-going management and maintenance requirements.

SL4. Set out an urban greening and tree strategy that helps transform the visual qualities and character of the town centre and improve the area's resilience to climate changes and mitigate the urban heat island effect.

SL5. Transform the market in to the major public civic space in the town centre, that is able to host a range of events and activities.

SL6. Improve town centre wayfinding through routes and spaces with clear hierarchies, including across the ring road and routes to the station.

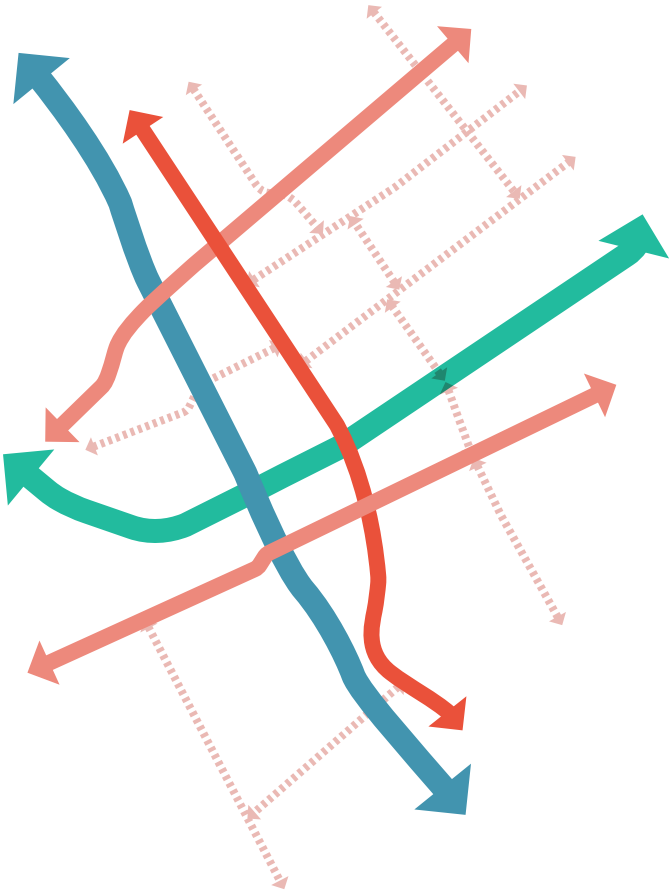
SL7. Celebrate the River Rom providing public access, improving its immediate landscape, including deculverting and naturalising hard engineered edges.

SL8. Safeguard and enhance the biodiversity of the area.

SL9: Contribute to achieving the Good Ecological Status of the Water Framework Directive for the River Rom in line with the relevant actions and measures set out in the Thames River Basin Management Plan.

4.3.2 Movement & Connectivity

The Masterplan improves access, connectivity and permeability across Romford. Public transport and active travel choices, such as walking and cycling, are promoted to encourage healthy lifestyles and considered equitably with other modes of travel to help reduce private vehicle use and congestion. Reconfigured streets and public realm will create a more attractive, safe and inclusive Romford with engaging spaces to walk, cycle and dwell.



Objectives

MC1. Make the ring road more permeable for all modes of transport by turning it in to a green street with uses that front it, tackle congestion 'hot spots' along it and incorporate peninsularisation of the existing roundabouts to reclaim land for other uses.

MC2. Improve connections between the town centre and existing schools, health and community facilities and open spaces outside of the ring road and encourage walking and cycling by making routes family friendly, safe and enjoyable.

MC3. Improve the arrival gateways into Romford by rail, bus, road, on foot and by bike.

MC4. Improve the capacity and passenger experience of Romford Station and surrounding area and create an additional station entrance on Exchange Street.

MC5. Roll out a town centre public car parking strategy which optimises the number of spaces, and creates attractive car parking areas that people feel safe to use.

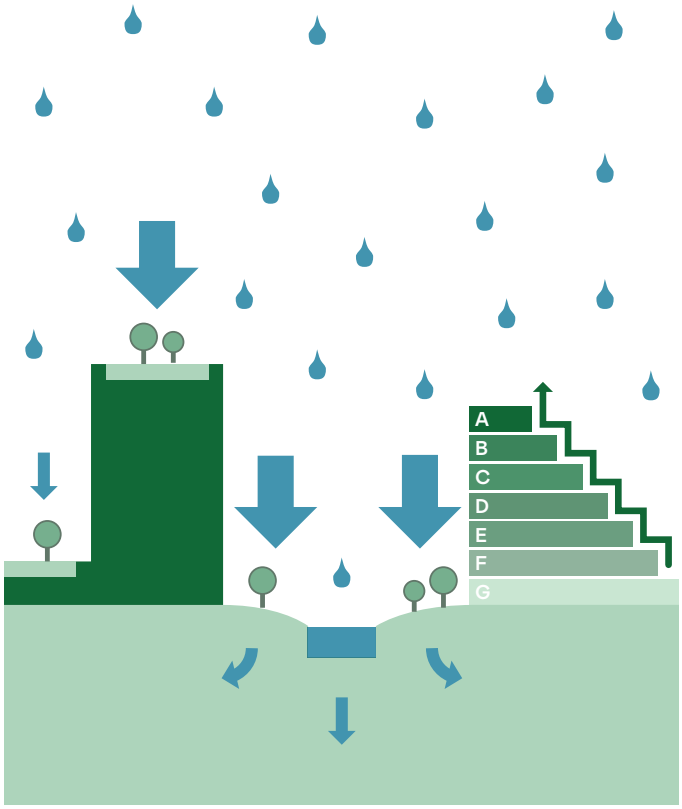
MC6. Improve the bus network to encourage activity across the town centre and Queens Hospital, whilst ensuring it is easy to use.

MC7. Accommodate a potential north-south rapid transit system through the town centre in a positive way and that enhances local connectivity.

MC8. Promote active travel as an attractive alternative to vehicular travel.

4.3.3 Sustainability

The Masterplan offers the opportunity to ensure growth is built on a platform of sustainable infrastructure with significant environmental and wellbeing benefits. As such, environmental, social and economic sustainability is a golden thread that runs through all themes of the Masterplan. Each theme incorporates corresponding sustainability objectives and the specific objectives listed here relate to environmental resilience, energy and carbon, materials, and the circular economy.



Objectives

S1. Transition Romford to a Zero Carbon Town by 2030 and use the Council's Carbon Offset Fund to achieve it.

S2. Encourage zero carbon development through energy efficient design that considers both operational and embodied carbon.

S3. Develop a strategy for an integrated heat and power network linking wind and solar energy generation, battery storage, ambient heat networks and waste heat sources, with consideration to future proofing, climate change and greater use of electric vehicles.

S4. Create / consider the establishment of a local energy company, such as a Community Interest Company, to supply affordable and reliable energy heat and power to the residents of Romford.

S5. Adopt the principles of the circular economy for all development, incentivising building adaptation and reuse. Incorporating strategies to ensure zero waste to landfill through reuse and recycling of building elements and designing for longevity, adaptability, flexibility and disassembly, taking account of building layers and their lifecycle.

S6: Improving blue and green infrastructure to mitigate and reduce the risk of flooding on the River Rom catchment as well as increasing biodiversity to provide environmental resilience to the effects of climate change

S7: Promote active travel through improved public transportation and the creation of walking and cycling routes.

S8: Promote local, shared food growing opportunities including small allotments, communal gardens and growing spaces within developments.

4.3.4 Inclusivity, Health & Wellbeing

The Masterplan ensures that all developments, public realm, transport and projects have inclusive design at their heart and are informed by discussion with a range of local people. The Masterplan provides guidance to promote social cohesion and to create opportunities to diversify and to also improve health wellbeing through better accessibility, infrastructure and resources.

Objectives

IHW1. Use the Healthy Streets Approach to facilitate active travel choices such as cycling and walking that can improve accessibility, air quality, health and economic performance.

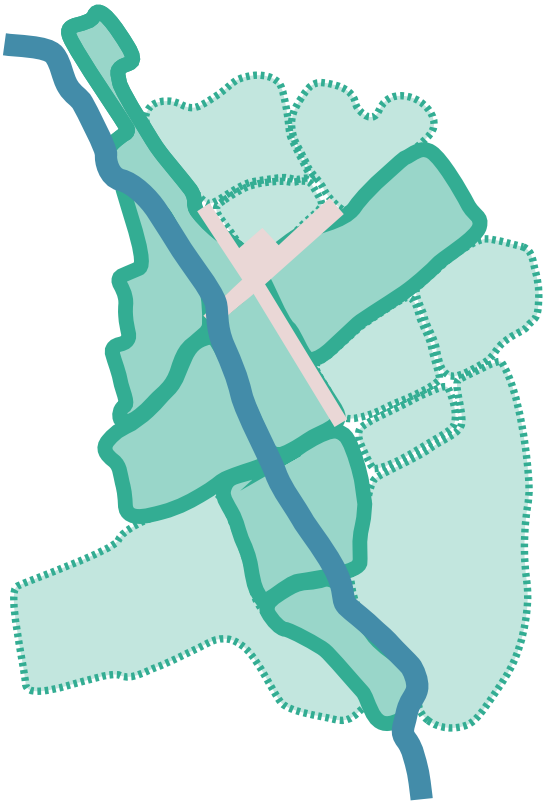
IHW2. Ensure open spaces and streets are designed to encourage active lifestyles, travel and play and identify opportunities for local food growing.

IHW3. Create green and accessible streets and public spaces that can accommodate vibrant uses, as well as offering places of tranquillity and rest for members of the community of all ages and abilities.

IHW4. Ensure that places are child-friendly and facilitate independent movement by young people around the area.

4.3.5 Character & Townscape

The Masterplan draws on the existing qualities and unique assets of Romford to become an increasingly characterful and vibrant place. The setting of Romford's historic places and buildings will be enhanced, including Romford Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Buildings. New developments will contribute by positively supporting existing or evolving character areas through new and enhanced buildings, streets and spaces that provide a pleasant place to walk through, and to live, work and relax in.



Objectives

CT1. Develop a greater sense of character, consistency and quality in Romford's built environment and public realm.

CT2. Curate, nurture and enhance existing assets, including Romford Conservation Area and other designated and non-designated heritage assets, in order to collectively build a distinctive Romford character.

CT3. Ensure development is responsive to the needs of a growing local population and actively position the town centre in order that it provides an attractive offer to businesses and visitors.

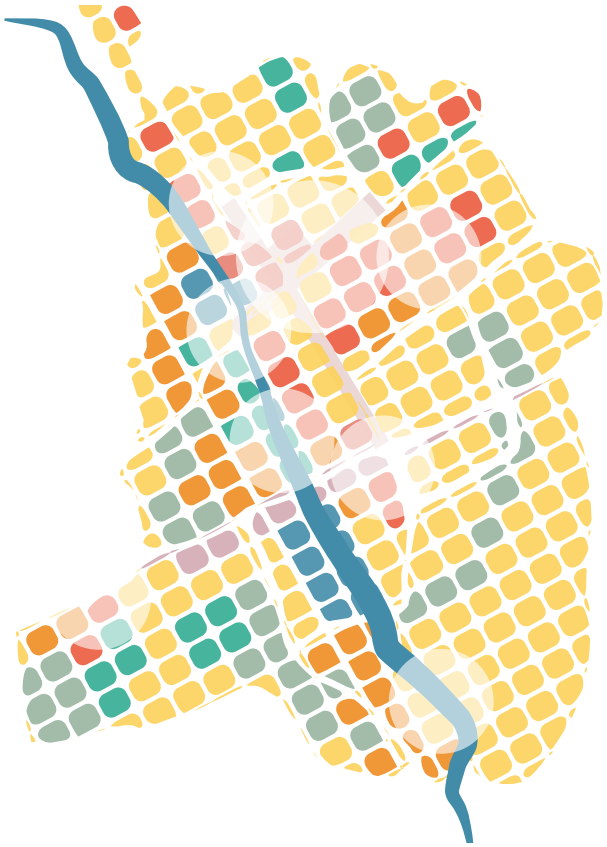
CT4. Seek to redevelop or reanimate underutilised sites and buildings such as surface car parks.

CT5. Ensure developments enhance and reinforce the overall character and townscape of Romford, responding to its history and predominantly low- to mid-rise townscape.

CT6. Building heights should respond to the character of their setting with any taller elements, in excess of six storeys, carefully considered and only supported where there is no adverse impact on the surrounding townscape.

4.3.6 Uses & Mix

The Masterplan promotes a diverse Romford that is active throughout all times of the day. In the central area smaller shops and a more varied food and drink offer will support the vibrancy of the centre and an enhanced early evening economy. Employment and business space will be enhanced, with new provision focused around the station, Waterloo Road and Rom Valley Way. Key locations and public spaces will be anchored by cultural and leisure uses to drive footfall. New residential within the town centre will support existing and new businesses but will also require corresponding social infrastructure including schools, public spaces, heath facilities and transport.



Objectives

US1. Strengthen Romford's Metropolitan town centre status by focussing retail and other 'main town centre uses' around North Street / High Street, South Street, the Market Place, Romford Shopping Hall and the Liberty, Brewery and Mercury sites and improving the overall retail offer.

US2. Diversify the range of uses within the town centre and nurture a safe and attractive early night-time economy, to support the town's vitality and long-term viability by giving people a number of reasons to spend time there.

US3. Encourage the expansion of Romford's arts and culture scene as key attractors of visitors, businesses and residents by supporting proposals for additional cultural venues, such as live music venues and suitable workspace, and enhancing the theatre offer.

US4. Incorporate active frontages throughout the town centre.

US5. Encourage additional office space around Romford Station and other business space (including workspace) as part of mixed-use developments in other parts of the town centre.

US6. Optimise the amount of housing throughout the SDA, without overdeveloping, to provide much needed new homes, provide activity throughout the day and aid financial viability of mixed-use schemes.

US7. Ensure that the growth in housing and residential population is matched by additional necessary childcare, school places, health facilities and community space as part of mixed-use developments in locations that are accessible by walking and cycling and ensure that provision keeps pace with growth.

US8. Require meanwhile suitable uses where buildings have been vacant for longer than 12 months and encourage developers of multi-phased schemes to identify a suitable meanwhile use strategy and programme of cultural activities to enliven otherwise vacant / underused land and buildings during the development process.

4.3.7 The Economy

The Masterplan capitalises on Romford's unique position at the interface between Essex and London to promote Romford as a destination, to support existing businesses and attract new occupiers. The Masterplan seeks to make Romford more attractive, diverse and inclusive by broadening the early evening and night-time economies, revitalising Market Place and enhancing retail, business and residential offers. This diversification will create new jobs and support the vitality and long-term viability of Romford.

Objectives

E1. Capitalise on Romford's unique position at the interface between Essex and London and new Elizabeth Line services to attract new business occupiers to the town centre.

E2. Revitalise and champion the Market Place to support a thriving and local market that is distinct and positive.

E3. Promote Romford as a destination for business by increasing and diversifying the range and type of work and employment spaces available for local residents.

E4. Encourage Romford's entrepreneurial spirit by providing spaces for businesses to start and grow including maximising the amount of affordable workspace to help socially sustainable local enterprises and cultural industries establish themselves and thrive.

E5. Create interrelated environmental, social and economic improvements that create a sense of place, increase civic pride, involve local people and create positive change.

E6. Seek opportunities to create socially sustainable local enterprises that support a sustainable Romford.

E7. Capture opportunities and deliver them more locally and equitably, for example through the creation of local social enterprises and community led schemes.

E8. Identify opportunities for local businesses to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the circular economy including reprocessing of materials, leasing materials and the sharing economy.

5 MASTERPLAN THEMES

This chapter sets out strategies for the Masterplan, all of which are designed to deliver the objectives and the vision.

ROMFORD STAT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Masterplan Themes are categorised into the eight key themes of the Masterplan, and seek to deliver on the vision and objectives described in the previous chapter. The strategies set out thematic guidance for delivering these objectives and good growth, and offer illustrative designs to further guide development. The strategies are grouped into two streams: those to guide the delivery of physical infrastructure and interventions; and those to direct development and growth.

The objectives for Implementation are supported by guidance in a separate chapter, 'Implementation'. This follows Chapter 6 Site Guidance, as it also responds to the content of that chapter.

The Strategies are focused largely around the town centre and core study area, with some strategies covering a wider area – such as for connectivity and active travel – within the SDA boundary. Where Strategies do not explicitly refer to the wider SDA, the spirit of these strategies – for example townscape – can be used to help guide development, conscious of the sensitive suburban context and the need to support Romford's character going forwards.

These Strategies have been overlaid to form the overall illustrative Masterplan, shown in the previous chapter.

Illustrations are used throughout to support the Masterplan. These are based on illustrative proposals outlined in more detail in the Site Guidance chapter. These are indicative, though offer a flavour of the nature of intervention that the Masterplan supports.

As set out in the Vision and in Chapter 7 Implementation, interventions in the Masterplan are anticipated to come forward over time, with the Masterplan looking at a 15-20 year trajectory. Where interventions may come forward in the longer term, these can react to 'triggers', such as modal shift towards active travel, which can prompt and support these interventions. Within this section interventions which can come forward in the short-term are also introduced to help catalyse further positive growth. Reference is also made to ongoing Havering projects, such as the Liveable Neighbourhoods work around the ring road, and strategies that relate to this. The Masterplan seeks to build on this work and take it further over the longer timeframe of the Masterplan, whilst supporting their shorter term success.

5.2 SPACE & LANDSCAPE

5.2.1 Overview

In order to deliver a liveable place for the existing and new communities, the town centre must provide sufficient high-quality, multi-functional open spaces to support an increase in residential and non-residential accommodation. Green and blue infrastructure will contribute to community health and wellbeing, climate resilience and biodiversity and to the overall quality of the neighbourhood.

The following strategies seek to balance the quantum and quality of open public open space, including parks and squares, active and healthy green streets, and smaller open spaces. As part of this, the River Rom is renaturalised and deculverted. These strategies are strategically placed to strengthen existing connections into the wider landscape and form an interconnected green and blue network across the town centre that can enhance biodiversity.

The Masterplan draws on existing initiatives and projects, such as the 'River Rom Restoration Project' and the 'Land of the Fanns' partnership to restore river landscapes through Romford, and the Liveable Neighbourhoods work looking to green the ring road.

Romford sits in the context of a multitude of fantastic parks and amenity spaces yet currently is lacking in quality green spaces. The Masterplan delivers a coordinated public realm strategy that introduces public spaces across the town centre, greening Romford. The following strategies bring green spaces, planting, and blue infrastructure including the renaturalised River Rom and sustainable drainage systems into the town centre.

Central to these strategies is the reduction of fluvial and surface water flood risks. This includes measures to control surface water runoff at source and interventions on the River Rom corridor in line with Policy SI12 of the London Plan.

5.2.2 Strategies

The following space and landscape strategies set out guidance to create attractive, high-quality, sustainable public realm based on a network of blue and green infrastructure and landscaped public spaces.

Green Strategy

A network of primary, secondary and tertiary green corridors and spaces providing public amenity, walking and cycling routes, increased biodiversity and playspace distributed across the town centre.

Blue Strategy

Reestablishing the River Rom, and to a lesser extent Black's Brook, as key features of the town centre through renaturalising or deculverting the rivers, landscaping, and Nature-based Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features.

Public Realm Strategy

Introducing new public spaces across the town centre with guidance on public realm design including planting, materials, and lighting.

Key Interventions

Specific design guidance for two significant public spaces that will define the future of the town centre: the Market Place and Brewery Gardens.

Resilience

Promote climate resilience and adaptation, through sustainable design of streets, spaces and buildings integrated with responsive green infrastructure.

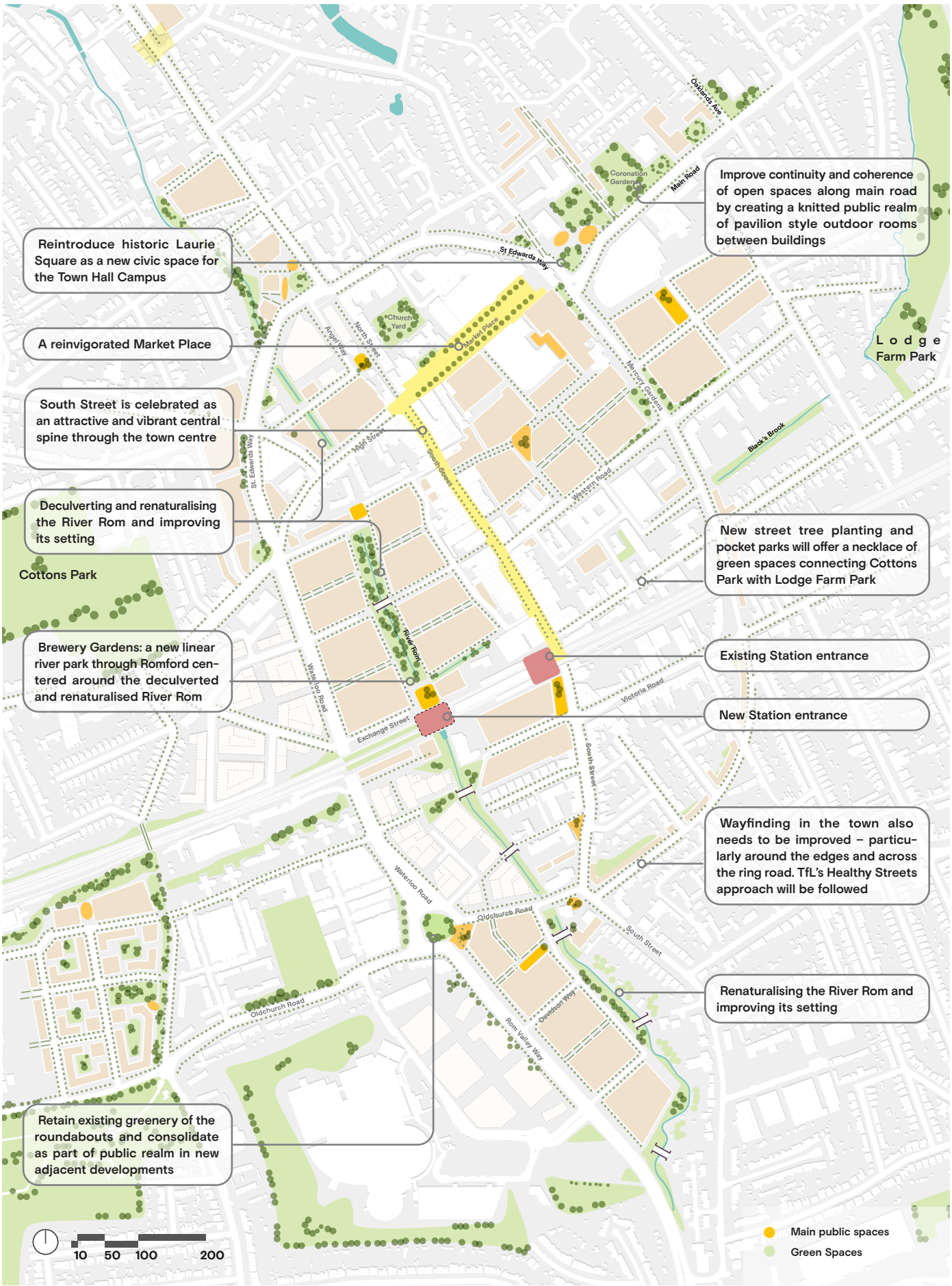


Fig. 15. Space and landscape strategy

5.2.2.1 Green Strategy

The Masterplan promotes urban greening, to provide amenity and an attractive environment but also enhanced biodiversity, heat reduction, carbon reduction and shading. The primary green network comprises two east-west green routes and the Rom corridor. Ecological continuity of the corridors is provided through Nature-based SuDS and tree canopies interspersed with larger green spaces such as the Market Place and Brewery Gardens. The two green spines are within 5 minutes walk of any location in the town centre and when combined with the two parks at the extremities form a 3km green loop which can be walked in 45mins or cycled in 15mins.

1. Northern Green Corridor

The northern, east-west green corridor connects Cotton and Lodge Farm parks via the Market Place.

2. Southern Green Corridor

The southern, east-west green corridor runs between Cotton and Lodge Farm parks via the Waterloo Estate, Exchange Street and Eastern Road. It connects to the renaturalised Rom and proposed new station entrance.

3. Rom Corridor

The River Rom should be deculverted and renaturalised as much as possible in and outside the town centre to improve biodiversity and enable access to the river. This approach is in line with the Environment Agency's national policy, will make significant contribution to fluvial flood resilience and will decrease flood risk elsewhere on the River Rom catchment. Improvements should also include a pedestrian and cycle link running north-south through the town. Buildings should be set back a minimum of 8m from the top of the river bank to achieve a wide naturalised riparian corridor, in line with Policy 31 of the Havering Local Plan, and provide maintenance access to the river edge and any fluvial flood defences.

The proposed naturalised green open spaces for the Rom Valley and Brewery sites, alongside and around an open River Rom, can be classified as Suitable Alternative Green Spaces (SANGS).

Fig. 16. Map of primary green network

Secondary network: Key Green Spaces

Two significant additions to the town centre landscape are proposed: Brewery Gardens and a greening programme for the Market Place. These two spaces will increase urban greening, biodiversity and provide key amenity benefits.

Raphael Park, Romford: celebrating existing local assets

Tertiary network: The Green Grid

A tertiary green network connects the main parks through pocket parks, waterfronts and a network of green streets and swales. This is made up of street trees, swales, pocket parks and green waterside verges that perform as part of the flood strategy. The tertiary network is key in establishing a dense, interconnected and high-performing green grid.

Ecology

Soft landscape design and ecology must be consistent with and reinforce Romford's location at the interface between Natural England's classifications of North Thames Terraces and the Essex Plateau. Planting must be composed of a diverse range of native species in accordance with Havering's Local Biodiversity Action Plan, whilst ensuring species are climate change resilient, and also drought resistant where possible. There is potential to incorporate innovations such as wildflower lawns that can be walked on and used in place of amenity grass to create a more naturalised environment.

Amenity

Alongside designated nature areas, primary green spaces must provide local play space, sports and leisure programme,. Together, green spaces should establish a network of safe, legible, and connected walking and cycling routes through and beyond the town centre.

Child Friendly Romford

Havering prides itself on being a place for families, as both a place to start and a place to stay. However, the town centre does not cater well for children. There is a deficiency in formal and informal play space and critically is not a place most people would describe a child-friendly in terms of mobility. New developments must deliver high quality and varied play space which should respond to and reinforce local character in line with the following recommendations.

Local (for years 5-11) and Neighbourhood play (for teenagers) should be provided in parks and public space as a combination of designated and informal playable space. Doorstep Play (for children under 5) should to be provided within individual plots, courtyards and along green streets.

The location and type of play should be considered together to create a journey - allowing children to roam and play freely, and away from traffic. All playable spaces must be located in areas that are not too exposed to wind, receive a minimum of 4 hours of sunlight on 21st March and have a comfortable micro climate. Active and passive surveillance should be used to provide a safe, child-friendly environment.

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London: incorporating informal play alongside cafes and parks

Play and sports spaces should cater for adults, for example providing adequate seating. Equipment should be multi-use and designed to promote imaginative play, rather than solely 'off-the-shelf' equipment.

Connections to the town centre must be improved for all but taking particular account of families and children who do not use cars.

The following quote from Dinah Borat from the Greater London Authority (GLA) Good Growth By Design, Making London Child Friendly, illustrates the importance of considering children in the design of places and spaces:

"*Independent mobility is the everyday freedom we all need to get around our local neighbourhood and city as we choose. For children and young people it might be to reach destinations like school and the shops, but it is also about being active outside as part of play, or hanging out with friends...We need to focus on improving the independent mobility of young Londoners if we are to reverse the negative trend, and give back their freedom to enjoy spaces, be part of the community, and grow up as happy, healthy people.*"

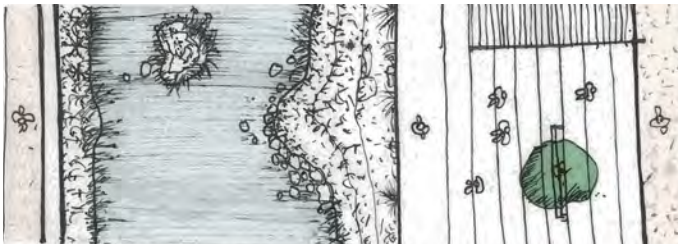
5.2.2.2 Blue Strategy

The Rom, and to a lesser extent Black's Brook, are central to Romford's history and should form key elements of its future identity. Proposals must work to maximise the experience, activation and ecological potential of these existing waterways through naturalisation and ecological enhancements.

Culverted and canalised sections should be renaturalised, wherever possible, to enhance environmental and recreational qualities of the watercourse. Key public spaces are located strategically along the waterfronts.

The Masterplan blue strategies should be considered in tandem with the Havering Local Flood Risk Management Strategies (LFRMS) and Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP), which are currently in draft.

Street and public space design should enhance the environmental and aesthetic value of the landscape by forming a web of parks, swales and other Nature-based SuDS features, illustrated in Fig. 17, that enhance the quality and character of the area, whilst ensuring its resilience to surface water flooding and reducing fluvial flood risk.



Siegen, Germany: river corridor width 30m

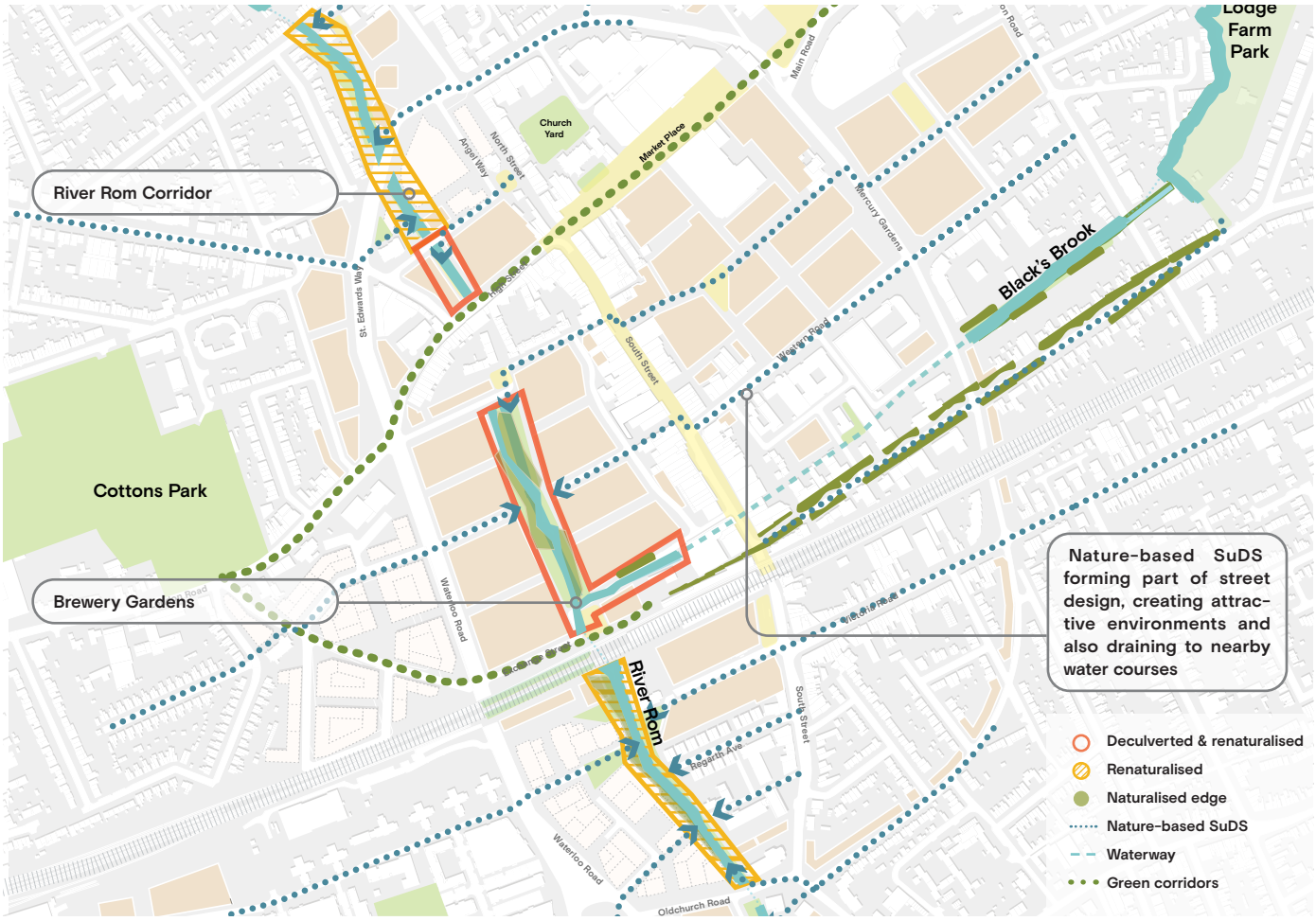


Fig. 17. Map of blue strategy

5.2.2.3 Public Realm Design

Public realm should create a high quality, consistent landscape that reinforces Romford's status as the cultural and administrative heart of Havering. The key public spaces are illustrated in Fig. 18. These include the Market Place, Brewery Gardens, new and upgraded station entrances and a network of smaller squares and pocket parks whose locations are indicatively shown, with the target of ensuring all new major developments bring significant public space. These spaces can be encouraged to host cultural events to support community activity and positive interpretation of the physical environment. In addition, development must be in line with the previous green and blue strategies and the following design principles.

Planting must be composed primarily of native species with some non-native species to offer climate resilience. Planting should be locally sourced, within 100 miles of the site as they will have more climate resilience and will not become invasive or be detrimental to local ecology now or in the future.

Materials should be robust, long-lasting, practical to maintain and attracive. More than 50% of materials in the landscape must be from secondary sources. A coordinated maintenance strategy will be needed to ensure that all public spaces are kept in good condition over time.

The BRE standard of a minimum of 2 hours of sunlight in public spaces should be met. Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) testing must be carried out to understand and address wind issues and mitigation integrated into building and public space design to address any identified issues.

The street scene should avoid clutter, with potential for components such as lampposts to be designed so they can incorporate other uses including vehicle charging, sensors, signage and CCTV. Street lighting must be designed to minimise light pollution whilst providing good levels of light for pedestrians. Particular care should be taken in sensitive areas including along quiet green streets, along park edges and the Rom. Lighting should be designed to minimise energy use.

Waste collection systems should be integrated into the public realm to minimise impact around plots whilst also facilitating high levels of recycling within easy reach of units.

Fig. 18. Map of public realm network

5.2.2.4 The Market

The market is a central component of Romford's culture and heritage. The Masterplan will create an enhanced setting in which the market can thrive, through improved frontage on the Market Place and improved public realm in the Market Place.

The market has declined in volume in recent years, however, it is still regarded as an asset and there is strong support shown through the Masterplan Public Engagement, summarised in Fig. 19, for its retention and to nurture future growth. In the meantime, the Masterplan proposes a new setting for the market to accommodate a flexible number of stalls, that can help provide a sense of vibrancy if fewer stalls are present, and also allow expansion should further stalls arrive.

Continuing to run a programme of activities and events within the Market Place, public realm improvements, and supporting its vitality with cafes and restaurants and complimentary retail at its edges will help in enhancing the market, bringing extra footfall and increasing dwell times. This will also help generate a culture of activity in the Market Place outside market days as opposed to simply utilising the space as a car park.

Uses around the town centre, particularly in the Liberty and Romford Shopping Hall, must compliment the market and not compete directly with it. Instead, the rest of the town centre can help in supporting Romford's key asset, allowing the town centre to thrive.

A vibrant Market Square

When thinking about the market there were suggestions for distinct play areas with elements such as climbing walls/frames, slides, swings etc and the potential to create swing seats. There were also suggestions for high impact landmarks such as colourful gateway signage, pergolas and performance space, and other kinds of decoration and public art such as interactive floor lighting, fountains, festoon lighting, colourful artwork. There were also suggestions for more planting trees and edible that could be sold on stalls.

Fig. 19. Feedback from young people - Romford Masterplan Engagement Summary, 2024

Market **266**

The market as a key part of Romford's identity was equal top priority for most respondents. Linking together specialist markets, improvements to landscaping and trees coupled with varied programming that animated this space.

Signposting the market from the station and creating art, signage and reflecting the heritage were all seen as key approaches to supporting the market to thrive.

"We need a vibrant market with activities and culture as the jewel in our crown"

Fig. 20. Thematic feedback - Romford Masterplan Engagement Summary, 2024

Romford market

5.2.2.5 Key Interventions

The Market Place, alongside Brewery Gardens, are two key public spaces in the town centre that will help define Romford's future character. Approaches to these spaces are included here to help demonstrate the objectives and strategies that they relate to, with further detail provided in relation to the Market Place within the Site Guidance chapter.

The Market Place

The Market Place hosts the local market, foundational to Romford, and consists of a large open space in a formal composition at the heart of the town. It forms a linear axis bisecting the town from High Street to the ring road. On market days, the space is primarily populated by market stalls and otherwise is designated for car parking. The only open green space is the historic churchyard cemetery behind the church.

The intention is to improve the structure of the Market Place to make it better able to host a market and other events, whilst remaining flexible and adaptable. An intimate scale of buildings and supportive uses fronting the space will help to positively animate it, alongside improving connections into the space. More detail on these proposals as well as illustrative layouts are set out in the Site Guidance Chapter.

Key features of the future of the Market Place:

- Remain the primary civic space for the town centre
- Continue to accommodate the market, and allow for a flexible provision of temporary stalls
- Accommodate greening in the form of trees and planting
- Accommodate space for events
- Provide seating and informal spots to stop and dwell, in an attractive and safe environment
- Remove car parking in order to be continuously usable and attractive as a civic space
- Enhance lighting and create a welcoming and safe feeling across the space at all times of day and night.

The Masterplan proposes the market to be a core component of this civic space, and central to ensuring that Romford's Market is successful and vibrant will be having a strong management strategy.

Car parking from the Market Place should be rationalised by consolidating in other locations to accommodate a more generous, usable and attractive public realm, whilst still allowing servicing access for the market within the space.

Market Place Implementation over Time

There is an opportunity to commence enhancements immediately:

- Utilised infrastructural remnants or marks on the ground can be used to help define and programme the space.
- Transform under-utilised areas into ecological assets through temporary or permanent soft landscape.

In the near term, further enhancements can be made:

- Use the axis running through the Market Place to divide the large 1ha area into smaller pockets of spaces.
- Articulate the square acts to recall the scale of the historic market.
- Activate the segments with different programmes, such as attractive event spaces, stage or fairground.

In the longer term can be full transformation of the space:

- Introduce pieces of a natural landscape in phases until the terrain evolves and can perform a role as part of the wider green corridor, restoring the lost connection between Romford and its rural context.

Fig. 21. Market 1 year

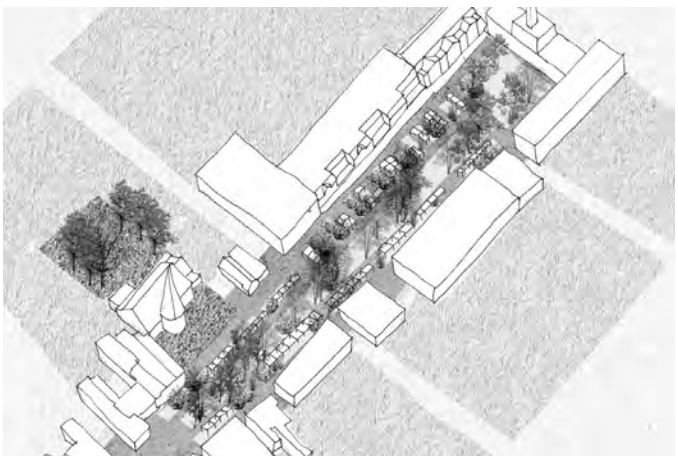


Fig. 22. Market 5 years

Fig. 24. Market Place strategy illustrating the market as a civic space, anchoring surrounding public realm, with flexible space for the market and events, and with greening and seating

Fig. 23. Enhancing public space and helping the market to flourish – Illustrative view of the Market Place, looking west

Brewery Gardens

A naturalised section of the Rom forms the centrepiece of the proposed Brewery Gardens. This will be a new 1.1 ha linear public space running alongside a deculverted and renaturalised portion of the River Rom. The key design principles are illustrated in Fig. 25 and Fig. 26 with additional design guidance for the wider, immediate context. Opening and renaturalising the river will enable the creation of an ecological corridor for different species of plants and wildlife for migration. Biodiversity should be maximised through the creation of habitats along the riparian corridor using native marginal planting and diverse hydro-morphological in-channel features such as riffles and pools. Soft riverbanks and the use of soft engineering solutions should be implemented where possible. Clear justification should be provided where hard banks are required.

New opportunities for recreation and education should be incorporated along the riverbanks for residents and visitors to have 'doorstep' access to nature. This amenity will be a hugely positive asset for the anticipated new neighbourhoods adjacent and nearby.

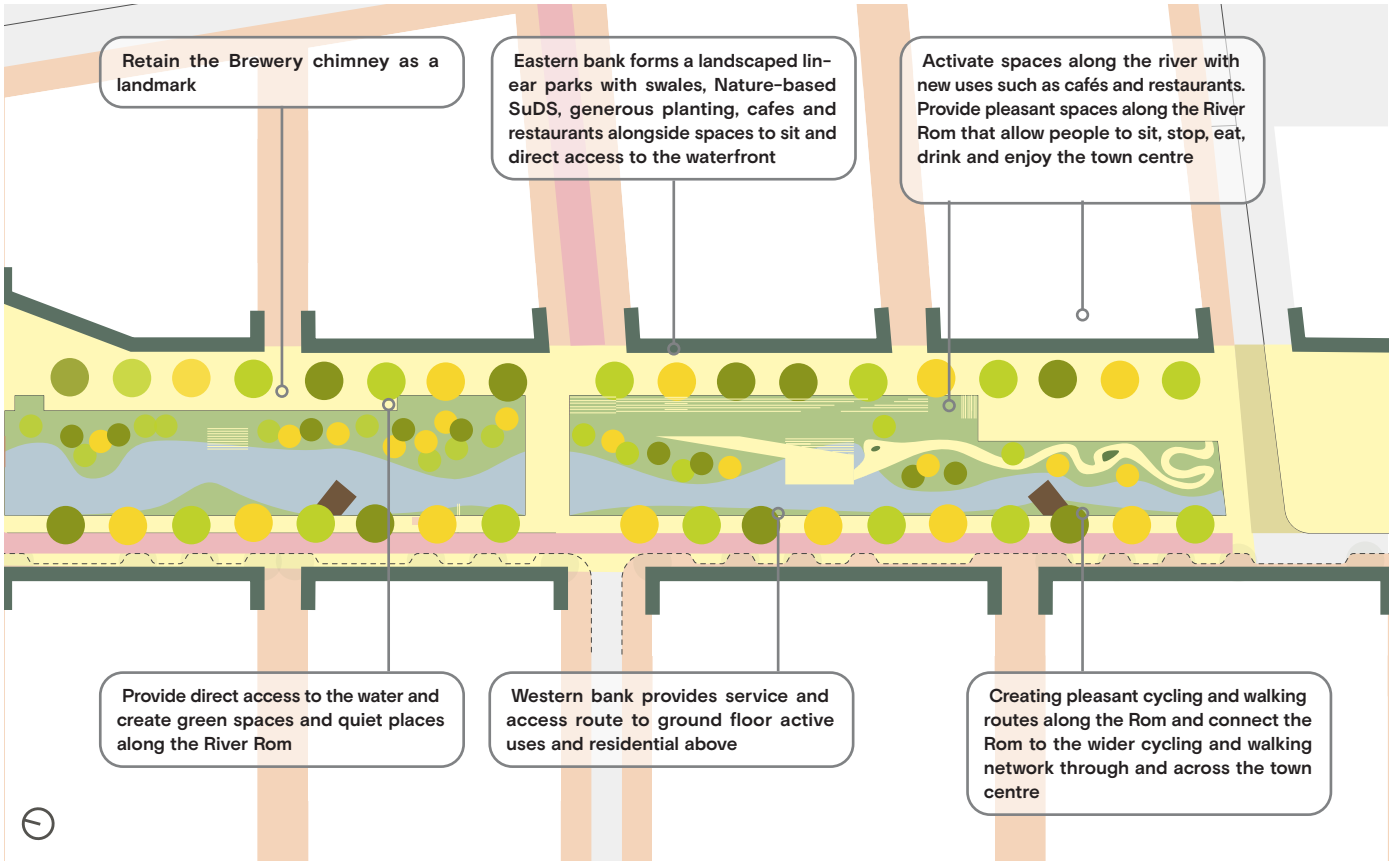


Fig. 25. Illustrative plan of the Brewery Gardens showing key moves

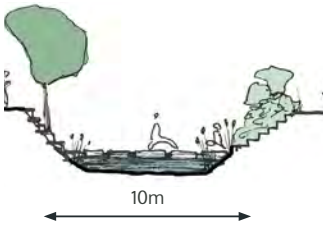
Fig. 26. Illustrative section through the Brewery Gardens

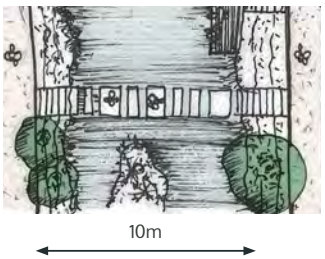
Brewery Gardens Character

The River Rom bank's width should be considered an ecosystem. Landscaping should both improve its natural dynamics and reinforce its role in the city by keeping the low vegetation on the river side to allow visual connectivity to the water.

The River Brent restoration in Tokyngton Park incorporates low vegetation to preserve the connection to the water

Mix pockets of green space with urban space and local species in keeping with the natural ecology of the Rom





The Parc de Bottière-Chénaie in Nantes incorporates stepped, naturalised banks with an adjacent pedestrian route and direct access points to the water

Fig. 27. Capitalising on natural assets, greening the town centre and engaging with the river – Illustrative view of Brewery Gardens, looking north along the River Rom

5.3 MOVEMENT & CONNECTIVITY

5.3.1 Overview

The Masterplan actively seeks to enhance the quality of access to Romford for all modes of travel, drawing on the excellent public transport and vehicular access, and in particular by making local walking and cycling journeys more attractive. The introduction of more green spaces, trees, and Nature-based Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to the streets will create bespoke attractive and resilient environments.

The Masterplan also builds on the Romford Liveable Neighbourhood proposals which seek to make walking and cycling easier and more attractive. This includes the ambition for roundabouts with underpasses to be transformed into at-grade crossings, creating more attractive walking and cycling access across the ring road to the town centre, and increasing green space around the ring road. A first phase to upgrade the North Street roundabout area is likely to come forward in the shorter term.

Public realm improvements, also in line with the Liveable Neighbourhood works, are proposed south of the ring road along Rom Valley Way. These improvements will create more favourable conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and support active travel for large scale development proposals coming forward in this area of Romford.

The Masterplan promotes further enhancements in the longer term, targeting compact junctions in place of roundabouts, freeing up developable and public realm space, whilst maintaining key vehicular north-south and east-west connections beyond the town centre. Though outside of the scope of this Masterplan, proposals must place transport capacity and safety considerations at the heart of any interventions in the movement network.

Public transport is vital to the success of Romford, and strategies for rail and buses, including a proposed new station entrance, help reinforce but also enhance this key component.

5.3.2 Strategies

The following strategies aim to create a balanced network of urban streets, offering a choice of ways to get around and prioritising active travel and public transport.

Walking and Cycling Strategy

Encouraging walking and cycling through the creation of a network of walking and cycling routes and transforming all streets and spaces into attractive, accessible spaces with equal priority for pedestrians and cyclists.

Active Travel Strategy

Promoting cycling, walking and public transport as the preferred means of transportation.

Public Transport Strategy

Promoting integrated public transport through improving the experience of the existing bus and train network and possibly incorporating a potential new north-south rapid transit link.

Car Parking Strategy

Distributing sufficient car parking across the town centre, adjacent the ring road, to reduce the dominance of private vehicles in the town centre.

Ring Road Strategy

Recharacterise the ring road, downgrading in parts, transforming it into a more attractive and accessible multi-modal street.

Town Centre Servicing

Develop a street-based, coordinated, time-controlled servicing strategy.

Fig. 28. Movement and connectivity

5.3.2.1 Walking & Cycling

Havering's Local Implementation Plan has set an ambitious target for 65% of residents to be walking, cycling, and using public transport by 2041. The Masterplan supports this goal by encouraging walking and cycling locally and transforming streets and spaces to make them more attractive, accessible, inclusive, equitable and safe.

Crossing the ring road easily and safely is a key part of this, and the Masterplan draws on the ongoing Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods work which will see roundabouts with underpasses transformed into at-grade crossings – a positive way to encourage more people to walk and cycle into the town centre.

The network of walking and cycling routes within and around Romford can be enhanced and extended by upgrading streets to offer wide pavements and cycle lanes / space for cyclists, and by introducing new pedestrian and cycle friendly streets and connections. These will create attractive routes into the town centre to encourage people to step out of their cars and relieve pressure on roads and town centre parking.

A consistent palette of materials and wayfinding markers should be used across the public realm. These should be robust, high-quality, long lasting and easy to maintain.

Cycle infrastructure must be embedded in the design of streets around Romford. Cycle lanes should be segregated where appropriate, or given dedicated space on busy roads; with cycling and pedestrian priority given on quieter internal streets without the need for segregated cycle lanes. Bike ramps should be incorporated where necessary in public realm schemes, where changes in level has to be by steps. Romford already has higher cycle parking standards than the rest of the Borough, and this can be further enhanced as part of new and improvement public realm work, and in particular through cycle parking hubs around the station.

Making sure streets are for active travel and social interaction, rather than purely places for the car, aligns with the Havering Local Plan as well as the Mayor's Transport Strategy, 2018. It is an important step towards Havering's own local Implementation Plan target of 65% of residents walking, cycling or using public transport, and the London Plan target of increasing mode share for walking, cycling and public transport towards 80%, both by 2041.

With such a shift comes great benefits. As well as health benefits, economic benefits are outlined in TfL's evidence base on the 'economic benefits of walking and cycling', stating that people who walk to the town centre spend up to 40% more than those who drive; and that cycle parking delivers 5 times the retail spend per square metre than the same area of car parking.

Improving routes for walking and cycling can often be low-intervention upgrades that can be delivered early, encouraging a shift away from the car for shorter journeys.

The Masterplan recommends that the planning application process is used to secure generous cycle parking and other cycle infrastructure (such as lockers, showers and electric bike charging) for non-residential buildings, as well as to encourage provision of cycle repair shops.

The River Rom corridor should be developed as a continuous north-south pedestrian and cycle movement connection through Romford town centre, also better connecting the town centre with its surrounding neighbourhoods and with recreational areas along the Rom. The path infrastructure should be within close proximity of the river course, above the 1:5 flood level, offering visual amenity and a physical connection to the river, in order to provide an experience of nature. There should be regular cycle and pedestrian crossing points provided no more than 125m apart along the river to avoid long isolated paths through landscape without means of exit – this allows for a safer environment and one that better plugs into the wider network. Walking and cycling paths must be inclusive using appropriate stairs and ramps. The river corridor should be widened to contain sufficient space for the necessary infrastructure.

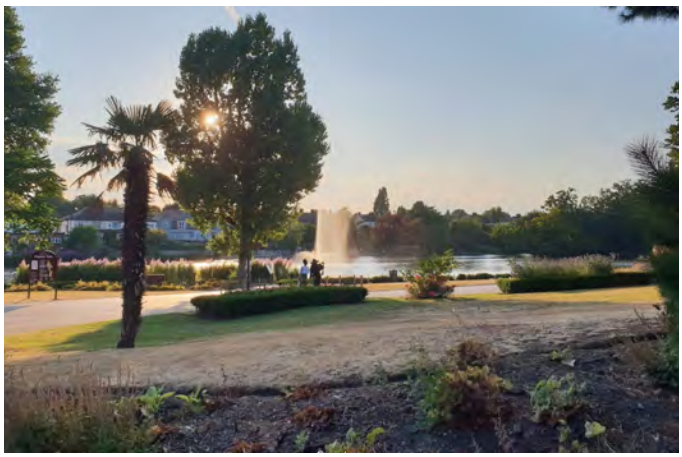
Fig. 29. Walking & cycling connectivity across the town centre

5.3.2.2 Active Travel

Walking or cycling to the town centre and the railway station for journeys under 2km should be the most attractive modes if not taking public transport. Some of the trips within 2km are already quicker and more convenient by bicycle than by car.

There are also an abundance of attractive nearby parks and amenities within 2km of the town centre and the station which can be easily reached on foot or by bike for those living in the centre.

The Masterplan proposes that routes across the SDA be enhanced to provide for active travel Fig. 30 highlights how much of the town centre's context is within a 2km catchment.



Nearby attractive amenities – Raphael Park, Romford

Fig. 30. Enhancing routes for active travel within 2km of the town centre

5.3.2.3 Street Hierarchy

The Masterplan proposes a finer urban grain, based on streets, that creates a clear hierarchy, and clear definition of urban blocks and their public frontage. Streets are designed to be shared by multiple modes of transport – pedestrians, cyclists, buses, vehicles, mobility scooters, etc. This will form a marked shift from the current car-dominated approach to roads in the town centre.

The pedestrianised areas in the town centre are maintained. This will extend into the Market Place, with car parking removed from the space so it can perform as the town centre's primary civic space without hindrance.

The street hierarchy map highlights 'active travel streets' that are primarily for pedestrians, and also for cyclists where appropriate, with potential for controlled vehicle access where required such as is currently the case in parts of South Street. A network of pedestrian and cycle priority 'local streets' provide access in and around the town centre, separate to the primary route network.

The town centre currently has many exposed back conditions, and the intention is for these to be enclosed within new blocks.

Buildings can be serviced from the street. This will require careful timing controls to ensure minimal intrusion on the public realm and on other transport movements.

The ring road is currently a highway condition and can be transformed into an urban street.

A series of street sections are included as part of the Movement strategies which further explain the make-up of the proposed streetscapes. Importantly, it can be seen that generous spaces are given to pedestrians and cyclists, with only minimum spaces offered to vehicles, ensuring a more equitable environment that can encourage active travel.

Smart cities components can become a part of Romford's street design. Specifically, smart technologies to support coordinated town centre parking could help reduce town centre vehicle movements by informing users which spaces are available, potentially through an app. Additionally, smart benches, parklets, EV charging points, electronic advertising, traffic modelling and enforcement by CCTV which can also monitor noise, speed, and emissions can all be integrated.

Fig. 31. Street hierarchy

- Major routes
- Secondary streets
- Local street
- Route along the River Rom
- Active travel street
- Civic space

5.3.2.4 Public transport

The Masterplan promotes the integration of public transport solutions in Romford, and seeks to improve the accessibility and experience of those using the town centre. In particular, the railway, buses and a potential new north-south connection across Havering, are the core public transport offer. Key to the Masterplan is the introduction of a new station entrance at the western end of the platforms, adjacent to the River Rom.

Bus network

Bus routes around Romford provide good coverage of the area and influence the high PTAL rating the town centre gets. If a modal shift towards active travel is achieved, bus travel will be important for those travelling more than 2km to get to the town centre, and for those less able to walk or cycle. Retaining the bus movements through the town centre, therefore, allows passengers to access the core of the town.

The environment in front of the existing station entrance can be improved partly by removing or reducing bus movements under the viaduct. It is recommended that further engagement and feasibility discussions should be evolved in partnership with TfL to consider potential rerouting of services. Select alternations to the existing bus routing that could improve the experience of moving around the town centre could include removing buses from Chandlers Way and providing an interchange for the existing station at Victoria Road and South Street. Consideration should also be given to connecting the potential new station entrance to the west with stops on Waterloo Road.

The bus stands to the south of the railway are at capacity and deemed by TfL to be in a good location – close to route termini. The area also has driver facilities, allowing for change of shifts and comfort breaks. Redevelopment of this area should consider possible reprovision or relocation of these facilities, subject to discussions with TfL.

Policy 1 of the Havering Local Plan makes specific mention of the importance of bus connectivity with Queen's Hospital, and easy access must be maintained.

As outlined in the emerging Liveable Neighbourhoods work, there is potential to introduce dedicated bus lanes on the ring road to alleviate impact from congestion, promote bus use and improve bus journey times .

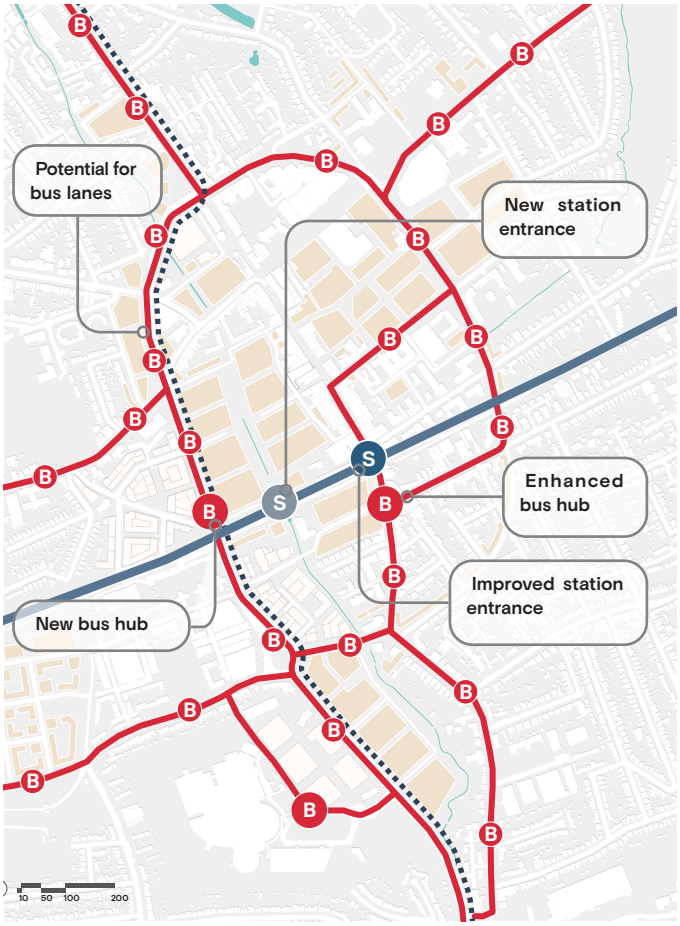


Fig. 32. Transport network

Bus routes & bus hubs / bus stops
Railway and station entrances
Potential north-south rapid transit route

Fig. 34. Improvements to the existing station entrance can be achieved through potential rerouting of bus movements, and through careful upgrades to the station building

Fig. 33. Creating a new entrance on Exchange Street to link the west of the town centre, create a new public space, and relieve pressure on the existing entrance

Railway & station entrances

Romford currently has excellent rail links to London and Essex, with a connection also to Upminster. On the back of the arrival of the Elizabeth line, and of the expected growth in the town centre, a new station entrance is proposed to the west of the existing entrance, (in addition to upgrades already completed to the existing entrance) an excellent opportunity exists to open up links to the west, create a new public space, and incorporate routes along the River Rom. Conceptually, this new entrance could make use of the historic archway through the viaduct previously used for goods trains. The entrance can also alleviate pressure on the current station entrance, and support new growth and connectivity in the west of the town centre and along the River Rom.

Further work with Network Rail and other relevant operating companies will be necessary to improve the existing station entrance and introduce new north and south entrance ways. Further collaborative work will also be necessary to investigate the provision of a second western entrance to Romford station.

North-south Borough connection

North south connectivity for public transport in the borough is currently poor with the main transport routes running east west to connect to central London. A new public transport corridor is being investigated by the Council to improve the north south connections, with the route going through Romford. The Masterplan includes a suggested route along the western flank of the ring road, connecting with the new station entrance, safeguarding the historic core of the town as a pedestrian space and providing better public transport connections to the new developments on the western side of the centre.

The proposed route could take the form of dedicated bus lanes. A bus network would allow for reliability improvements in the existing network. The expansion of a good public transport network will also help further reduce reliance on private cars in the borough, potentially further reducing the number of vehicles on the road and the parking demand in the town centre. The route could provide an interchange with the new station entrance on Exchange Street. This could help unlock and support new development. The route should not create a physical barrier and should allow sufficient capacity for other modes. The route could also better integrate key neighbourhoods and the Queens Hospital with the town centre.

5.3.2.5 Town centre car parking

The Masterplan proposes a coordinated town centre parking strategy for retail, leisure and employment uses, to ensure a sustainable, attractive, and safe provision. Parking should be integrated into urban blocks and wrapped with active uses, or be provided as formalised on-street spaces that support a tidy and attractive street scene and public realm.

Town centre parking (separate to that of residential parking provision, covered in the Havering Local Plan and London Plan) should be spread around the town centre, offering points of provision around the ring road for those arriving from all directions, reducing the need to drive around the ring road searching for a space, reducing the risk of queueing along the ring road, and reducing the dominance of private vehicles in the town. The Masterplan promotes better quality, safer, more attractive built car parking, integrated into building structures to optimise land use. The locations chosen in the Masterplan for these are near the ring road for convenient access and near to public transport options. Reliance should not be placed on one or two car parks. Formalised on-street parking provision should be included as part of public realm upgrades, potentially also on the ring road, particularly to allow easy access to resources and amenities for those less able to walk or cycle, such as Blue Badge holders. Ad-hoc and unformalised parking and parking in the Market Place should be removed from the town centre to support high quality public realm across the town centre. Provision should be made for attractive electric vehicle charging points both in the street and in built parking structures, that do not obstruct the public realm.

As a result of improved active travel options into the town centre for journeys under 2km, car parking requirements could drop significantly. Demand could drop by a third if these local journeys can be walked or cycled due to the high proportion of local journeys currently taken by car, with new residential developments in the town centre being well set up for walking and cycling. TfL Roads Task Force – Technical note 14: 'Who travels by car in London and for what purpose?' states:

- 1/3 of car trips are currently shorter than 2km
- 80% of car trips are currently shorter than 5km
- Around 6 in 10 car driver trips are made alone

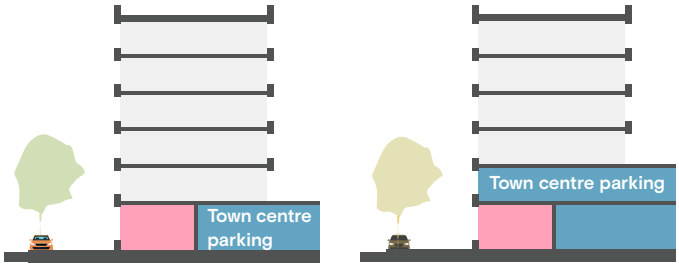


Fig. 35. Integrated parking set behind active uses with potential for other uses and further car parking stacked above. Formalised on-street parking can be provided as part of the street section between trees.

Integrated stacked car parking with communal residential courtyard above – Canada Water, London

The Masterplan seeks to safeguard a suitable quantum of town centre parking, and this quantum can be monitored over time and considered holistically for the town centre rather than on a site-by-site basis. Latest figures show there is currently an over-provision of town centre parking, with many car parks proving unattractive with under-utilised spaces most of the time (such as the Brewery multi-storey car park), leaving heavy use of more attractive car parks (such as the Brewery surface car park). New developments which incorporate town centre parking can therefore respond to overall demand, as well as an expected shift to active travel, and provide a proportionate and coordinated provision of spaces overall, as outlined in the diagram opposite. Car parking use should be monitored, ensuring that delivery and provision of parking is aligned with the Masterplan's aspirations.

Parking provision should be flexible where possible, and allow for a reduction in capacity over time, in keeping with increases in active travel. Taxi drop-offs should be included in suitable locations across the street network as part of public realm upgrades.

Integrated car parking – High quality, formalised on-street parking - Altrincham

Integrated car parking – High quality, safe car parking in built structures - Q Park, Liverpool

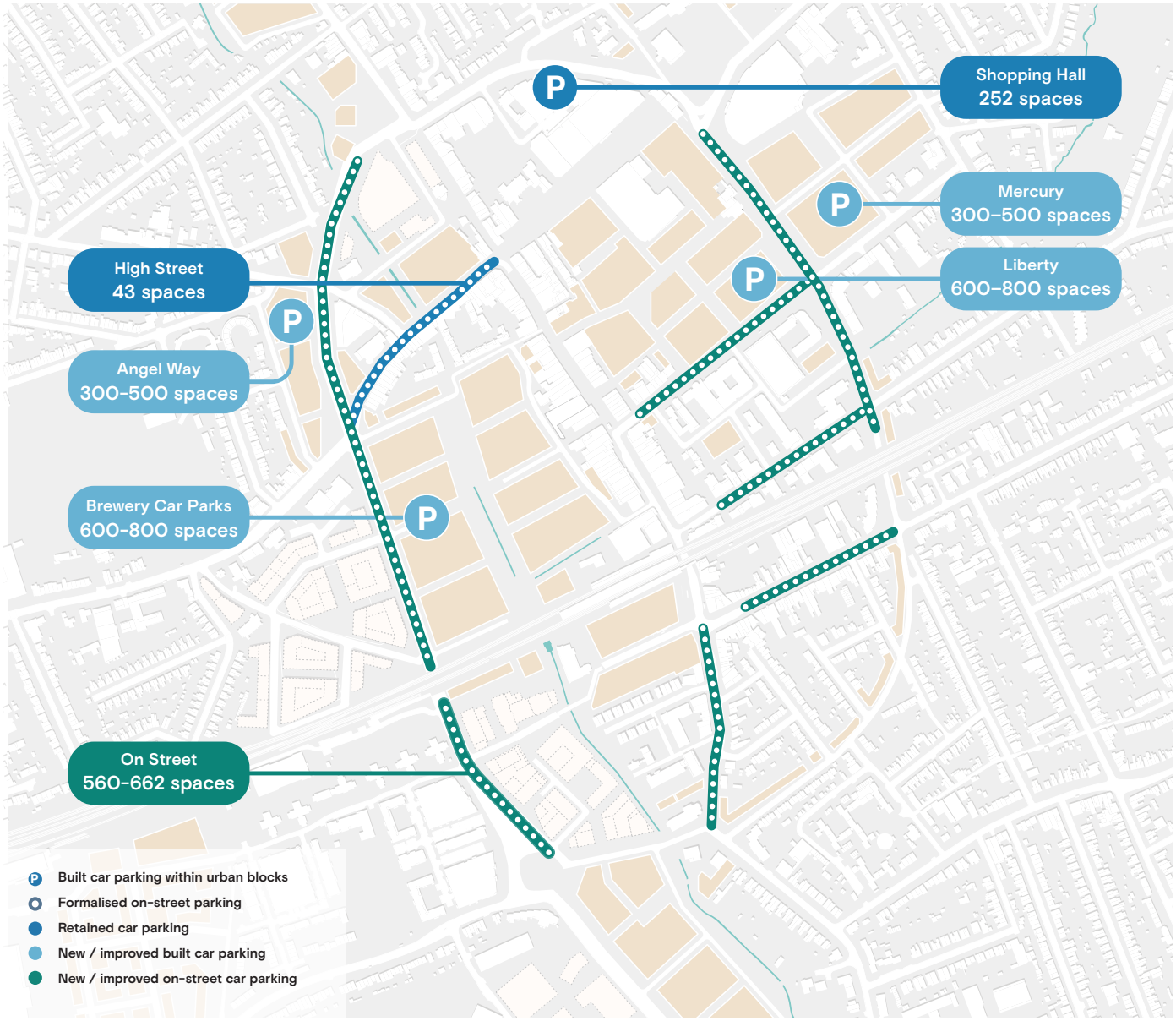


Fig. 36. Proposed town centre parking locations

5.3.2.6 Roundabouts

The Masterplan highlights the potential for peninsularisation of roundabouts around the ring road, making pedestrian at-grade crossings, and showcasing increased developable land and public realm. This would draw on the work done by the Liveable Neighbourhoods project. Developments adjacent to the ring road should therefore be conscious of the opportunity this brings and to support future development opportunities.

The Liveable Neighbourhoods work will greatly improve the experience for pedestrians and cyclists crossing roundabouts in the shorter term. In the longer term the Masterplan proposes peninsularisation of roundabouts to remove underpasses and introduce at-grade crossings, whilst increasing space for public realm and potentially also new development. Such alterations would require traffic modelling to ensure existing journey times, including buses, can be maintained and potentially improved thanks to uptake in active travel options.

Peninsularisation roundabouts should be considered over time, following more immediate interventions as outlined by the ongoing Liveable Neighbourhood work, and can react to 'trigger points' such as measured shifts towards active travel locally. The key target is to create desirable active travel links into the town centre, to allow active travel to flourish, and to consider all modes of travel not just vehicles.

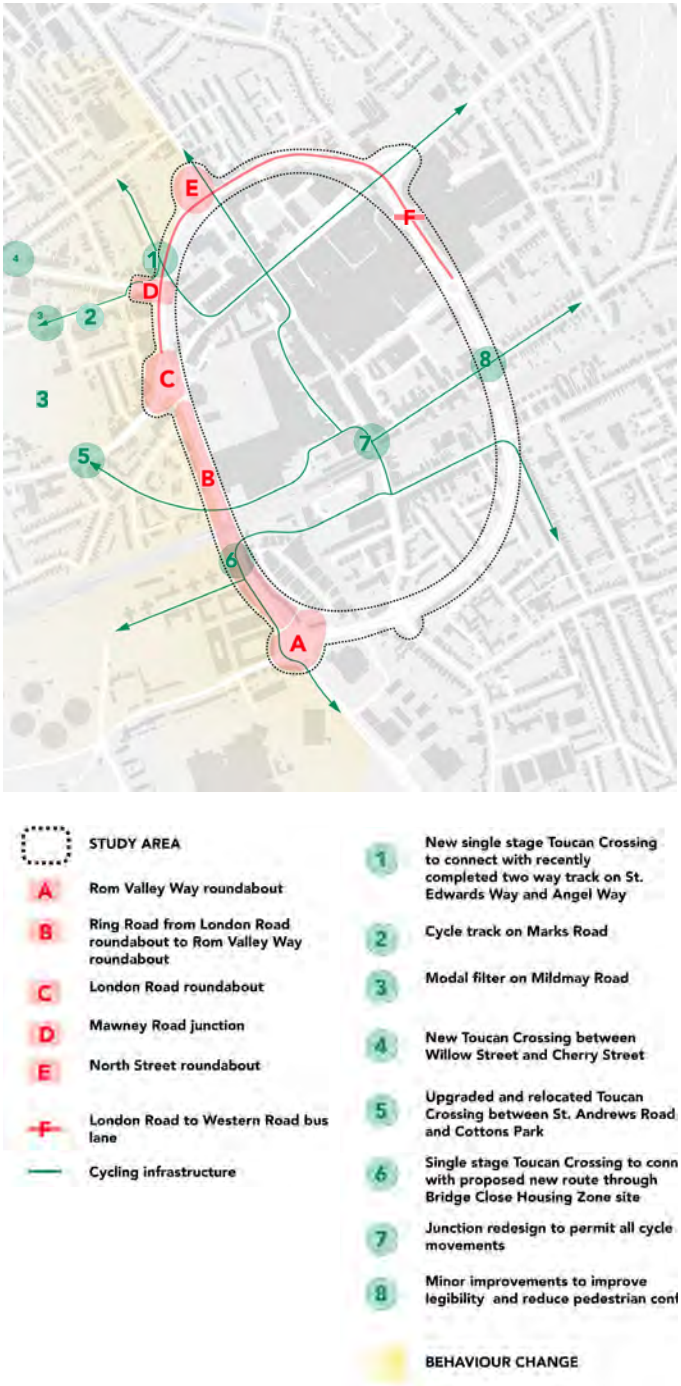


Fig. 37. Romford ring road, Liveable Neighbourhoods proposals

5.3.2.7 Town centre servicing

The Masterplan promotes a coordinated servicing strategy which is street-based and time-controlled. Streets which are dedicated only to servicing must be avoided in order to remove 'back' conditions such as along Exchange Street. Service yards need to be rationalised and, where, possible, given active frontages to the street. Parts of Exchange Street could, for example, be inhabited by new development. In other locations, a multi-purpose streetscape can accommodate servicing at particular times without interference to other activities, for example as currently works successfully in parts of South Street. In this way, streets in the town centre can be safe and attractive for all to use. Any off-street servicing should be integrated within built structures, with impact on the facade minimised. A bespoke delivery strategy should be created for Romford drawing on the high-level strategic approach outlined in the Masterplan here.

5.3.2.8 Ring Road

The ring road must be recharacterised and softened to make it a more attractive and safe environment for all users, breaking it into a series of discrete streets. Connections across it and along it can be greatly improved, particularly for walking and cycling, whilst acknowledging its role at a wider scale to deliver traffic into and past Romford. By supporting a more multi-modal offer, moving beyond the current car-focused infrastructure and providing an attractive arrival for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, this approach can increase town centre capacity. Development should also positively front the ring road to activate it and help it become an urban street.

In the short term, removing barriers to crossing such as guard rails wherever possible, and introducing at-grade crossings will help to change perceptions of the road. Further, implementing the approved Liveable Neighbourhoods project along the western arm as a first phase will remove safety and connectivity concerns surrounding underpasses. This work also start greening the ring road, which can be taken further through future upgrade work. As part of this, introducing a significant number of large street trees will positively impact the experience on the ring road, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

In the longer term there is significant opportunity in the reconfiguration of the ring road into an urban street. This can manifest in different ways at different points, with major traffic routing occupying the western and northern edges of the ring, and buses and lighter traffic movements occupying the eastern and southern edges. Carriageways in all locations can be narrowed without reducing capacity.

As such the western and northern edges can accommodate two lanes in each direction as necessary, whilst allowing generous pavements and segregated cycle lanes. These can also accommodate the north-south rapid transit link proposed across the Borough.

On the eastern and southern edges a single lane in either direction is proposed, which can offer new opportunities for development sites at its edges. Space can also be reallocated for more pleasant walking and cycling routes.

Motor vehicles Annual Average daily flow on the ring road vary between around 25,400 to 34,500.[1] Assuming people choose walking and cycling over car use for trips under 2km in the future, with no other change in travelling habit these numbers should reduce by a third to around 15,000 to 25,500 cars per day.

Development along the ring road should define a continuous street edge and frontage, helping to urbanise the street. Trees, segregated cycle lanes, further planting, and potentially on-street parking should all be used to help buffer buildings from the carriageway, without needing to create overtly wide and baron spaces. Ring road improvements should be funded by developer contributions from such sites along the ring road.

Street sections on the following pages further outline the potential for recharacterising the ring road at different points.

1 Department for Transport, Road traffic statistics 2023 - https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk

5.3.2.9 Ring road characteristics

With the recharacterisation of the ring road, specific upgrades are shown here in relation to the overall strategy. With major routes maintained along the red portions of the ring road, capacity is maintained whilst creating a more equitable and attractive streetscape. Along the blue portions of the ring road there is less need for through-traffic and fewer lanes are included in the south-eastern portion, whilst still providing dedicated space for buses where necessary.

These proposals are indicative and will need to carefully consider fluctuations in width and pinch-points such as under the railway. In all cases, dedicated at-grade crossings are included to bring better connections across the ring road, and street greening and Nature-based SuDS are introduced. Given the busy nature of these streets, segregated cycle lanes are also included.

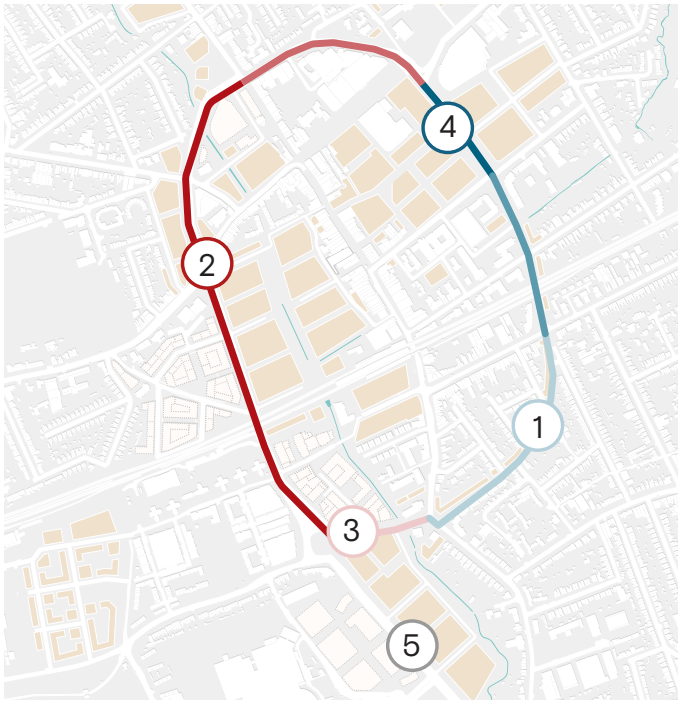


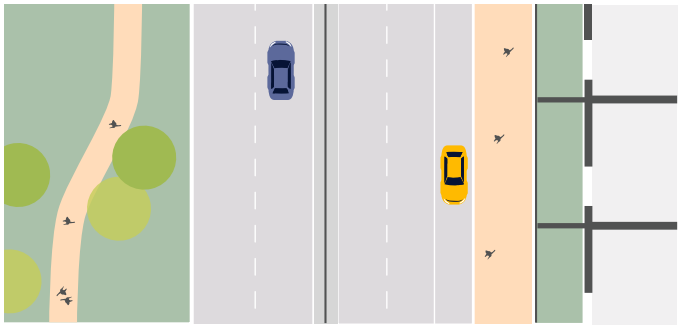
Fig. 38. Recharacterising the ring road

1. Thurloe Gardens

Reconfiguration of the eastern and southern parts of the ring road to create a quieter street and create development sites at the edges. The number of lanes is reduced in response to discouraging through-traffic on this portion of the ring road, bringing opportunities for development along the inside curve of the ring road. Space is provided for a segregated cycle lane. A central, slightly raised, strip in the centre of the roadway – as in Park Lane, Poynton – allows the carriageway to feel constricted in order to slow traffic, whilst still allowing space for buses and larger vehicles which can traverse the strip.

A quiet street with space for buses and bikes. Park Lane, Poynton

Before



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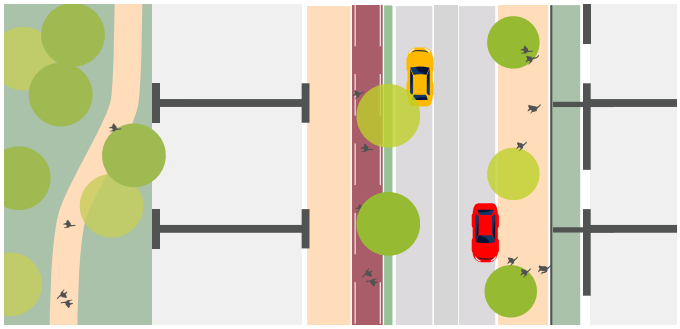
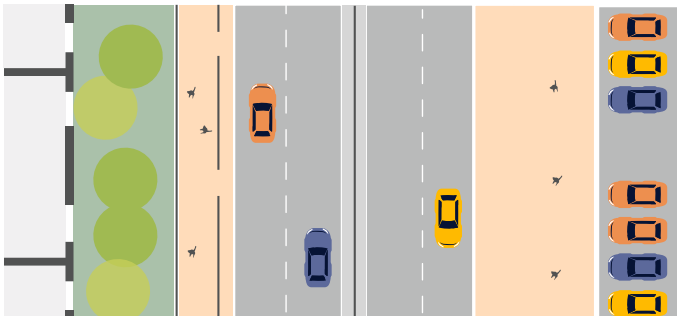


2 St Edwards Way and Waterloo Road

Major route reconfigured as an urban street, with bus lanes, bus stops, segregated cycle lanes and tree planting, retaining two carriageway lanes in both directions for vehicles. A central green strip with planting is introduced and carriageways narrowed to sufficient widths. Space for bus stops and potential on-street parking is included at the edges. A segregated cycle lane can run asymmetrically with two-way cycle traffic. Pavements remain broad, and are fronted positively by suitable ground floor uses.

Successful major route with positive frontages on both sides and space for segregated cycles, Blackfriars, London

Before



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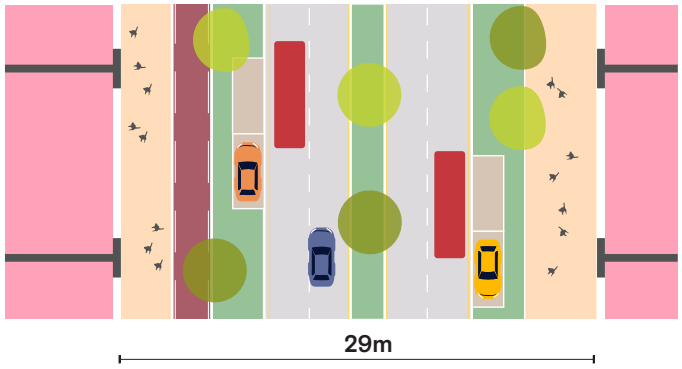
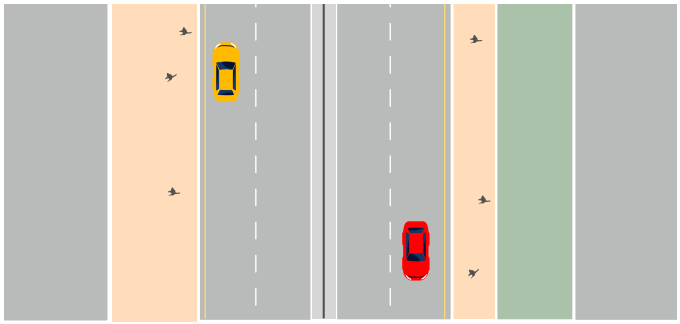


3. Oldchurch Road

New street profile with fewer lanes and a reduction in carriageway width, whilst maintaining space for pedestrians, cycle lanes, and cars, with generous tree planting along the pavement. The number of lanes is reduced in response to discouraging through-traffic on this portion of the ring road, bringing opportunities for larger pavements relating to positive ground floor frontages. A segregated cycle is provided asymmetrically to allow two-way cycle traffic. As with Thurloe Gardens a central, slightly raised, strip in the centre of the roadway allows the carriageway to feel constricted in order to slow traffic, whilst still allowing space for buses and larger vehicles which can traverse the strip.

Mixed use streets for bikes, pedestrians, cars and parking. Stamford New Road, Altrincham

Before



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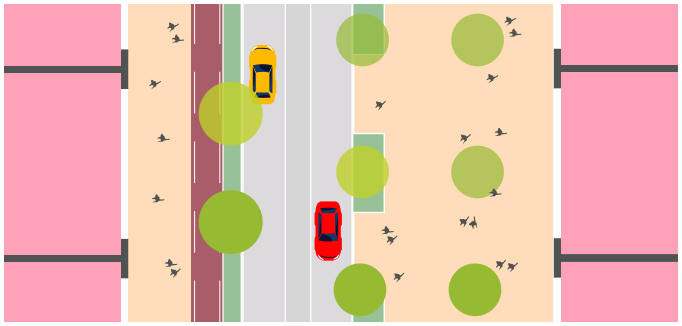
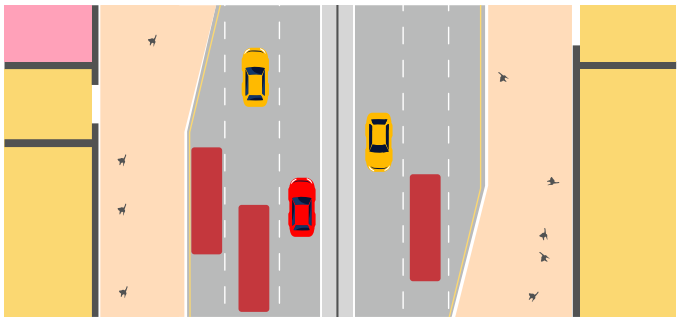


4. Mercury Gardens

A recharacterised Mercury Gardens as an urban street, with bus lanes, landscape strips, and generous tree planting, creating a pleasant environment, activity and new at-grade crossings. The number of lanes is reduced in response to discouraging through-traffic on this portion of the ring road, whilst still accommodating space for buses. Dedicated space for bus stops is provided, with potential also for on-street parking. Segregated cycle lanes are provided on both sides, as well as broad pavements that are fronted positively by ground floor uses.

Urban street with space for cyclists, pedestrians, and public transport. Kensington High Street, London

Before



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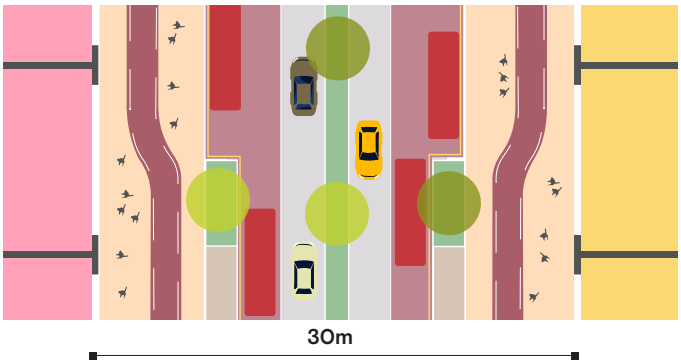
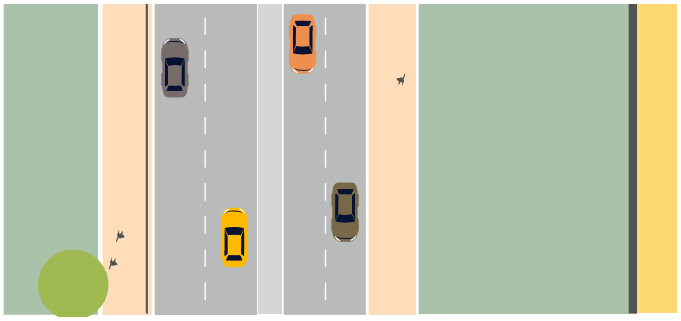


5. Rom Valley Way

Major route upgraded to include bus lanes, and segregated cycle lanes. Bus standing spaces can be reaccommodated parallel to the highway, and dedicated spaces given for bus stops outside of the carriageway. Carriageways can be narrowed to sufficient widths, with a central green strip formalised to improve natural drainage and enhance the appearance of the street. Broad pavements with street greening can formalised and rationalised on both sides.

Major street with Nature-based SuDS and segregated cycle lane. Rue Garibaldi, Lyon

Before



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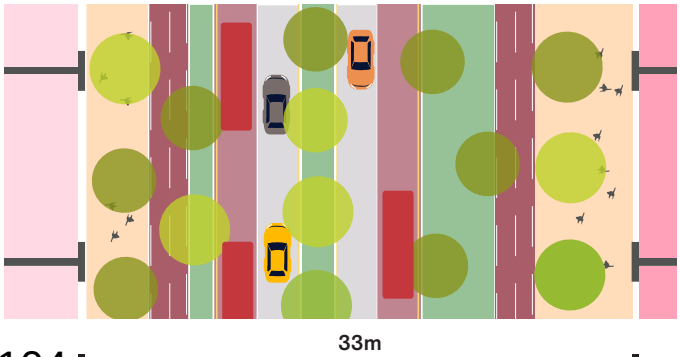


Fig. 39. Creating equitable streets for all types of transport along the ring road – Illustrative view of Waterloo Road, looking north towards the High Street and St Edwards Way

5.4 SUSTAINABILITY

5.4.1 Overview

To remain successful, now and into the future, Romford must be liveable, productive and inclusive.

The Masterplan seeks to ensure that the redevelopment of Romford captures the opportunity to transform the town centre into a sustainable and resilient place. Accordingly, the sustainability strategies have been designed to capture growth equitably and deliver it locally, ensuring that the redevelopment delivers sustainable infrastructure along with significant environmental and wellbeing benefits.

5.4.2 Strategies

The Romford Town Centre Masterplan enshrines sustainability within four strategies:

Environmental resilience

Creating a town centre that is resilient to changes in climate and builds strength in ecosystem services

Biodiversity net gain and urban greening factor

Going beyond National and London policies, showcasing Romford as a forward-thinking town centre that champions biodiversity and urban greening.

Energy and carbon

Setting a pathway to zero carbon through the design of buildings and infrastructure

Circular economy and materials

Maintain materials at their highest value through construction and operation, by reuse and repurposing, and avoiding waste.

Fig. 40. Creating accessible and liveable neighbourhoods – Illustrative view of public spaces along the River Rom, Rom Valley

5.4.2.1 Environmental Resilience

Opening up the River Rom

The River Rom runs Northwest to Southeast through Romford town centre, and is joined by the Black's Brook north of Exchange Street in the town centre. The River Rom is a tributary of the River Beam, which feeds into the Thames Estuary.

Within the town centre, both watercourses flow within culverts or concrete engineered channels and their environmental quality is very poor as a result. The culverts have lower hydraulic capacity than the natural river channel, which results in significant fluvial flood risks to areas along the Black's Brook culvert and areas upstream of the town centre, as shown in Fig. 44 and Fig. 45.

Climate change is predicted to increase rainfall intensities, which will in turn increase the risk of surface water and fluvial flooding. The NPPG states the allowance for climate change to be considered for development, depending on development type and flood zone, with requirements for the Thames river basin district up to 70%. Romford already has a history of flooding, demonstrating the lack of suitability of the current infrastructure and the need for the town to improve resilience to existing and expected risk.

Fig. 41. Potential to deculvert and renaturalise the River Rom

Areas where waterways should be deculverted and partially renaturalised

Area where the River Rom should be renaturalised as much as possible

Culverted areas of the River Rom

The layout and amount of green space of an urban environment plays a vital part in the desirability of a space, as well as the natural biodiversity, which has seen severe decline in recent years. The nature of the culverts is contributing to the very poor environmental quality of the river and limiting any opportunity for biodiversity.

Romford Town Centre Masterplan opens up the River Rom through the town centre, removing culverts and naturalising its course to provide a continuous ecological corridor of public realm through Romford, and enhanced hydraulic capacity. The river course is naturalised beyond the town centre as well, tying into 'The River Rom Restoration Project' and the 'Land of the Fanns' partnership. This will significantly enhance resilience and biodiversity, linking the town centre to greener areas downstream in the Chase Reservoir. In addition, it will provide a more desirable place to live and work and encourage the use and interest of the outdoors and create opportunities for the local community. Removal of the concrete channel base and replacement with natural gravels will improve ecology and connect the river with groundwater, improving land drainage.

Consideration will also be given to deculverting sections of the Black's Brook through Romford town centre. Where this is not possible, spatial provision will be made for future deculverting and renaturalising of the Black's Brook when developing land along the culverted watercourse, in line with Policy SI17 of the London Plan to contribute to further reductions in flood risk and restoration of the ecological status of the watercourse.

The capacity of the proposed river section will at least match the capacity of the existing section, to ensure there is no increase of flood risk upstream on the River Rom, or on the culverted Black's Brook or existing surface water sewers discharging into the river. Opportunities associated with widening of the river channel, creation of a floodplain and potential reduction of fluvial flood risk, on the river catchment in the town centre, will be explored. The river corridor enhancement proposals will also aim to reduce and in any case avoid any increase of flood risk in any surrounding areas in line with paragraph 173 of NPPF. Opportunities for making use of the increased floodplain capacity to reduce flood risk will be explored, and the necessary flow controls will be introduced in the river channel. The design development of these interventions will be supported by a comprehensive hydraulic model.

The river corridor, including the channel and surrounding parks, will be designed considering the 1 in 100 year + 70% flood event reducing flood risk to the town to a standard that is resilient to climate change, either by containment within the river corridor and / or by reconnecting the watercourse to its undeveloped floodplain. Building entry thresholds will be set above the 1:100+70% fluvial flood level, allowing for an appropriate freeboard of typically at least 300mm.

A continuous safe pedestrian route will be provided along the length of the river corridor, supporting access and active travel, and containing a range of enhanced public spaces including play areas.

The pedestrian route will be provided above the 1 in 100 year + 70% level play areas and hardstanding public realm areas will typically be above the 1 in 30 year flood level and will be designed for submergence in extreme events. Footpaths along the river edge will typically be above the 1 in 5 year flood level, and will be designed for occasional submergence. Consideration will be given to the potential damage caused by river flooding and removal of debris associated with fluvial flooding when defining an acceptable frequency of flooding for different surface and land use types, in close consultation with Lead Local Flood Authority.

The catchment area is described by the Environment Agency as “fast responding and flashy” with significant associated flood risk, however river flows are low in summer and dry periods. The river corridor enhancements will include the creation of a low flow channel to concentrate flows in dry periods and maintain depth, velocity and water quality. The water quality of the Rom in the town centre is described by the Environment Agency overall as 'moderate', with 'good' quality chemical status. Sinuosity should be introduced in the alignment of the channel within the constraints of available gradients, with the creation of diverse hydro-morphological in-channel features such as riffles and pools where possible. The bed will include gravel and / or shingle to maximise the potential for varied ecological habitats.

The river corridor section will be wider above the low flow channel to accommodate higher flows and make space for water. This can be achieved with a combination of stepped terracing of the river section and graded planted slopes.

Soft riverbanks and the use of soft engineering solutions (for example planted ledges retained with coir roll and battens) should be implemented where possible, aiming to renaturalise most of both banks of the River Rom with native marginal planting. This will allow the watercourse to regain as much lost riparian habitat on the banks as

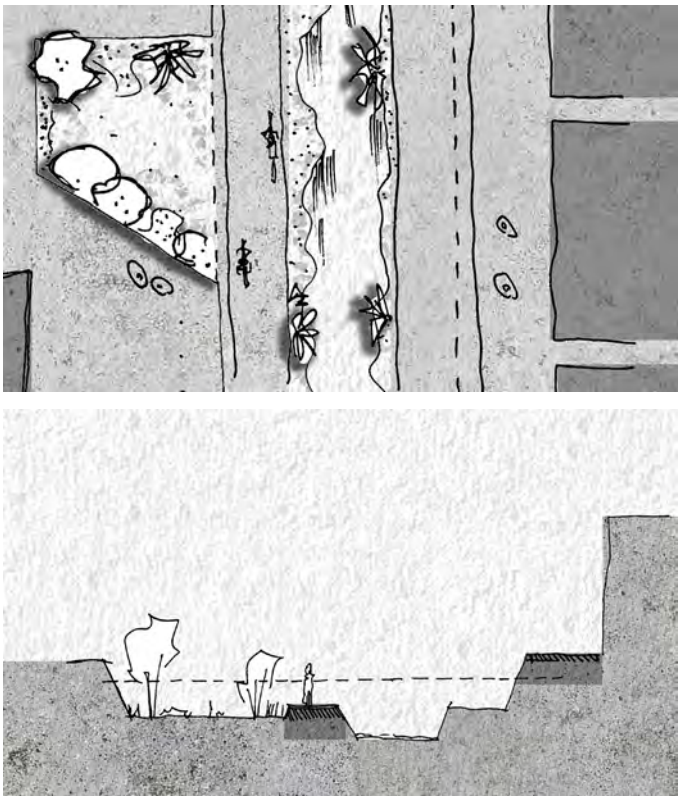


Fig. 42. Flood storage attached to river course

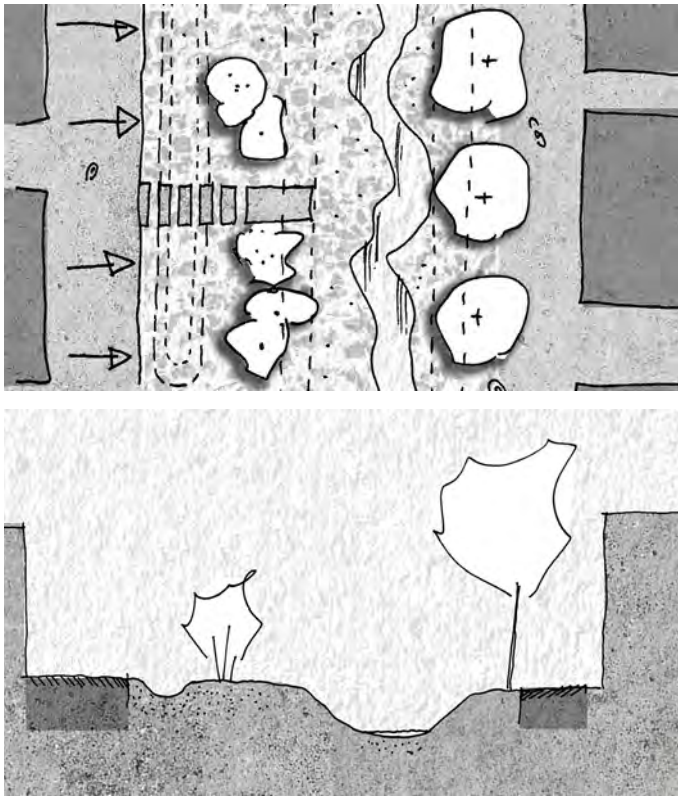


Fig. 43. Drainage and storage of pluvial water

possible, increase its resilience to environmental degradation associated with urban environments, aiming to achieve Water Framework Directive 'Good Ecological Potential' status.

The size and depth of the low flow channel will need to be defined based on hydraulic modelling in low flow condition. Consideration will need to be given to lateral stability of the channel alignment, erosion and river solid transport / deposition. Similarly, the geometry of the high flow channel will be based on detailed river hydraulic modelling in flood condition. The planting will also need to be based on an understanding of flow and water level regimes.

Scour protection and erosion control will need to be to be considered along the length of the river, ensuring that upstream and downstream erosion control are aligned. Scour protection will be required in particular at the outfall of the section of the river that will remain culverted, bridge abutments, and drainage outfalls into the river, to prevent the potential degradation of ecological habitats and affecting the stability of these infrastructures.

Comprehensive hydraulic and hydrological river modelling will be required to assess the hydrological implications of any interventions on the river channel and corridor. This will carefully consider:

- Changes to channel conveyance and floodplain storage capacity;
- Flood risks to the Masterplan and surrounding areas (upstream, downstream and adjacent to the town centre) associated with extreme events including climate change;
- Low flow condition and associated water quality considerations; and
- Erosion and hydro-morphological changes to the watercourse.

The modelling work will be carried out by competent consultants using best practice and latest established modelling tools. The modelling approach, extent of the model, boundary conditions and modelling scenarios will be agreed with technical specialists at the Environment Agency. The model will be calibrated as far as practical against available flow and water level records and historical flood events. The modelling results will be reviewed and validated by the Environment Agency.

Nature-based SuDS: Sustainable drainage integrated within the landscape

Nature-based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) control and manage surface water runoff, reducing flood risk, enhancing amenity functions and increasing biodiversity. The Masterplan promotes the integration of drainage and attenuation features with landscaping proposals to create a network of blue-green corridors that can convey and discharge surface water drainage flows into the River Rom.

All developments should implement a Nature-based SuDS strategy, including attenuation of peak discharge, integrated with landscaping and ecological proposals to improve the diversity and strength of ecology along the river corridor.

Strategic sustainable drainage principles are as follows:

- Comply with the Nature-based SuDS hierarchy set out in Policy SI13 of the London Plan
- Limit discharge to greenfield runoff rates – Policy SI13 of the London Plan and the Havering Local Plan
- Control surface water runoff at source and control of pollution to the water environment in line with the requirements in the SuDS Manual (CIRIA C753) and Havering's SuDS Developer Guide and the DEFRA Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Enhance amenity and biodiversity by integrating Nature-based SuDS systems within the landscaping proposal

All developments are to be designed in accordance with BS EN 752, in order that there is no surface flooding for the 1:30 year event and no flooding to buildings for 1:100 + 40% event. There must be no increase to off-site flood risk, limiting peak discharge to greenfield runoff rate and containing 1:100 + 40% event on site. Allowing low risk areas to flood minimises construction impact while reducing the impact of flooding.

As part of restoring the ecological status of the River Rom, it is particularly important to prevent discharge of pollutants into the surface water drainage system. Control at source improves water quality and reduces flows, achievable with use of green roofs, permeable pavement and rain gardens. Consideration will also need to be given to control of the potential leaching of ground contaminants into the watercourse.

Nature-based SuDS systems will also be included in the riparian zone of the River Rom, to help intercept diffuse urban pollution. Where possible, Nature-based SuDS systems will also be retrofitted on roads, and other infrastructures to help address water quality issues and ensure the Rom is protected.

Surface water flood risk caused by intense rainfall events should be decreased through localised sustainable drainage solutions. This will also contribute to reducing peak discharge from developed areas into the River, and reduce fluvial flood risk. The introduction of Nature-based SuDS within the Masterplan will contribute to increasing resilience to the effects of climate change on rainfall intensities and flooding. The requirement for a sustainable drainage approach will be accompanied by a requirement to develop and implement a maintenance plan for all proposed Nature-based SuDS, to ensure performance is maintained over the design life of these systems.

All developments along the Rom corridor should include drainage infrastructure adequate to avoid direct run off into the river. Developments should prioritise the use of impermeable surfaces along the riverside, subject to consideration of the potential pollution risks associated with the mobilisation and leaching of ground contaminants.

Ecology

The Rom is part of a diverse and interconnected river corridor. The environmental quality of the existing culverted section of the river, and concrete channel section downstream of the railway is currently very poor. One of the key aspirations of the Masterplan is to open up and renaturalise the river through Romford Town, linking the enhanced urban river sections to the wilder parts of the river further downstream in the Chase Local Nature Reserve. This will help create an interconnected and ecologically varied river corridor.

Reducing water footprint

Serious water stress is forecasted for the River Thames basin and South East of England as a result of climate change and water use. Water use within buildings also contributes to greenhouse gases due to the energy footprint associated with water abstraction, treatment, supply and wastewater treatment. Reducing the quantity of water used in each home and business will therefore help to achieve zero carbon, and also reduce stress on water supply.

Water demands will be reduced through the use of water efficient fittings, control of leakage and metering. Water use within residential building will be reduced to a maximum of 110 litres / person / day in line with Policy SI5 of the London Plan. Non-residential buildings will be designed to achieve BREEAM Excellent rating for water efficiency.

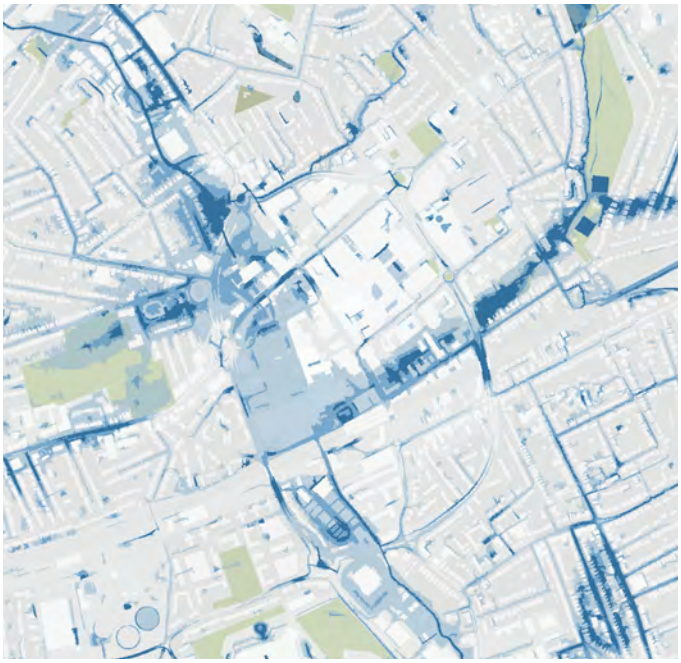


Fig. 44. Flood risk from surface water, generated by high intensity rainfall events*

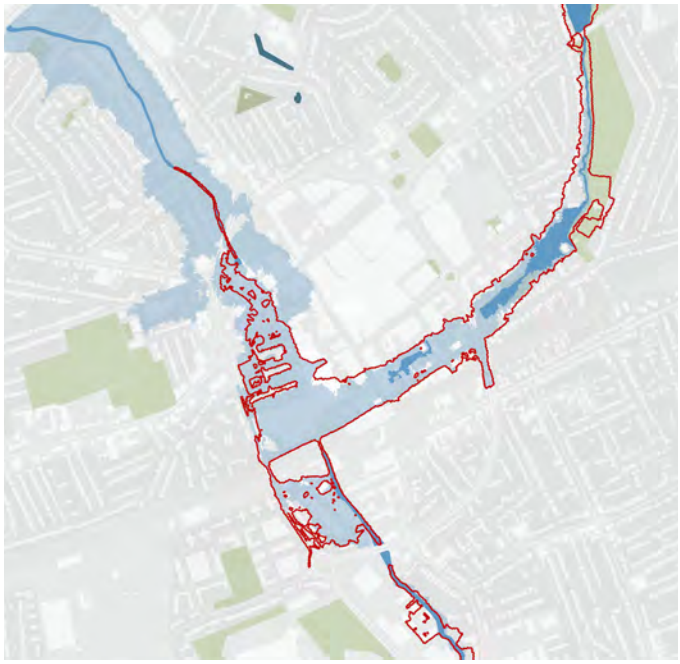


Fig. 45. Flood risk from rivers and reservoirs*

The whole life benefits of rainwater harvesting and water recycling to further reduce potable water demand will be considered on a case by case basis, taking into account whole life carbon emission. It is recommended to explore opportunities for implementing latest weather-controlled rainwater harvesting technology allowing to harvest rainwater from attenuation storage capacity without the need for dedicated harvesting storage in a land and material efficient way.

Fig. 46. Enhanced amenity along the River Rom and Black's Brook for pedestrians and cyclists alongisde Nature-based SuDS

5.4.2.2 Biodiversity net gain and urban greening factor

Romford suffers from a paucity of green space. Urban greening reduces the urban heat island effect and has a positive influence on community wellbeing. The GLA highlights the degree that Romford suffers from the urban heat island effect[1], and green infrastructure can provide some mitigation of this effect by shading roof surfaces and through evapotranspiration[2]. The provision of ecologically rich green spaces has been shown to enhance development value and creates additional economic activity. The Masterplan promotes inclusion of a range of interlinked green spaces that can support different habitats. This includes the use of Nature-based SuDS, provision of street trees, green roofs, green walls, rain gardens, hedgerows, shrubs and bushes, flower gardens and grassland. These support natural solutions to urban drainage

Biodiversity net gain and urban greening factor are two ways of measuring the net quantity and quality of green spaces and natural habitats within all developments including green spaces, new buildings and public realm.

Biodiversity net gain (BNG)

Biodiversity net gain means that natural habitats are quantifiably improved as a result of development. The Masterplan requires all new development to be able to demonstrate a net biodiversity gain of greater than 10%, pushing beyond National Planning Policy minimum of 10%, as calculated using the statutory biodiversity metric tool. This means that that through development, more or better natural habitats will be delivered, including taking account of any loss.

Urban greening factor (UGF)

Urban Greening Factor is a way of measuring the net resultant quality and quantity of all 'natural features' of a development. Urban greening can be achieved through a variety of approaches tailored to the site and type of development and could include elements such as green roofs, Nature-based SuDS, street trees and planting, water-spaces, growing spaces or communal gardens.

The Masterplan requires new development to demonstrate an urban greening factor above those in the London Plan, (minimum of 0.4 for residential and 0.3 for commercial development). The calculation of the urban greening factor should follow the method established by the GLA.

1 https://apps.london.gov.uk/heatmap/, accessed August 2024
2 London Plan 2021

5.4.2.3 Strategies for a Zero Carbon Town

Although minimum thresholds have been established by National and London Planning Policies, they should not be regarded as targets and developments are encourage to exceed these values. The Masterplan seeks to push beyond these, taking a lead from Havering's green context and showcasing Romford as a forward-thinking town centre. Environments should always be designed so they are able to thrive, supporting a diverse range of materials, flora and fauna that is interconnected throughout Romford. This is achieved through early and careful considerations of the ground conditions and climate, including seasonal variations and anticipated changes due to climate change.

Considering BNG and UGF at the earlist stages of development and in discussions with planning will help result in both the maximum uplifts but also in linking enhancements so they contribute to the wider greening ambitions set out in the Havering Local Plan, supporting strategies including the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Strategy as well as this Masterplan.

Developments should deliver BNG and UGF within the footprint of their sites, though it may also be appropriate to combine some biodiversity and urban greening enhancements across developments collectively. In these instances, priority can be given to contributing to wider Romford blue and green networks and projects such as deculverting and partially renaturalising the River Rom, greening the Market Place, or linking wider green spaces through landscaped, active travel routes.

The Romford Energy Network

In response to more stringent policy, there are several trends that are driving a transition to more local and dynamic energy supply networks. Decarbonisation of the power grid is changing the method of heating from gas to electricity, with use of low carbon technologies such as heat pumps. Policy has also driven down the costs of technology and systems including battery storage, wind turbines and photovoltaics. Integrated approaches to energy supply include low and ambient temperature heat networks, smart and dynamic electricity grids and potential to adapt and expand, such as to allow for car charging and feeding into the grid.

There are currently no planned energy networks for Romford. This is an opportunity to leapfrog to a 5th Generation Low Temperature Heat Network which can balance and recover waste heat from commercial buildings to supply heat to residential buildings. The network can be seasonally balanced by dumping heat to the ground in summer, and extracting heat in winter, through ground source heat pumps. There is also opportunity for interconnection with high temperature networks fed from low carbon sources such as energy from waste, co-location of data centres or deep freeze industry with buildings with consistent heat demand.

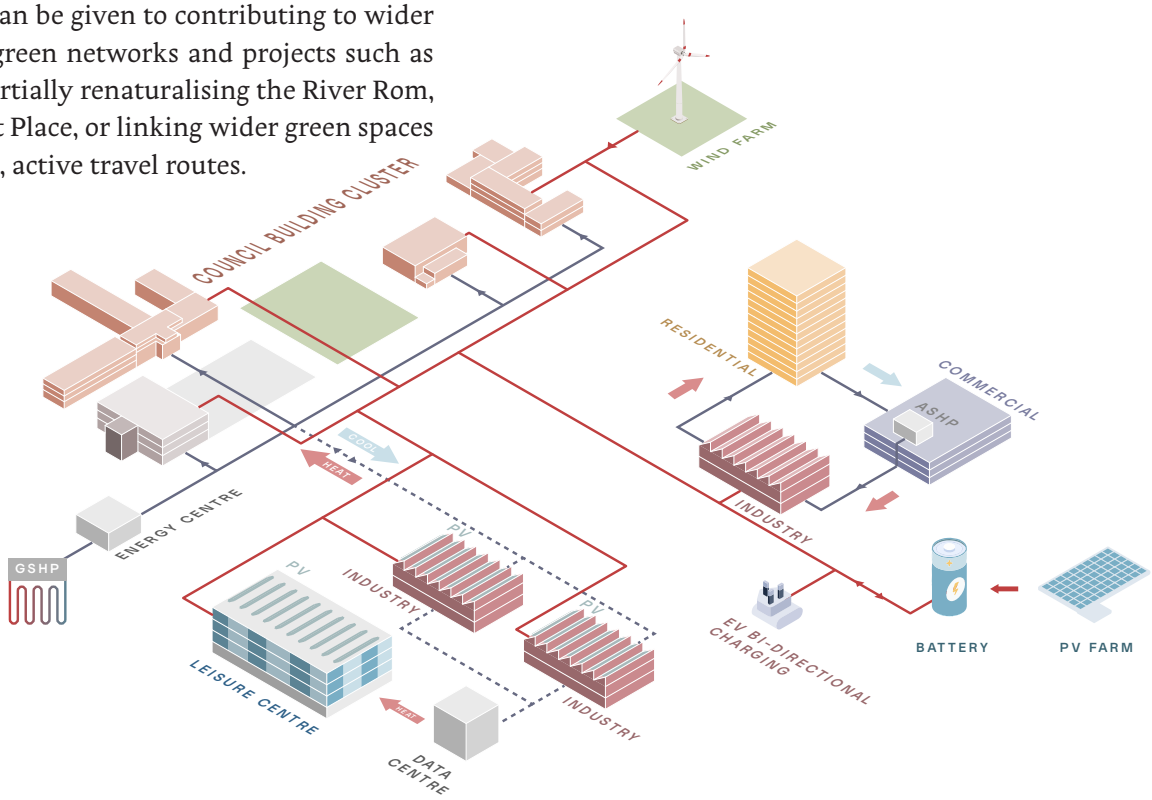


Fig. 47 Example of integrated smart energy system

This approach can be complimented by opportunities to support greater decarbonisation of the grid through renewable energy generation and storage. The future need for a "dynamic" grid will require storage banks which will allow the grid to draw electricity from dynamic stores (such as electric vehicles) during times of need and deposit during surges. Development of offsite renewables farms outside of the city support the potential to deliver Zero Carbon within Romford town centre.

Whilst some renewable energy can be delivered through new development applications, there is also opportunity to lease roof space on commercial buildings within Central Romford. If half of the available roof space could be given over to Photovoltaic Arrays (PVs), approximately 5 hectares of PV panels could be installed to generate 10GWh per year, equal to 2-3% of the borough's annual domestic electricity consumption[1].

The Romford Energy Company

There are a number of models coming forward to change the way we purchase, generate and distribute energy. Many local authorities are looking to establish arms lengths energy companies to drive forward the provision of local heat and power networks.

More innovative business models incorporate community representation or are formed using social purpose vehicles such as a Community Interest Company. This provides a focus on customers and the provision of reliable, affordable and low carbon energy. Profits can be reinvested into expansion of networks, retrofit projects and subsidise bills for the most vulnerable.

Zero Carbon Developments

New developments (including major refurbishments) should follow the energy hierarchy with a focus on passive design solutions. The Masterplan supports the shift to zero-emission vehicles, and where car parking facilities are provided, EV charging facilities should be provided to support this.

Development proposals should include a detailed energy strategy to demonstrate how the zero-carbon target will be met within the framework of the energy hierarchy. The cost of delivering passive homes and buildings is falling dramatically with leading construction companies able to deliver at competitive rates. Therefore, new developments should target a 10% against Part L through fabric measures alone. The overall minimum reduction of 35% against Part L will be met through a combination of low carbon heat and renewable heat sources. This decrease in energy consumption should be continually improving to strive towards a Zero Carbon development.

In the future all developments, whether stand alone or large developments, should allow for future connection to the Low Temperature Heat Network and potential for a two-way connection to the grid to allow for future renewables. Larger developments should explore opportunities for a Low Temperature Heat Network as highlighted in Fig. 47.

Co-location

New developments should be encouraged to bring forward proposals that encourages a mix of heating and cooling demands to allow for sharing of energy both at a micro and macro scale.

New development should be encouraged make use of existing energy sources such as waste heat from existing uses, such as data centres. Furthermore, where possible new development should be located to incentivise supply any waste heat to complimentary uses such as leisure uses.

1 Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, "Electricity Comsumption, Borough, 2017," GOV.UK, 2019.

Table 9. Upfront Embodied Carbon, A1-5 (exc. Sequestration)

Band	Office	Residential (6+ storeys)	Education	Retail	
A++	<100	<100	<100	<100	
A+	<225	<200	<200	<200	
A	<350	<300	<300	<300	LETI 2030 Design Target
B	<475	<400	<400	<425	
C	<600	<500	<500	<550	LETI 2020 Design Target
D	<775	<675	<625	<700	
E	<950	<850	<750	<850	
F	<1100	<1000	<875	<1000	
G	<1300	<1200	<1100	<1200	

Table 10. Life Cycle Embodied Carbon, A 1-5, B1-5, CI-4

Band	Office	Residential (6+ storeys)	Education	Retail	
A++	<150	<150	<125	<125	
A+	<345	<300	<260	<250	
A	<530	<450	<400	<380	
B	<750	<625	<540	<535	RIBA 2030 Build Target
C	<970	<800	<675	<690	
D	<1180	<1000	<835	<870	
E	<1400	<1200	<1000	<1050	
F	<1625	<1400	<1175	<1250	
G	<1900	<1600	<1350	<1450	

Offsetting and Targets

Remaining operational emissions to Zero Carbon will be offset through contributions to Romford's Carbon Reduction Fund. This can pool resources to help reduce carbon through initiatives such as carbon sinking (growing trees), installing vehicle charging points, investing in renewable energy sources, or in the Romford energy company.

Energy strategies should also set out both regulated and unregulated operational consumption and will be expected to monitor and report on energy performance through post occupancy evaluation.

Longer term, developments should aim towards 15-20 kWh/m2/yr for heating and cooling demand (Passivhaus aims for 15 kWh/m2/yr) to reduce overall operational energy. Overall operational energy should be within 55 kWh/m2/yr as highlighted in the RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge targets.

The reduction of embedded carbon is also expected and is closely linked to design strategies for the Circular Economy. In the short to medium, it should be demonstrated that embodied impacts of developments should target the aspirational benchmarks as outlined in the GLA Whole Life Carbon Assessment Guidance. In the longer term, embodied carbon should be reduced to with align with LETI 2030 band A.

Be Seen – Post Occupancy Evaluation

The drive towards zero-carbon development requires comprehensive monitoring of energy demand and carbon emissions to ensure planning commitments are being delivered. Post Occupancy Evaluation also provides useful insight to inform the design and operation of energy infrastructure.

Major developments are required to monitor and report on energy performance, such as by displaying a Display Energy Certificate (DEC) and reporting to the Mayor for at least five years via an online portal, enabling the GLA to identify good practice and report on the operational performance of new development in London.

5.4.2.4 Strategies for a Circular Economy

Circular construction

The built environment sector is the largest global user of materials, using over 400 million tonnes of materials per year in the UK. The production, delivery, use and disposal of building materials accounts for significant quantities of energy and CO2 emissions ('embodied energy' and 'embodied CO2'), and natural resources (including waste to landfill and water). Production and use of materials can also release toxic emissions, HCFC / CFCs and have negative impacts on biodiversity. Materials need to be selected carefully to create safer, higher quality spaces for building users whilst minimising environmental impacts over their lifecycle.

The construction industry is also a significant generator of waste in the UK, with over 90 million tonnes of waste produced annually by construction and demolition. Typically, construction projects achieve high diversion from landfill rates (>95%) but reuse levels are low.

Construction projects are moving beyond the waste hierarchy and emphasis on recycling towards a circular economy approach, which seeks to retain the value and quality of materials over time and take a much more strategic whole-life-thinking approach to the design of buildings and infrastructure to avoid waste.

All new development should achieve zero waste to landfill during demolition & construction, and maximise reuse and recycling, exceeding GLA's 2020 target of 95%.

By bringing stakeholders together and working in partnership with developers, local communities, deconstruction specialists and waste authorities, opportunities for reusing and repurposing the existing fabric of the town centre can be realised. In addition to the benefits of avoided waste and reduced impact of construction logistics, new supply chains can be established and new business opportunities can be developed.

It is encouraged that development should engage and report on the metrics set out in the UKGBC Circular Economy Metrics for Buildings paper.[1]

1 https://ukgbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Circular-Economy-Metrics-Paper.pdf

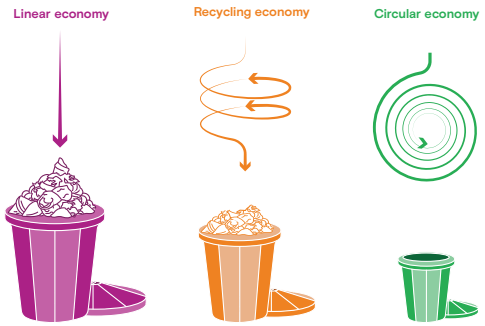


Fig. 49. Example of integrated smart energy system - diagram courtesy of Circular Flanders

Principles for Circular Construction

- Existing buildings should be adapted and reused as much as possible
- Where the adaptive reuse of the whole building is not appropriate, development teams should investigate reusing parts of the existing building and conduct pre-demolition audits to identify the value of materials and opportunities for reuse and recycling of building elements
- Buildings should be carefully deconstructed rather than demolished where feasible to help retain the value and quality of materials, support reuse, and limit dust and noise disruption to local residents
- Materials from the existing development should be reused on-site where possible, as part of new structures or for lower grade uses such as for aggregate, fill or landscaping
- Surplus materials not required for the development should be collected for reuse and recycling in other building schemes as a priority

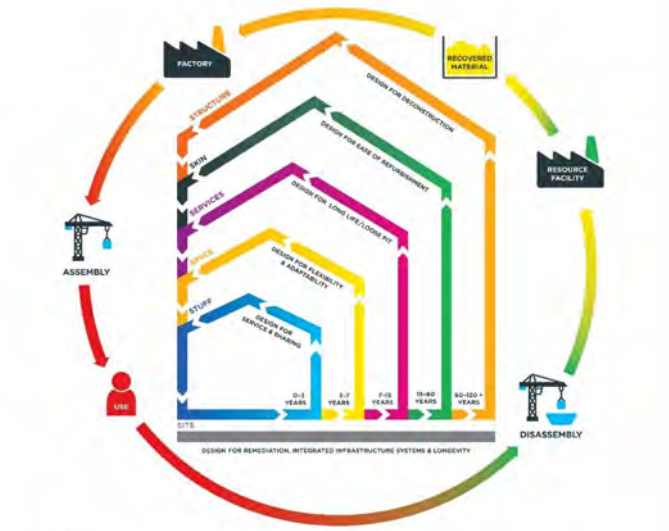


Fig. 48. Typical lifecycle length of the six 'building layers': site, structure, skin, services, space, and stuff. Adapted from the 6S' by Stewart Brand, by Useful Projects

- Designing out waste principles should be adopted, e.g. use of prefabricated building elements, standard sizes and procuring accurate quantities of materials
- Design new developments for longevity, adaptability, flexibility and disassembly taking account of building layers and their lifecycle (see Fig. 48 for typical lifecycle of building layers)
- Buildings should be designed to be easy to maintain and upgrade over time, this will extend a building's lifecycle
- Embodied carbon of materials should be reduced, through lean design and sustainable materials specifications
- Design teams should specify healthy, responsibly sourced materials
- Projects should aim for at least 20% reused or recycled content by value, sourced locally
- Major building elements should be carefully evaluated to balance traditional criteria such as aesthetics, technical performance and cost alongside environmental and social criteria

Waste Collection and Circular Economy Business Opportunities

Havering is part of the East London Waste Authority (ELWA) which is seeking to continually improve municipal recycling rates and collection efficiency through collaboration of local councils. New developments are required to consider how they can contribute to this. Havering's recycling rate has been improving over time, with a household recycling rate of 37% in 2017 / 18, which is above the London average.

The collection of waste has a significant impact on the urban realm. Waste storage can have a negative impact on the pedestrian experience and devalue the public realm. There is a strong preference within the Masterplan for underground storage facilities and smart waste bins.

Waste arising from Romford town centre stem from three principal areas:

- Commercial and retail
- Public realm and landscaping
- Residential and municipal waste

By focussing on the waste and material streams through the development of the town centre, Romford could develop approaches that:

- Design out waste arisings by working with retailers to reduce packaging waste and creating spaces in the Masterplan for businesses that provide sharing, leasing or fixing services
- Support smart waste collection infrastructure, enabling optimised waste collection, reducing numbers and impact of vehicle movements in the town centre and associated pollution
- Use underground waste storage, which can be commercially beneficial due to increased efficiency at certain scales
- Work with the ELWA to drive upgrading of waste collection fleet to reduce emissions
- Develop a single commercial and retail waste collection service which could be operated by a local business provider or social enterprise, and be incentivised to increase the value of waste materials and work with businesses to reduce the amount of waste generated
- Follow the waste hierarchy as set out by DEFRA[1]

Additionally, all new developments should also be designed to enable high levels of material recovery. In addition to the requirements in Havering Local Plan Policy 35 waste management, developments should:

- Provide enough space on-site to securely and safely store waste and recycling bins
- Bins should be stored at ground level and there should be a flat route between the storage area and the point where they will be collected from
- Bins should be stored as near to the boundary of a site as possible, and in the case of large bins (over 240L) no further than 10 metres
- Space for composting organic waste should be provided in residential development. This should be designed as part of private or communal green spaces on a site and be in an easily accessible location that is well drained and receives as much sun as possible

1 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, "Guidance on Applying the Waste Hierarchy," 2011.

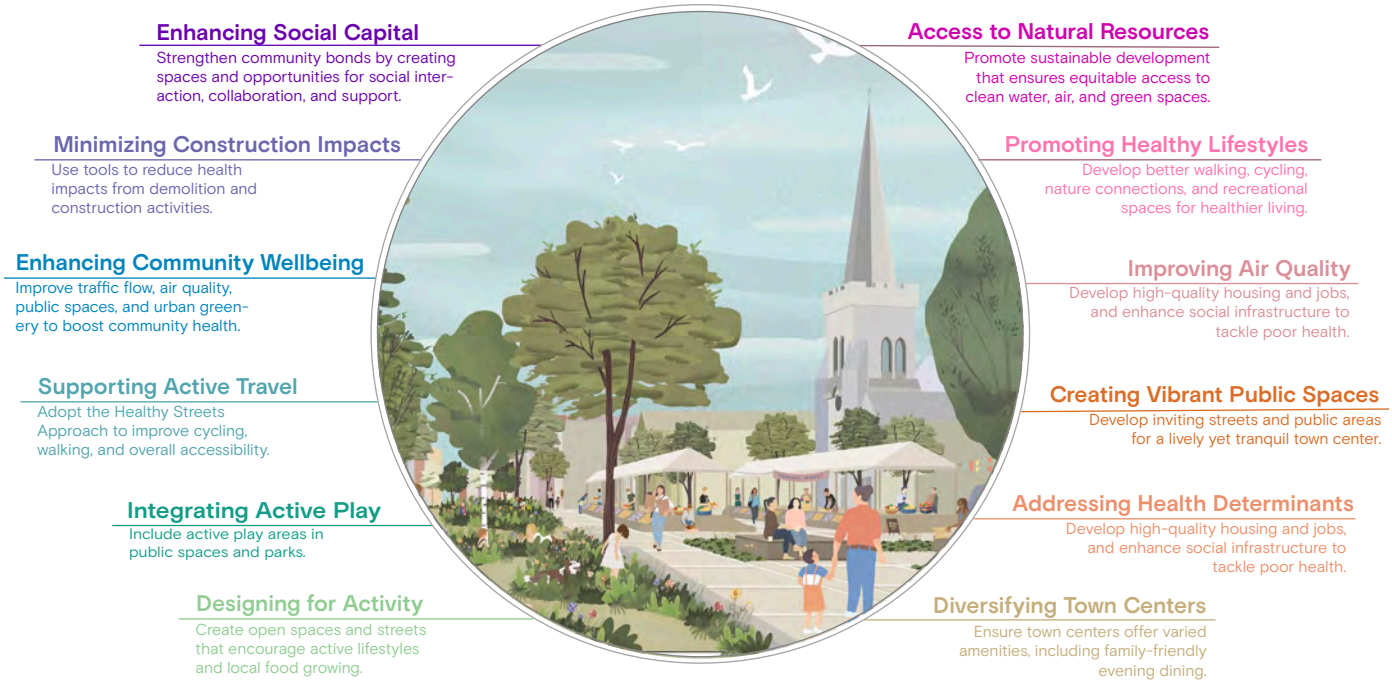
5.5 INCLUSIVITY, HEALTH & WELLBEING

5.5.1 Overview

The spatial qualities and design of places greatly impact whether they promote inclusivity, health and wellbeing. These three core considerations are at the foundation of the Masterplan strategies and key moves, from the design and layout of street sections to the mix of uses. Any development within the town centre should be designed to be equitable to all people, modes of travel and make it easier and more attractive to make healthy lifestyle choices.

The diagram below illustrates how inclusivity, health and wellbeing have been integrated across the different Masterplan strategy sections, in order that Romford town centre continues to evolve as a place that is accessible to all and positively contributes to the health of communities.

Havering is committed to improving and protecting population health under the Health and Social Care Act (2012) and using all levels at its disposal to improve health and wellbeing. Havering's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 / 20-2023 / 24 set out the top priorities for the borough and the Masterplan Strategies build on this good work by setting out practical and quantifiable targets, tools and recommendations. Although these are integrated across the other strategies and chapters of the Masteraplan, this section sets out additional strategies as well as collating and expanding on how throughout, the Masterplan strategies contribute specifically to inclusivity, health and wellbeing.



5.5.2 Strategies

The Masterplan helps to deliver Havering's joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and support the delivery of Havering's statutory duties of protecting and improving health through:

Promoting development that tackles determinants of poor health

- Providing additional high-quality homes and jobs
- Distributing social infrastructure equitably
- Using tools to manage and minimise the adverse health impacts from demolitions and construction, including noise, dust and heavy traffic
- Putting air quality improvements at the heart of transport of and environmental strategies

Helping local people adopt healthy lifestyles

- Ensuring open spaces and streets are designed to encourage active lifestyles by using the Healthy Streets Approach to facilitate active travel choices such as cycling and walking that can improve accessibility, health and economic performance
- Promoting development and projects that secure improved public realm and, better connections with nature making active travel choices more attractive
- Improved recreation space
- Providing additional facilities for young people

Promoting development and projects that improve communities and places

- Reducing traffic and improving air quality
- Creating a mix of high-quality streets and public spaces that accommodate vibrant town centre activities, as well as offering places of tranquillity
- Providing additional open space that encourages social interaction
- Greening spaces
- Encouraging food growing opportunities
- Incorporating active play throughout the public realm and in appropriate parks and open spaces
- Developing land use and management strategies that ensure that the town centre provides a broader offer – including early evening eating out – to ensure that it is safe and attractive for all – including families with children

Inclusive public spaces with events – Manchester International Festival

Encourage mobility for all and active lifestyles – Venn Street, Clapham

5.5.2.1 Inclusive design

Inclusive design means designing places that take account of the entire community in order that everyone can participate in urban life equally, easily and confidently. Inclusive design principles form the basis of all public realm, open space, and movement strategies. These have been informed through discussions with a wide range of local people, community groups as well as inclusive design professionals.

In addition, as developments come forward pre-application discussions should be used to highlight the need to embed the following inclusive design principles:

- Provide frequent seating places in the public realm, particularly on busier streets with some seating options available in shaded areas
- Secure inclusive public realm and open space designs that are barrier free and take account of different mobilities
- Ensure new physical barriers are not created whilst rectifying existing ones
- Secure provision of 'Changing Places' facilities in public toilets that include a height adjustable changing bench, a peninsular toilet and a celling hoist
- Provide baby changing facilities in public toilets
- Enhance the positive impact of social cohesion through provision for voluntary and community sectors and additional space for civic functions
- Consider the provision of community gardens and food growing space to enhance access to healthy food
- Strengthen the shop mobility scheme
- Provide accessible car parking in easy reach of amenities and prioritised over other car parking
- Enhance accessibility to buildings and places through the reprovision of public toilets, changing places and provision of cycle parking for accessible cycles
- Design out, wherever possible, step level changes in streets and the public realm. Where necessary make level access routes equally clear and intuitive
- Include sensory interesting landscape features such as smells, water, sounds
- Integrate accessible play equipment
- Ensure childcare facilities maximise positive impacts of access to work
- Provide secure cycle parking for non-standard cycles
- Create opportunities to diversify and improve lifestyles through better accessibility, infrastructure and resources
- Make places that are child-friendly and facilitate independent movement by young people, in line with the Mayor of London's 'Making London Child-Friendly' (February 2020)
- Create opportunities to promote social cohesion by providing well-lit, attractive and overlooked public informal seating and gathering places
- Enhance spaces to be safe and attractive for all – including women and the disabled – to use at any time of day or night, ensuring they are well lit, that furniture and planting do not create areas to hide behind or within, removing underpasses and replacing these with at-grade crossings, and encouraging positive social interaction.

Fig. 50. Components of a 'healthy street' – TfL, Healthy Streets for London

5.5.2.2 Active travel

The Romford Masterplan champions active travel options through improved streetscape and public realm enhancements. In order to achieve a successful shift towards active travel, it is acknowledged that cycling and walking must be presented as attractive alternatives before any reduction in car infrastructure be considered. Research demonstrates that good urban design has clear and tangible benefits to climate change resilience, health, wellbeing, the environment and experience, improved air quality, liveability, and it is in response to this that the Masterplan strategies are sculpted.

By promoting cycle infrastructure and pleasant environments for walking across Romford, these important steps towards a shift in transport culture are readily achievable, and to the betterment of the town centre as a whole.

Fig. 51. Reductions in health problems associated with inactive lifestyles through Healthy Streets design – TfL, Healthy Streets for London

Attractive and inclusive space provided for active travel – Old Bethnal Green Road

Multi-modal streets promoting active travel to create a positive environment for local businesses – Walthamstow Village, Mini-Holland

5.6 CHARACTER AND TOWNSCAPE

5.6.1 Overview

This section sets out character and townscape strategies to help enhance and preserve Romford's assets including key buildings and spaces such as the Market Place, South Street and the High Street, Romford Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Buildings, whilst accommodating new and emerging characters from new development. Romford's character is described here through:

- Character Areas of built fabric; supported by
- Townscape of spaces and streets

The character strategies here strike a balance between preserving and enhancing Romford' vibrant and unique existing character. and projecting a positive future for Romford through new or evolving characters. Fig. 52 illustrates the future character areas that make up the fabric of the town centre. These are informed by the existing character of each area, defined by uses and activities in and around them. They indicate the potential for change through colour intensity, with white areas indicating parts to be reinforced and maintained – primarily the Conservation Area and its surrounds which includes the Market Place, High Street, and parts of South Street and North Street; but also the wider suburban residential context into which development should be sensitively feathered. Areas suitable for change may be enhanced and improved through new interventions, or in some cases transformed and changed to support Romford's future. Transformation of character must always relate to the overall town centre character and the Conservation Area at its core. In some places a reinvention of character is outlined, suggesting change through reprovision that evolves the area positively.

The strategies outline how to develop Romford's character through new developments and interventions to ensure a positive future Romford that is attractive and distinct, whilst accommodating new and emerging characters from new development where demonstrated to be appropriate.

5.6.2 Strategies

The following strategies establish character and townscape guidance to reinforce or develop the qualities of the character areas, overleaf.

Character areas
These are mapped in Fig. 52 to guide uses and activity across different parts of the town centre.

Contextual height & massing
Approach to building height and form in relation to context and street width.

Townscape
Axonometric guidance for townscaping and building form in relation to context, street width and height strategy

Urban Grain
Strategies for developing a finer urban grain, based on streets and blocks, that create positive street edges, enclose back conditions, subdivide existing sites, and responds to the Romford Conservation Area and heritage assets.

Streetscape
A series of sections through key streets and spaces that provide guidance on building heights, street widths and layouts, and uses which together help establish the character of these areas.

Views & Heritage
Key views in the town centre which should be preserved and enhanced through careful massing that responds to the existing character, proportions and nearby historic buildings.

5.6.2.1 Character Areas

St Edwards Way
Enhanced residential-led character, with local retail and commercial uses addressing the High Street.

North Street
A new residential neighbourhood with opportunities for small scale employment, local retail and social infrastructure

St Edwards Way North
Residential area at the edge of the town centre to be sensitively enhanced through potential incremental intervention

Shopping Hall
Reinvention of character creating an improved context for the Conservation Area with a mix of commercial and community uses that should support the Romford Market

Market Place
Robust, historic character to reinforce and maintain in the heart of the town centre

Civic Campus
Enhanced character defined by the town hall and library, intensified with residential and employment opportunities

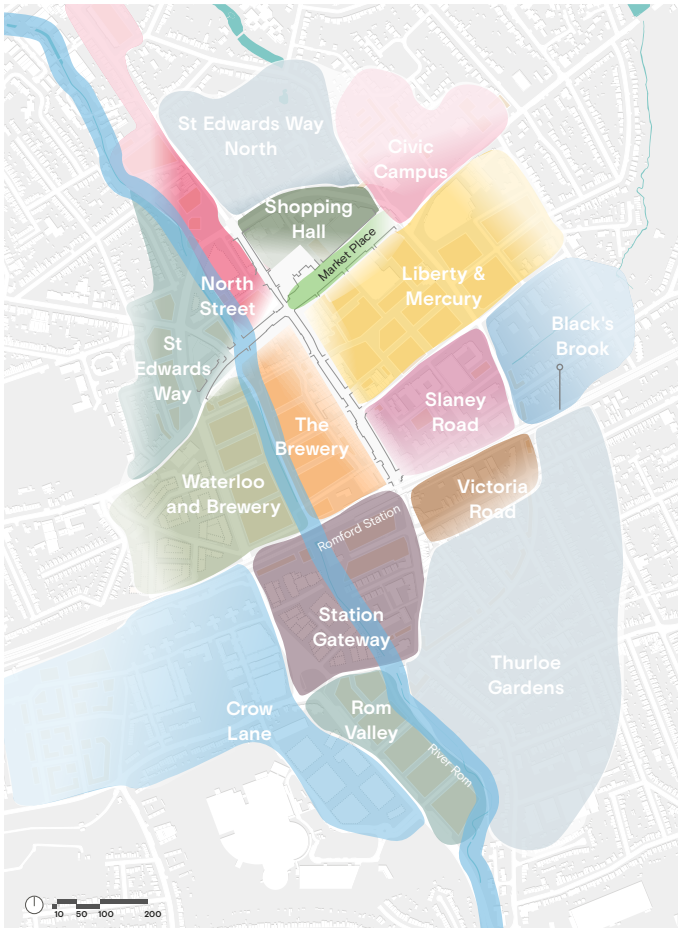


Fig. 52. Future character areas

Liberty & Mercury
Reinvention of the existing primary retail core from shopping centres to streets, incorporating employment uses, food and beverage, and residential.

Waterloo & the Brewery
Transformation of character into a new neighbourhood forming part of the primary retail offer and principle location for leisure, cultural uses, food and beverage, mixed with residential

Station Gateway
Transformation of character into employment and residential-led neighbourhoods with improved station access

Crow Lane
Ongoing transformation of character including a recently built residential neighbourhood with major social infrastructure and planned redevelopment of the former ice rink site.

Rom Valley
Transformation of character into a new neighbourhood with employment uses, social infrastructure local commercial and residential

Thurloe Gardens
Residential area at the edge of the town centre to be sensitively enhanced through potential incremental intervention

Victoria Road
Enhanced character with potential for development along the rail corridor should maintain a mixed-use high street character along Victoria Road

Slaney Road
Reinvention of character of offices and cultural uses, also reinforcing the character of South Street

Black Brook
Reinvention of the existing primary retail core from shopping centres to streets, incorporating employment uses, food and beverage, and residential.

5.6.2.2 Contextual height & massing

New buildings must respect the setting of Romford and its historic character. To preserve the existing character and townscape qualities of Romford, heights of new buildings should be in-line with the diagram, right.

At its centre, in and around the Romford conservation area, is an area suitable for 2-5 storeys, closely aligned with the heights of existing buildings, in particular heritage assets. Across the rest of the town centre and its vicinity is an area suitable for 4-6 storeys, with buildings of compact urban form and a mid-rise townscape that must respect the existing heights and townscape around them.

In specific areas it is suitable for buildings of 4-8 storeys, with potential for some taller elements (over 8 storeys). This area is broadly aligned with the area identified as suitable for tall buildings (defined as 6 storeys / 18 metres or higher) in the draft Havering Character Study, 2024. The frequency of taller elements should not be so great as to become the predominant height datum, requiring instead the predominant height to remain at 4-8 storeys. Taller elements will also be required to demonstrate their appropriateness for consideration by the Council by way of:

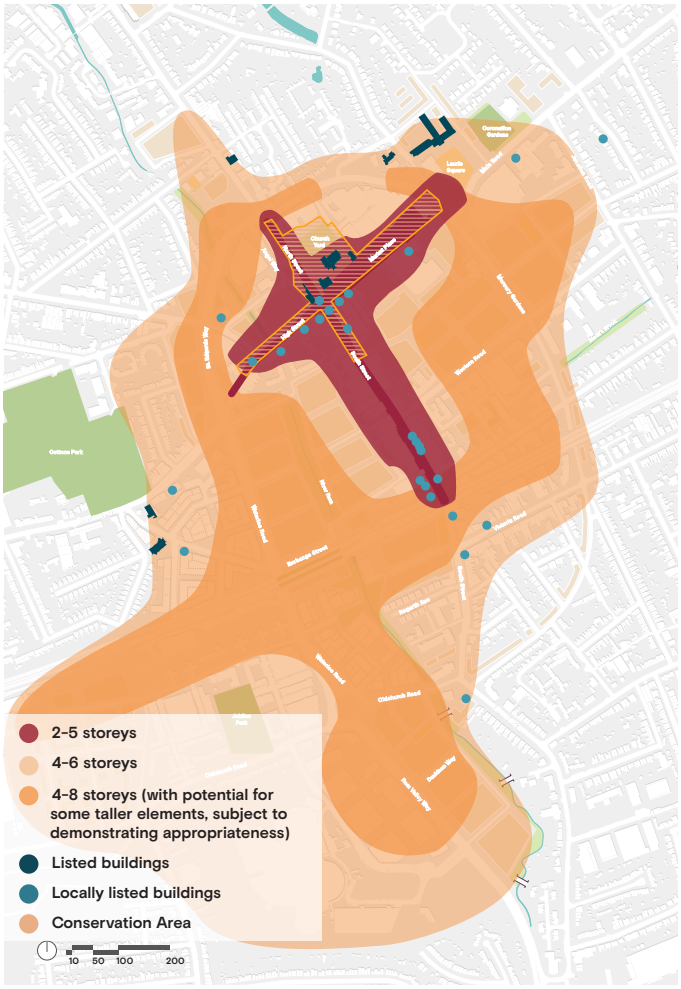


Fig. 53. Height strategy

1. The location of the scheme

- Taller elements will only be acceptable in locations within the identified area where existing character will be improved or complemented by the proposed development

2. The design quality of the scheme

- Reflect Romford's outer London location and its contexts
- Respond positively to the historical context and Romford's role as a market town, with a distinctively Romford response
- Ensure substantial sky component, the amount of sky visible from a window, by spacing taller elements
- Feather into the surrounding context, allowing for a stepped transition with heights lowering towards the surrounding low-rise suburban context and the historic core centred around the Conservation Area
- Offer a positive and effective ground floor relationship with the street and public realm, positively contributing to their character

3. The community benefits from the scheme

- Provide new public amenity space
- Contribute to the greening of Romford
- Incorporate non-residential ground floor uses that contribute to the vitality of the town centre (where relevant, location dependent)
- Clearly demonstrate that the level of community benefit, including amount of affordable housing, would not be achievable without the inclusion of tall buildings

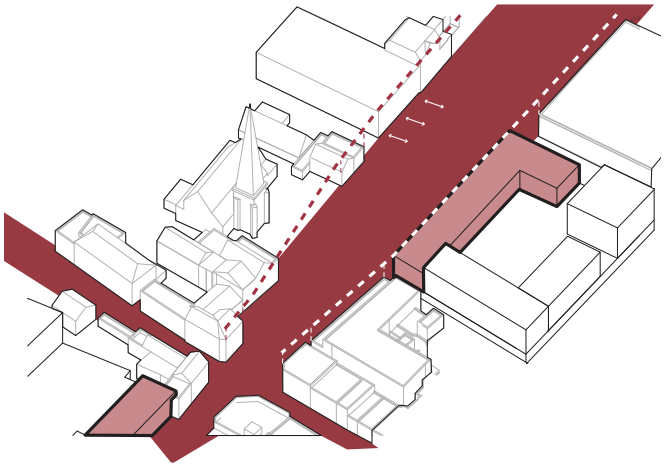
Applications for schemes with taller elements (over 8 storeys) should:

- Be subject to the Council's Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) process;
- Engagement at early stages – during brief formation / site selection process;
- Secure Endorsement from the Council's Quality Review Panel (QRP), in relation to the height of the proposed scheme;
- Demonstrate exceptional design quality;
- Provide a greater degree of detail as part of the application process to help safeguard higher quality; and
- Have community support, demonstrated through effective community engagement.

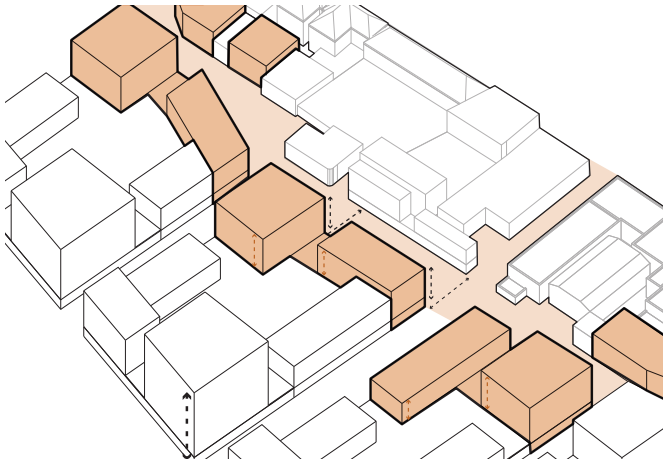
5.6.2.3 Townscape

The townscape of Romford is enhanced and reinforced through a consistent and contextual scale and proportion of streets and spaces, that produces a predominantly 3-8 storey urbanism in the town centre, feathering into the Conservation Area and into the wider context which must be maintained and respected. The character of streets can be broadly classified into three types, shown on the map overleaf, specific guidance for which is set out below.

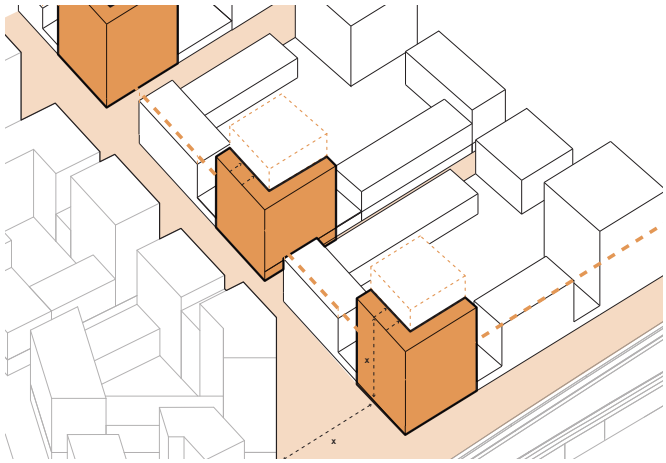
Condition



Market Place, South Street, North Street and the High Street



Areas suitable for 4-6 storeys



Areas suitable for 4-8 storeys and taller elements

Guidance

- Proposals must respect the existing character, scale and urban grain
- Ground floor frontages should be active uses that contribute to and enhance the existing commercial offer
- Proposals must enhance the setting of existing heritage assets and should not impact their backdrop
- Activate with small scale and intimate development, reinstating narrower frontages
- Townscape should be sympathetic to the Conservation Area and to historic assets such as Listed and Locally Listed buildings, offering them a positive context

- Heights and massing should reflect the widths of streets, typically not exceeding 1:1 proportions in keeping with local townscape. For example, a street with a width of 12m should accommodate buildings up to 12 m tall
- Massing should be medium-rise and broadly maintain a 4-6 storey townscape as identified in Fig. 53, with variety in height encouraged
- Transitions in height from the adjacent context should not exceed 2 storeys
- There is greater scope for contemporary or innovative architecture. However, the existing character of individual streets should be respected and developments enhance existing positive attributes, buildings and spaces

- Buildings of predominantly 4-8 storeys, with taller elements that will be required to demonstrate their appropriateness
- There is greater scope for taller elements in the areas identified in Fig. 53
- Where taller elements are proposed and demonstrated to be appropriate, maintain a predominant height consistent with the street width that follows the overarching 4-8 storey townscape, with taller elements set back or made architecturally discrete and proportioned elegantly to avoid monolithic blocks that will negatively impact views
- All taller elements must be incorporated into urban blocks, provide a variety of height, and must feather into their context
- Point towers are not supported
- Use modulation to break up long elevations

5.6.2.4 Urban Grain

The Market Place, South Street, High Street and North Street define the core structure of the layout of Romford's streets. Outside of these, the Masterplan proposes to recalibrate the urban grain, and establish a finer grain of urban blocks based on a network of streets that also makes incremental delivery more feasible. These should be made up of robust urban blocks that positively define and enclose street edges, and where necessary enclosing current back conditions.

Currently, the town centre is comprised of a series of large-scale urban blocks, often with large uses within them, such as the shopping centres. Breaking these down into a finer urban grain will improve pedestrian permeability across the town centre and will allow streets to be publicly open all of the time, as opposed to only during shopping centre operating hours.

Where large-scale uses such as retail and leisure are introduced or reprovided these should be placed at the centre of new, finer grain and smaller urban blocks, accessed from the street, and set behind smaller uses providing active frontages at the edges of the urban block. These smaller units should be around 5-10 m wide to ensure streets are filled with regular front doors.

Enhancing arcades and introducing new contemporary arcades can be a useful tool in creating a finer urban grain in Romford, given their positive history in the town centre, such as the Quadrant Arcade.

A complexity of lanes, yards and alleys should be maintained and also introduced, helping to add variety and depth to the urban grain. Historical examples are found along the edge of the Market Place, and the loss of these should be resisted, helping to reinforce this aspect of local identity. Restoration of the Quadrant Arcade would also support local identity. Narrow side streets could add interest, variation, surprise and also different economic opportunities.

The network of streets should create a townscape of a sequence of revelations, avoiding a uniformity of grid structure, and providing interesting spaces at junctures throughout the town centre.

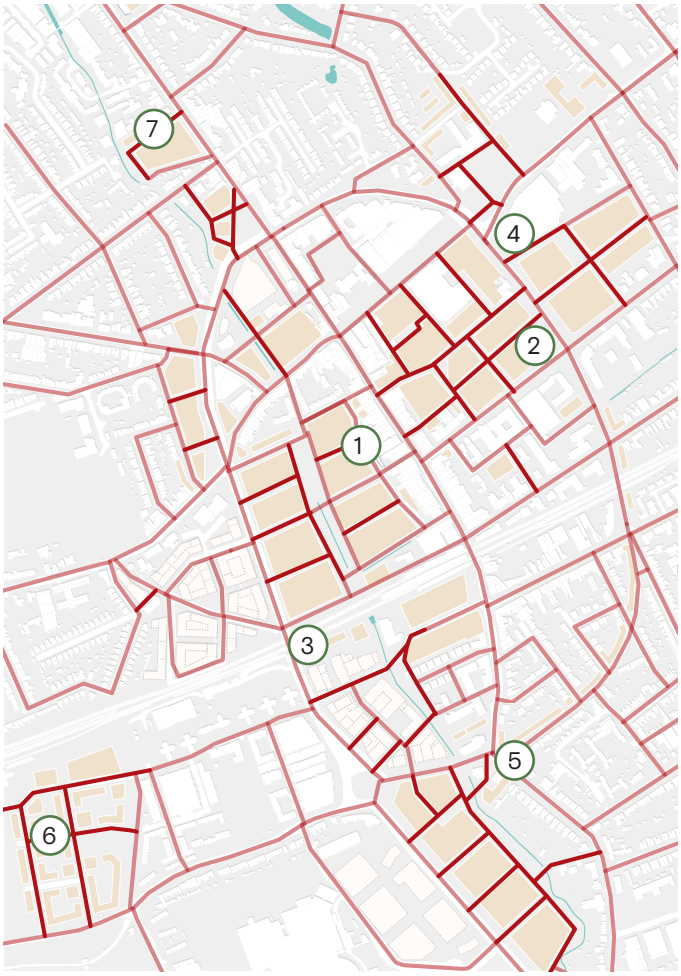


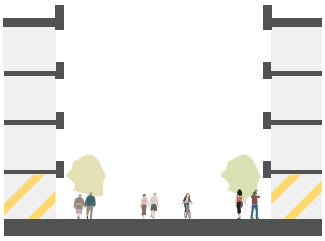
Fig. 54. New streets highlighted that introduce a finer urban grain

5.6.2.5 Streetscape

The character and composition of key streets and spaces, shown in the map opposite, are illustrated here. The height of new buildings should relate to the width of streets, typically up to a 1:1 proportion, unless fronting a wide space such as the Market Place, and should relate to the context set by neighbouring buildings.

1. Narrow internal streets

Narrower streets and lanes creating a more intimate atmosphere, with potential for ground floor residential – avoiding single storey ground floor residential – or small commercial units in appropriate locations.



2. Broad internal streets

Broader streets with active commercial ground floors, with a predominantly 6-storey townscape.

3. Waterloo Road

Broad, busy and active street with predominantly 6 to 8-storey townscape.

4. Mercury Gardens

Broad, busy and active street with predominantly 6 to 8-storey townscape.

5. Thurloe Gardens

Reconfiguration of the southeastern part of the ring road to create a quieter street with development sites at the edges with mid-rise townscape.

6. Crow Lane internal residential street

New residential streets with predominantly 4 to 6 storey townscape in proportion to the widths of streets.

7. North Street new internal street

New residential, pedestrian and cyclist priority street with predominantly 4-6 storey townscape.

Ground floor uses

- Retail / leisure / f&b
- Employment
- Residential

5.6.2.6 Views & Heritage

There are four main categories of views within the town centre: central key views, kinetic / long views, intimate views and emerging views. Examples of these views are illustrated on the diagram opposite. These specific views highlighted are not exhaustive but illustrate the existing positive qualities and characteristics that should be preserved and enhanced through detailed height and massing studies that ensure development responds positively to and respects existing character, proportions and nearby historic buildings, recognising their embodied heritage value.

The Masterplan promotes extending the boundary of the Conservation Area further down South Street and to incorporate buildings in their entirety, as opposed to only along building frontages. There should be a greater continuity of frontages, particularly in the Conservation Area and along North Street and High Street, restoration of these frontages, and recognition and protection of Romford's unusually extensive collection of inter-war buildings.

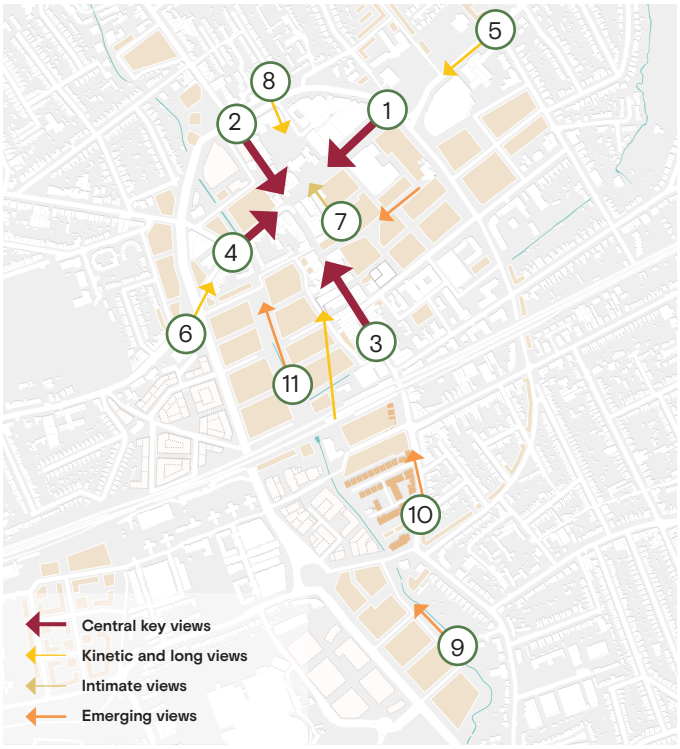


Fig. 55. Key views

Central Key Views

A subtle sequence of views that reflect the pedestrian experience within the town centre along key historic routes culminating at the crossroads of South Street and the Market Place.

The built character and predominant roof line along the edges of the Market Place, South Street, North Street and the High Street in and around the Conservation Area should be maintained with any new buildings reinforcing the existing positive qualities, without impacting their backdrop.

1. Market Place looking west towards the church spire

3. South Street looking north towards the church spire

2. South Street looking south towards the Conservation Area

4. High Street looking east towards the Market Place

Kinetic / Long Views

Historic routes / views from beyond the ring road which allows the historic centre of Romford to be clearly articulated by the church spire. This demonstrates the value of negative space behind the spire.

5. Main Road looking towards Town Hall

6. Ring road looking towards spire

Intimate Views

Intimate views with a domestic scale, historic character and clear focal point which should be preserved and enhanced as well as providing a precedent for the new 21st century routes which will permeate the large 20th century blocks.

7. View along Kings Arms Yard

8. View of church from churchyard

Emerging Views

Views that emerge from the Masterplan morphology for example the green corridor of the Rom. The new townscape should "create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting", (CABE Historic England, Building in Context)

9. Illustrative view of Rom Valley

10 Illustrative view towards proposed station entrance

11. Illustrative view of Brewery Gardens

5.7 USES AND MIX

5.7.1 Overview

The Uses and Mix strategies relate closely to Character and Townscape, with Character Areas defining locations for focuses of uses across the town centre.

The Masterplan focuses a retail core of activity around the Market Place and South Street, with other locations working in harmony to support the central area.

Acknowledging the changing nature of the retail, the Masterplan seeks to deliver smaller shops and a more varied food and drink offer, all working to support a unique and distinctive Romford. A key target is to create a more varied offer, that promotes activity at different times of day, and that can grow the early evening economy.

Employment and business space will be focused around the station, Waterloo Road and Rom Valley Way, and could be further supported by a potential north-south rapid transit route through the town centre. The Masterplan encourages growing pockets of cultural activity alongside leisure uses, using anchors to catalyse activity and drive footfall. New residential development brings further opportunities, and the Masterplan uses these to support town centre activities for everyone and as a means to deliver new resources and infrastructure.

The key moves informing the strategies are:

- Focus comparison retail, commercial and leisure in the heart of the centre
- Grow the town's cultural offer
- Focus office-based employment around the station
- Ensure continuity of key assets
- Clustering land uses in order to efficiently utilise and encourage vibrancy in the urban landscape
- Integrate additional housing with other uses
- Integrate additional workspace with other uses

5.7.2 Strategies

This section provides strategies for the following uses:

Retail, leisure and cultural infrastructure

- Safeguarding Romford's role as the principle centre of the Borough whilst reconfiguring the retail, leisure and cultural format and typology to be more street based and more aligned with emerging and future trends.

Business space

- Increasing the mix of employment uses within the town centre, enhancing and expanding business and employment space to capitalise on the arrival of the Elizabeth Line, and the interface of London and Essex, whilst delivering local opportunities and adding to the town centre vitality and the spend.

Flexible space

- Creating flexible building typologies that adaptable and flexible to accommodate a range of retail, social and commercial uses.

Meanwhile uses

- Creating spaces and opportunities for meanwhile activities to occur within the town centre, supporting transition and contributing to the attractiveness and cultural offer.

Housing

- Creating a series of integrated, liveable neighbourhoods, where dwelling within the town centre is a meaningful and attractive opportunity.

Social infrastructure

- Integrating the delivery of schools, healthcare facilities and community uses in the most appropriate locations, to support a desirable and liveable town centre.

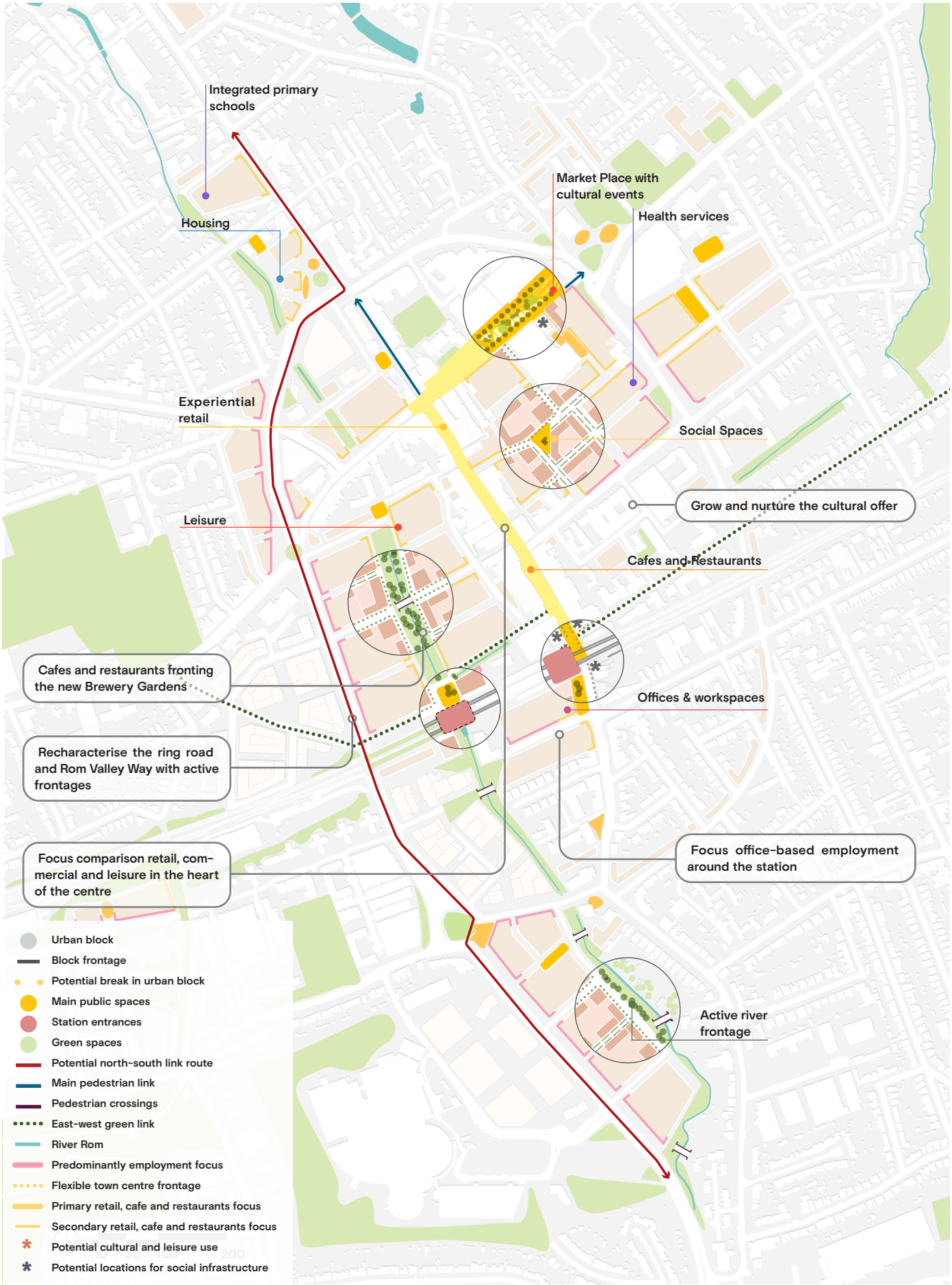


Fig. 56. Key moves and objectives for uses and mix

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5.7.2.1 Retail, Leisure and Culture

Retail

The most recent Retail Needs Assessment (LSH, February 2024) recognises the strategic challenges facing town centres generally and the impact this is having on future space requirements for Romford. Overall, whilst there is an expectation of future growth in the sector, based on expenditure and population growth, it concludes that there is no requirement to allocate additional sites and future needs can be met by reusing existing stock and already committed developments. Critically the assessment does not identify a need to contract the retail / leisure floorspace provision within Romford, and supports the continued operation of existing provision and planned developments that deliver new space.

The delivery of the Masterplan vision for Romford will offer opportunities to strengthen demand for retail / leisure activity by increasing the potential expenditure by raising the number of immediate residents in the catchment and supporting increased income levels – further supporting the retention of the overall retail / leisure capacity – but accepting the balance of uses may change within that stock.

Accommodating the correct form of retail will be important in future-proofing Romford, moving toward smaller retail and more adaptable units. Importantly, changes and developments will need to transition the town centre, and not extinguish its current role of accommodating a commercial focus.

Looking ahead the strategy for the town centre should:

- Seek to consolidate and focus retail space over time into the core of the town centre around North Street / High Street, Market Place and South Street
- Provide a new focus and purpose for the market, as a place for diverse independent retail activity and start ups
- Encourage increased café, informal dining and food offerings
- Support diversified / innovative models of sustainable activity, such as The Heart and Soul, which mixes café, venue and workspace

Leisure and cultural infrastructure

The investment in the Sapphire Ice and Leisure Centre has attracted a new audience to the town centre and shown a wider range of activities can succeed in Romford, complementing the existing commercial leisure off that includes bowling, cinemas and bars.

In the future, the leisure and culture offer should develop to become a core part of the town centre at day and night time by:

- Giving non-drinking establishments more prominence through improved street frontages
- Clustering uses into the heart of the town centre to complement the dining offer
- Clustering resources such as retail and food & beverage alongside leisure and cultural infrastructure to complement one another
- Nurture existing cultural facilities and providing space for them to expand in the town centre
- Encouraging creative business activity through increased workspace provision
- Delivering a structured programme of events (particularly in the Market Place) that continues to attract visitors and shift perceptions

Experiential retail that supports local production and helps activate streets and spaces – 19th & Mercer, Seattle

Integrating cultural activities and uses – sometimes temporary – into the town centre and spaces such as the Market Place – The Playing Field, Southampton

An expanded leisure offer that helps support a more experiential town centre, integrated with retail – Alley Oop, Vancouver

Cafes and restaurants that promote activity throughout the day and support an early evening economy, activating streets and spaces across the town centre, particularly South Street and the Market Place – New Road, Brighton

5.7.2.2 Business space

Havering is an entrepreneurial borough, with a large proportion of small, micro and start up enterprises within the borough. Changes to working patterns, increasing levels of self-employment, improved connectivity and the existing business make up will all drive demand for employment space in the future. New anchors, such as public institutions, could be utilised to bring further employment interest. The diversity of the economy will require a range of spaces types:

Offices

- Whilst much of Romford's historic office stock has been lost to residential, it remains an important and well-connected centre for businesses seeking to service London and Essex
- However, the nature of space requires modernisation and refocussing to locations that maximise the benefits of connectivity to businesses
- The provision of office space in high quality environments, within 400m of the Station is critical for optimising the offer to businesses
- Space should be flexible and create opportunities for direct occupancy or operation through serviced office providers

Workspace

- Romford should be a focus for start up and growing businesses, however at present there is little space provided for them
- Small, flexible and affordable workspace provision will address this gap and encourage greater business activity
- A mix of shared workspace, small studio offices and workshops should be delivered through mixed use development
- In line with local and London-wide policy an element (10%) of this space should be at 'affordable' rent levels

Industrial space

- The Masterplan area already accommodates some industrial space, albeit these sites have been earmarked for mixed use development
- New forms of light industrial / residential co-location development can retain and improve this important component of the local economy
- A key focus will be south of the town centre where there is strong connectivity via Rom Valley Way

Supporting an eclectic employment offer, with areas of focus such as around the station, but also integrated with other uses – Impact Hub, Kings Cross & Spacemade-The Landing, London

5.7.2.3 Flexible space

To ensure that ground floor non-residential space is fit-for-purpose and provides flexibility for future changes of use and adaptability over time, the ground floor of mixed-use buildings in the Romford SDA should have a minimum floor-to-floor height of 4.5m. Proposed space should also and take account of the checklist in the GLA's Vacant Ground Floors in Mixed-Use Development (December 2016) in relation to detailed design of space, access and servicing requirements etc.

5.7.2.4 Meanwhile uses

Large strategic developments can take five or more years to build-out over a number of phases. To ensure that Romford remains attractive and vibrant during a period of significant change and to continue to engage local people in the regeneration process, the Council encourages landowners and prospective developers of multi-phased schemes to identify a suitable meanwhile use strategy and programme of cultural activities to activate and enliven otherwise vacant / underused land and buildings during the development process. The Council will expect this issue to be addressed early on when discussing proposals at the pre-application stage and when determining planning applications. During construction or points where no use is possible, hoarding should create an attractive street façade, using for example dibond hoarding. As part of a transition of parts of the town centre, existing larger floorplates and volumes could be innovatively used for experiential meanwhile uses, testing in support of town centre enhancement.

5.7.2.5 Housing

Optimising housing

The Council encourages the inclusion of housing in mixed-use schemes throughout the Romford SDA in order to: (a) provide much needed additional homes; (b) create attractive compact places that reduce the need to travel and are attractive and safe throughout the day, and; (c) help deliver financially viable development and associated social infrastructure. To do this, the strategy is to carefully integrate housing with other uses, which will often be located on the ground and lower floors of buildings in the town centre, and ensure that homes have their individual or communal front doors on to streets, without breaking up commercial frontages. The optimum amount of housing on any particular site will be determined by a design-led approach based on a detailed contextual area character appraisal and character impact assessment. The design-led approach must be based on the requirements of London Plan Policy D3 in terms of form and layout, resident experience and quality and character.

Type and tenure

The Masterplan strategy is to encourage a range of housing to rent and buy as part of mixed-use development across the Romford SDA, with build-to-rent developments being most suited to the town centre. The Council will use its own land to deliver at least 50% affordable housing (Social / Affordable Rent and Intermediate) and to maximise affordable housing provision in development by others.

Dwelling Mix

Given the characteristics of the Romford SDA and the Council's vision and objectives for it, a pragmatic approach to dwelling mix should be adopted when designing major general needs housing schemes in the area. Such schemes should maximise the amount of family-sized homes, in Line with Local Plan Policy consistent with the choice of an appropriate design and outdoor space requirements and the overall need to optimise the amount of development on a site. Appropriate building typologies include incorporating duplexes at ground and first floor (with access to garden spaces and the inclusion of housing at first floor and above with access to podium gardens. Prospective developers will need to explain and justify their proposed dwelling mix for a particular site at the pre-application and applications stages.

Residential apartments creating a new source of town centre footfall and activity, with potential to stack above other uses and also provide active residential ground floors on quieter streets – Brentford High Street London

5.7.2.6 Social Infrastructure

The Masterplan seeks to ensure the delivery of childcare, schools, health facilities, community and cultural facilities in and around the Romford SDA, aligning this with the anticipated growth of residential communities.

The proposed improved pedestrian and cycle routes and public realm across the Romford SDA should improve connectivity between areas of growth and existing facilities – to help make the best use of these now and in the future. In addition, the Council is working with childcare and school providers, the North East London Integrated Care Board, and the Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospital NHS Trust (BHRUT) to ensure that necessary additional provision of facilities and services keeps pace with population growth.

Childcare

A new nursery is planned as part of the proposed Bridge Close development. The Site Guidance for the key Opportunity Sites (set out in Chapter 6) highlight other opportunities and, where appropriate, the Council will negotiate the inclusion of high-quality facilities during pre-application discussions on these and other sites. Locating childcare facilities in proximity to development areas can support a positive work-life balance, and maximise the positive impacts of access to work.

Schools

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places. The Council plans school places on a planning area basis; the Romford Masterplan area falls under the Romford primary planning area and the Central secondary planning area.

Primary Schools

Primary schools are the heart of a community and need to be integrated with where people live, in order that children can walk or cycle to school. Policy 1 of the Havering Local Plan makes clear that development proposals in the Romford SDA that generate a primary school child yield equivalent to 1Form of Entry (FE) (210 pupils) will be expected to provide adequate space on site for the provision of a school – unless it can be robustly demonstrated that existing or planned education provision can cater for the additional demand for school places.

Expansion opportunities at existing schools are now very limited and additional primary schools will need to be provided as part of large mixed-use developments in order that additional school places to cater for the expected increase in residents are provided in the right place at the right time. The Council's preferred size of new primary school is 3 FEs across 7-year groups, with a nursery and a special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) unit for pupils with Educational Health Care plans.

A new 3FE primary school (Free School) is currently proposed as part of the Bridge Close development. This is due to cater mainly for additional children living in homes on the Bridge Close, Waterloo Estate and Rom Valley sites and should meet demand during the medium-term. Policy 1 of the Havering Local Plan identifies the need for a further 6FE to be provided to cater for the additional homes up to 2031. Using the Council's school planning assumption of 0.27 primary school pupil per household, the level of growth proposed in this Masterplan will require 10-13FE as follows:

Taking account of location, likely numbers of additional homes and overall site suitability, the sites identified in Fig. 58 should accommodate new 3FE+ primary schools in the first phase of development that includes housing.

Table 11. Primary school provision

Delivery period	Primary school provision
Short term (2021 / 22 to 2025 / 26)	1FE permanent expansion at a local school, in addition to bulge classes to meet the need for places
Medium term (2026 / 27 to 2030 / 31)	3FE need (3FE to be provided as part of a new school in the proposed Bridge Close development, due to open school year 2028 - 29)
Long term (2031/32 to 2035/36)	3FE need
Future (2036/37 to 2040/41)	3FE need

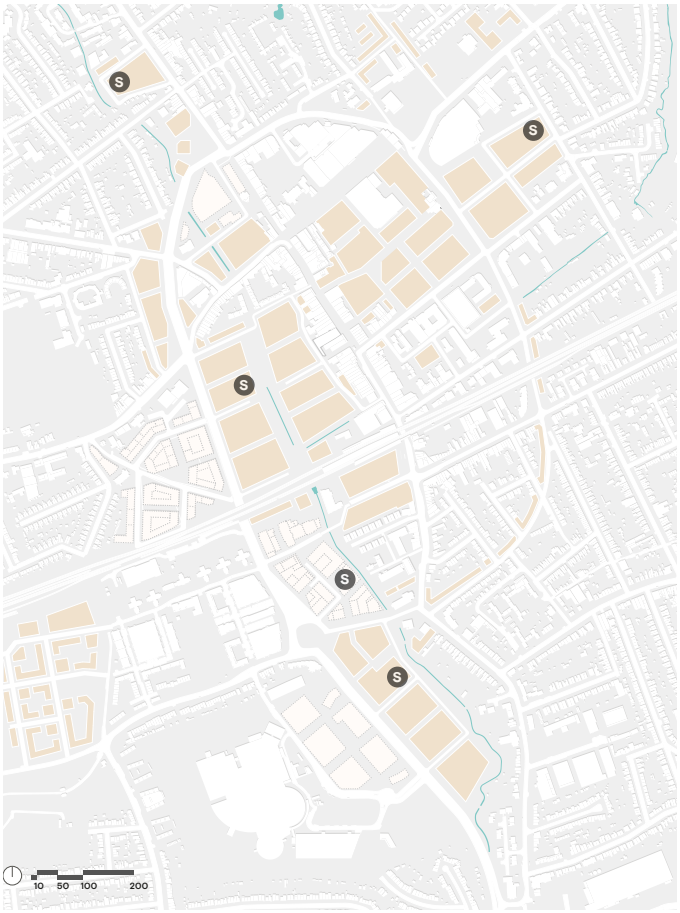


Fig. 58. Potential Primary School locations

Primary school integrated into an urban block – Marlborough Primary School, Chelsea

Secondary schools

Most older children can be expected to travel independently to school. Expansion opportunities at existing schools are now very limited and there is the need for a new secondary school or schools within Havering's Central school planning area to meet the expected increased need. The Council's preferred size of new secondary school is between 5FE and 8FE across -year groups, between 750 and 1,200 pupils (excluding sixth form places), and all new secondary schools will also need to have a SEND unit to cater for pupils with Education Health Care Plans.

A combination of expansion of existing secondary schools, slower than expected housing growth and less children from neighbouring boroughs attending Havering schools means that the overall need for secondary school places up to 2031 is fewer and less urgent than identified in Policy 1 of the Havering Local Plan. The Council's current estimates and using the Council's school planning assumption of 0.13 secondary school pupils per household the level of growth proposed in this Masterplan will require 8FE as follows:

Taking account of the absence of an identified suitable site, a new secondary school to cater for increasing demand is not likely to be able to be implemented until the long term (2031/32 to 2035/36). The Masterplan does not identify a suitable site for the secondary school, however, the Council is seeking to identify potential suitable sites in the Central school planning area for the necessary additional secondary school provision and will look to allocate a site for a secondary school / mixed-use development in the Havering Local Plan.

Table 12. Secondary school provision

Delivery period	Secondary school provision
Short term (2021 / 22 to 2025 / 26)	Need to be met by expansions already implemented.
Medium term (2026 / 27 to 2030 / 31)	Expansion of a secondary school in the Central planning area.
Long term (2031/32 to 2035/36)	New secondary school to open 6-8FE.
Future (2036/37 to 2040/41)	Need to be met by new secondary school opened during the long term period.

5.7.2.7 Healthcare facilities

The Masterplan seeks to have positive health impact. Improvements to the quality of the built environment, increasing the options for active travel and active lifestyles, and enhancing the natural environment, all support this approach, and alongside this is the need for healthcare facilities to support the town centre and its growing needs over time.

Primary healthcare provision

Based on current government guidance a planning standard of 1 GP per 1,800 people, the level of growth proposed by the Masterplan would require approximately an additional 13-15 Full Time Equivalent GPs. Some additional primary health provision is already planned, including a new 1,600sqm health hub as part of the proposed Bridge Close development and a new 1,000 to 1,500sqm health centre on the site of the Old Victoria Hospital (just outside of the Romford SDA). Together, this should cater for the additional GP facilities for the short and medium-terms. However, further provision will need to be provided in the long-term and beyond.

Health hubs

There is the opportunity to provide additional health hubs which have space for about 8 GPs, community services and advice, based on an integrated care model that dissolves the divide between primary care and community health services. In addition to catering for the anticipated population growth, such hubs will also provide opportunities for services to relocate from existing inadequate doctor surgeries – which do not meet current expectations on infections control, disability access etc. – and be part of more integrated health facilities.

Taking account of existing and planned facilities, access to public transport, timing of provision and overall site suitability, Fig. 59 identifies potential for two health hubs of about 1,500sqm each in the long and future terms, in addition to the healthcare facility planned as part of the Bridge Close development. An NHS facility as part of the Ice Rink site on Rom Valley Way is also planned. The Council will work with the North East London Integrated Care Board, BHRUT and others to develop proposals as and when these sites come forward for development, taking account of need and health strategies at that time.

Queens Hospital

The original design for Queens Hospital was to serve a local population of approximately 400,000, but it now serves a population of over 800,000 which is projected to increase further. There is a need to reconfigure space within the Hospital to meet the increasing demand. Whilst some administrative and / or outpatient services can be moved to other settings, there is a need for additional clinical space. The hospital site is constrained making expansion on site very difficult. The adjacent, currently vacant, former ice rink site offers the best opportunity to provide accommodation with acceptable linkages to the hospital and any redevelopment of this site should include suitable accommodation for the hospital.

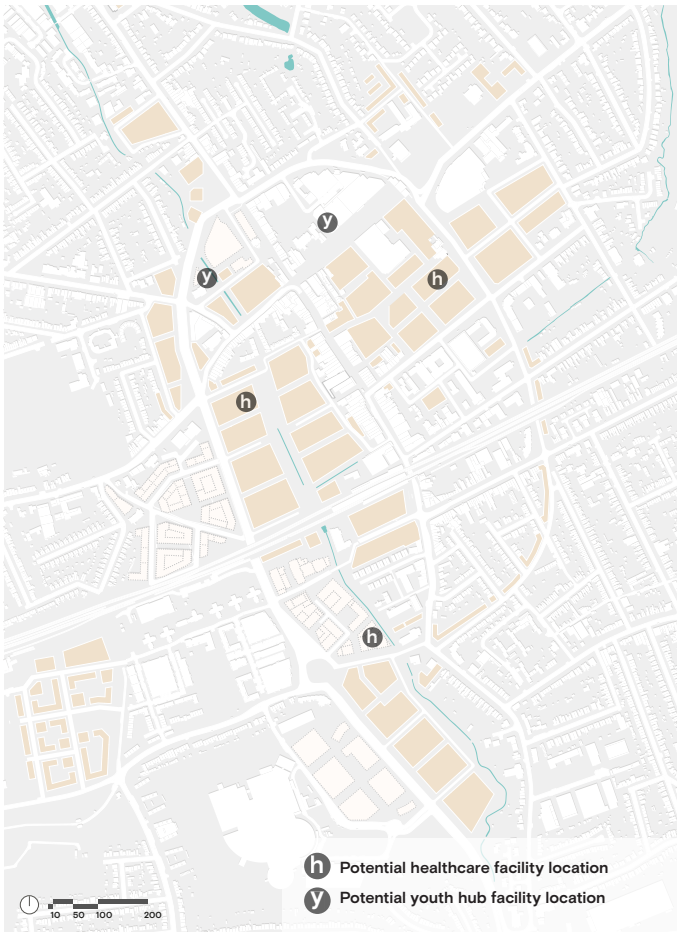


Fig. 59. Potential healthcare and youth hub facility locations

5.7.2.8 Community

The Council will help broker discussions between community groups and prospective developers at the pre-application stage to help highlight opportunities for use by both existing and new communities to foster greater social cohesion.

To improve facilities for children and young adults in the town centre, the Masterplan proposes a landmark multi-purpose youth hub. This could include a sports hall and outdoor courts, music and multi-media room and space to provide projects encouraging enterprise and improving employability, health and wellbeing.

Redevelopment needs to maintain and improve public toilets and a space for a reprovided Romford Shopmobility scheme in the town centre, to ensure that it is an attractive and inclusive place to visit. The Site Guidance for the Brewery and Liberty Opportunity Sites (Chapter 6) provide detailed guidance.

Fig. 60. Promoting healthy, active lifestyles, and creating attractive environments to walk and cycle – Illustrative view of St Edwards Way, looking north towards North Street

5.8 THE ECONOMY

5.8.1 Overview

There are a number of fundamental changes in the retail, leisure, office and workspace sectors which are completely transforming the approach to commercial floorspace mix and the nature of activity within town centres and urban areas. Town centres can no longer be reliant on the traditional anchors to underpin activity, so there is a requirement for more creative and innovative strategies to support development and growth. Likewise, employment practices are continually evolving, which is shaping significant changes in occupier requirements for more flexible space in well-connected urban locations, steering away from more traditional floorplates and lease terms.

Romford is a market town with a strong sense of history and heritage and a unique positioning at the meeting point between London and Essex. The arrival of the Elizabeth line further improved the town's connectivity to Central London, and is already changing perceptions of the town and its nature as part of the strengthening and diversifying outer London offer, whilst retaining its character and connectivity with Essex to the east, and the wider south east. Romford's character as a historic market town makes it a unique proposition in this context, which in turn presents opportunities

Havering's population has grown steadily over the last 15 years, with the retired (over 65s+) and young children (0-15 years) growing significantly. Romford itself has experienced a different trend seeing a marked increase in young adults aged 15-24 and significant decrease in the retired aged 65 and over.

These trends, coupled with wider socio-demographic characteristics, suggests that the Romford economy faces some challenges, with a high proportion of its catchment having relatively low disposable incomes and not being immediately available to work or start businesses.

Despite some of these characteristics the borough continues to experience a growth in its business base and business survival rates that reflects London generally. There has been a broad spread of sectors that have driven this growth and, in the main, these reflect the sectors that are driving economic growth across London – professional services, digital / tech, creative for example.

East London has experienced significant growth in the creative economy in recent years as businesses have pushed out of more central locations in search of well-connected, but cheaper, locations. Havering has seen some of this growth, however it continues to lag behind neighbouring boroughs in this key growth sector. There could be multiple reasons for this under-performance linked to perceptions, provision of appropriate workspace or a lack of cultural infrastructure.

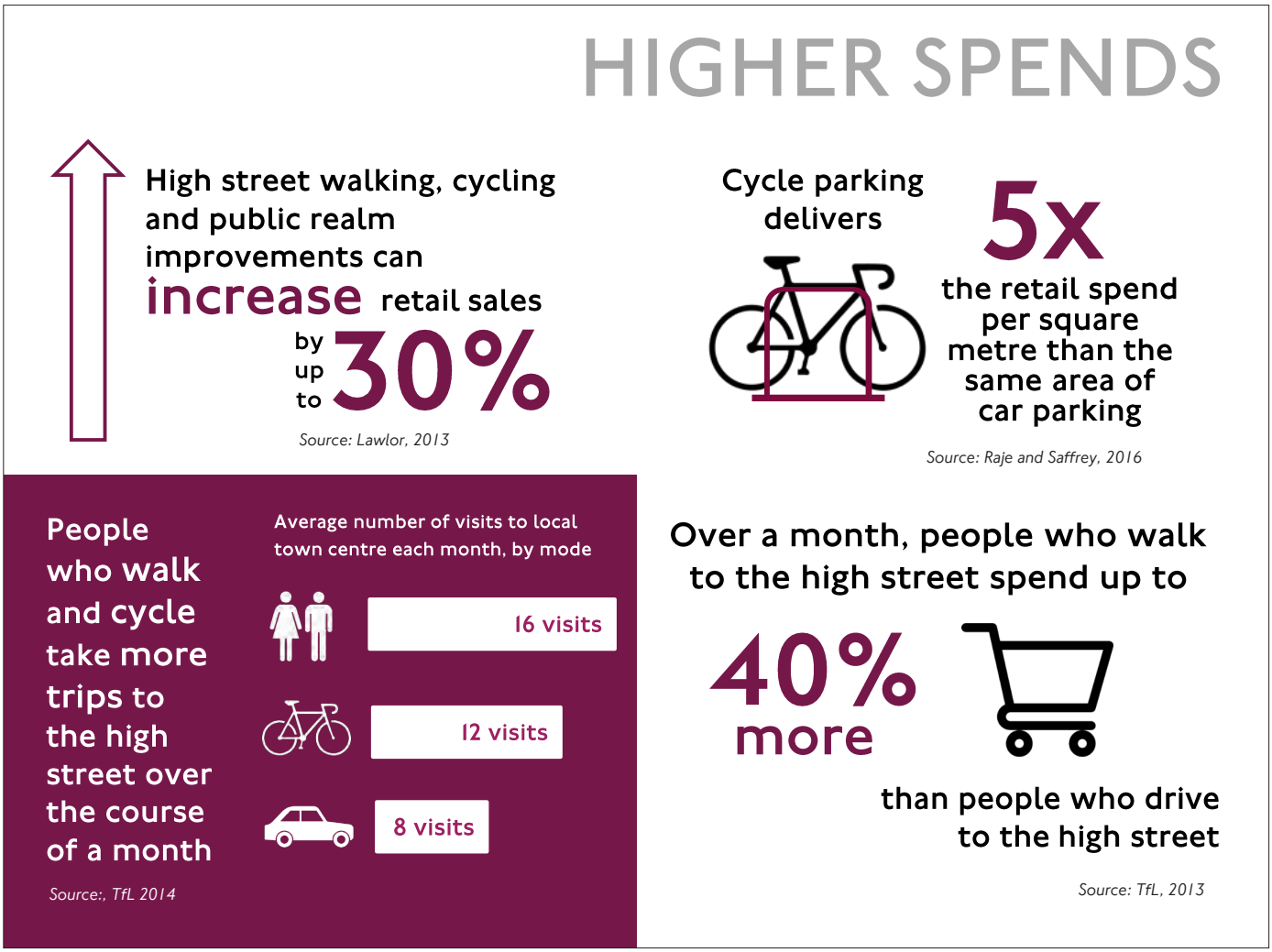
Given many businesses are seeking to be located in urban locations to enable their employees to benefit from the range of amenities provided and also be served by a range of transport services there is an opportunity for Romford to attract a greater scale of activity through the delivery of appropriate workspace. This should seek to provide smaller, serviced office and co-working spaces to reflect new dynamics in the occupier market, small light industrial units for the ongoing production based sector activity and studio spaces that can accommodate the creative sector.

To support the creative sector in particular there may need to be a wider response to help develop a creative and cultural ethos across the town centre that helps attract and retain both businesses and employees in the sector. For example, within the Masterplan this will not only require new workspace but other cultural venues and programming within existing spaces.

Ultimately the economy of the town centre will be driven by both its resident population (who may choose to start or locate their businesses here) and businesses attracted to the town centre because of its wider attributes and offer. For example, Romford can capitalise on opportunities in the digital economy. Bringing new businesses to the town centre will diversify the employment mix within the town centre, and can generate positive externalities supporting the opportunity for a dynamic and interesting mix of town centre retail & leisure uses.

The strategic positioning of Romford will be a key influencing factor in realising the opportunity. It provides the opportunity to cater for the residential and business space needs of those who are being squeezed out of more central parts of London but still require connectivity to it, as well as those in Essex seeking to be part of London without needing to be in Central London (whilst also maintaining proximity and connectivity to Essex). Its unique position as a 'gateway' between London and Essex, puts Romford in a strong position to draw on a diverse audience which will strengthen its offer as a vibrant and successful town centre, promoting diversity of offer across town centre uses.

The Masterplan is confident that Romford will be able to deliver at least 2000 additional jobs by 2041, particularly through taking the opportunities outlined in this Masterplan. The Masterplan provides for a significant change in the scale and mix of non-residential uses within the town centre, all of which will provide space to accommodate new jobs and have a positive impact on employment opportunities.



Walking and Cycling: The Economic Benefits, TfL

5.8.2 Strategies

Town centre destination
- Work with a range of existing and new partners to support the town centre as a destination

Local job opportunities
- Use the planning application process to secure the delivery of employment strategies and financial contributions that help local people take up additional job opportunities and help local businesses take up supply opportunities

Creative and innovative
- Use creative and innovative strategies to support development and growth rather than reliance on traditional anchors to underpin activity

Distinctive market town
- Harness Romford's character as a historic market town that makes it a unique proposition for business

Strategic positioning
- Acknowledge the strategic position of Romford at the gateway between London and Essex, and utilise the opportunity to be a front of house for the Thames Estuary Production Corridor

Rich mix of employment
- Promote a variety of employment types and opportunities through a range of building typologies, from light industrial through to office-based work, retail and leisure
- Take opportunity to attract a greater scale of activity through the delivery of appropriate workspace

Diversify the town centre mix
- Take advantage of bringing new businesses to the town centre that will diversify the employment mix within the town centre, and can generate positive externalities supporting the opportunity for a dynamic and interesting mixes of town centre retail & leisure uses

A creative and cultural ethos
- Develop a creative and cultural ethos across the town centre that helps attract and retain both businesses and employees

Integrated and easily accessible
- Promote active travel to support a higher spend in the town centre from those walking and cycling

Retail & food / beverage – 80-84 Market Place, Romford

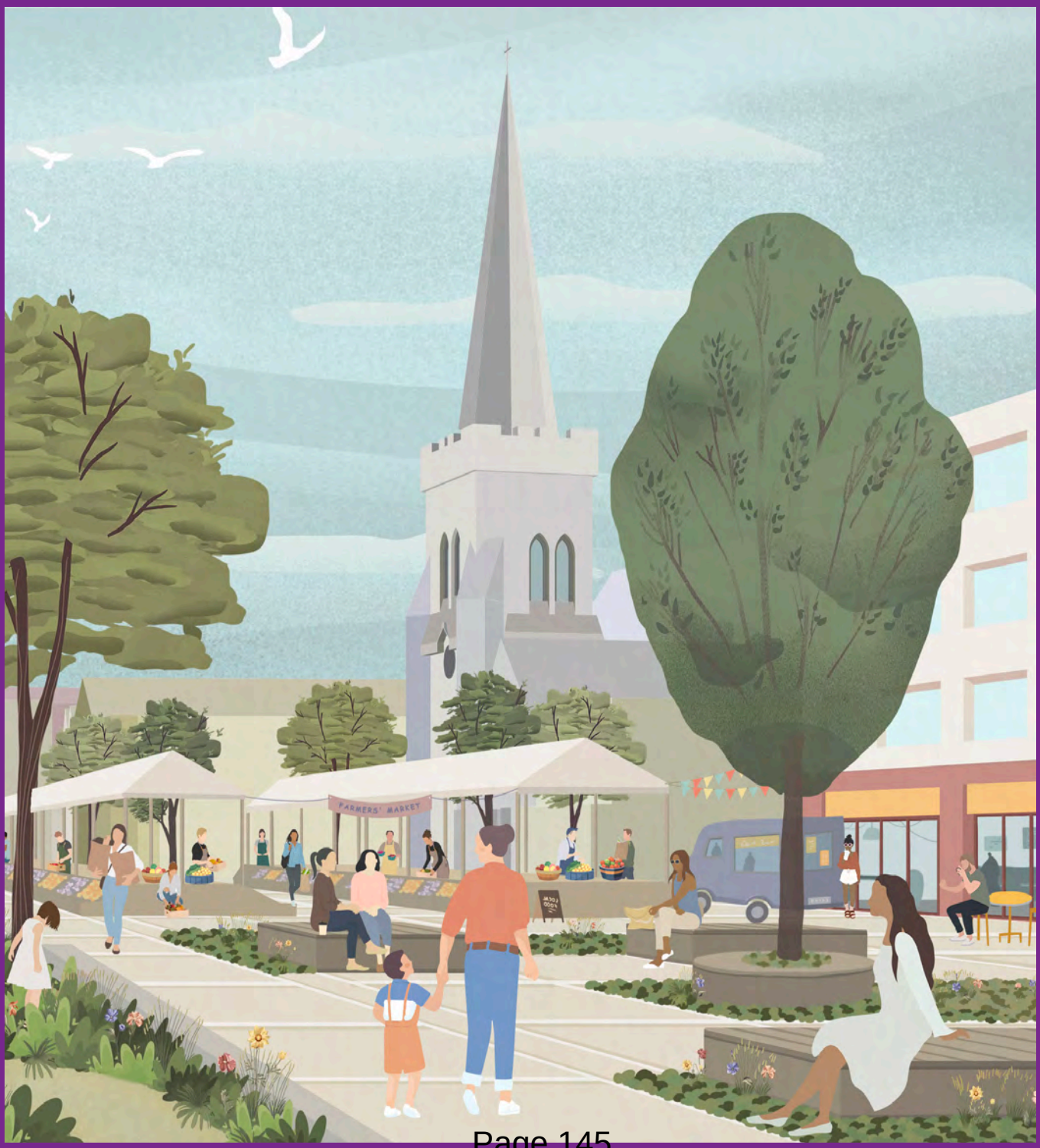
Employment - co-working space – Trinity Works, Colchester

Creating attractive and inclusive environments for local businesses to thrive – Illustrative view of Brewery Gardens

6 SITE GUIDANCE

This chapter sets out site guidance for key areas in and around the town centre.

These areas offer the most potential to deliver positive, transformation changes and are instrumental in the delivery of the overarching objectives and vision for Romford. It is anticipated that further analysis and design work would take place on a site by site basis as these come forward for redevelopment.


FARMERS' MARKET

6.1 SITE GUIDANCE OVERVIEW

6.1.1 Introduction

This section covers site guidance for 10 key sites across the Masterplan area. The guidance reflects a design led process, and these respond to and coordinate with the Vision, Objectives and Strategies covered in this Masterplan.

These sites have been chosen sites because of the potential for their transformative nature. The guidance sets out enhancements across a number of themes, with potential for development of sites within them. They do not necessarily propose total redevelopment, but rather represent study areas in order that proposed development can be successfully contextualised by retained or enhanced buildings and spaces.

These briefs acknowledge that there are a number of ways these sites could be developed but emphasises the need for a robust site Masterplan and phasing strategy for the whole site before individual sites can come forward.

Where massing for new development is proposed, this takes into account the guidance set out in the GLA Optimising Site Guidance LDG, 2024.

Each site guidance is structured as follows:

Existing context
Explaining current character, uses, and the nature of the site in its current form.

Objectives
Covering the following:

- Vision: identifying the core objectives through mapping and vision text that sets out what the transformative nature of the site can achieve.

Development principles:
Explained through a number of themes:

- Land use: proposed uses or programmes for the site, including references to reuse or retention, providing broad ranges for potential capacity per use.
- Open space, streetscape, and ecology: identification of key spaces, opportunities for greening, enhancements and potential recharacterisation of streets, and potential to enhance ecology.
- Access and movement: setting out a street and movement structure, alongside public transport and potential enhancements to movement such as at-grade crossings.
- Character and townscape: highlighting the nature of the future character and townscape and what the interventions should achieve.
- Implementation: identification of potential approaches to intervention and how development may come forward.

Each concludes with an illustrative layout and massing, to offer an interpretation of how the Objectives and Development Principles may manifest.

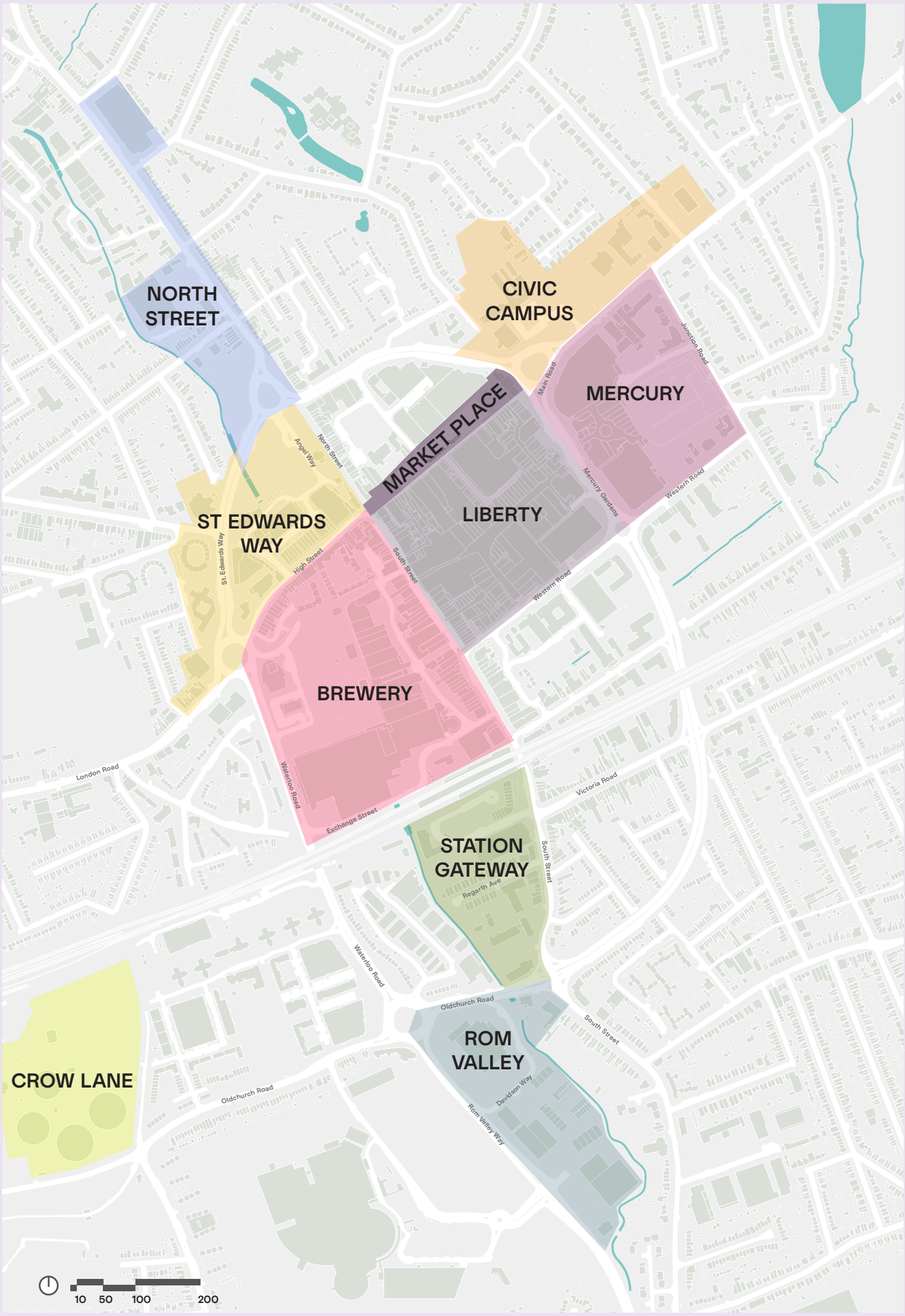


Fig. 61. Site guidance areas

6.2 MARKET PLACE

6.2.1 Existing Context

The Market Place is the historic heart of Romford and lies at the central crossroads of the town centre. It is currently a generous open space that is used weekly for the popular and well-loved Romford Market, as well as civic or community events and as a surface car park on alternate days. It forms an essential part of the conservation area and has several listed buildings, buildings of architectural or historic merit and a consistent townscape of 2-5 storeys with a fine grain reflecting the historic pattern of development. Some newer buildings and the prevalence of cars detract somewhat from the overall character and quality of this important town centre civic space.

Table 13. Existing Market Place uses

Existing Market Place Uses		Quantum
Market		
Public car parking	Surface car park	160 no.
Market stalls	Market servicing only	Varies

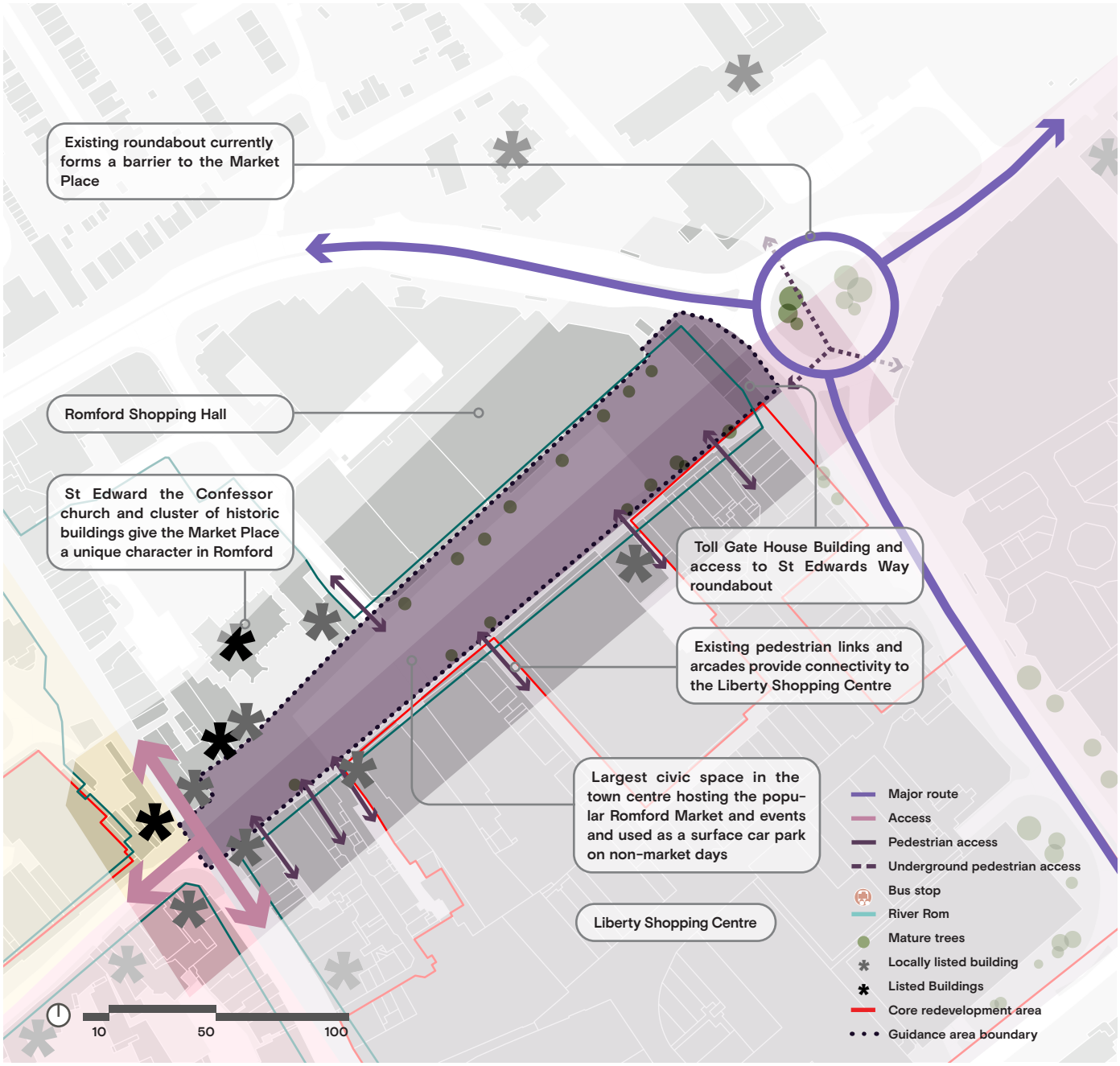
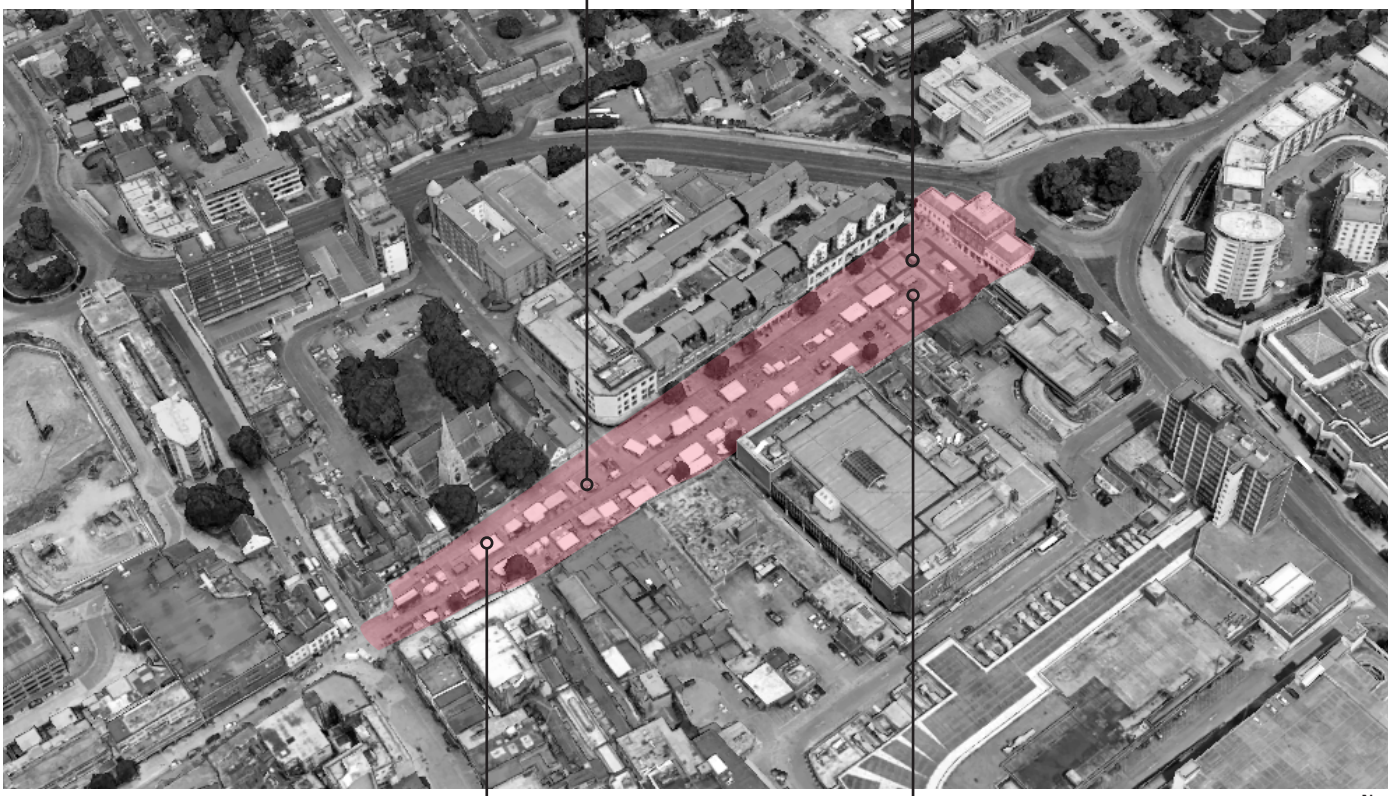


Fig. 62. Existing Market Place physical context

Market Place looking towards Tollgate House

Market Place looking southeast (market day)



Aerial view - looking north

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St Edward the Confessor church

Market Place looking southeast (non-market day)

6.2.2 Objectives

6.2.2.1 Vision

The vision for the Market Place is to enhance its role as the town centre's key civic space. The Market Place should remain a flexible civic space suitable for hosting the market as well as public and community events. Public realm, landscape design and new buildings fronting it should be of the highest quality reflecting the Market Place's prominent civic role and historic origins.

Creating a vibrant civic space that incorporates formal and informal gathering spaces alongside urban greening – Eddington, Cambridge

Fig. 63. Mercury site opportunities and objectives

6.2.3 Development Principles

6.2.3.1 Land Use

Situated at the commercial heart of the town centre, ground floor should incorporate active uses to contribute to making the Market Place a destination. The primary focus should be on retail, leisure, services, and food and beverage but some limited office and convenience shopping. Upper floors can provide residential uses with potential to incorporate some office, commercial and hotel uses.

Table 14. Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Romford Market	c.17 000 m² (flexible)
Romford events space	c.5 000 m² (flexible)
Total area	c.23 000 m²
Public town centre car parking	0

Fig. 64. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.2.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

The existing quality of public ream and planting along the Market Place should be enhanced and respond to the scale of the space. The landscape and public realm should have a civic quality and be robust enough to accommodate the market, events and significant daily footfall. This could include a linear tree arrangement defining the entire market space and a tree arrangement supporting designed functions such as seating areas. Landccaping should support market and event fuctions through careful consideration of tree and softscape placement. Paving can be used to demarcate market stall spaces, event areas and spill-out spaces from ground floor uses.

A mix of public seating, high-quality paving and spill-out areas organised to provide different activity zones – Eddington, Cambridge

Fig. 65. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.2.3.3 Access and Movement

The Market Place currently forms part of the key east-west route through the town centre and part of the wider proposed east-west green, active travel corridor linking the town centre to the wider green spaces.

Permeability should be enhanced between the Market Place and surrounding context by creating an at grade crossing at St Edwards Way, improving and opening up the north-south routes connecting into the Market Place and improving the pedestrian experience within Market Street by enhancing public realm, removing car parking and creating additional attractive places to sit and dwell.

Creating an attractive environment for active travel movement alongside spaces to sit and dwell – New Road, Brighton

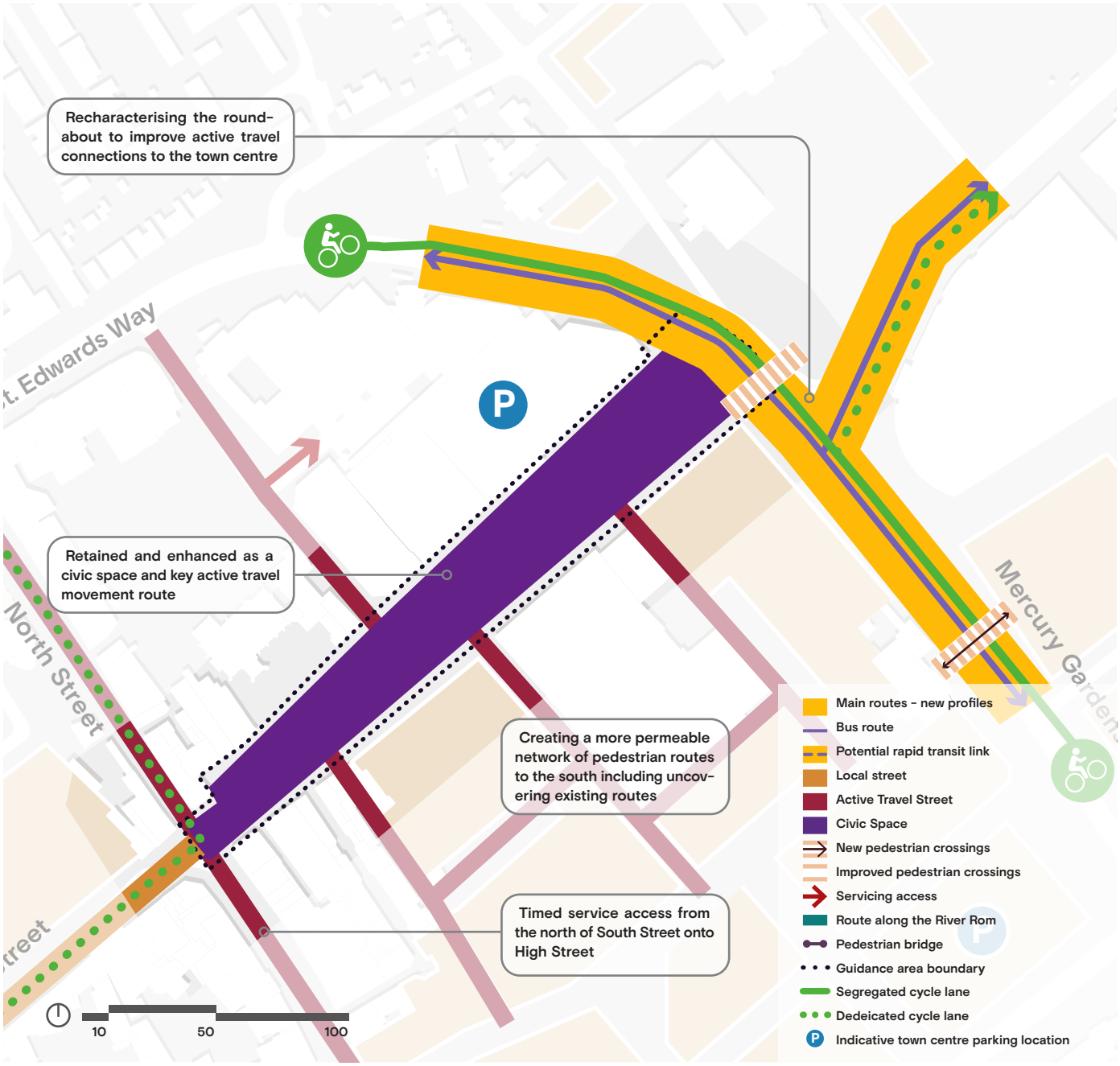

Fig. 66. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.2.3.4 Character and Townscape

The character and townscape of the Market Place should reflects its historic importance and central role as a civic and public spaces. The design of the Market Place must be flexible enough to respond to different programmes: markets, events, public space, shopping street. Consideration should be given into designing different characters along the length of the public space. This could include spill-out zones for ground floor cafes, space for performances and a more intimate space with planting and seating for informal social gathering or enjoying a lunchtime sandwich in the historic setting.

6.2.3.5 Implementation

Key to the future success of the Market Place as an attractive, civic public space is for the removal of surface car parking. Priority should then be given to improving the quality of planting and landscape design to create an attractive place to walk, rest and socialise. This includes providing an at-grade crossing at St Edwards Way and improving north-south routes.

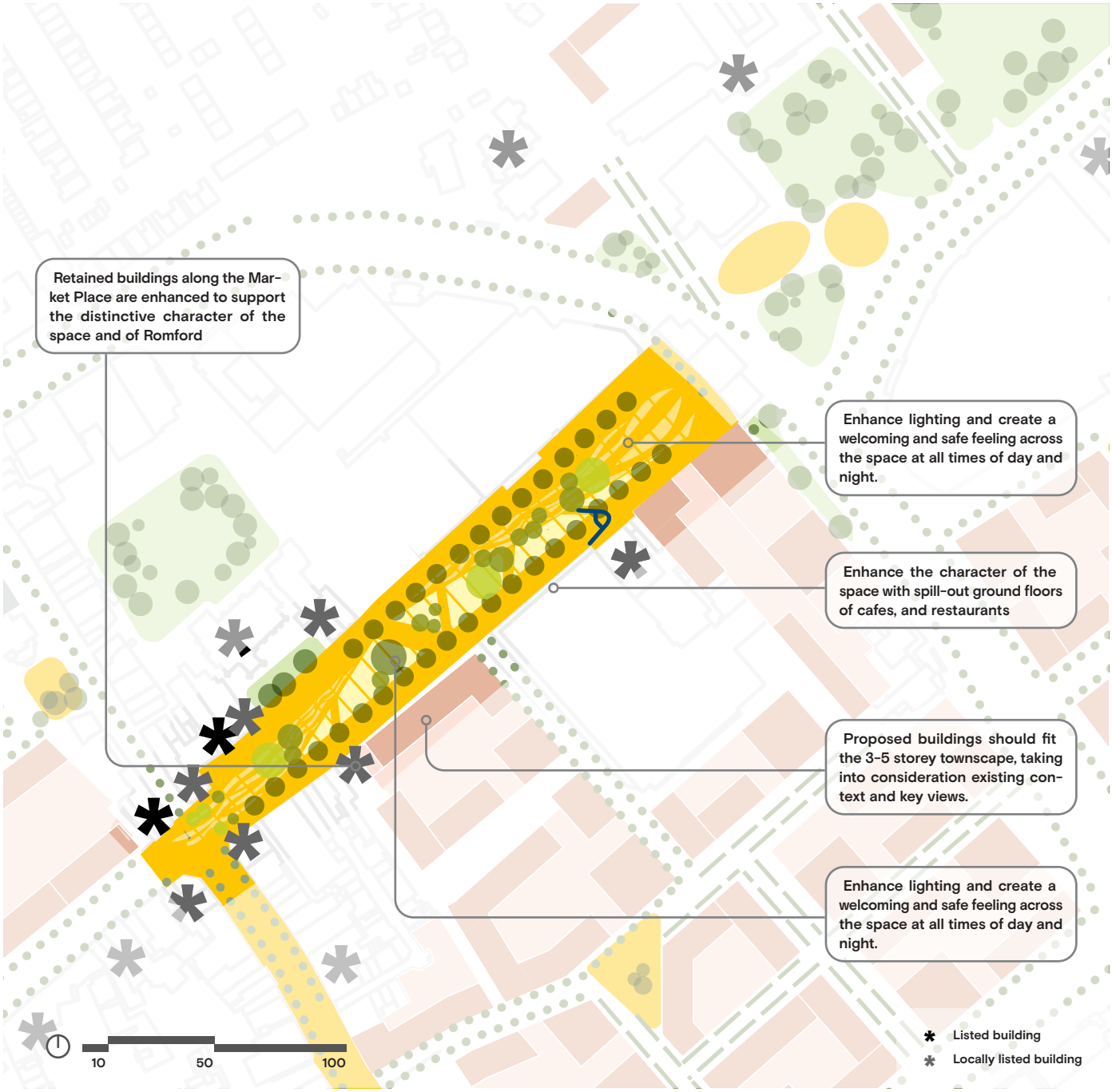

Fig. 67. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

Fig. 68. Illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 69. Transform the Market Place into vibrant public space with new planting, seating and character areas that can be used for various activities including the Romford Market

6.3 ST EDWARDS WAY

6.3.1 Existing Context

St Edwards Way comprises a string of sites, shown in the aerial opposite. The majority of the sites have a PTAL of 6a, although the Como Street Car Park has a PTAL of 5. The area is partially within Romford town centre and Romford Conservation Area, an Archaeological Priority Area and Critical Drainage Area. Several frontages are designated Primary Frontages (no. 7-9 and 21-23 North Street and 2-4 High Street) and Secondary Frontages (no. 6-46 High Street).

Table 15. Existing St Edwards Way uses

Existing St Edwards Way uses (net, approximate)*		Quantum
Retail, financial / professional, restaurant / café		5 000 m²
Business	River Chambers & Ballard Chambers	250 m²
Business	Grays Auto Centre	900 m²
Residential	Rotunda (equivalent to be reprovided)	3 800 m²
Community	Yew Tree Day Centre & Youth Zone (equivalent to be reprovided)	Unknown
Leisure	RUSSC (equivalent to be reprovided)	900 m²
Other	Angel Way Car Park	Unknown
Public car parking	Angel Way Car Park	480 no.

*net, approx. proposed for redevelopment within core development area

Fig. 70. Existing St Edwards Way context and key site descriptions

Romford High Street c.1908

North Street roundabout looking towards Angel Way

Aerial view - looking North West

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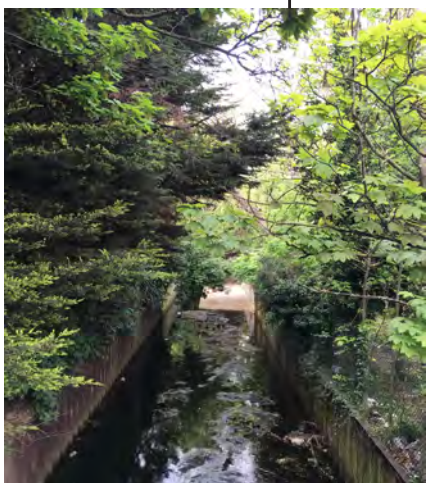
St Edwards Way



River Rom

6.3.2 Objectives

6.3.2.1 Vision

The vision for St Edwards Way is a collection of urban mixed-use areas that knit the town centre into the existing urban grain, rationalising it, drawing in connections to the town centre from the north-west whilst reconfiguring and urbanising part of St Edwards Way with defined edges and active uses. It transforms the character of the ring road from highway to urban street to create an attractive street-based part of town that is safe and convenient for pedestrians and cyclists. It incorporates a supporting retail and commercial mix of uses, enhanced employment, a range of housing types, sizes and tenures, and supporting social infrastructure.

The Angel Way / St Edwards Way / High Street areas have long been identified for development. However, taking a more comprehensive approach to redevelopment will help reshape this part of the ring road as an urban street, ensure that buildings properly address the street and optimise development potential.

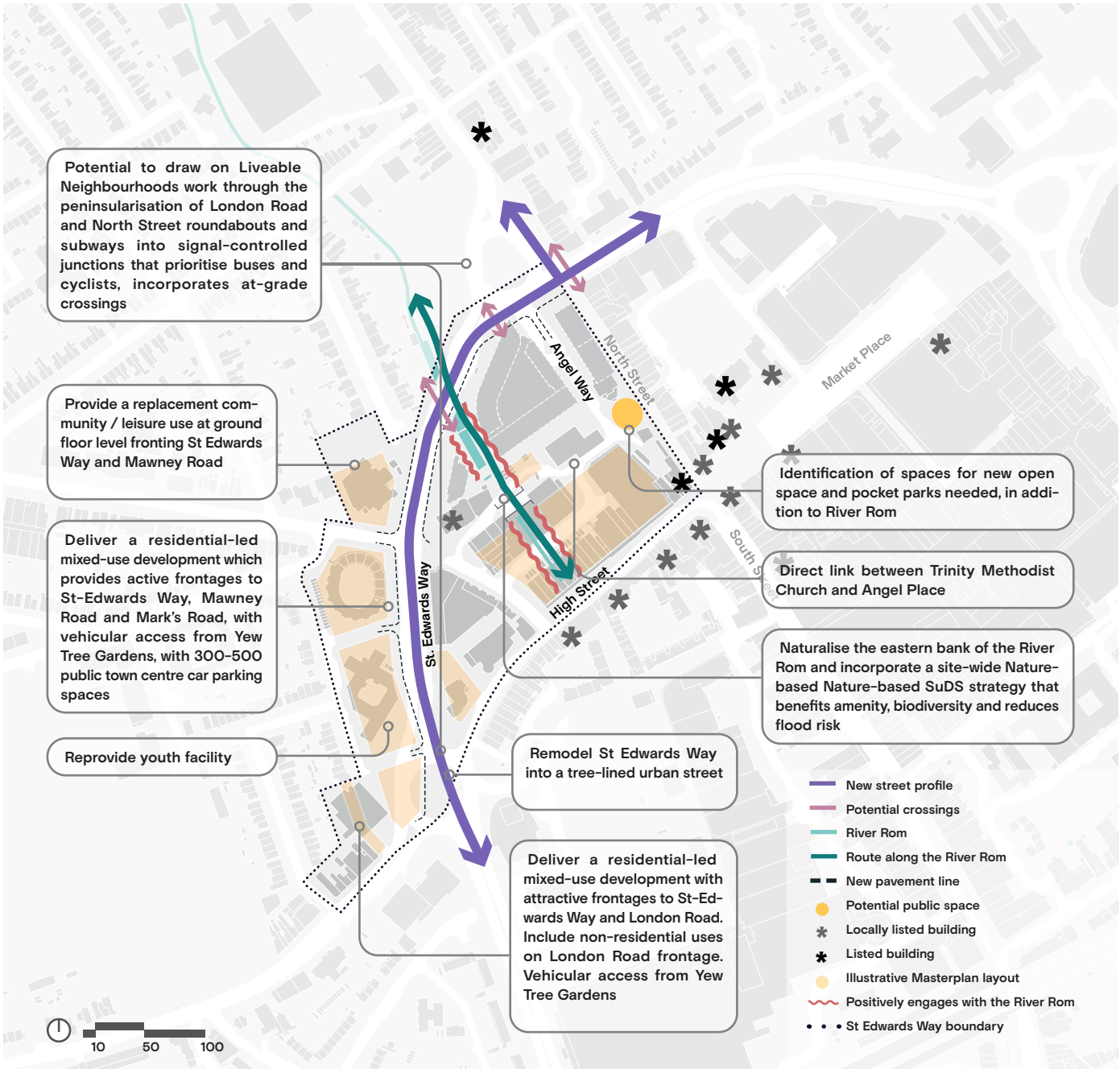


Fig. 71. Site opportunities and objectives

6.3.3 Development Principles

6.3.3.1 Land Use

A retail focus along the High Street and North Street should be supported by new areas of retail around Angel Way that respond to the new setting of the River Rom. Community and leisure uses need to be reprovided on site, as well as healthcare facilities, and these can also utilise the new setting around the River Rom. Employment uses should front the ring road.

Table 16. St Edwards Way Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	Approx. 2.5 ha
Residential	50 000 - 60 000 m²
Retail	Approx. 3 000 m²
Employment / Commercial / Hotel	5 000 - 10 000 m²
Community	Reprovide youth facility
Leisure / Culture	Approx. 1 000 m²
Total built area	70 000 - 90 000 m²
Public town centre car parking	300-500

Fig. 72. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.3.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

Development should capitalise on the River Rom by creating a lively green landscape, a green walking and cycling network and improved biodiversity. The primary green link along the High Street will form part of the east-west green connection across the town centre, connecting Cottons Park in the west with Lodge Farm Park in the east.

Greening of the ring road will form part of the wider strategy to create a more attractive environment around the ring road, and will support enhancing biodiversity across the town centre.

Create a mixture of green cycling and active routes along the Rom and active, hard-paved social spaces – Siegen, Germany | Kardinaal Mercier Square, Belgium

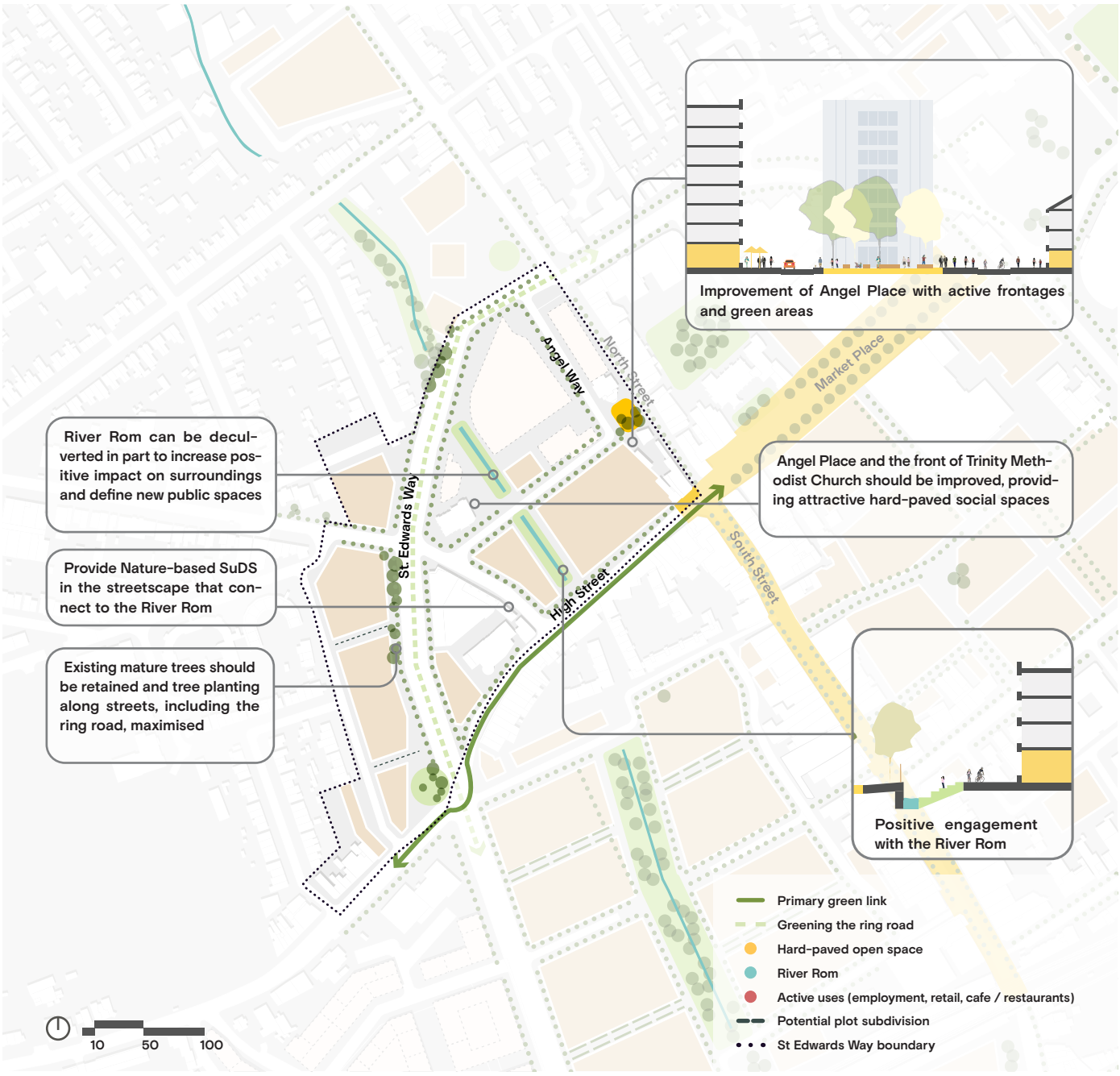


Fig. 73. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.3.3.3 Access and Movement

The access and movement network must promote active travel, utilising green links along the River Rom and new and improved connections across the ring road to accommodate attractive walking and cycling routes. The street layouts must observe the street user hierarchy and provide access for all. All streets need to contribute to the public open space network with some incorporating sustainable drainage systems and street trees.

The ring road could accommodate part of the Borough's potential north-south rapid transit link, manifesting potentially as dedicated bus lanes.

Ring road enhancements are outlined further in the Themes chapter, and make reference to the peninsularisation of the roundabout at North Street in the longer term into a signalised junction, which can free up land for more public realm improvements incorporated into new developments. In the shorter term the Liveable Neighbourhoods greening of the roundabout will create a more attractive crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists.

The existing Angel Way car park is removed, and town centre car parking provided as part of the wider town centre parking strategy.

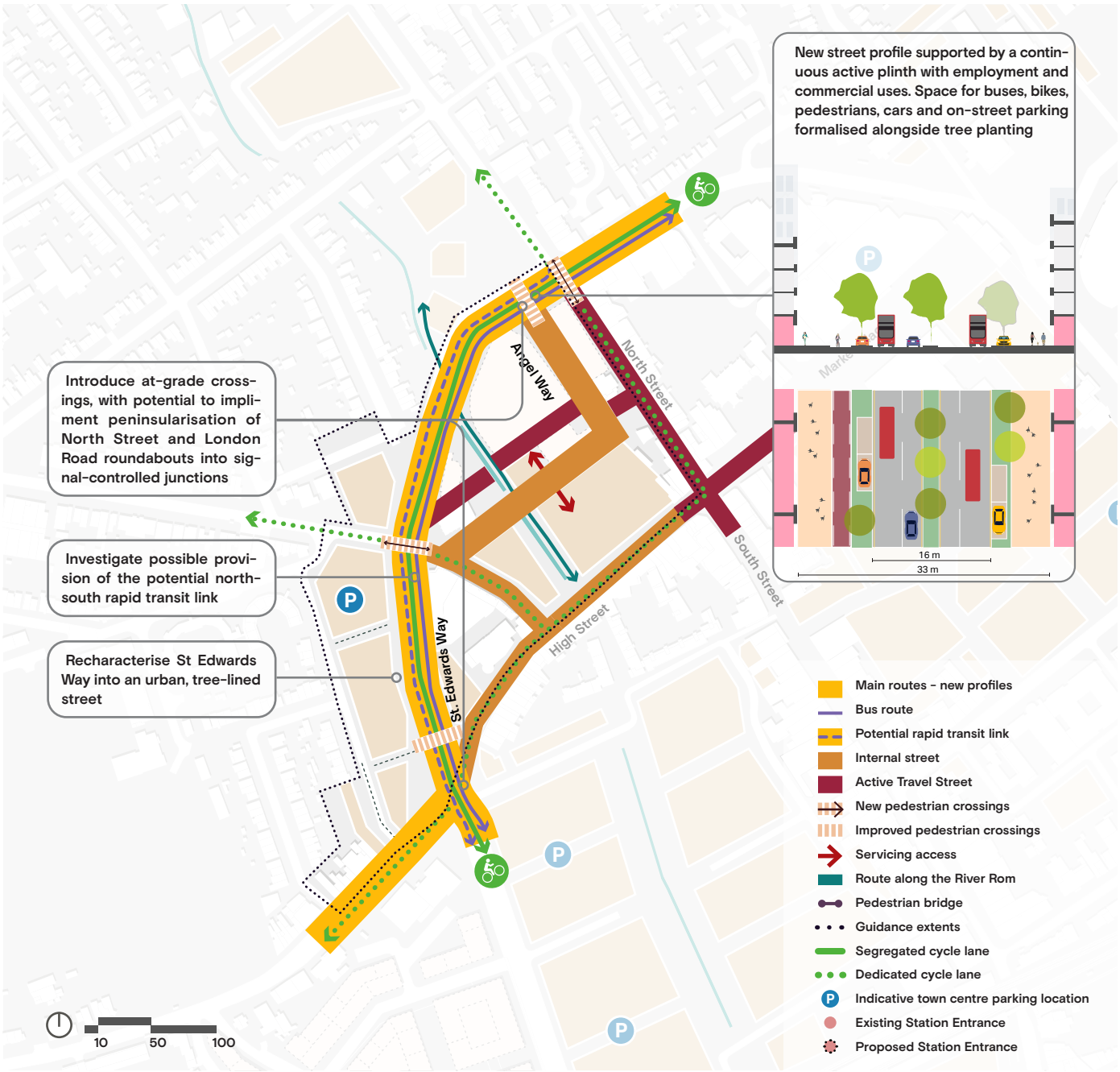


Fig. 74. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.3.3.4 Character and Townscape

St Edwards Way straddles two character areas identified in the Themes chapter. There is potential for intensification of both character areas, mindful of the need to feather into the wider context to the north and west, and to the fringes of the Romford conservation area to the south and east. Continuous frontage along the High Street characterises the southern edge, whilst the River Rom characterises a central green space running north-south through the area, crossing under the ring road. Angel Place in the east of the area draws in a character of retail activity from North Street, with the area as a whole blending into a more residential context to the north-west.

6.3.3.5 Implementation

In its current form St Edwards Way is a mix of sites in multiple ownership. To date a piecemeal approach has been taken to redevelopment which has not successfully delivered any wider Masterplan benefits for the town centre. It is considered that a comprehensive approach to delivery will be critical to ensure the area comes forward in a complimentary and well considered fashion. At present there are some sites already under development, alongside others which provide scope for further early intervention and delivery, with sites west of the ring road likely coming forward later.

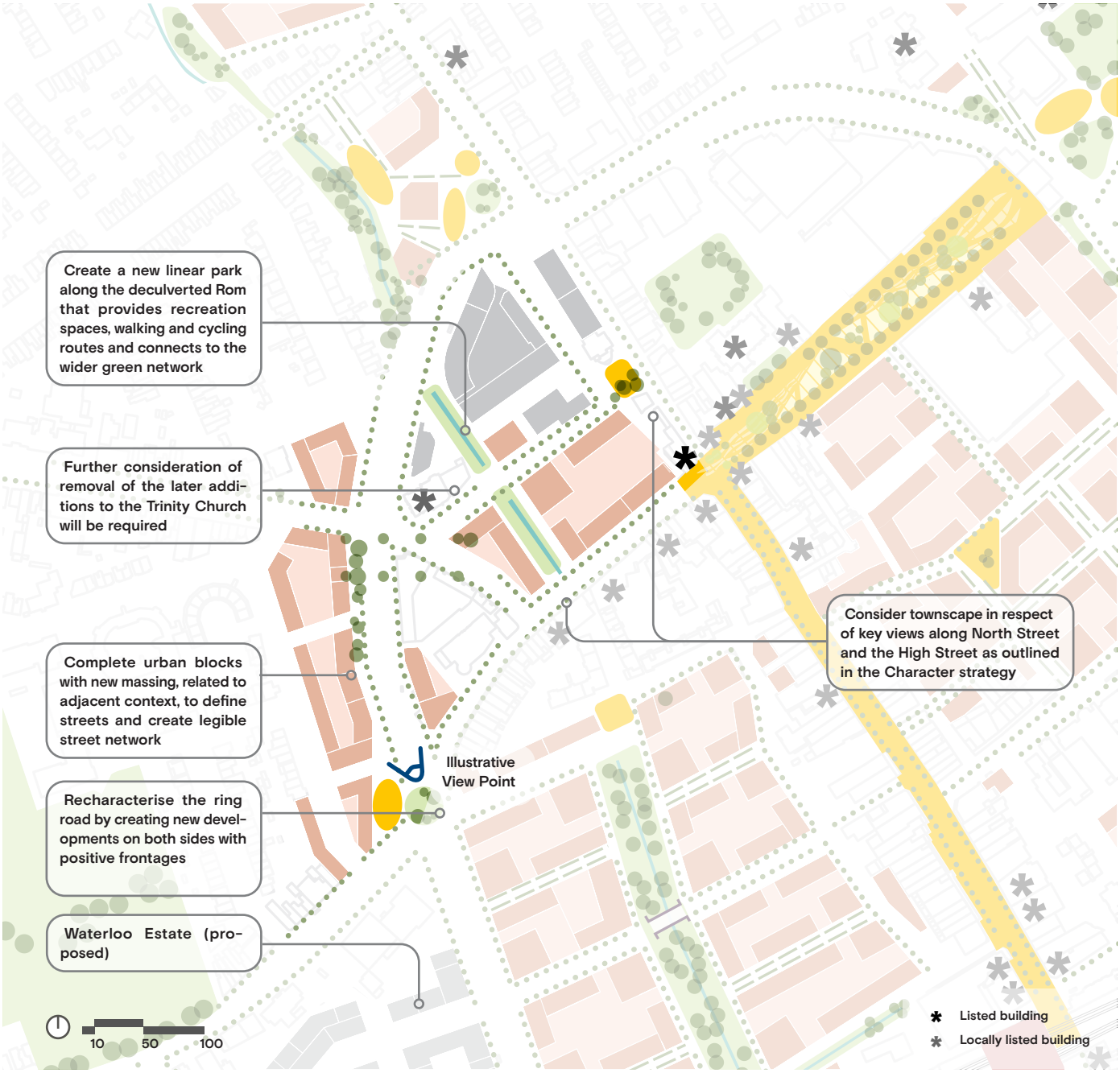


Fig. 75. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

Fig. 76. Aerial view

Fig. 77. Creating a multi-modal street with opportunities to cross at grade, and active frontages on both sides – Illustrative view of St Edwards Way, looking north towards North Street

6.4 BREWERY

6.4.1 Existing Context

This brief covers the whole street block framed by the High Street in the north, South Street to the east, railway lines to the south and Waterloo Road to the west. However, it focuses on providing guidance for the future of the existing Brewery development which sits within this street block (approx. 7 ha) and the site of Nos. 37-59 High Street. Both sites have a PTAL of mainly 6a (although the central part of the Brewery site has a PTAL of 4 and 5).

Table 17. Existing Brewery uses

Existing Brewery uses (net, approximate)*		Quantum
Food retail	Sainsbury's superstore	10 200 m²
Non-food retail, financial / professional, cafe / restaurant		19 750 m²
Business		150 m²
Community	Day nursery (equivalent to be reprovided)	100 m²
Leisure	Cinema	Unknown
Family entertainment / Health and Fitness	10 pin bowling, Kidspace, etc.	8 800 m²
Other	Petrol station, bus station public toilets, recycling facilities, Romford Shopmobility space, car park	Unknown
Public car parking	Angel Way car park	480 no.

*net, approx. proposed for redevelopment within core development area

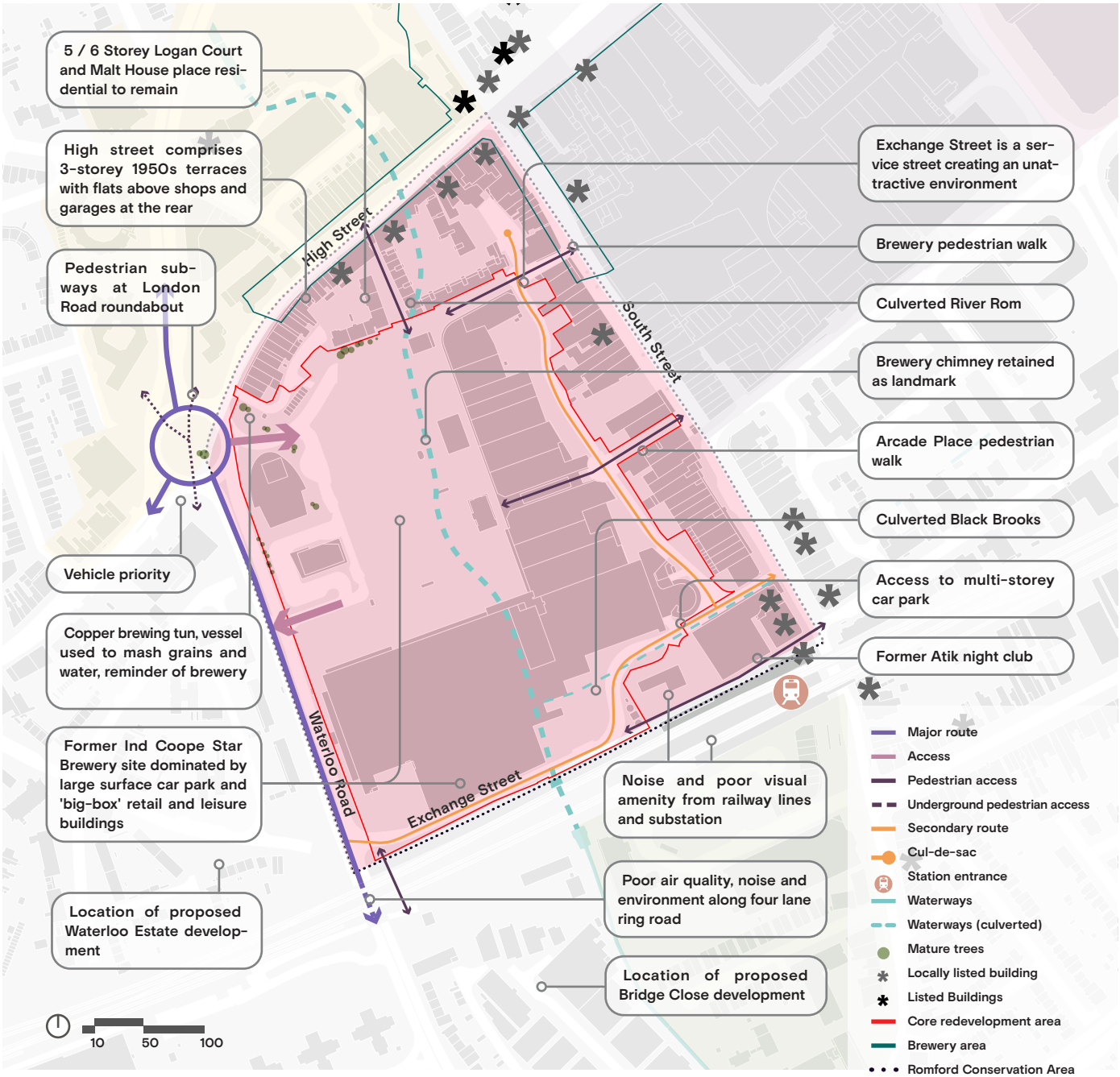
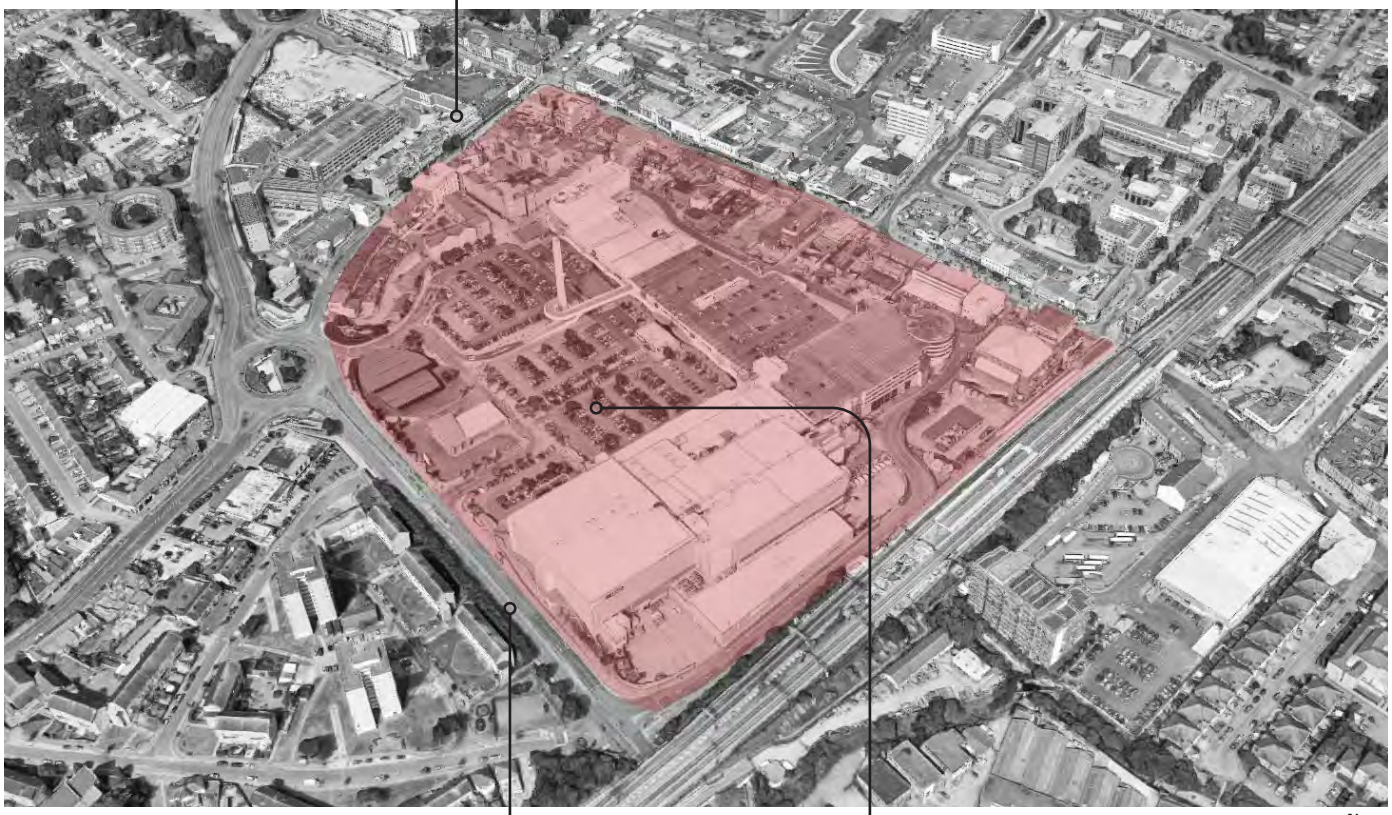


Fig. 78. Existing Brewery context

Havering Museum - High Street

Culverting the River Rom in the Brewery, 1960



Aerial view - looking North East

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Waterloo Street

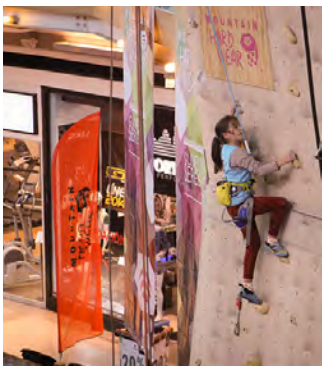
Brewery Car Park

6.4.2 Objectives

6.4.2.1 Vision

Deliver a predominantly commercial development of retail, leisure / culture and business uses that maintains the Brewery's role as a primary destination in Romford, with potential for civic uses, an expanded employment offer and / or housing at ground and on upper floors, with the River Rom forming the central focus of the area.

New high-quality development provides attractive views in to Romford for people arriving by train in to Romford Station, and along Waterloo Road strengthens links with South Street and the High Street, safeguards and enhances heritage assets, creates an attractive frontage to Waterloo Road and is centred around an attractive north-south open space which celebrates the River Rom.



Integrating leisure and experience into retail and expanding the food and beverage offer – Canada Water, Southwark | Sport Mall, Santiago

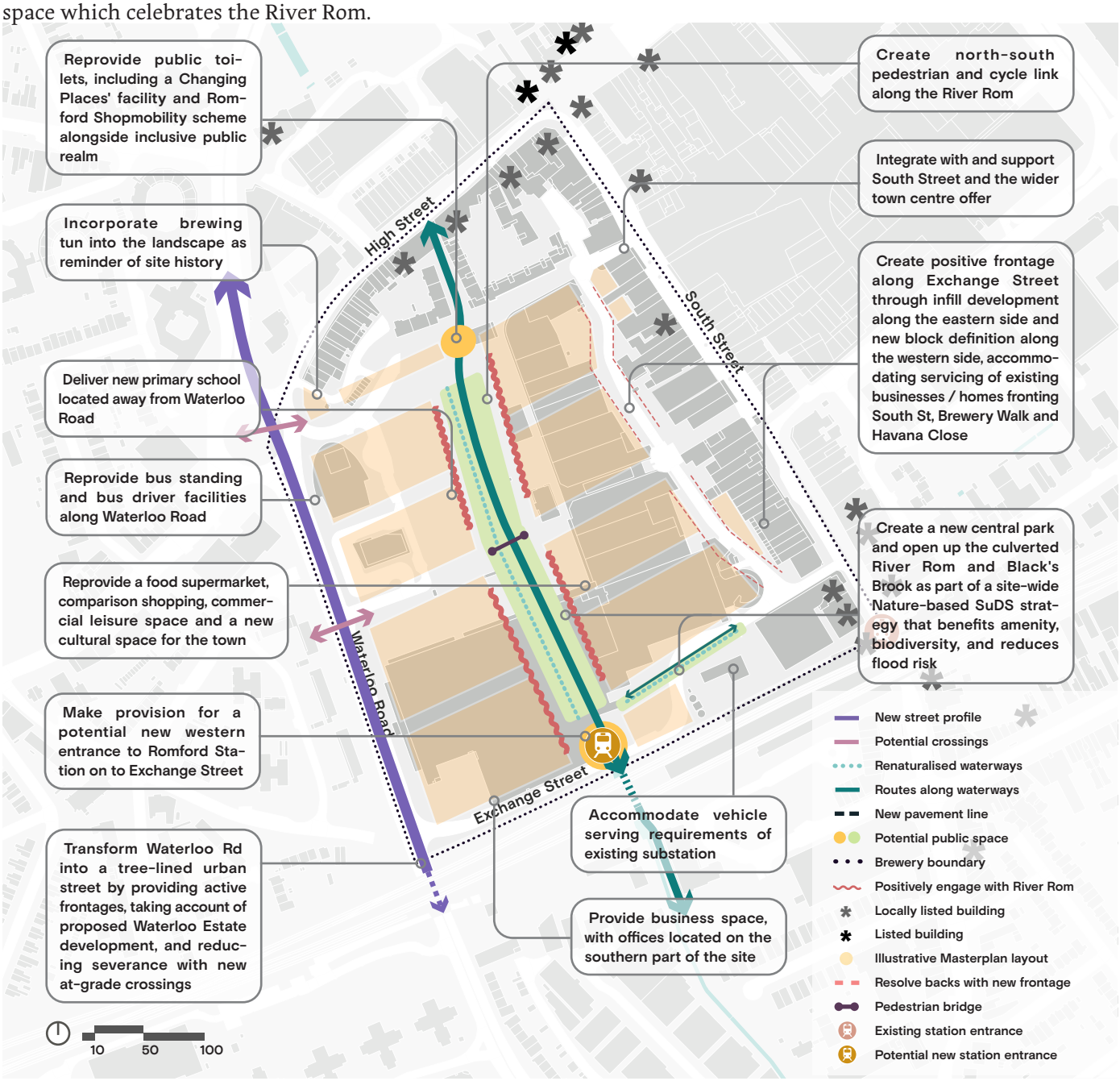


Fig. 79. Brewery site opportunities and objectives

6.4.3 Development Principles

6.4.3.1 Land Use

The redevelopment should enhance town centre activity and vitality reproviding a retail and food & beverage focus alongside leisure uses, seeking to reprovide a similar quantum of floorspace to that which is currently on the site, acknowledging that some units may reduce in size in response to changing market requirements. These uses should take advantage of the new setting of the deculverted River Rom, and should be focused on the eastern portion of the site, more closely associated with South Street, and taking advantage of westerly aspect onto the river. Blocks fronting the western side of the River Rom offer quiet yet accessible locations suitable for providing a primary school.

Table 18. Brewery Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	Approx. 3.2 ha
Residential	110 000 - 130 000m²
Civic / Employment / Commercial / Residential / Hotel	70 000 - 90 000m² Min 3 000m² of office / R+D
Retail	20 000 - 25 000m²
Community	100m²
Primary school	3FE school
Healthcare	1 500 m²
Leisure / Culture	13 000 - 15 000m²
Total built area	180 000 -230 000m²
Public town centre car parking	600-800

Fig. 80. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.4.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

Development should take full advantage of the Rom by creating a lush green landscape that celebrates the water course, opens it up for public access and improves biodiversity. Each of the plots identified must provide a public open space, along the Rom and within the block structure, incorporating both hard and soft public spaces.

Create green spaces and quiet places along the River Rom alongside places to sit, eat drink and enjoy the town centre – Riverside Lünen, Germany

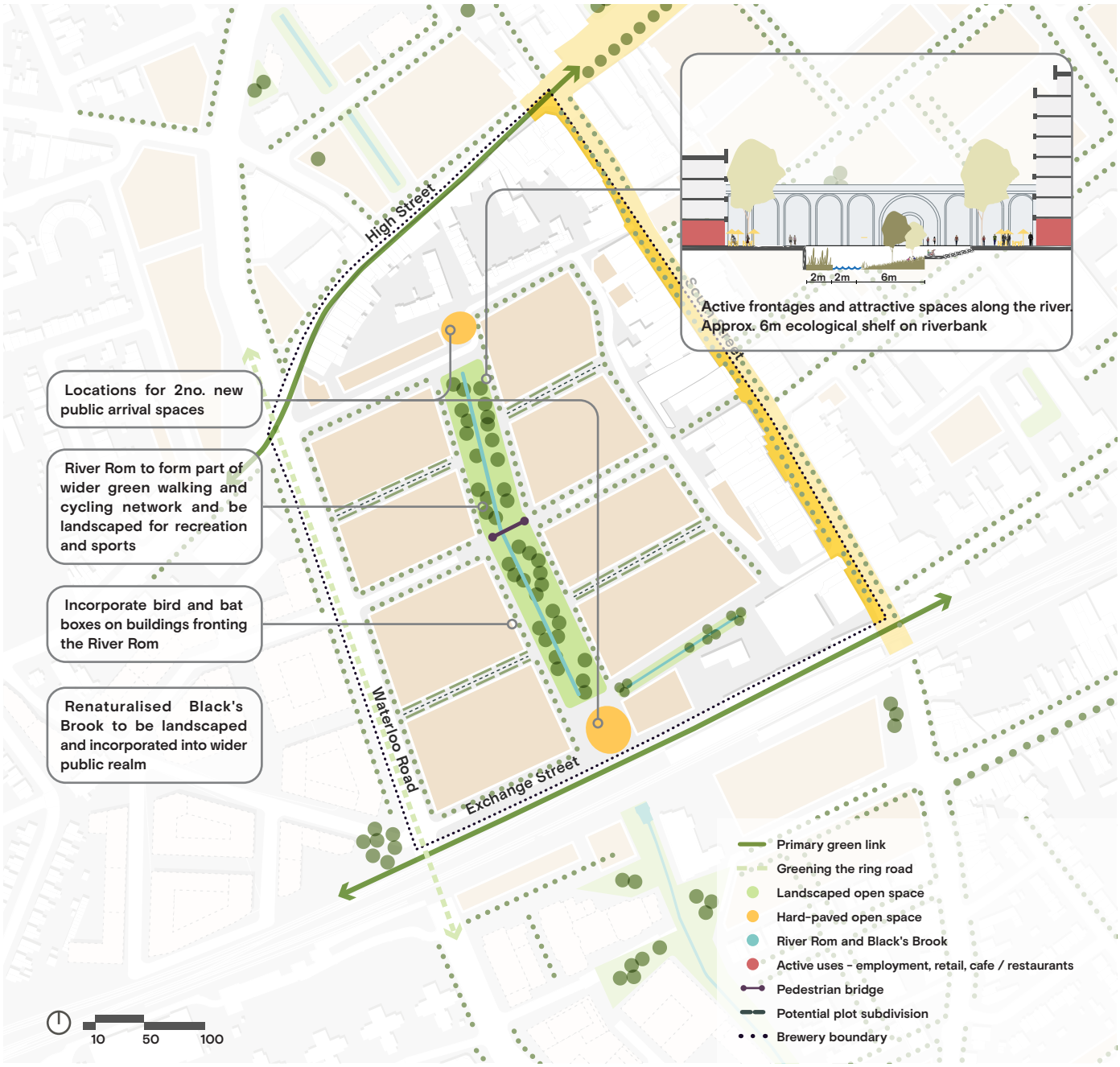


Fig. 81. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.4.3.3 Access and Movement

The access and movement network must promote active travel, utilising a green links along the River Rom to accommodate attractive walking and cycling routes. The street layouts must observe the street user hierarchy and provide access for all. All streets need to contribute to the public open space network with some incorporating sustainable drainage systems and street trees. The site has good access to buses and the railway station.

Recharacterise the ring road as an urban street, creating a pleasant environment, space for buses, rapid transit links pedestrians and cyclists, new at-grade crossings and active frontages – Blackfriars, London

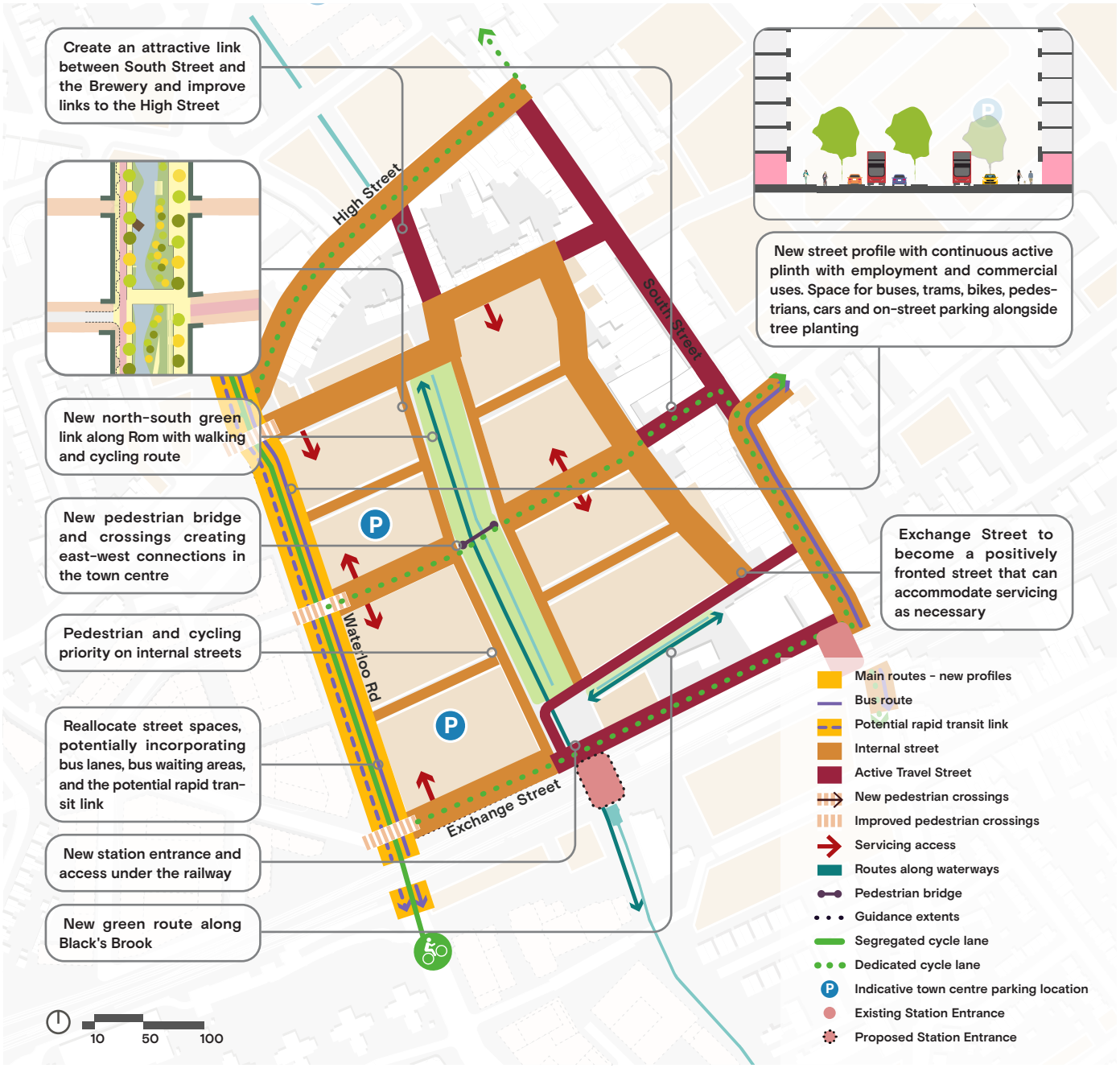


Fig. 82. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.4.3.4 Character and Townscape

The Brewery site straddles two character areas, knitting with town centre activity to the east, and with more residential to the west. The River Rom forms the transition boundary between the characters areas and defines the central space and focus of the area.

Experience retail, new examples of leisure and restaurants and cafes can all activate the edge of the river, with the river offering a unique setting as a counterpoint to the other retail provision in the town centre.

6.4.3.5 Implementation

A number of existing retailer and leisure uses are keen to be reprovided within any development and it is considered that early discussions with anchor tenants will be critical to derisk proposals and to ensure that new units are fit for purpose and that operational continuity is considered through any redevelopment period. Part of the surface car park could come forward for development first, decanting some existing uses into this first phase alongside some car parking provision. Once decanted, existing buildings can then be redeveloped step by step around the site, ensuring continuous operation of commercial activity.

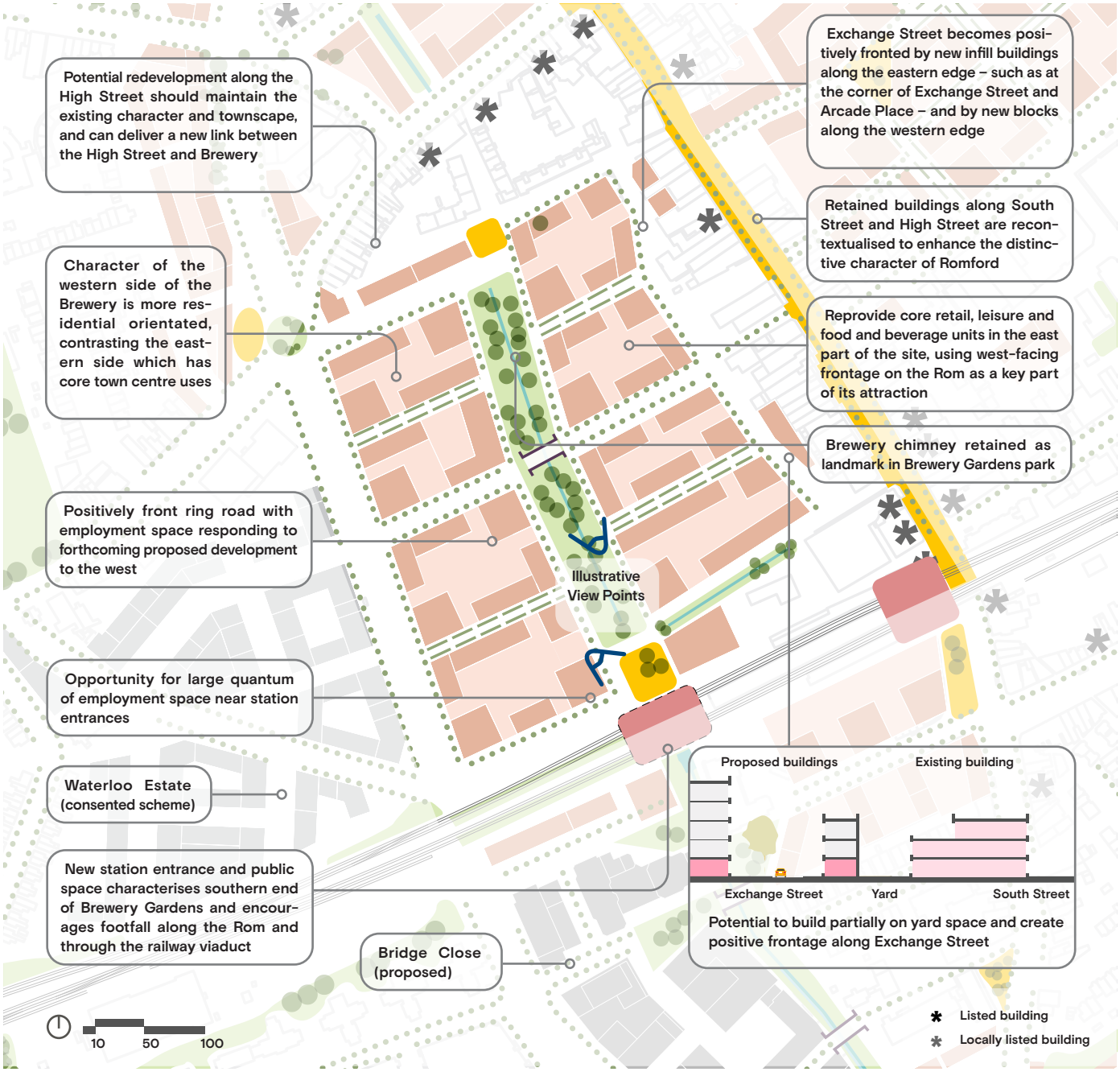


Fig. 83. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

Fig. 84. Aerial view of illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 86. View of proposed new central green link along the River Rom with active spaces on either side

Fig. 85. Creating a new entrance on Exchange Street to link the west of the town centre and relieve pressure on the existing entrance

6.5 STATION GATEWAY

6.5.1 Existing Context

This brief covers the area immediately south of the railway station framed in the north by the railway embankment and Romford Station, South Street to the east, Oldchurch Gardens to the south and the River Rom to the west. The majority of the site has a PTAL of 6b, although the south-eastern part of the site has a PTAL of 6a.

The northern part of this site, by the Station, has long been identified for development. However, taking a more comprehensive approach to redevelopment will help deliver additional homes and other uses and optimise development potential.

Table 19. Station Gateway uses

Existing Station Gateway uses*		Quantum
Food retail	Lidl foodstore	1 500 m²
Non-food retail, financial / professional, cafe / restaurant		450 m²
Business		2 600 m²
Residential	Family-sized housing (equivalent to be reprovided)	4 900 m²
Residential	Retirement housing (equivalent to be reprovided)	1 100 m²
Leisure	Fitness First	Unknown
Sui Generis	Night shelter (20 beds)	Unknown
Other	BT depot, bus stops, bus driver facilities, EA vehicular access to the River Rom	

*net, approx. proposed for redevelopment within core development area

Fig. 87. Existing Station Gateway context

Historic photo of South Street to the railway embankment looking to south c.1910

View west down Atlanta Boulevard

Aerial view - looking North West

N

View looking south down South Street

South Street bus stop

6.5.2 Objectives

6.5.2.1 Vision

Deliver an employment and residential neighbourhood, that forms a welcoming gateway to the town centre from the south.

A naturalised River Rom and associated green open space helps to unite a fragmented part of the town. New high-quality development with improved street definition results in an improved setting for the station and for the southern part of South Street and the River Rom.

Encourage a mix of employment uses (co-working, offices, studios, maker-spaces) and community and event spaces – Trinity Works, Colchester | Storey's Field Centre, Cambridge

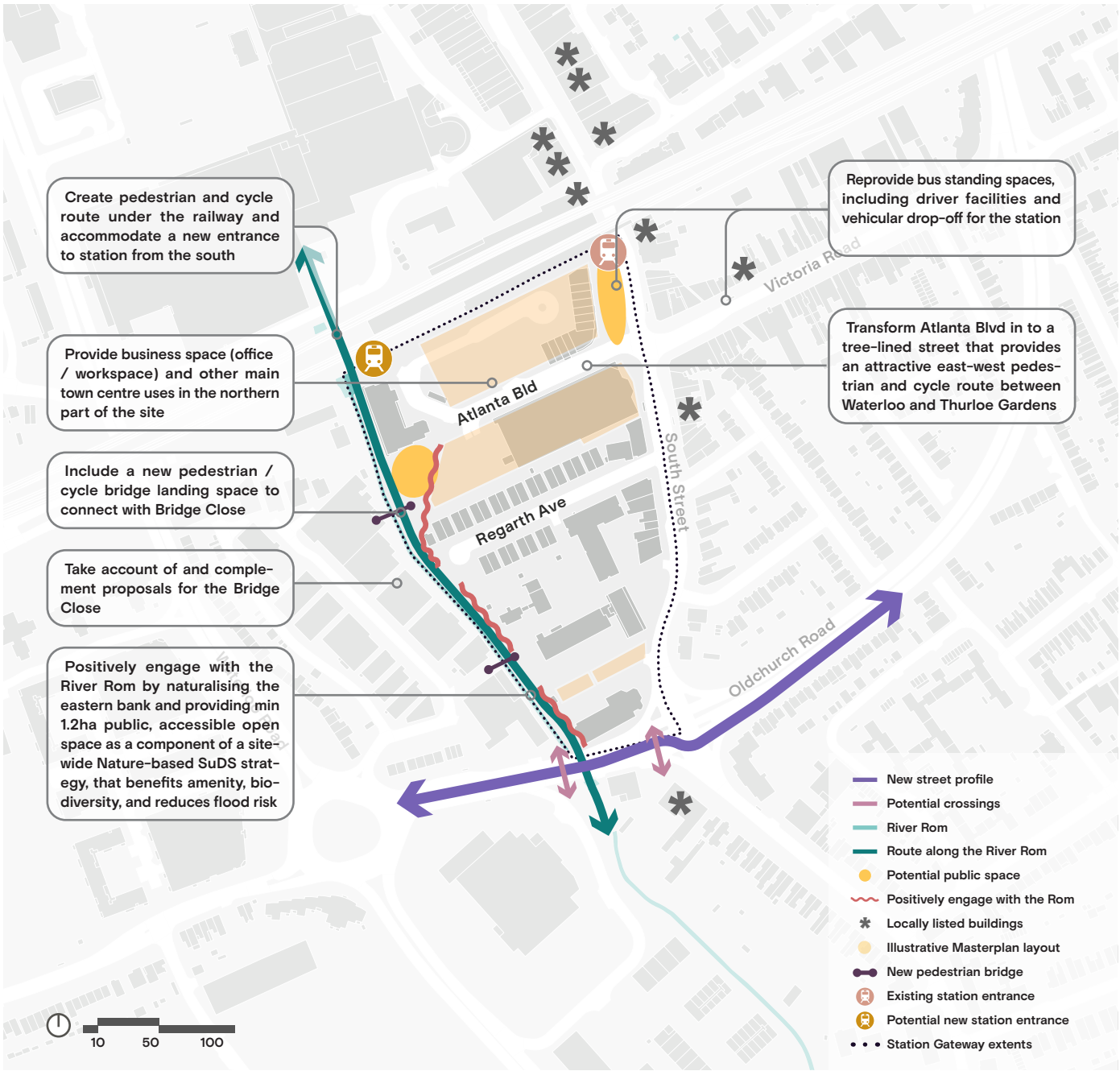


Fig. 88. Station Gateway site opportunities and objectives

6.5.3 Development Principles

6.5.3.1 Land Use

Station Gateway should deliver an employment focus around the station, with the greatest intensity of activity taking advantage of footfall around the railway station and hub of bus stops on South Street. Other retail should be focused along South Street as well as taking advantage of the enhanced riverside setting.

Active ground floor uses should respond to the east-west route across the site connecting Victoria Road with a new bridge over the River Rom and with the new station entrance to the west.

Table 20. Station Gateway Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	Approx. 1.2 ha
Residential	300m² (night shelter)
Residential**	5 000 - 8 000m²
Retail	5 000 - 7 000 m²
Employment / Commercial / Hotel	25 000 - 35 000 m²
Total built area	35 000 - 50 000m²
Public town centre car parking	On-street parking only

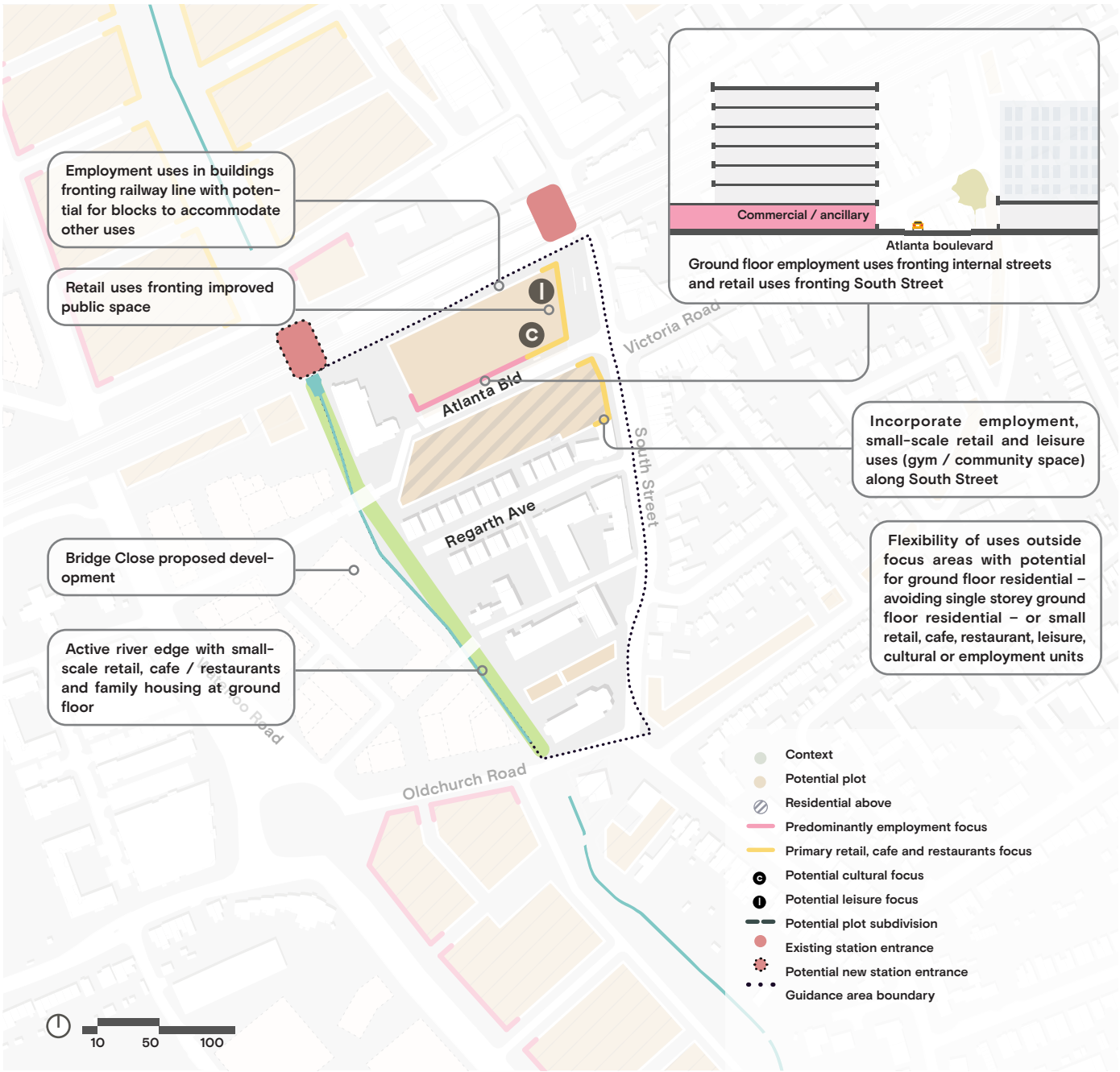


Fig. 89. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.5.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

Development should take full advantage of the Rom by creating a lush green landscape that celebrates the water course, opens it up for public access and improves biodiversity. Developments will be set back from the river bank allowing for ecological enhancement and introduction of Nature-based SuDS features within the river corridor. Each of the plots identified must provide a public open space along the Rom and within the block structure, incorporating both hard and soft public spaces.

Create a mixture of informal public playspace alongside cafes and high quality semi-private residential courtyards – Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London | Lieven Neighbourhood, Amsterdam

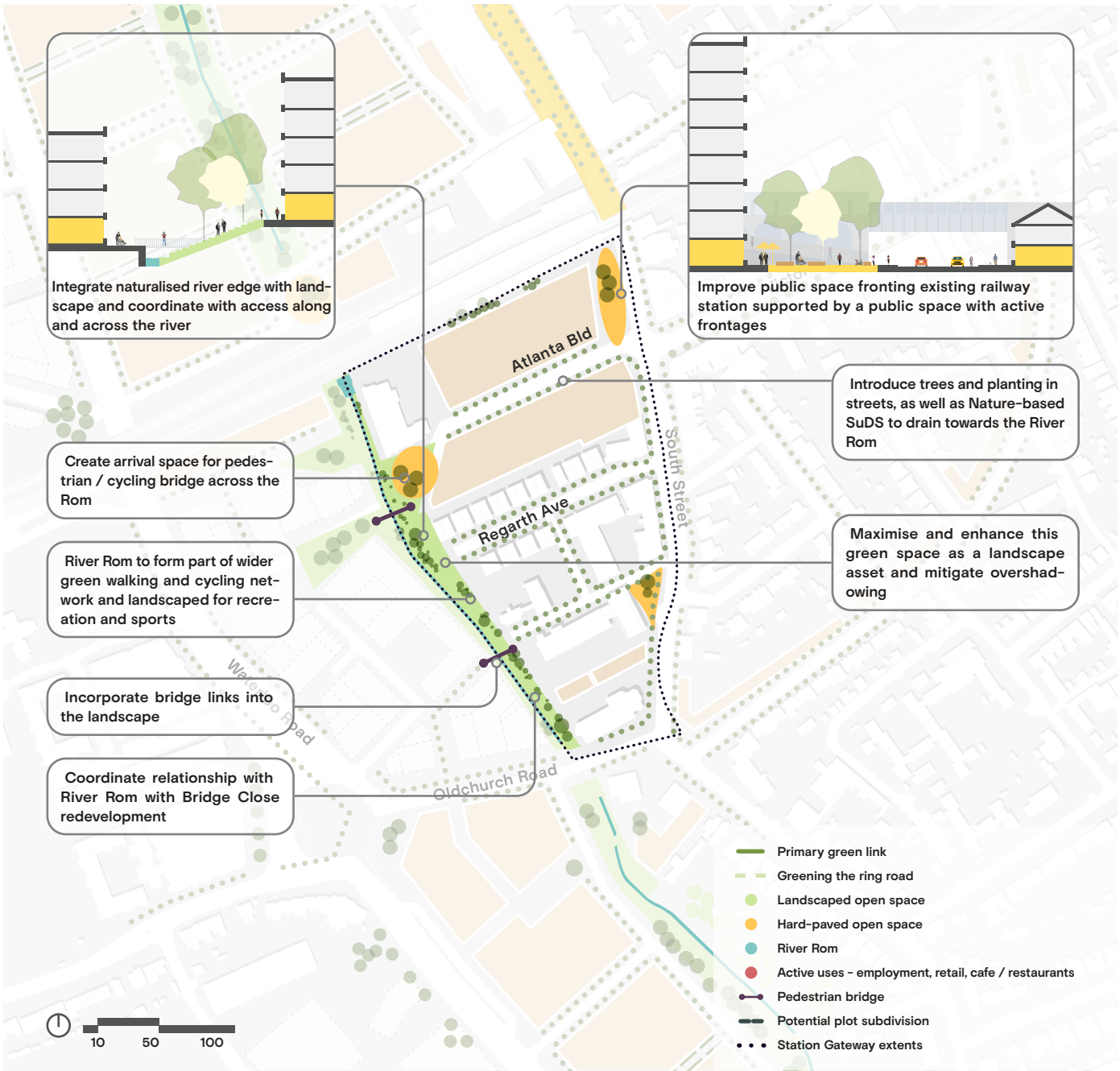


Fig. 90. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.5.3.3 Access and Movement

The access and movement network must promote active travel, utilising a green links along the River Rom to accommodate attractive walking and cycling routes. The street layouts must observe the street user hierarchy and provide access for all. All streets need to contribute to the public open space network with some incorporating sustainable drainage systems and street trees.

Create multi-model streets for bikes, pedestrians, cars with integrated on-street car parking and tree planting – Stamford New Road Altrincham

Fig. 91. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.5.3.4 Character and Townscape

The Station Gateway site is part of the Station Gateway character area. Given the prominent location adjacent to the station there is significant potential to improve the character of the southern part of the town centre, and to create an attractive gateway from the south. The employment focus around the station defines the northern part of the site, with the green space along the Rom to the west providing a quieter atmosphere.

The new street and block layout in the southern portion reacts to retained buildings, enclosing these in urban blocks.

6.5.3.5 Implementation

This area is critical to the future image and perception of the town centre, with the new Elizabeth Line services contributing to raising the profile of Romford to businesses, residents and visitors. Early engagement with TfL, Network Rail and the TOC will be critical to unlock development adjacent to the station and railway line. Phasing of delivery should focus north to south, starting close to the station to maximise value and demand driven by accessibility, and improving the town centre gateway. This also offers the potential to also build on market improvements created by Bridge Close. Later phases can allow value improvement to 'ripple' along South Street.

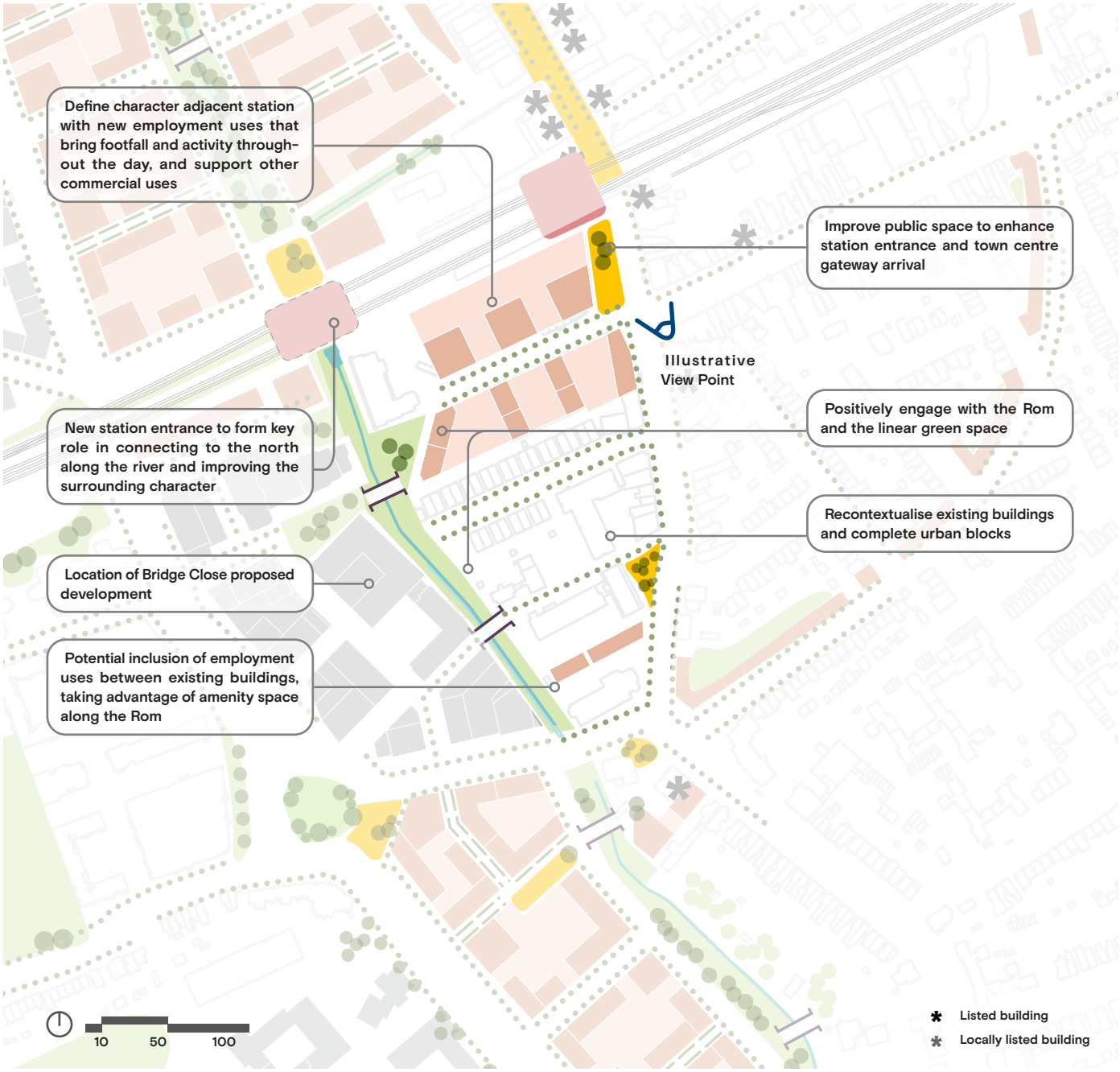


Fig. 92. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

Fig. 93. Illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 94. Reinforce the existing station entrance with an enhanced arrival public, providing an attractive approach into the town centre and the rail station

6.6 ROM VALLEY

6.6.1 Existing Context

This guidance area comprises a relatively flat area of land to the south of the ring road, lower in places than the adjacent Rom Valley Way. Most of the site has a PTAL of 6a / 6b, although the southern part has a PTAL of 4.

The north, south, and western parts of the site are largely occupied by large-scale, non-food retail sheds that make up the Rom Valley Retail Park and associated car parking. The central and eastern part of the site is occupied by 45 small industrial / commercial units, with an associated café and car parking that make up the Seedbed Centre. The north-east part of the site, east of the River Rom, comprises a collection of buildings that include restaurant, retail, and office uses.

Table 21. Existing Rom Valley uses

Existing Rom Valley Uses*		Quantum
Retail / Warehouse		10 500 m²
Restaurant / Cafes		500 m²
Employment / Commercial	The Seedbed Centre (equivalent to be reprovided)	3 500 m²
Business		1 000 m²
Other	Recycling facilities, bus shelters	Unknown
Public car parking	350 Rom Valley Retail Park, 170 Seedbed Centre, 250 Homebase	770 no.

*net, approx. proposed for redevelopment within core development area

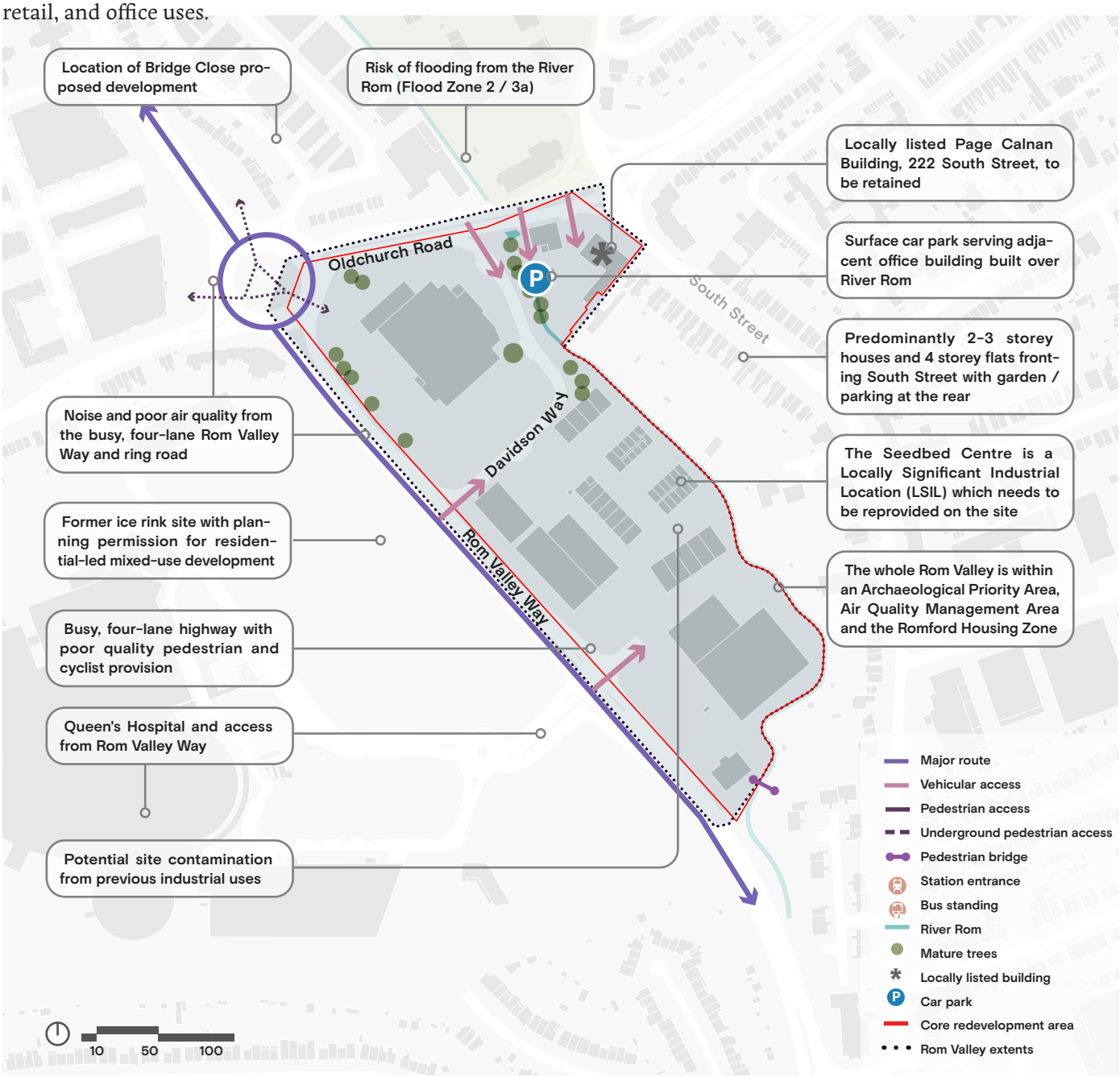


Fig. 95. Existing Rom Valley physical context

View from car park of Rom Valley Way retail park

View south down Rom Valley Way

Existing aerial view - looking South West

N

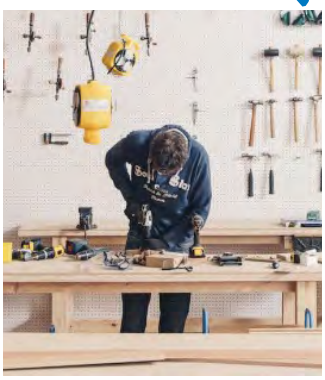
View south down the River Rom

Locally listed Page Calnan building c.1930

6.6.2 Objectives

6.6.2.1 Vision

Deliver a predominantly residential neighbourhood, with an employment focus along Rom Valley Way, supported by appropriate small-scale retail, community and leisure uses fronting the Rom. Development should transform this out of town shopping and employment area into an attractive and vibrant place, with improved street definition and active frontages that take advantage of and enhance the River Rom. It should provide a transition into the town centre and feather into the residential hinterland, with an opportunity for emphasis on family housing.



Activate the spaces along the River Rom with cafes, restaurants and a mix of employment uses – Canada Water, London | Blackhorse Workshop, London

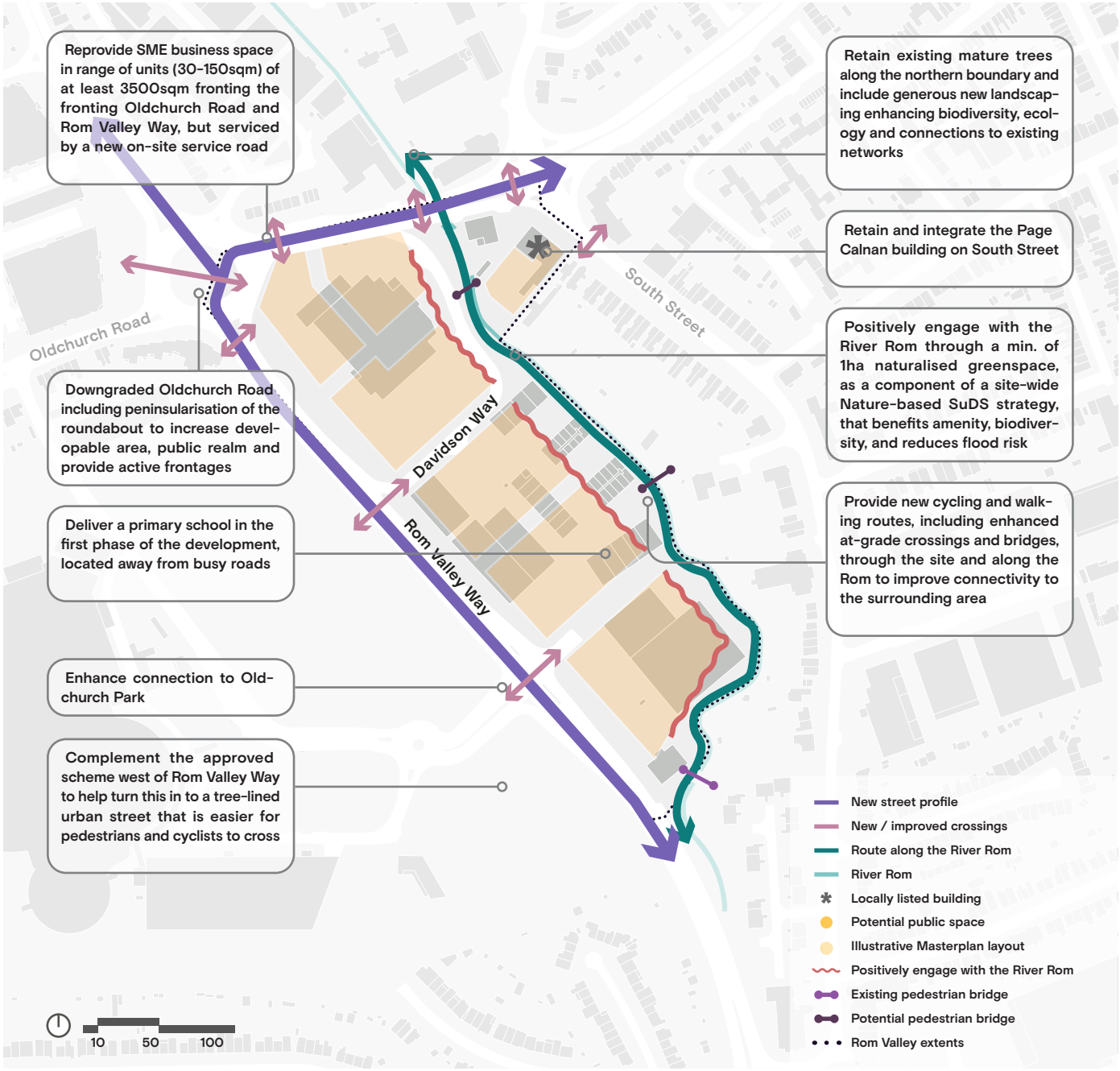


Fig. 96. Station Gateway site opportunities and objectives

6.6.3 Development Principles

6.6.3.1 Land Use

Rom Valley should be reconfigured to provide an urban block structure and uses mix, with employment uses and supporting retail providing the core focus of activity.

Employment uses should be focused along Rom Valley Way and Oldchurch Road, with retail and restaurants focused along the enhanced setting of the River Rom.

The eastern aspect of blocks fronting the River Rom offer quiet yet accessible locations suitable for providing a primary school.

Table 22. Rom Valley Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	Approx. 2.6 ha
Residential	65 000 - 85 000 m²
Retail	1 000 - 2 500 m²
Employment	5 000 - 8 000 m²
Light / General Industry	Min 3 500 m²
Leisure / Culture	Opportunity for small-scale units / childcare facilities
Primary School	3FE school
Total built area	90 000 - 120 000 m²
Car parking	Accessible parking provision only

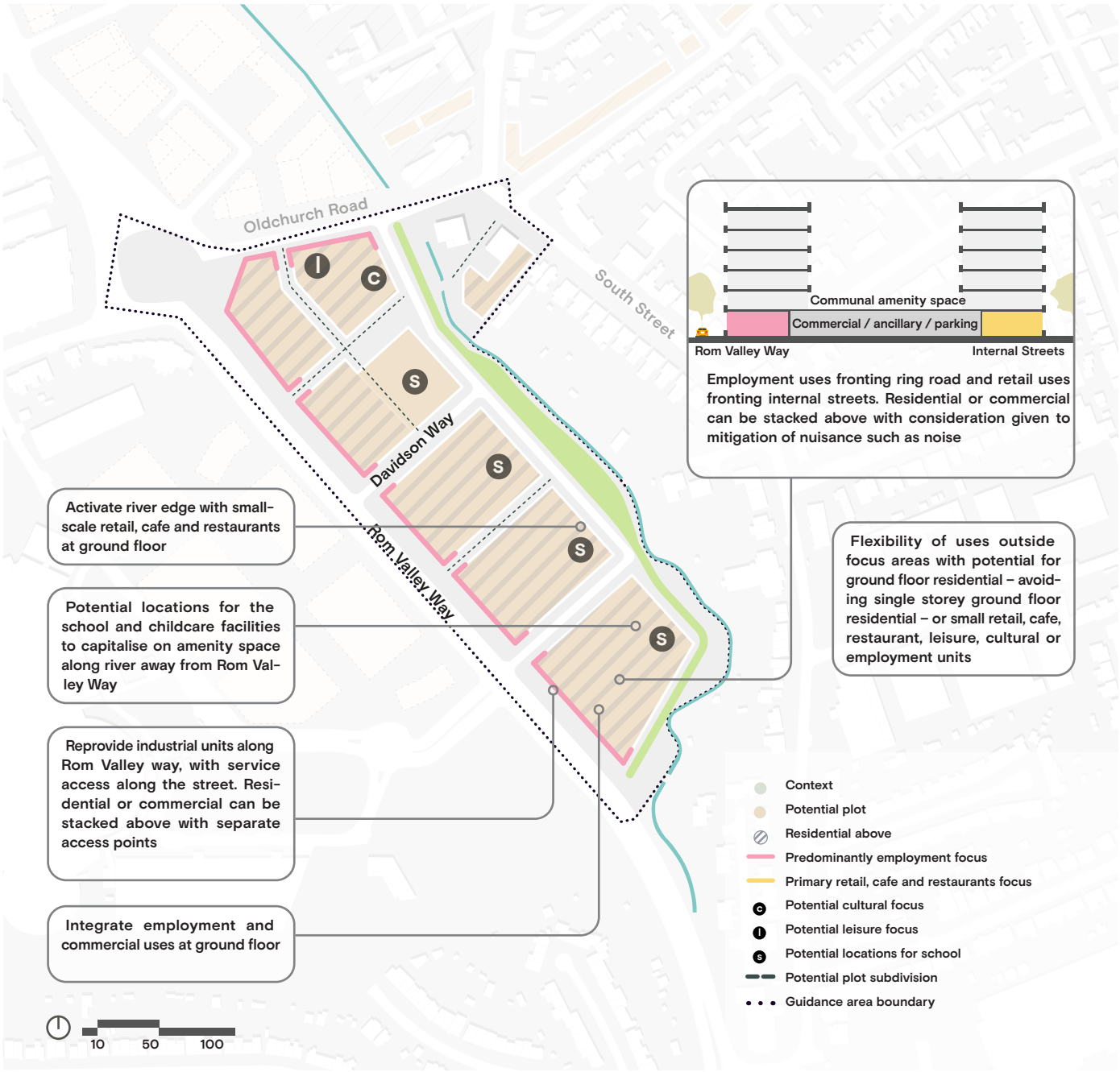


Fig. 97. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.6.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

Development should take full advantage of the Rom by creating a lush green landscape that celebrates the water course, opens it up for public access and improves biodiversity. This section of the Masterplan offers most opportunities to enhance the course of the river and restore its ecological value. Developments will be set back from the river bank allowing for a wider corridor supporting ecological enhancement, amenity functions and introduction of Nature-based SuDS features. Each of the four plots identified must provide a public open space, along the Rom and within the block structure, incorporating both hard and soft public spaces.

Create pedestrian and cycleway along the River Rom – Riverside, Lünen, Germany

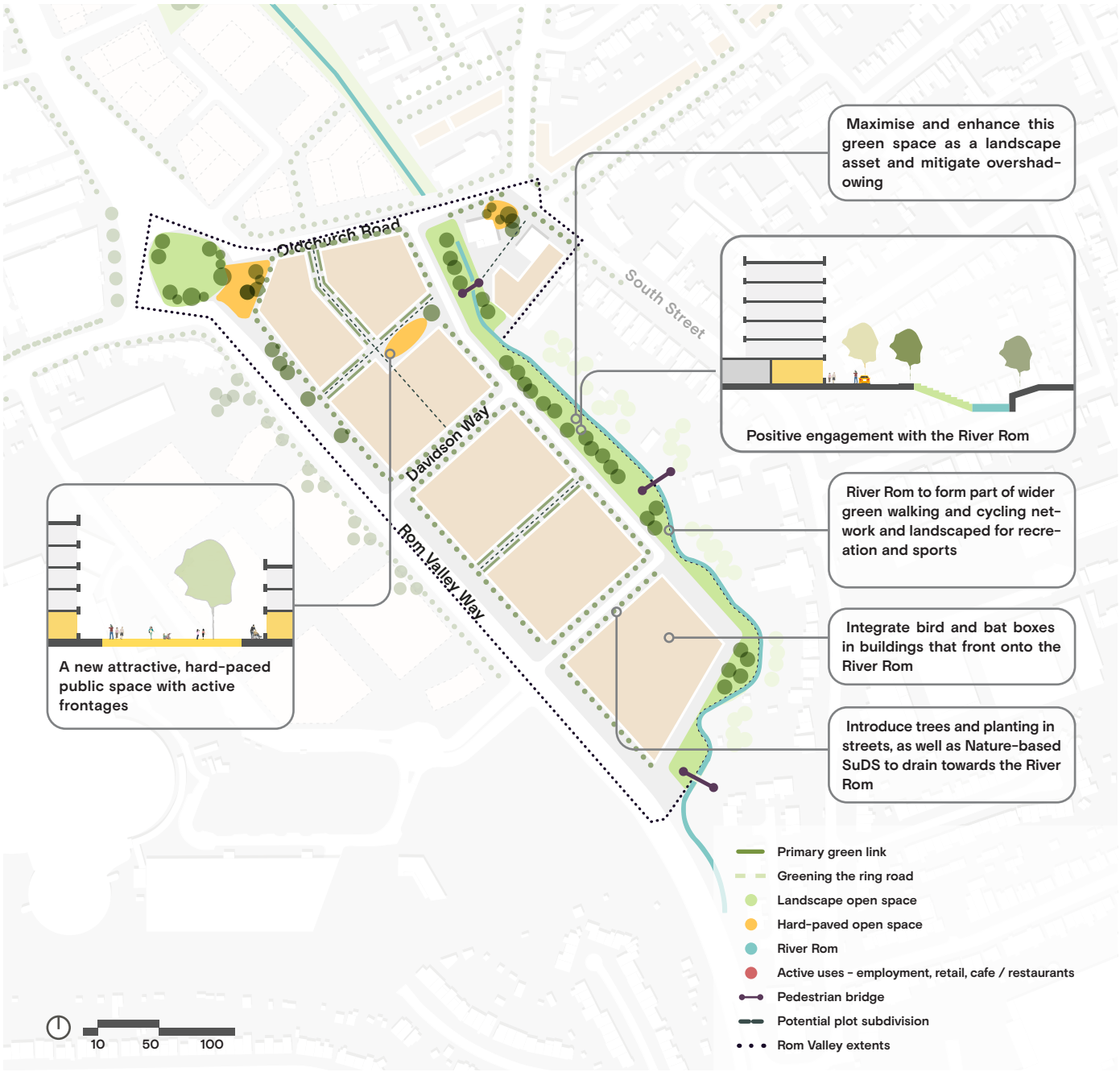


Fig. 98. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.6.3.3 Access and Movement

The access and movement network must promote active travel, utilising green links along and across the River Rom to accommodate attractive walking and cycling routes. Access between the hospital and town centre for pedestrians and cyclists is a key feature of this site, with at-grade crossings over Rom Valley Way and Oldchurch Road being vitally important. The site has good access to public transport (buses and rail services from Romford Station are 500m to the north of the site) and the possible provision of a north-south rapid transit would improve this.

Create urban streets with space for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport – Oxford Road, Manchester

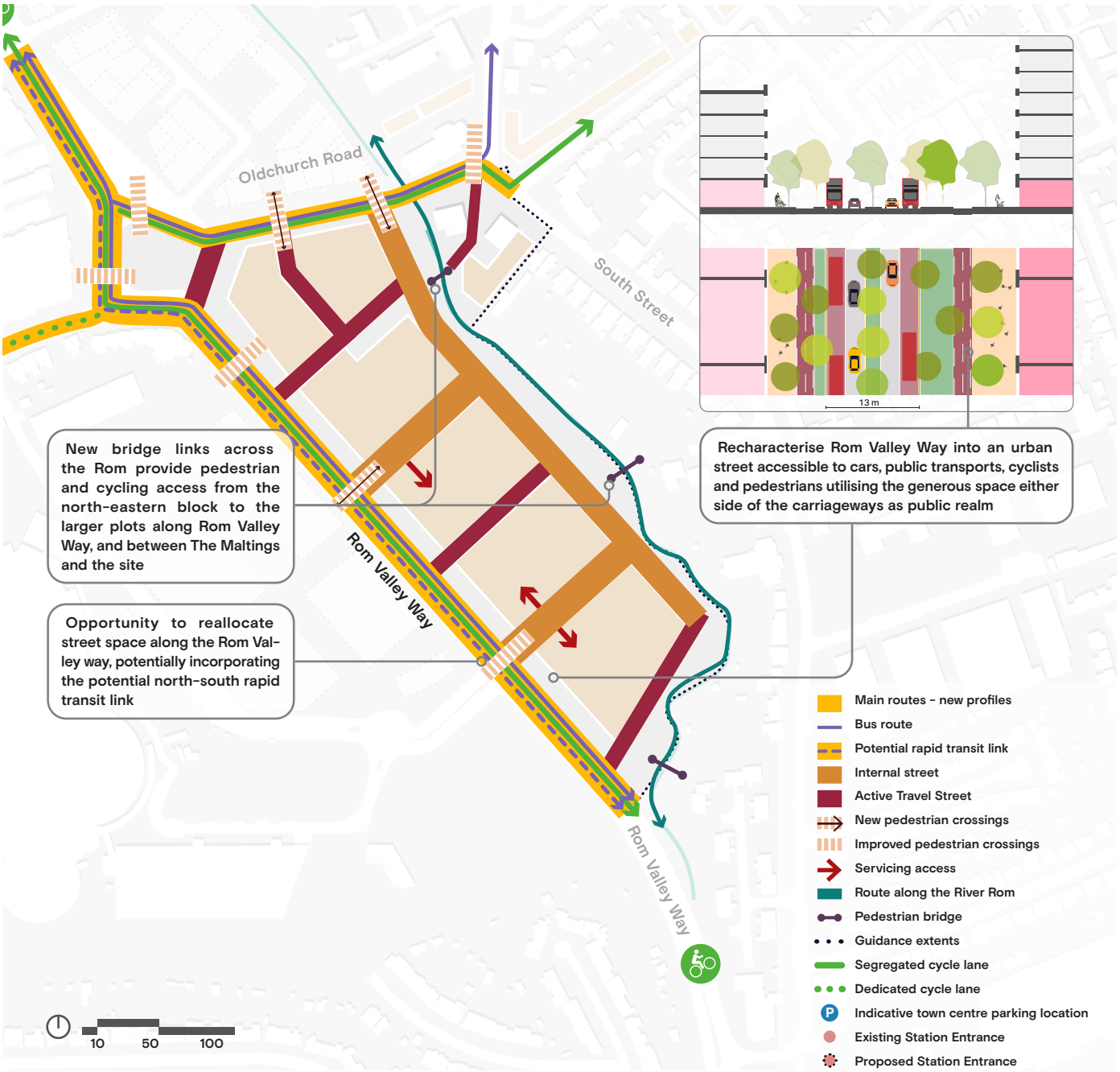


Fig. 99. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.6.3.4 Character and Townscape

The Rom Valley site forms part of the Rom Valley character area. Its employment focus provides the clearest indication for the make-up of ground floor programme, particularly along Rom Valley Way where the more hostile edge condition can be more boldly fronted by employment uses.

The massing should feather from north to south and from west to east into the residential context, boldly defining the busy roads, and creating a softer edge along the River Rom.

6.6.3.5 Implementation

It is important that the existing employment uses within the Seedbed centre are preserved through the redevelopment and that a phased approach starting at the south of the site is considered and provides for this.

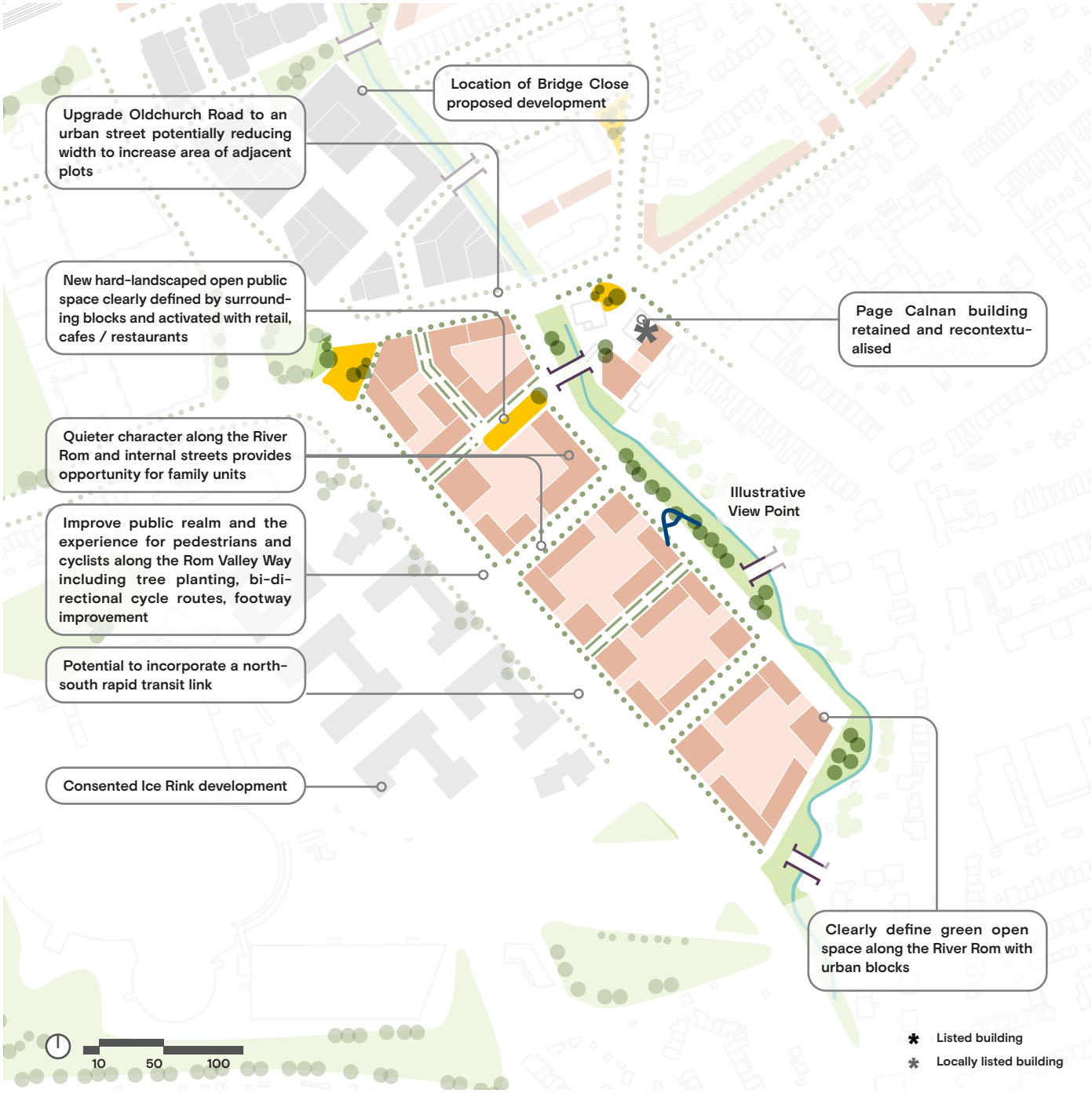


Fig. 100. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

Fig. 101. Illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 102. Creating pleasant spaces along the River Rom that encourage people to stop, sit, and enjoy. The River Rom can also become part of a wider cycling and walking network through and across the town centre

6.7 LIBERTY

6.7.1 Existing Context

This brief covers an area framed by Market Place, Mercury Gardens, Western Road and South Street. The majority of the site has a PTAL of 6a or 6b, with parts of Market Place and South Street having a PTAL of 4.

The original open-air Liberty Centre was opened in 1968 and enclosed and extended in 2003. It currently comprises 105 units primarily of non-food retail, including many household names, a post office, cafés / restaurants and financial services. Servicing for the shopping centre is from the roof with vehicle access at two points along Mercury Gardens. Redevelopment of any part of the site will need to maintain servicing access for retained units.

Lambourne House was built at the same time and has been refurbished to provide serviced office suites. The former Debenhams department store, built in 1963, comprises approx. 22,000sqm of non-food retail. Mercury House provides office space. The adjoining Mercury Gardens car park, built at the same time, is unused.

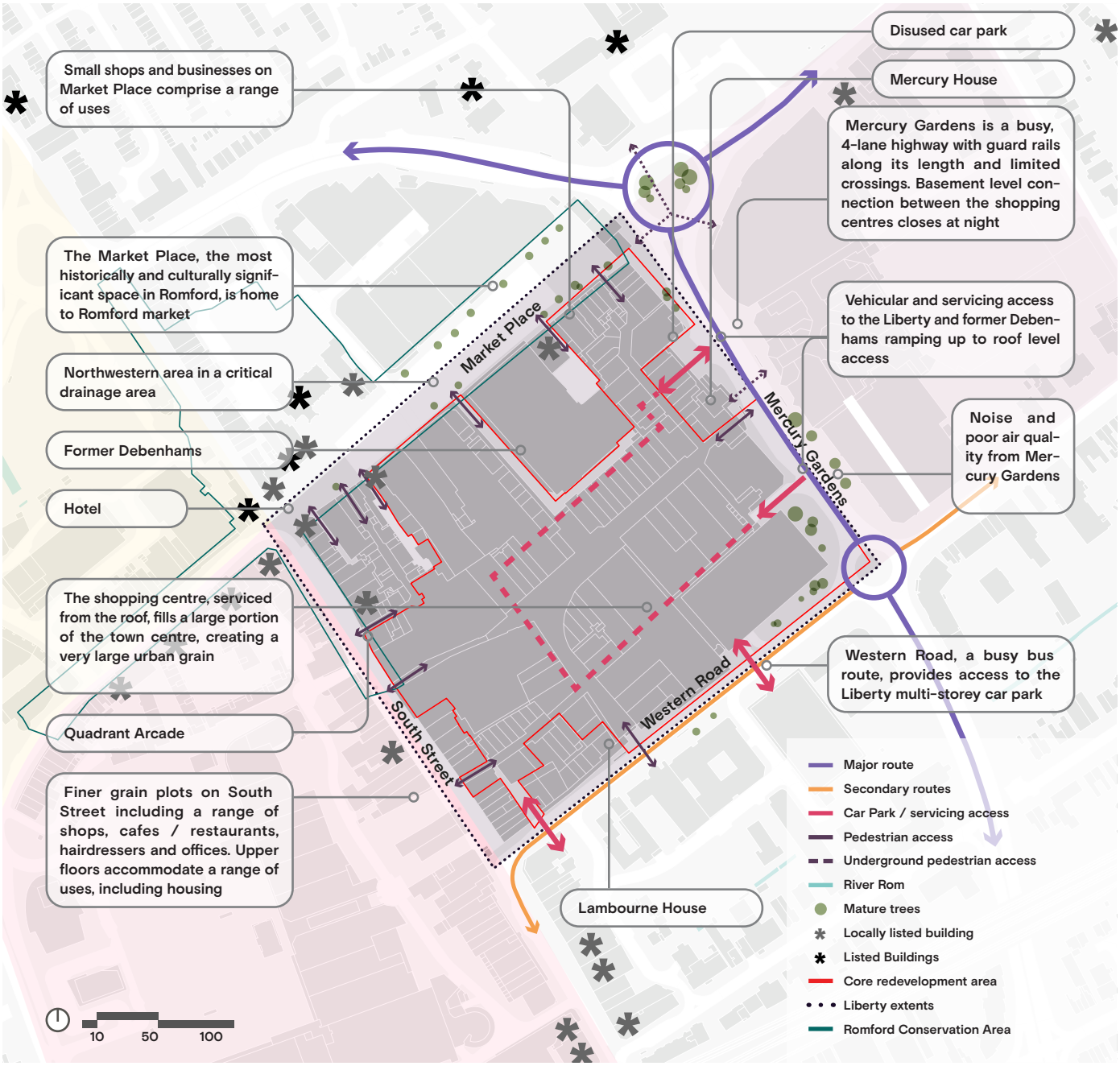


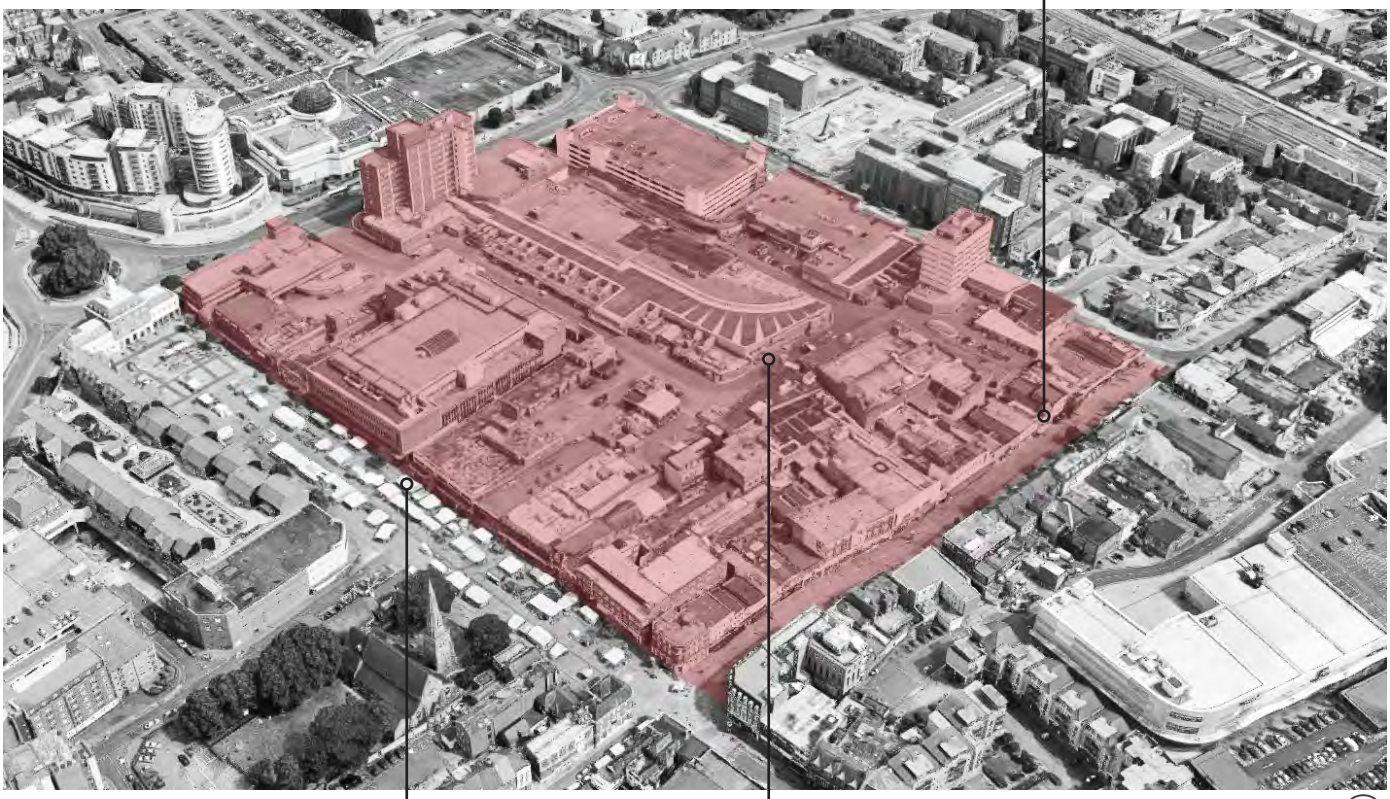
Fig. 103. Existing Liberty physical context

Table 23. Existing Liberty uses

Existing Liberty Uses*		Quantum
Retail / Restaurants Cafes	The Liberty Centre	39 000
Employment / Commercial	Lambourne House Mercury House	1 000
Residential		-
Other	Disused Mercury Gardens car park, public toilets, Council Public Access & Service Centre, Shopmobility Base	
Public car parking	Liberty Car Park	850

***net, approx. proposed for redevelopment within core development area**

View of one of the Liberty entrances on South Street



Aerial view - looking southeast

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View of former Debenhams store along Market Place

Liberty Shopping Centre, completed in 1972

6.7.2 Objectives

6.7.2.1 Vision

Phased evolution to an enhanced and nuanced commercial-focused area that provides active ground floor commercial and employment uses with residential accommodation on upper floors. Development to be sensitive to and supportive of the special character and setting of the conservation area, positively engaging with a rejuvenated Market Place with listed buildings, breaking up the existing large scale blocks to deliver a finer urban grain.

The finer urban grain can incorporate a network of publicly accessible streets that stay open at all times, and allow for street addresses for ground floor uses and for residential above.

Create positive, active ground floor conditions and spaces to eat and drink throughout the day – 19th & Mercer, Seattle | New Road, Brighton

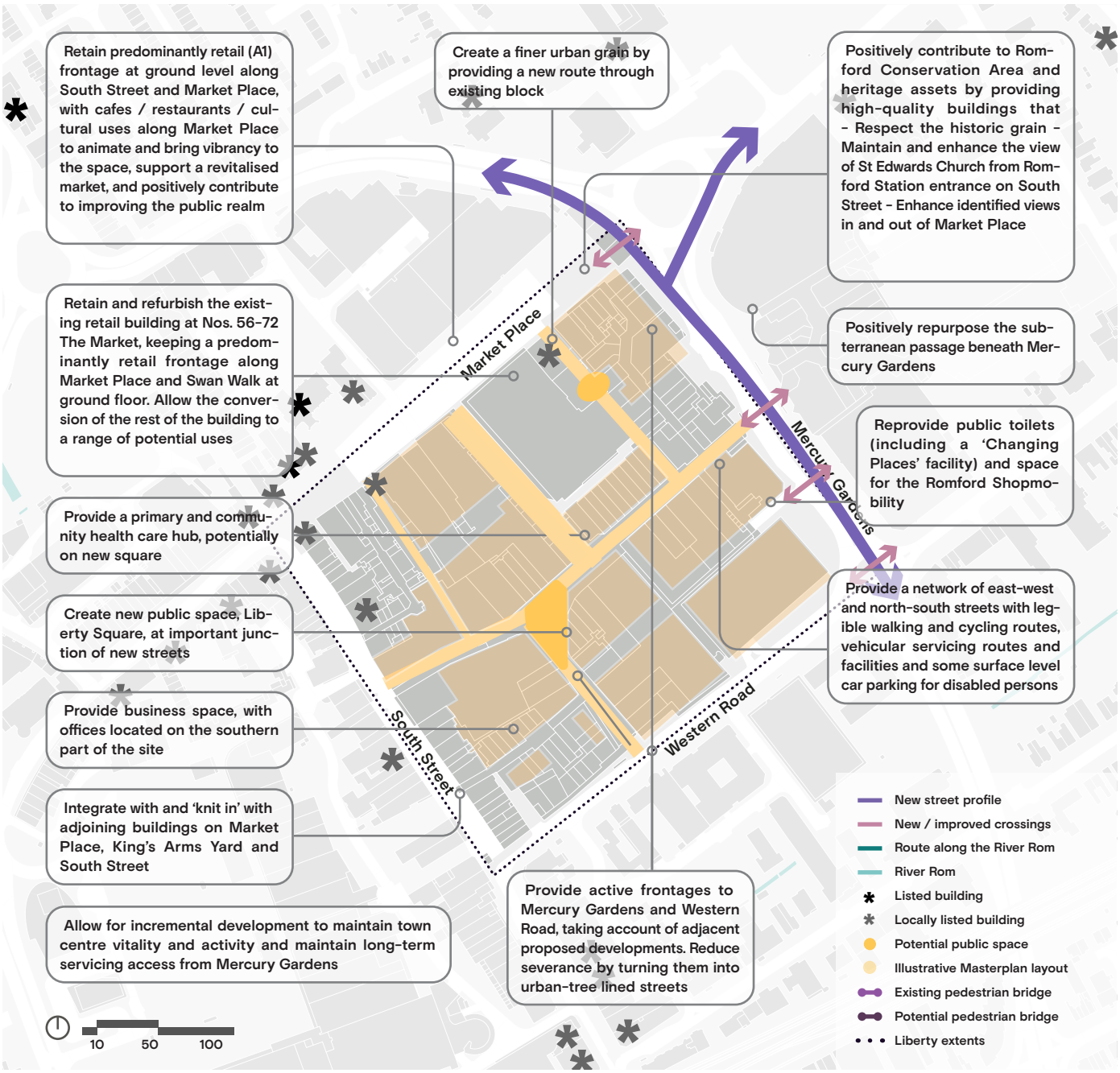


Fig. 104. Liberty site opportunities and objectives

6.7.3 Development Principles

6.7.3.1 Land Use

The site should be divided into sub-plots taking the form of urban blocks, creating a finer urban grain. Retail should form the focus of ground floor activity around the internal streets as well as along South Street and the Market Place. Uses along the Market Place should seek to positively engage with the space and help support it as the most important civic space in the town centre. Employment uses should front the ring road. Residential and employment uses can occupy upper floors.

Table 24. Liberty Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	Approx. 0.2 ha
Residential	80 000 - 110 000 m²
Retail	35 000 - 40 000 m² (inc. Post Office and PASC)
Office / research & development / light industry / leisure / culture / hotel	15,000 to 20,000 m²
Healthcare	1 500 m² (primary / community health hub)
Total built area	130 000 - 170 000 m²
Car parking	600-800 spaces

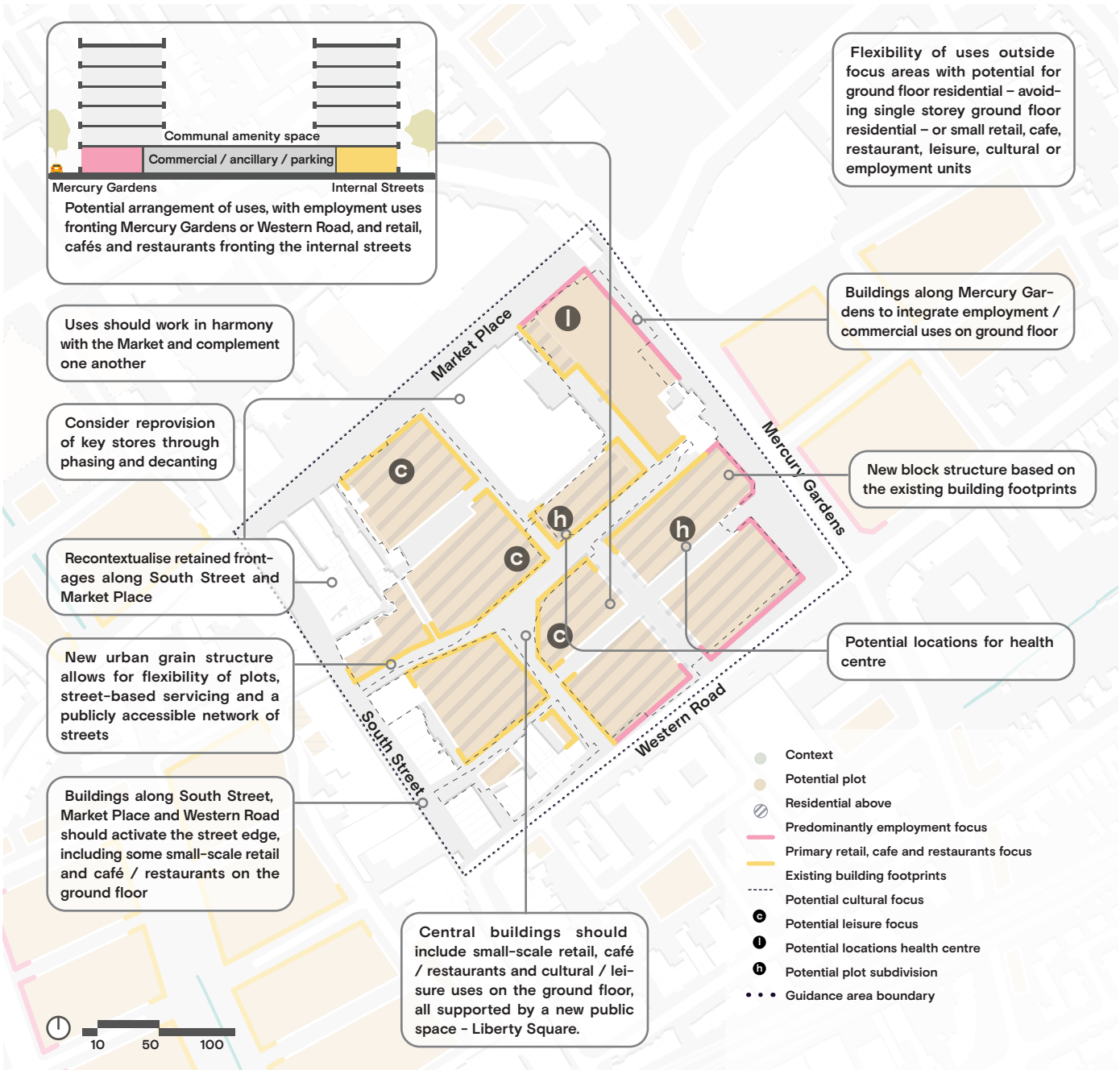


Fig. 105. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.7.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

Reprovide a truly public space at the centre of the area which can be positively engaged with at its edges by new buildings. The Market Place and South Street should be enhanced and celebrated as focal spaces for the town centre.

Create places to sit and dwell, places to socialise and be active throughout the day – Croydon South End High Street, London

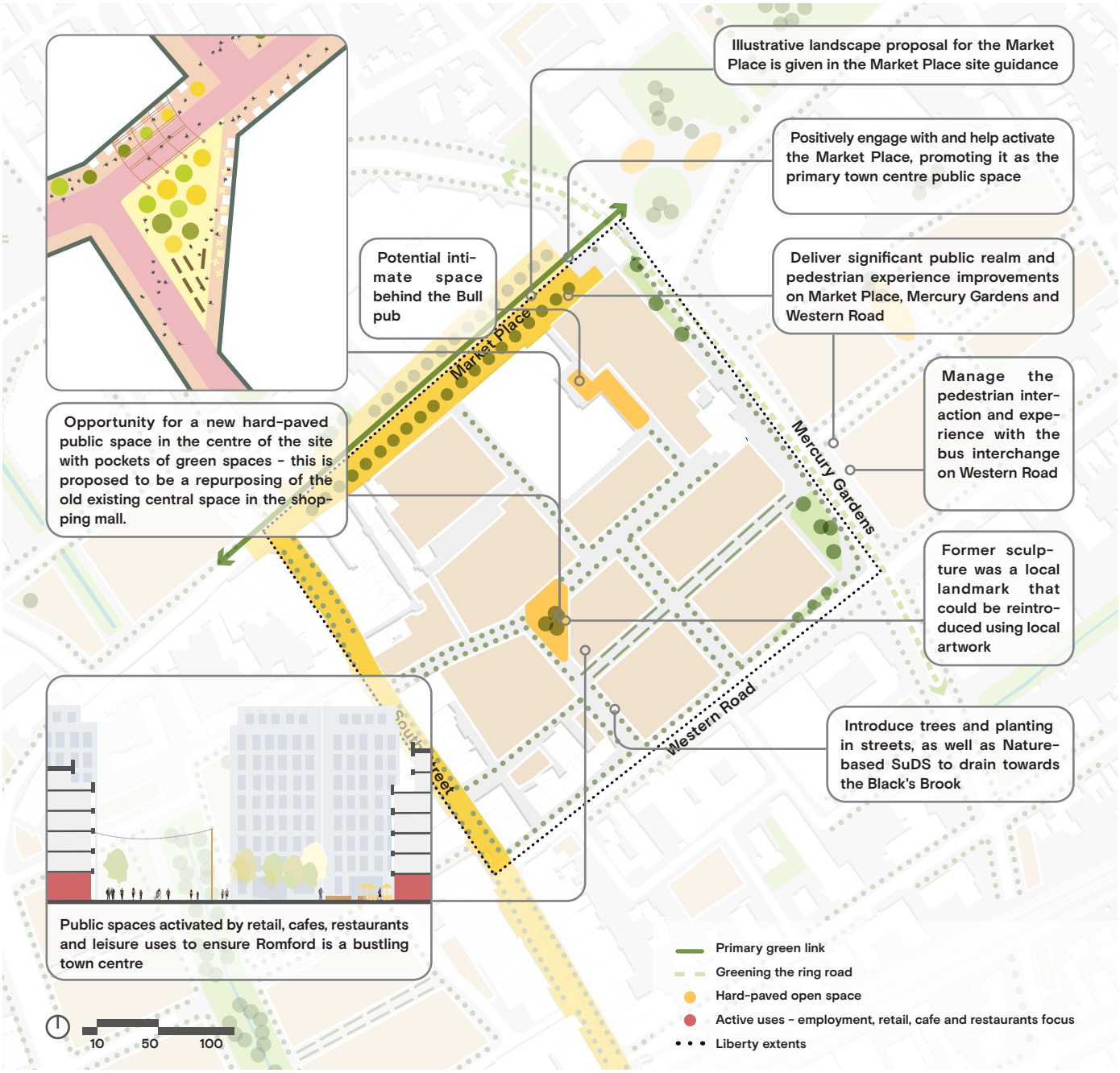


Fig. 106. Indicative public open space provision and locations.

6.7.3.3 Access and Movement

The access and movement network must promote active travel, utilising green links to the town centre. All streets must be clear, safe and accessible for pedestrians and cyclists to encourage active travel.

Given the removal of the service access on the roof, buildings to include coordinated commercial deliveries and waste strategy.

Create urban street with space for pedestrians, cyclists and public transports – The Cuts, Canada Water

Fig. 107. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.7.3.4 Character and Townscape

The Liberty forms the western component of the Liberty & Mercury character area. Going forward it should remain part of the primary retail focus of the town centre, but become better knitted into its context, offering a supportive role to the Market Place and encouraging permeability through the town centre at all times of day.

It will be paramount to the town centre that the shopping centre can perform its commercial function during redevelopment, with each element coming forwards piece by piece to ensure the town centre is not devoid of its primary retail attractor.

6.7.3.5 Implementation

The Liberty is a complex mix of buildings and a carefully phased approach will be critical to create value and ensure the ongoing retail function is maintained and not undermined. There are a number of vacant / under-utilised blocks which could come forward early whilst preserving occupied and well-performing retail units. Blocks are in multiple ownerships and a coordinated delivery strategy and agreement will be required. Phasing will need to be informed by landownership, existing lease agreements and the ability to change / reroute internal servicing / M&E infrastructure. A key consideration is the ability to continue servicing individual units given the current roof level access and coordination of parking provision in line with the Masterplan parking strategy.

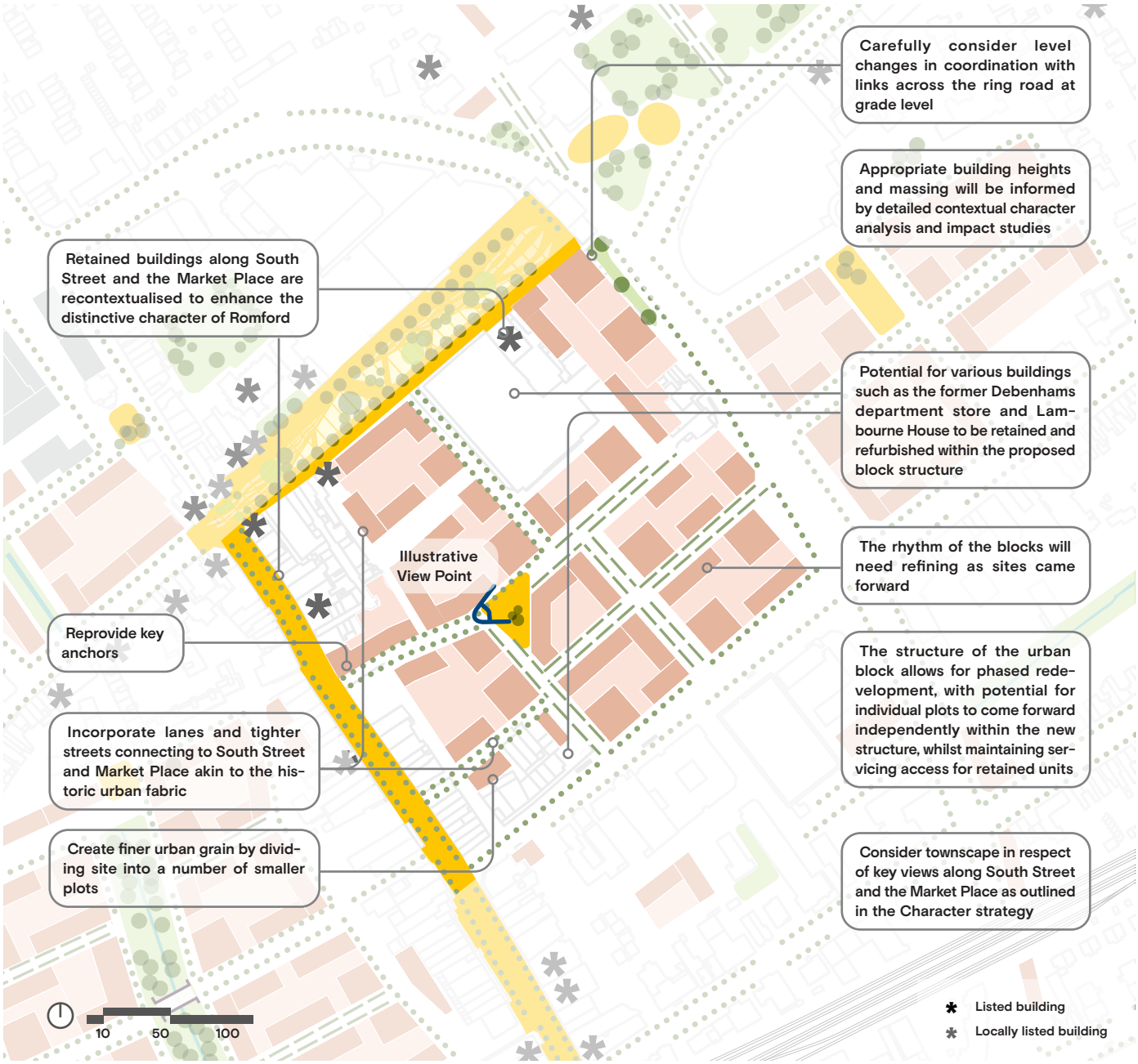


Fig. 108. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

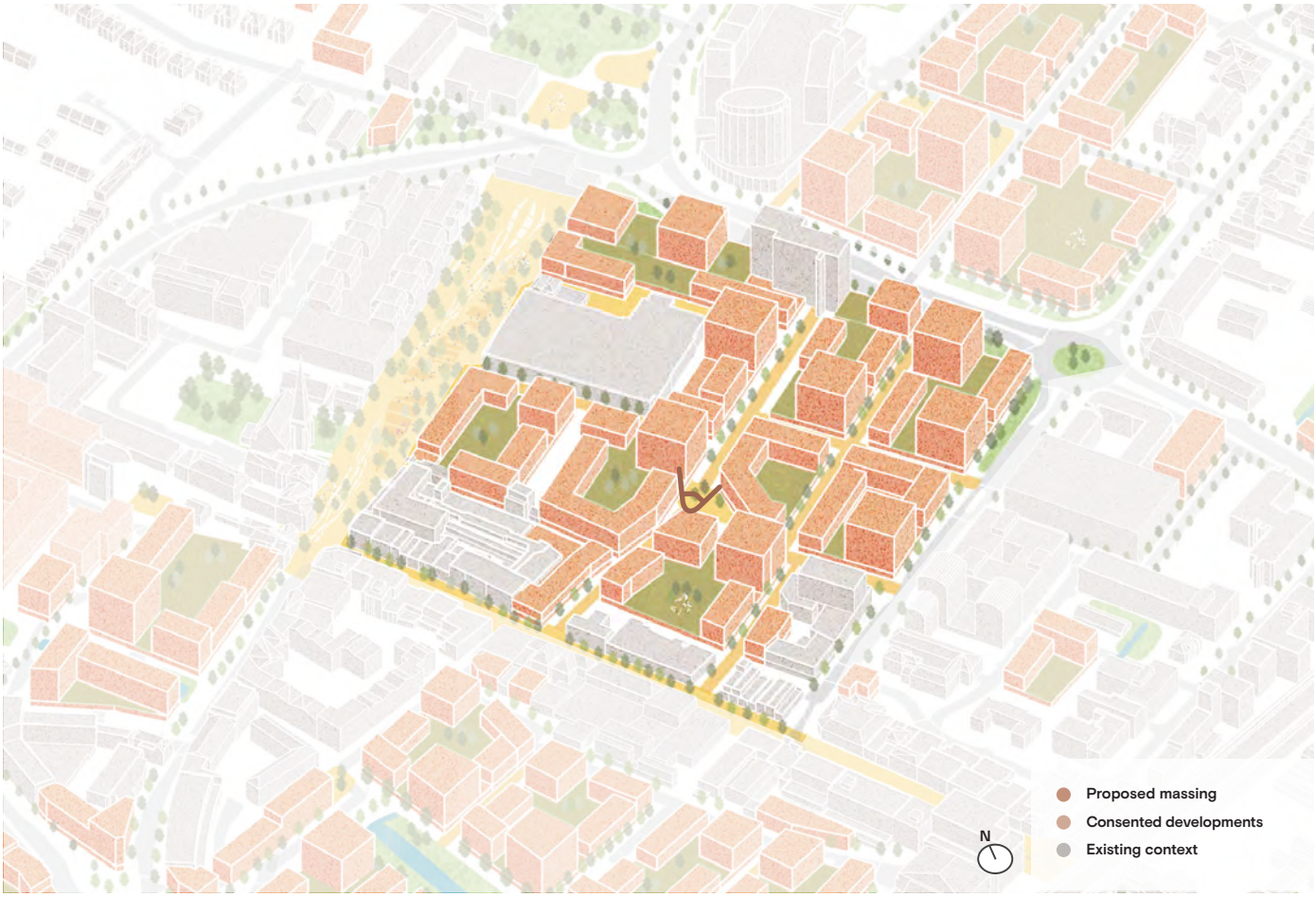


Fig. 109. Illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 110. Create new public spaces within the town centre to create attractive places to sit and enjoy the town centre, and will give a facelift to existing spaces, such as along South Street, to encourage outside activity and interaction

6.8 MERCURY

6.8.1 Existing Context

Mercury sits between the Main Road, Junction Road, Western Road and Mercury Gardens characterised by the Mercury shopping centre. The Mercury is a 3-storey enclosed shopping centre, opened in 1990, with approx. 40 stores including large Wilko and Peacocks stores, Premiere Cinemas, Mecca Bingo and a vacant nightclub. Servicing and parking access is from Western Road, with exits onto Western Road, Junction Road and Dolphin Approach. The car park is shared with the ASDA food store which forms the ground floor of the mixed-use retail, hotel and a residential development built in 2008 / 09. The site mainly has a PTAL of 6a, although the northern part has a PTAL of 4.

Table 25. Existing Mercury uses

Existing Mercury Uses*		Quantum
Non-Food Retail, Cafes / Restaurants, Financial / Professional		13 000 m²
Leisure	Premiere Cinemas, Mecca Bingo	Unknown
Leisure	Fitness centre, vacant nightclub	1 000 m²
Residential		-
Public car parking	Multi-storey car park	1000

*net, approx. proposed for redevelopment within core development area

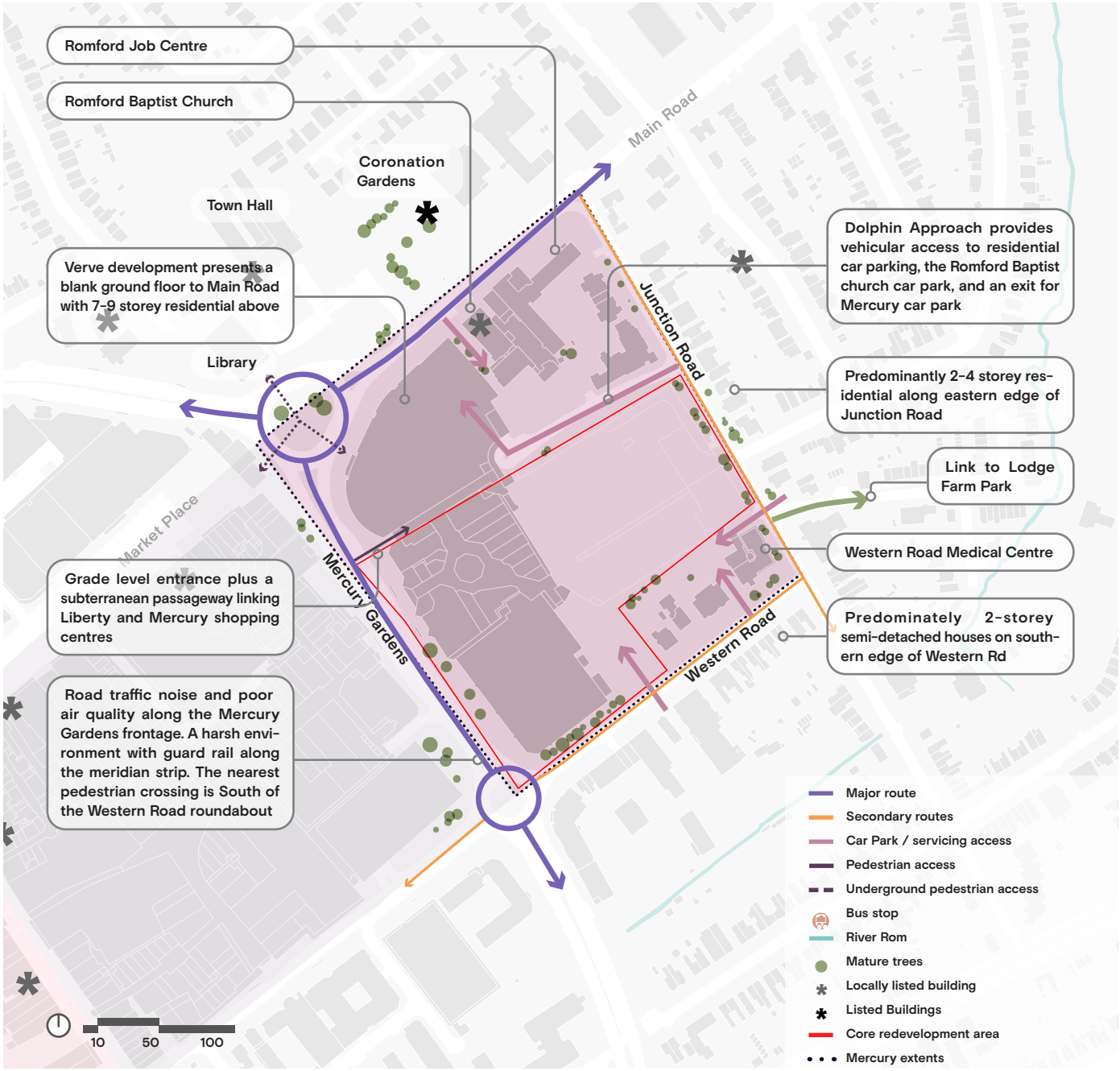


Fig. 111. Existing Mercury physical context

Dophin Leisure centre c.2000, demolished 2004

View towards Dolphin Approach

Aerial view - looking northwest

N

View towards Mercury Gardens

View west across Mercury Car Park

6.8.2 Objectives

6.8.2.1 Vision

A residential-led development together with business and other suitable 'main town centre uses' on lower floors fronting Mercury Gardens.

New streets will improve permeability and, together with the redevelopment of the Liberty opposite, high-quality buildings will transform the character of Mercury Gardens into a tree-lined urban street. A new local open space at its centre will provide opportunity food and beverage units.

Create high quality apartments at appropriate scales with ground floor uses activating streets and spaces – Elephant & Castle, Southwark | Canada Water, Southwark

Fig. 112. Mercury site opportunities and objectives

6.8.3 Development Principles

6.8.3.1 Land Use

The Mercury should be divided into sub-plots taking the form of urban blocks, creating a finer urban grain. Its retail core has the potential to adapt from a shopping centre focus that responds to its location at the edge of the town centre. Employment uses and main town centre retail uses should be focused on Mercury Gardens, with local retail and residential defining the new public space at the centre of the plot and internal streets to the east of Mercury Gardens.

Quiet streets behind Mercury Gardens offer suitable locations for a primary school.

Table 26. Mercury Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	Approx. 1.4 ha
Residential	40 000 - 55 000 m²
Retail and similar uses	10 000 - 12 000 m²
Employment / Commercial / Hotel	5 000 m²
Primary school	3FE school
Total built area	60 000 - 80 000 m²
Public town centre car parking	300-500 spaces

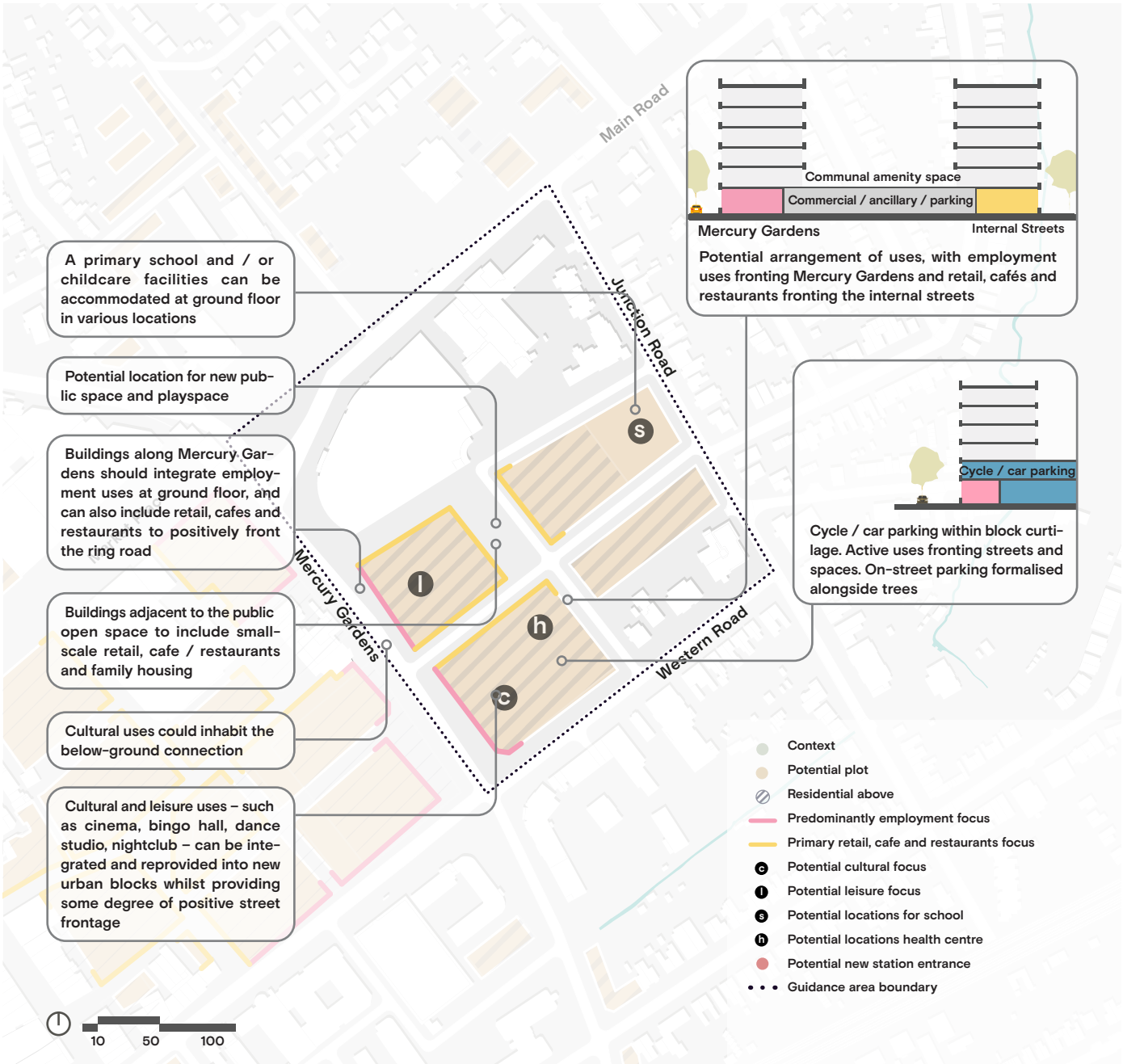


Fig. 113. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.8.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

There is potential to provide a new, local public space at the heart of the site and to positively engage with the new green links along Mercury Gardens and Main Road.

Create positive public environments that encourage social activity and residential streets that are also green links – Ruskin Square, East Croydon | St Andrews, Bromley-by-Bow

Fig. 114. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.8.3.3 Access and Movement

The access and movement network must promote active travel, utilising green links to the town centre. All streets must be clear, safe and accessible for pedestrians and cyclists to encourage active travel.

Given the reconfiguration of the block and potential reprovision of town centre uses, a coordinated servicing strategy will be needed.

Urban street with space for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport – New Islington, Manchester

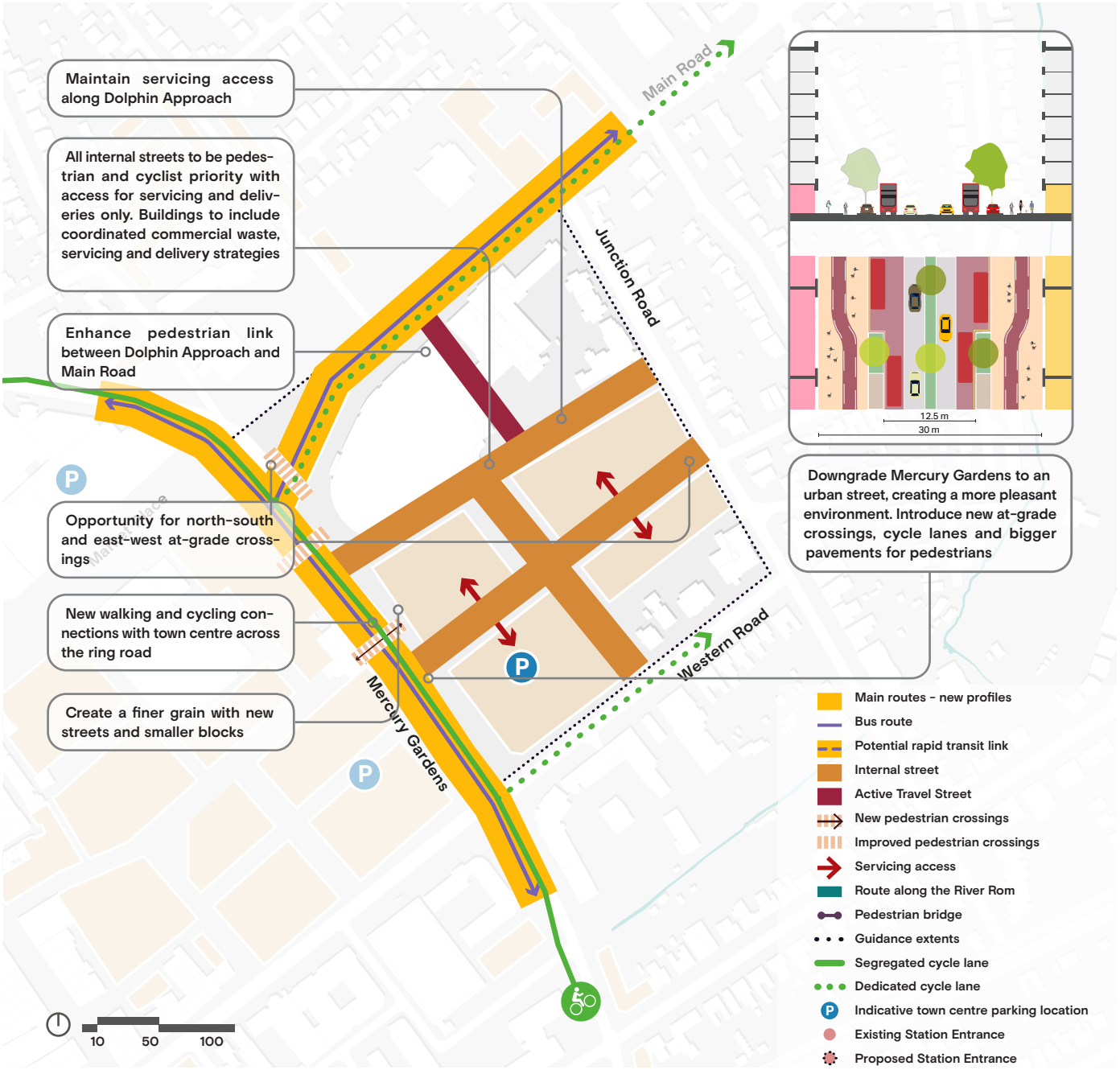


Fig. 115. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.8.3.4 Character and Townscape

The Mercury forms the eastern component of the Liberty & Mercury character area. To the west is Mercury Gardens and Liberty site and to the east is a residential neighbourhood consisting primarily of single family detached and semi-detached houses. Massing should feather from west to east into the residential context, defining the edge of Mercury Gardens, and enclosing into an urban block the existing buildings in the south-east of the area.

6.8.3.5 Implementation

It is important that the redevelopment of the Mercury shopping centre links back spatially into the town centre and that an early move to rework the existing car parking and to provide a mix of residential and retail uses is considered.

Fig. 116. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

Fig. 117. Illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 118. Recharacterise the ring road as an urban street, creating active frontages, spaces for cyclists, pedestrians, buses and cars, new at-grade crossings and on-street parking formalised along tree planting

6.9 NORTH STREET

6.9.1 Existing Context

The North Street site guidance area lies north-west of the town centre and extends from the roundabout by Angel Way along North Street to Seymer Road. It incorporates the sites to the west of North Street between the former Como Street car park to the Matalan site and stretches to the bus garage on the eastern side of the street. The area has a PTAL ranging from 4 at the bus garage to 6a at the roundabout. The surrounding context is characterised by largely low-rise surburban housing to the east and west. North Street itself provides a varied local high street offer although suffers from poor quality public realm and lack of greenery. St Edwards Way to the south has a generously planted meridian but also creates a barrier to connectivity with the town centre.

Table 27. Existing North Street uses

Existing North Street Uses*		Quantum
Commercial, employment	Matalan, Riverside House, high street employment	approx. 7 000 m²
Light industry	Bus depot	approx 6 000 m²
Cafes / Restaurants, Convenience Shopping	High street	approx 700 m²
Residential		approx 1000 m²

*net, approximated uses proposed for redevelopment within core development area

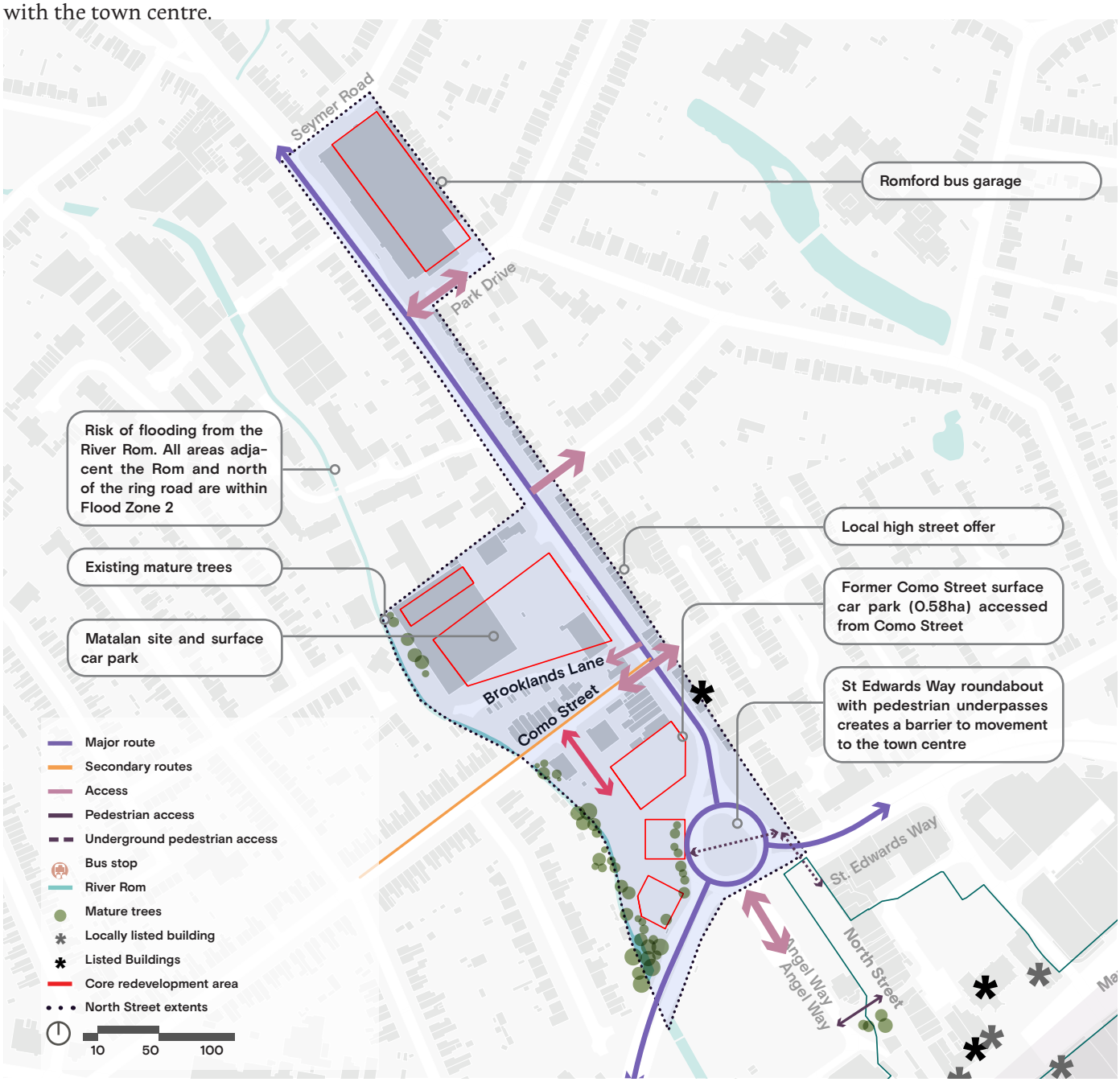
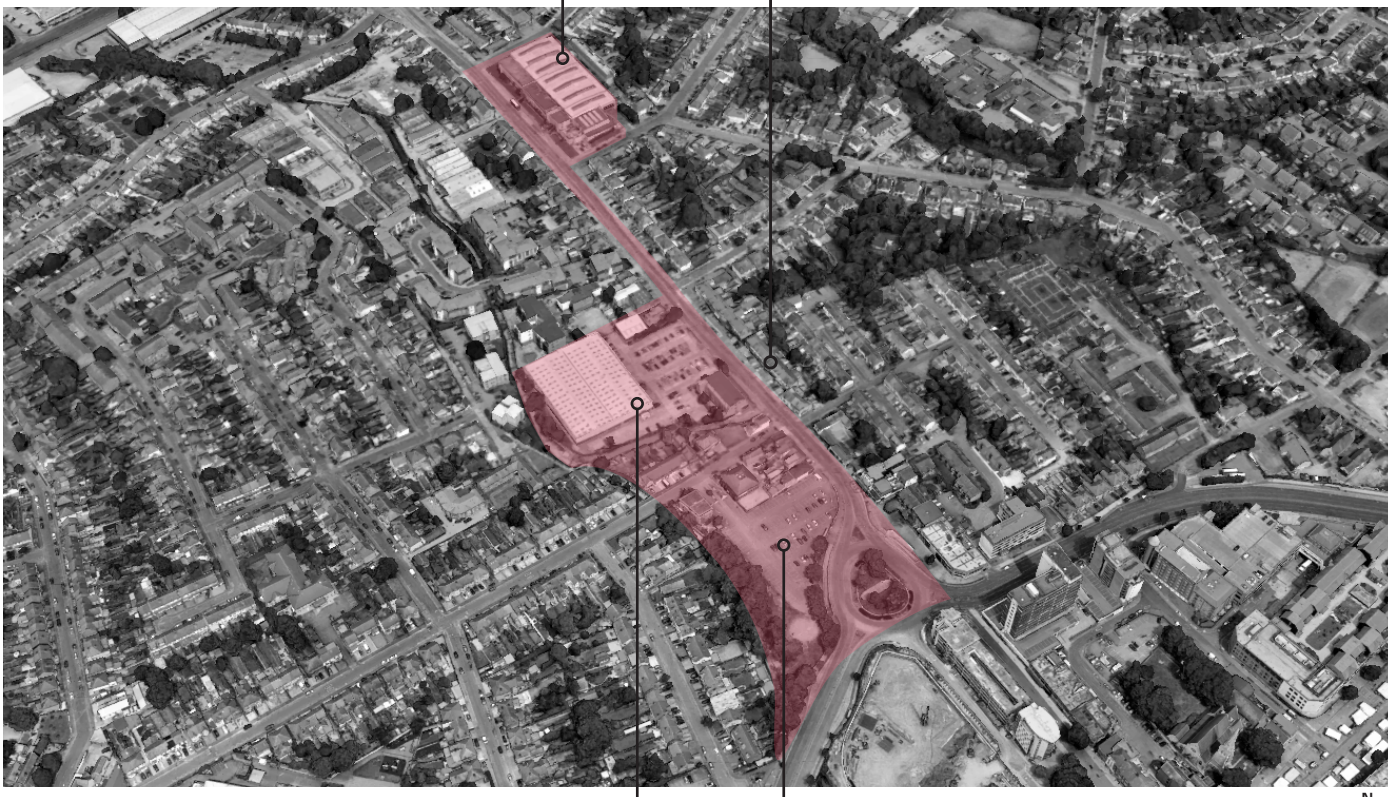


Fig. 119. Existing Mercury physical context

North Street bus depot

North Street high street shops



Aerial view - looking north

N

Matalan and car park

Former Como Street Car Park

6.9.2 Objectives

6.9.2.1 Vision

The vision for North Street is for it to evolve as an integrated and cohesive area that feels like an extension of Romford town centre. This means improving movement for pedestrians and cyclists across St Edwards Way as well as along North Street itself.

The urban grain is currently disjointed with isolated blocks punctuated by car parking and open spaces. The existing fabric should be stitched together to create a consistent street frontage. This should be supported with public realm improvements, street planting and a new public space that acts as a spill-out space for ground floor commercial uses and a positive gateway to the town centre.

A gateway to the town centre with ground floor active uses combined with attractive pedestrian routes and seating areas – Canada Water, London

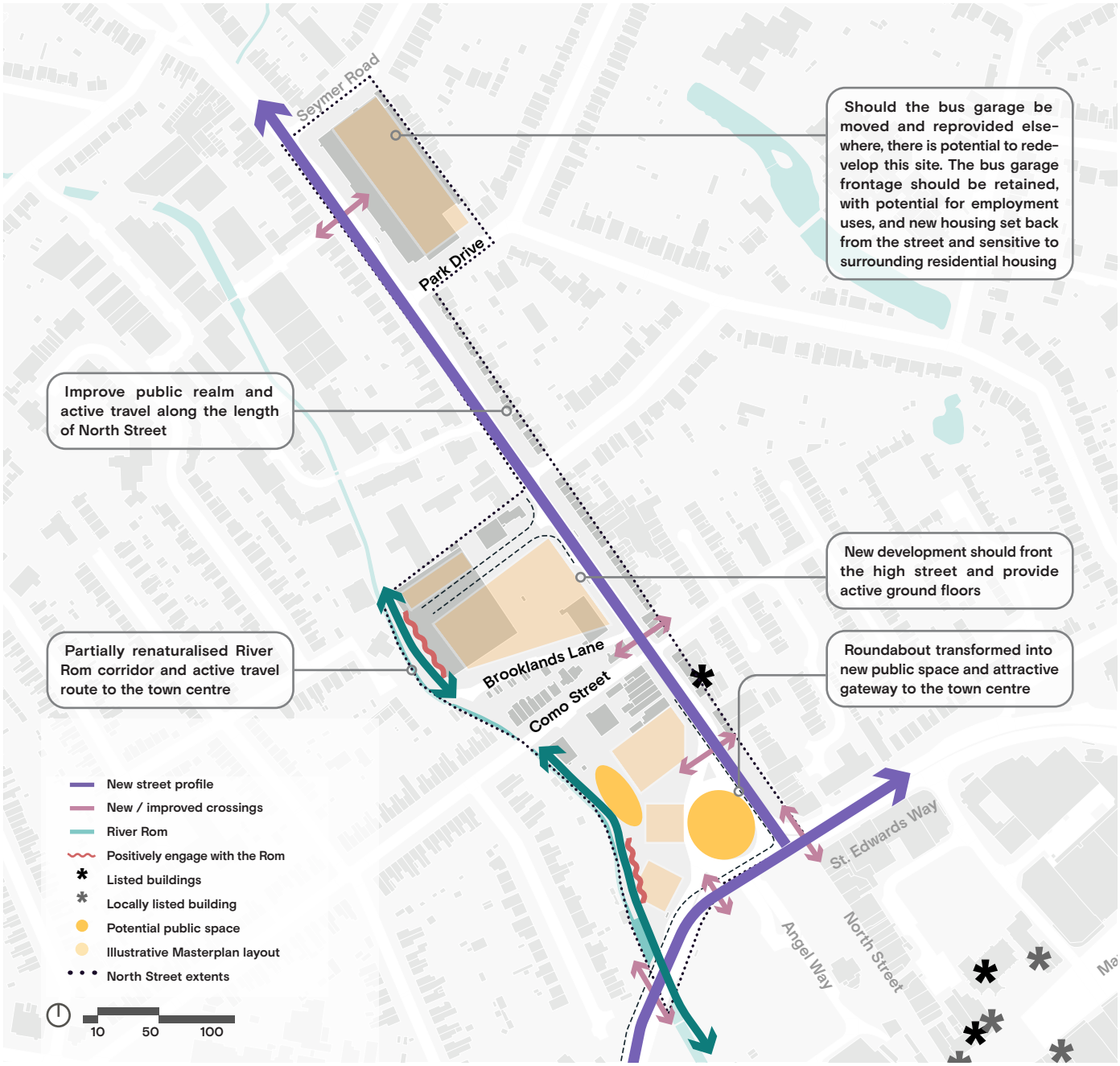


Fig. 120. Mercury site opportunities and objectives

6.9.3 Development Principles

6.9.3.1 Land Use

The quanta of existing employment and retail should be reprovided with potential to enhance the local high street offer with new ground floor commercial uses fronting onto North Street. Residential uses are provided above the ground floor.

Should the bus garage be moved and reprovided elsewhere, there is potential to redevelop this site. The front facade of the bus depot should be retained, and can provide an anchor employment use, with residential set back from the street. A new school is proposed on the Matalan site, complementing and providing a transition in massing to the suburban character to the west.

Table 28. North Street Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	approx. 0.3 ha
Residential	20 000 - 30 000 m²
Retail and similar uses	1 000 m²
Employment / Commercial / Hotel	4 000 m²
Primary school	3FE school
Total built area	30 000 - 40 000 m²
Public town centre car parking	Accessible on-street only

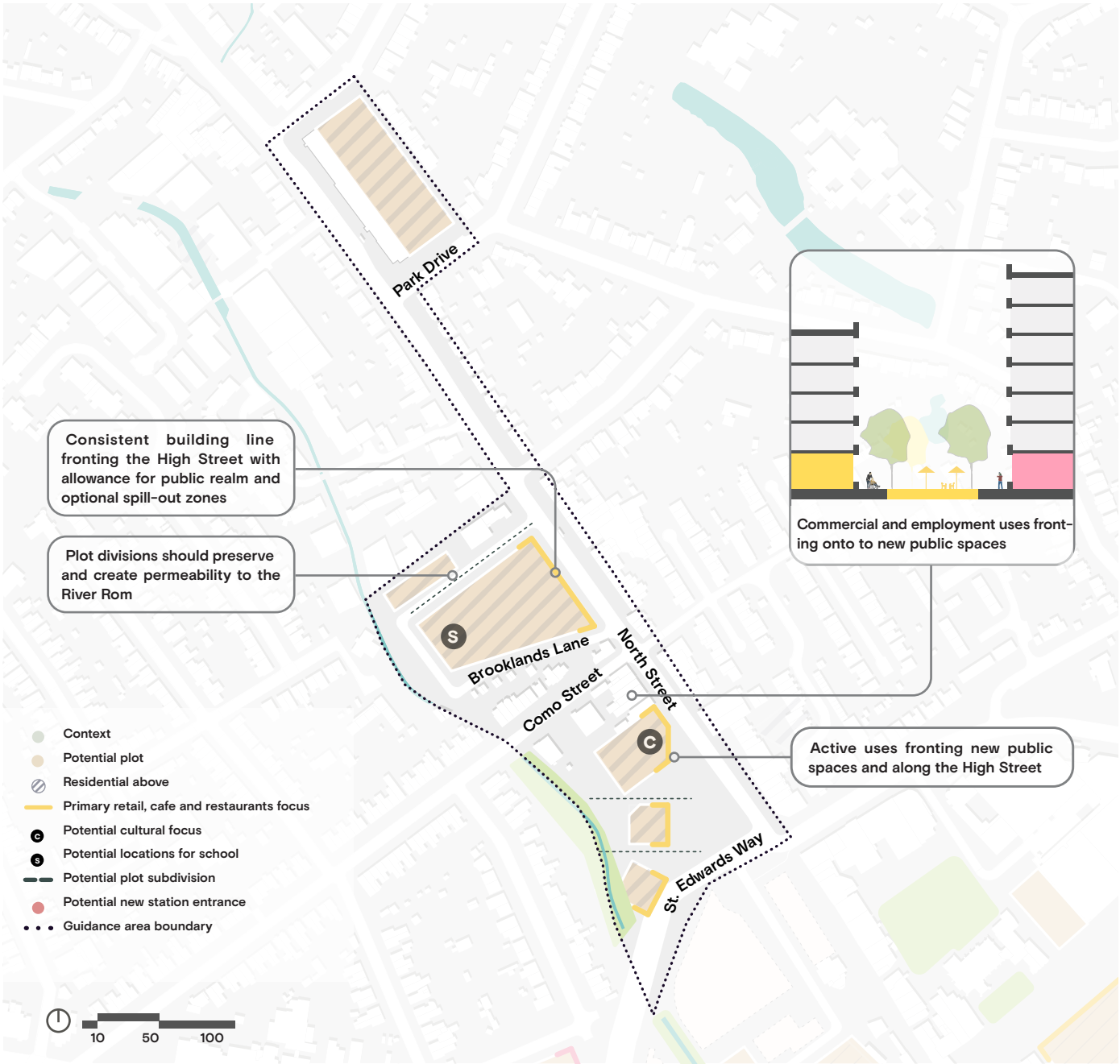


Fig. 121. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.9.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

A new public space at the southern end of North Street provides a spill-out zone for ground floor commercial uses as well as an attractive gateway to the town centre.

Public realm, including street trees and greening, is enhanced along the length of North Street to create a unified character and improve environment for pedestrians, cyclists and ground floor retail and employment uses.

Partially renaturalising the River Rom and creating an active travel link to the town centre – Mayfield Park, Manchester

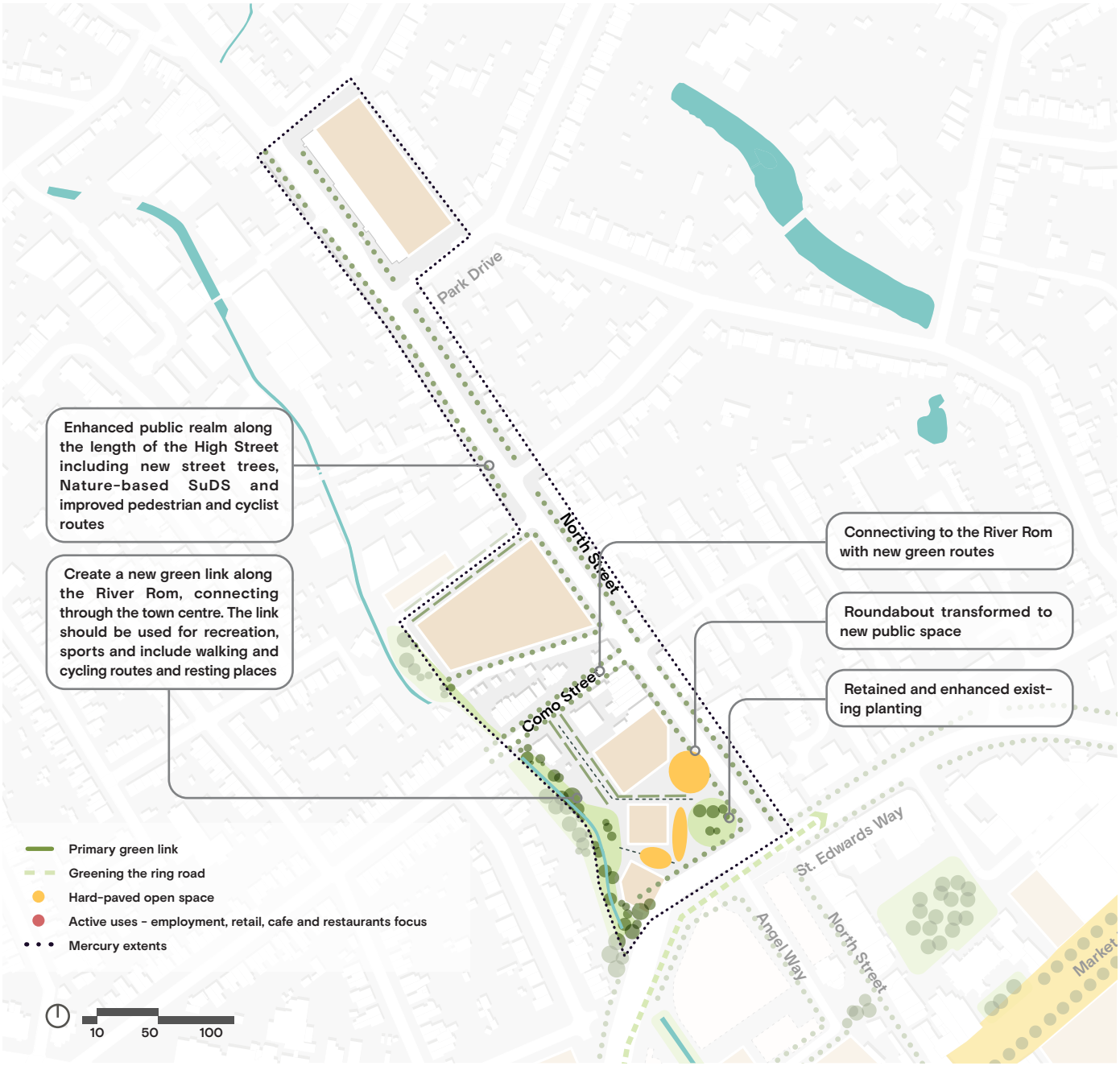


Fig. 122. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.9.3.3 Access and Movement

The access and movement network must deliver improved connectivity between the surrounding neighbourhoods to the north and the town centre. To facilitate this the existing roundabout should be downgraded into a signalled junction with an at-grade crossing through peninsularisation, improving the experience of pedestrians and freeing up space for a new public space and improved public realm. The proposed layout allows for the retention of the roundabout in the shorter term.

Active travel should be improved along of North Street with the introduction of a segregated cycle lane along its length.

Creating generous pavements with new street trees and a cycle-priority route – High Street, Altrincham

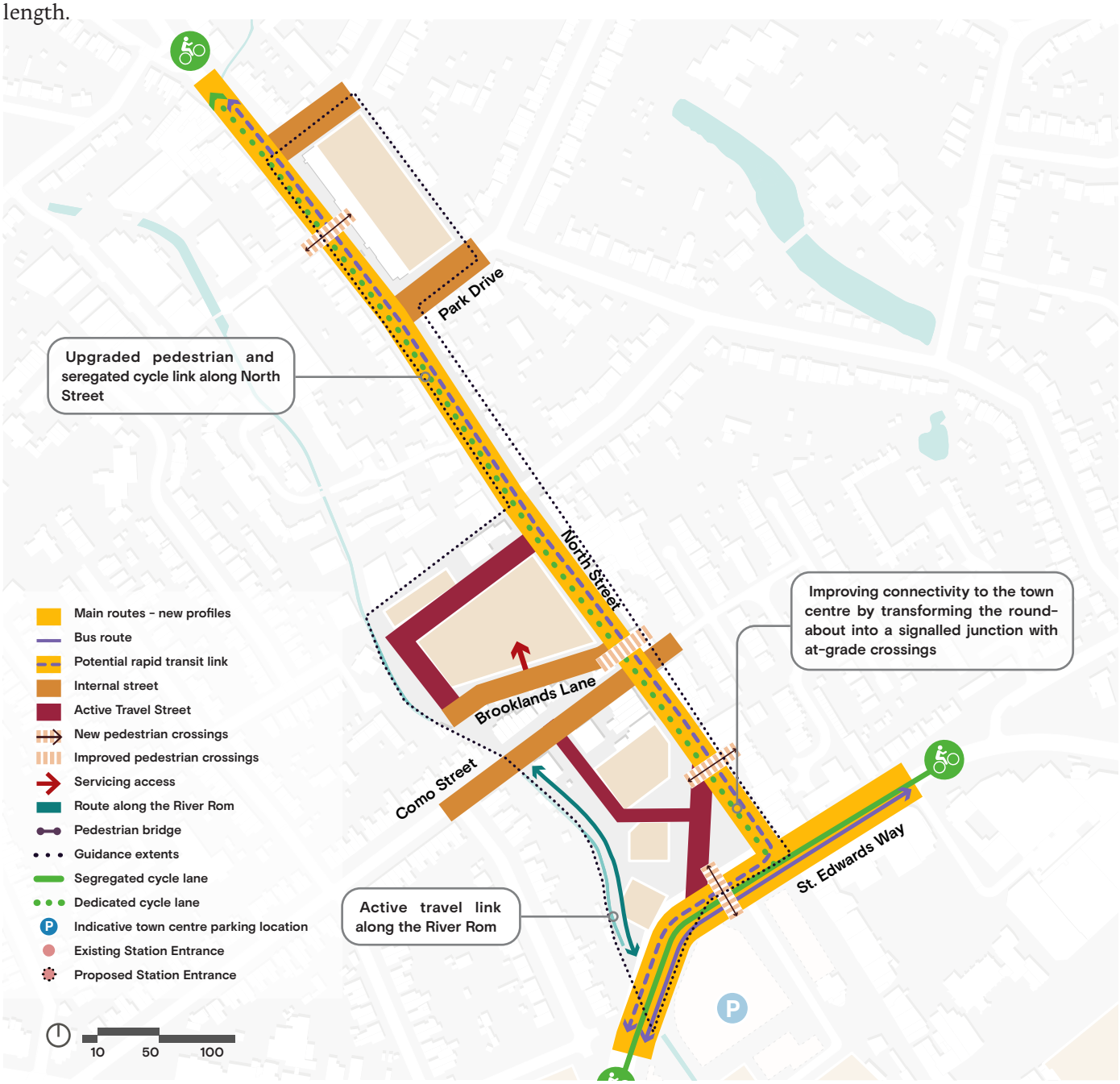


Fig. 123. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.9.3.4 Character and Townscape

The character along North Street should build on its local high street character with selective new development and upgrades to the existing offer to create a more attractive and consistent streetscape. Massing and heights should respond to the predominantly low-rise context by stepping down and creating a transition from the town centre. This should be reflected in both a lowering of heights and a finer grain of footprints, avoiding bulky massing and identical facades incongruous with the historic pattern of smaller, narrower plots.

6.9.3.5 Implementation

The former Como Street car park provides an early opportunity to catalyse development north of St Edwards Way, provide an anchor development and improved links to the town centre.

This should be brought forward in conjunction with the recharacterisation of the roundabout in order to deliver maximum public benefits as well as creating an attractive environment for new development.

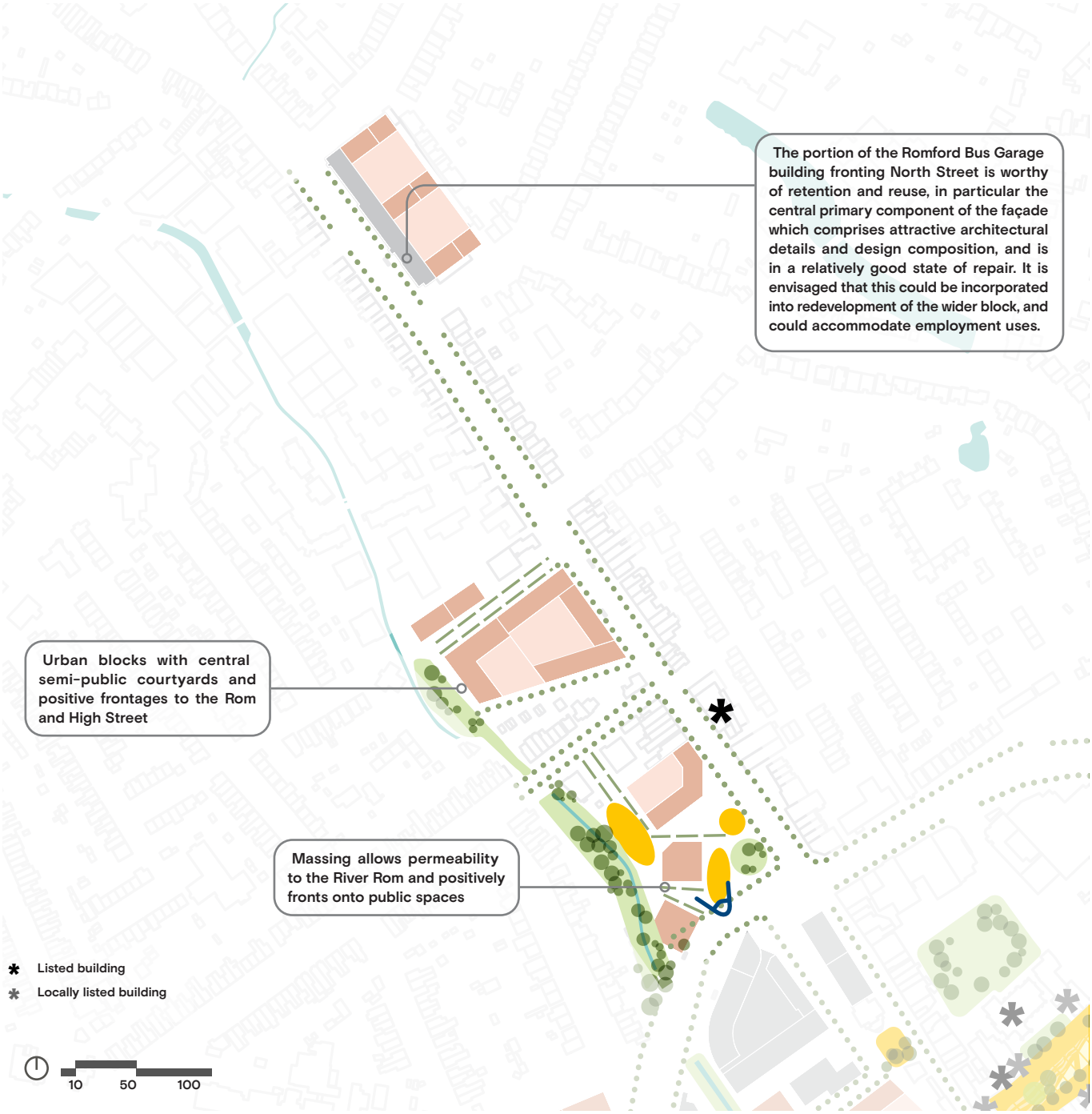


Fig. 124. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

Fig. 125. Illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 126. New link from North Street through to the town centres with spill out zones for active ground floor uses

6.10 CIVIC CAMPUS

6.10.1 Existing Context

Civic Campus is the existing administrative heart of Havering with a cluster of civic buildings punctuated by high-quality public green spaces. This includes Havering Town Hall, Romford Central Library, the Magistrate's Court and Coronation Gardens. Many of the buildings and spaces are of high quality and lend the area a unique character in Romford that should be retained and enhanced. The area has a PTAL of 4 at its eastern edge, with 5-6a elsewhere.

East and north along Main Road there is a transition to the low-rise suburban context characteristic of the wider Romford Strategic Development Area. While to the west, Tollgate House marks the beginning of the town centre and the historic Market Place.

Table 29. Existing Civic Campus uses

Existing Civic Campus Uses*		Quantum
Civic, employment	Magistrates Court, County Court, Havering Town Hall, Police Station	approx 15 000 m²
Cultural	Romford Library	approx 3500 m²
Convenience retail	Tesco Express, Esso	approx 1 000 m²
Town Hall Car Park	Surface car park	TBC

*net, approx. proposed for redevelopment within core development area

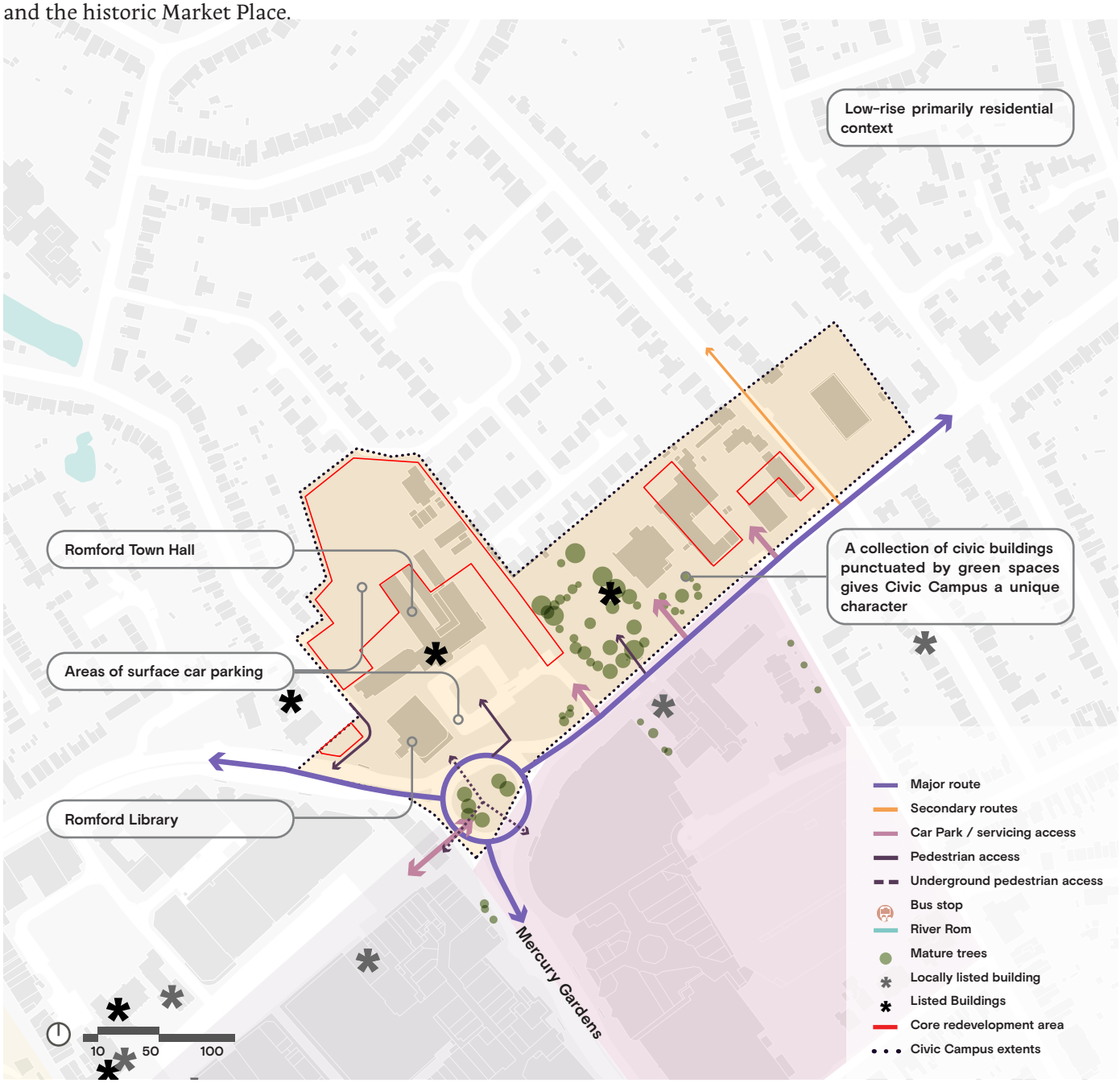


Fig. 127. Existing Civic Campus physical context

Havering Town Hall car park

Main Street and Oakland Avenue looking west

Aerial view - looking north

N

Romford Town Hall

Coronation Gardens

6.10.2 Objectives

6.10.2.1 Vision

The vision for Civic Campus is to improve the setting of the existing buildings and use new development to fill gaps in the streetscape to create a more unified area and stitching together pockets of built form.

New development and enhancements should focus on enhancing the existing pattern of pavilion buildings with complementary green pocket parks and civic open spaces.

Civic buildings with corresponding civic-quality public spaces – Town Hall, Waltham Forest

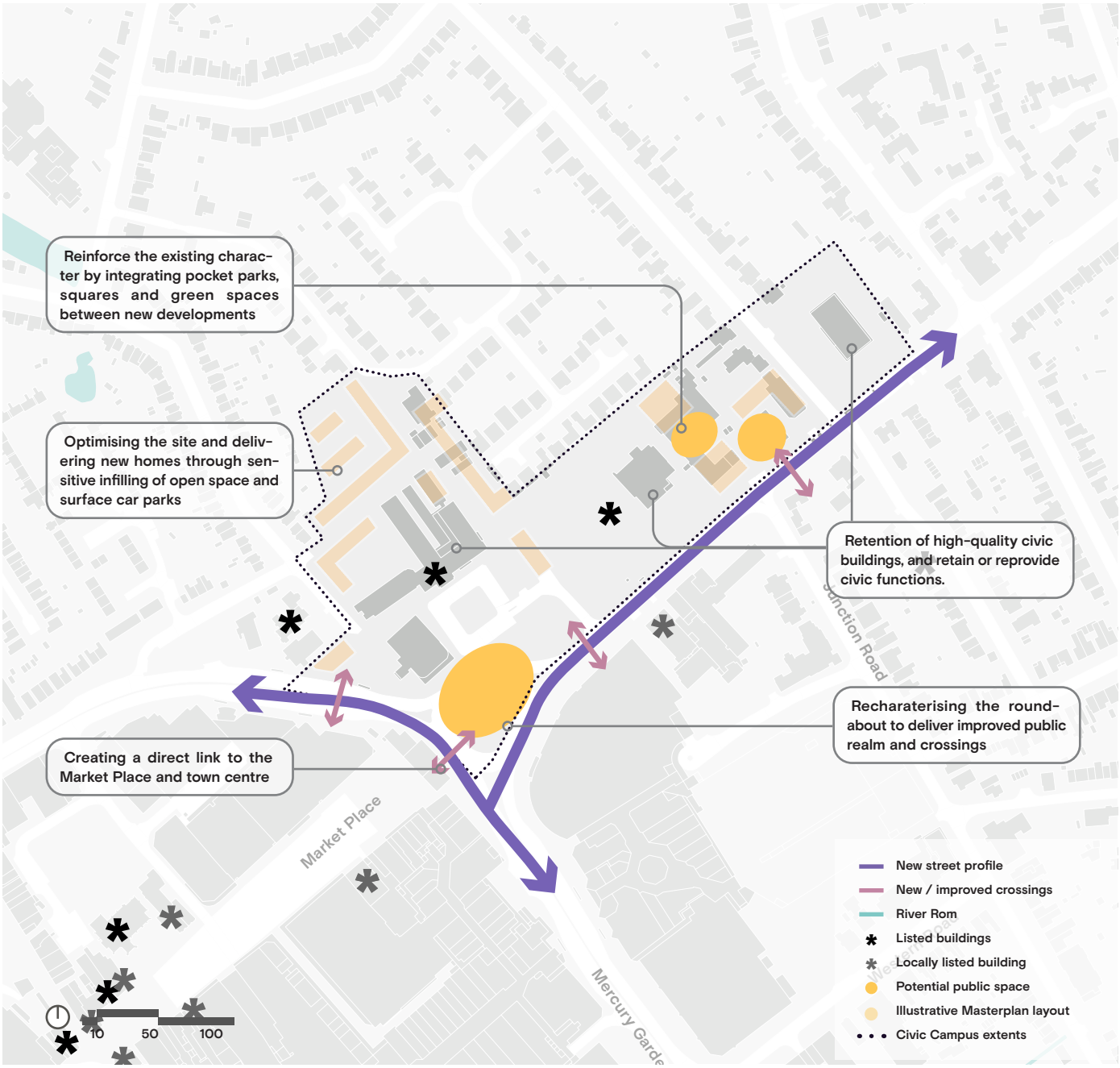


Fig. 128. Mercury site opportunities and objectives

6.10.3 Development Principles

6.10.3.1 Land Use

Existing civic uses should be retained or reprovided, with any building reuse to accommodate community or public functions to continue to evolve the area as the civic heart of the borough. Any future relocation of the Town Hall function may provide an opportunity for a new significant community, culture, or civic anchor for the neighbourhood. An analysis of the future of the Town Hall site is needed to determine if it is appropriate to keep the current function on site. Residential may be incorporated to help enable further positive development and public realm enhancement.

Uses and buildings that do not contribute to the vision and character for the area should be prioritised for redevelopment.

Table 30. Civic Campus Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	approx 1.0 ha
Residential	7 500 - 12 000 m²
Employment / Commercial / Hotel / Leisure	5 000 m² (tbc)
Civic / community / cultural	10 000 m² (tbc)
Total built area	25 000 - 35 000 m²
Public town centre car parking	On-street parking only

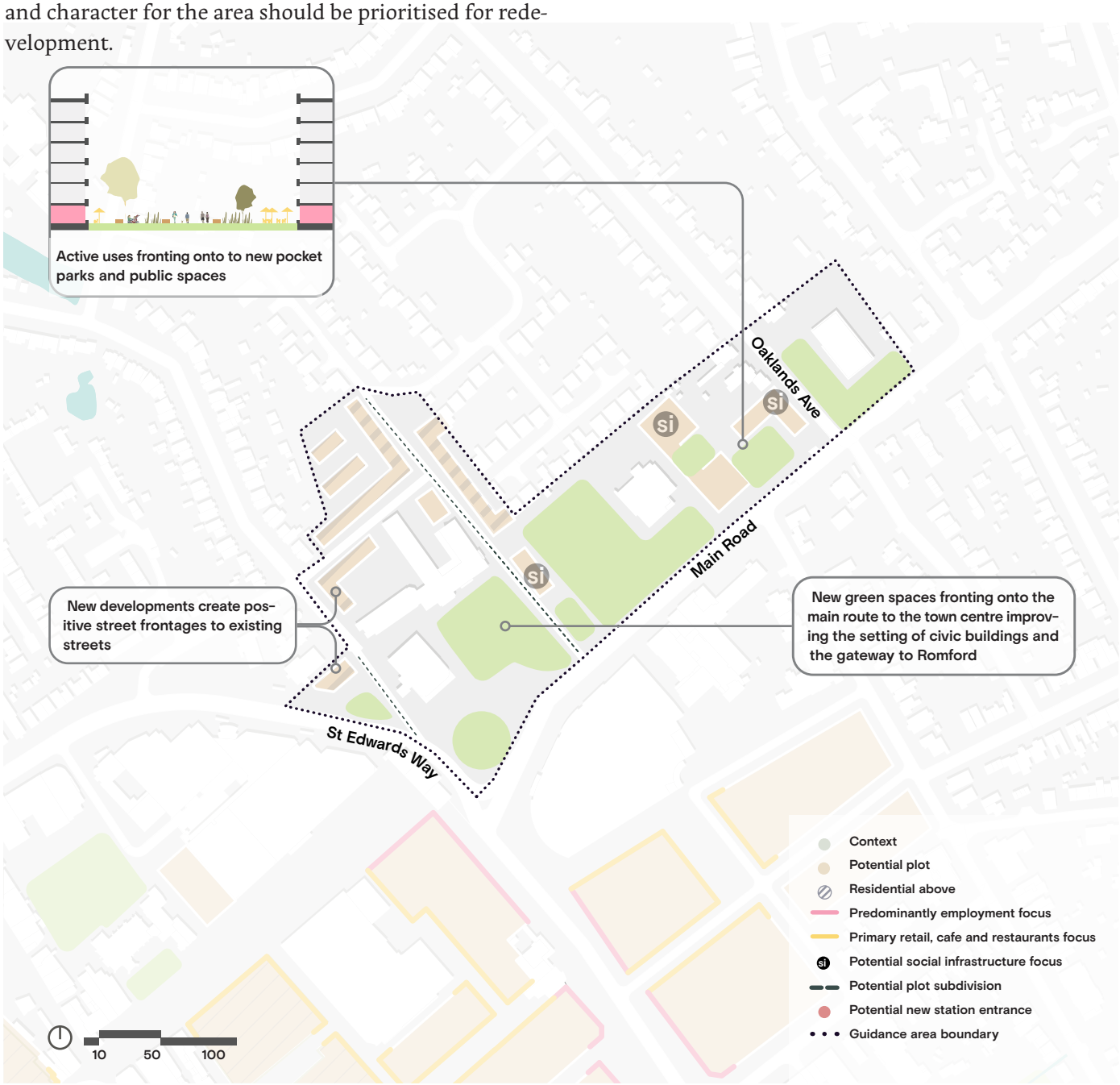


Fig. 129. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.10.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

There exist several high quality green spaces as well as mature street trees along Main Road that provide an attractive setting for buildings. The focus should be on improving the continuity and coherence between these public spaces, creating a tapestry of buildings and green open spaces. To facilitate this, a new public open space is proposed in front of Romford Town Hall as well as pocket parks on the existing petrol station site and between proposed developments along Main Road.

Creating pocket parks and green spaces between new developments – Alfred Place Gardens, London

Fig. 130. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.10.3.3 Access and Movement

Main Road is already a high-quality route linking to the town centre and proposed as one of the key 'green links' that connect the town centre to the wider green network. Improvements should be targeted at making active travel choices more attractive including the addition of segregated cycle lanes, increased planting and places to sit.

Crucial to improving the cohesiveness between the civic heart of the borough and town centre is the recharacterisation of St Edwards Way and the existing roundabout. This should be downgraded to a signalled, at-grade crossing with a clear pedestrian link to the Market Place.

Urban street with space for pedestrians, cyclists, Nature-based SuDS, and public transport – Eddington, Cambridge

Fig. 131. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.10.3.4 Character and Townscape

The existing character of Civic Campus should be enhanced by improving the setting of retained buildings and linking together public spaces to improve coherence and continuity. This site links the town centre towards suburban residential context and the Gidea Park conservation area. Thus, new development should be sympathetic to the sensitive context and provide a transition in height from the town centre to the low-rise suburban context.

6.10.3.5 Implementation

Improving connectivity both along Main Road and to the town centre will be key for the future success and character of Civic Campus. Priority should be given to recharacterising the roundabout and facilitating a more direct pedestrian and cyclist routes through to the Market Place

The Town Hall car park also provides an early opportunity to deliver public realm enhancements and improve the experience of arrival in Romford town centre.

Fig. 132. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

Fig. 134. Illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 133. Recharacterised streetscape with cycle lanes, SuDS, improved public realm and connected pocket parks

6.11 CROW LANE

6.11.1 Existing Context

Crow Lane comprises the former gas works stretching between Crow Lane and the railway and Nursery Walk and the retained Royal Mail distribution hub. It is largely made up of vacant land with some remnants of previous uses. To the east, new residential-led development of between 3 and 10 storeys provide a medium density context transitioning towards the town centre. Directly to the south lies the Romford Cemetery and to the west is a mixture of low-rise suburban housing and light industrial uses along the railway embankment. The area has a PTAL of predominantly 2, rising to 3 at its south-eastern edge.

Table 31. Existing Crow Lane uses

Existing Crow Lane Uses*		Quantum
Open storage / vacant land	-	N / A

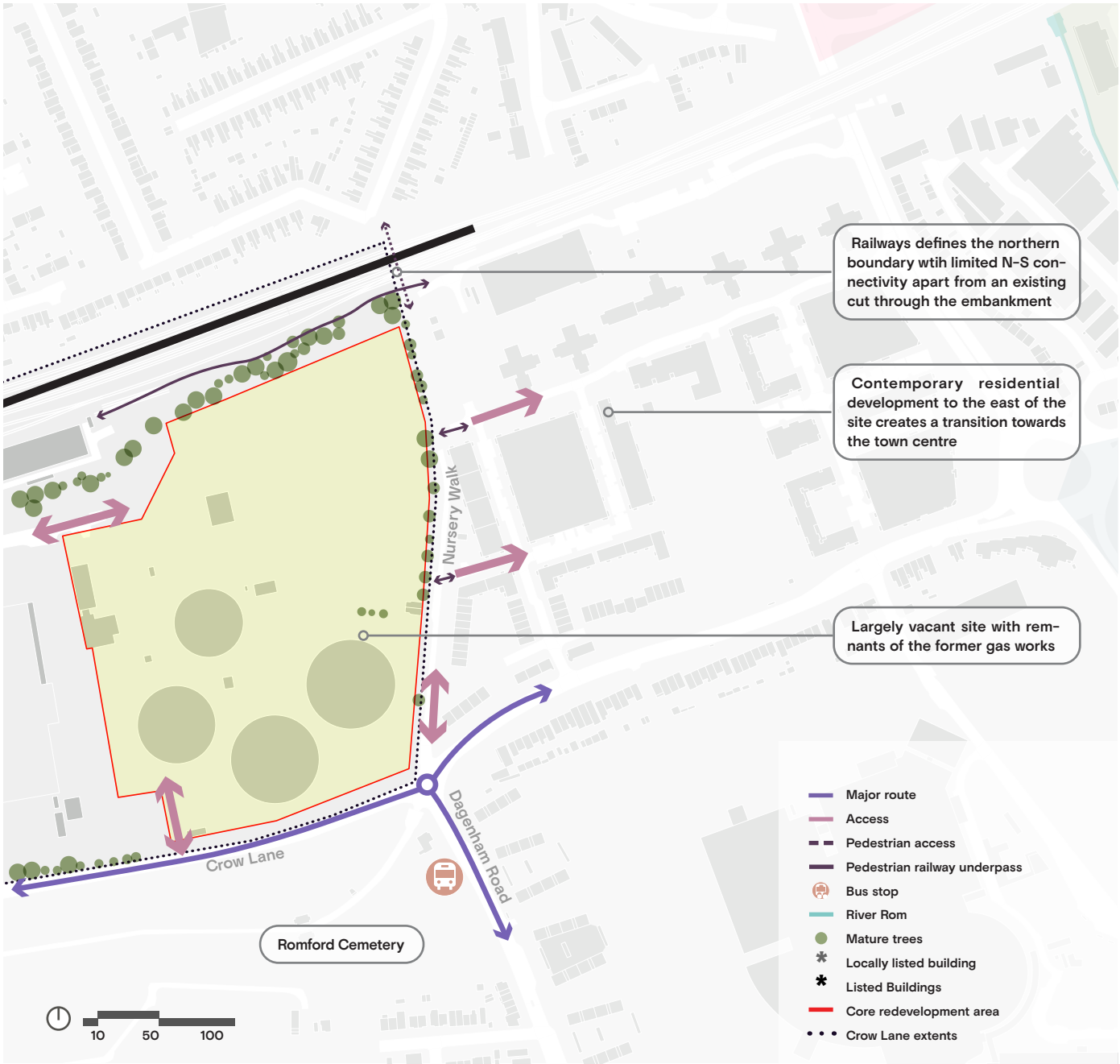


Fig. 135. Existing Mercury physical context

Aerial view of the site looking southeast

Crow Lane looking west

Aerial view - looking north

N

Royal Mail site

Romford Cemetery

6.11.2 Objectives

6.11.2.1 Vision

The vision for Crow Lane is that it should emerge as a cohesive and attractive residential neighbourhood with high-quality public realm and improved walking and cycling connections to the town centre and through the railway embankment.

New buildings should complement each other to create a unified character across the neighbourhood for example through the use of similar materials, colour palettes or form avoiding exact copies of buildings.

A mix of scales and architectural styles come together to form a unified neighbourhood character – Chobham Manor, London

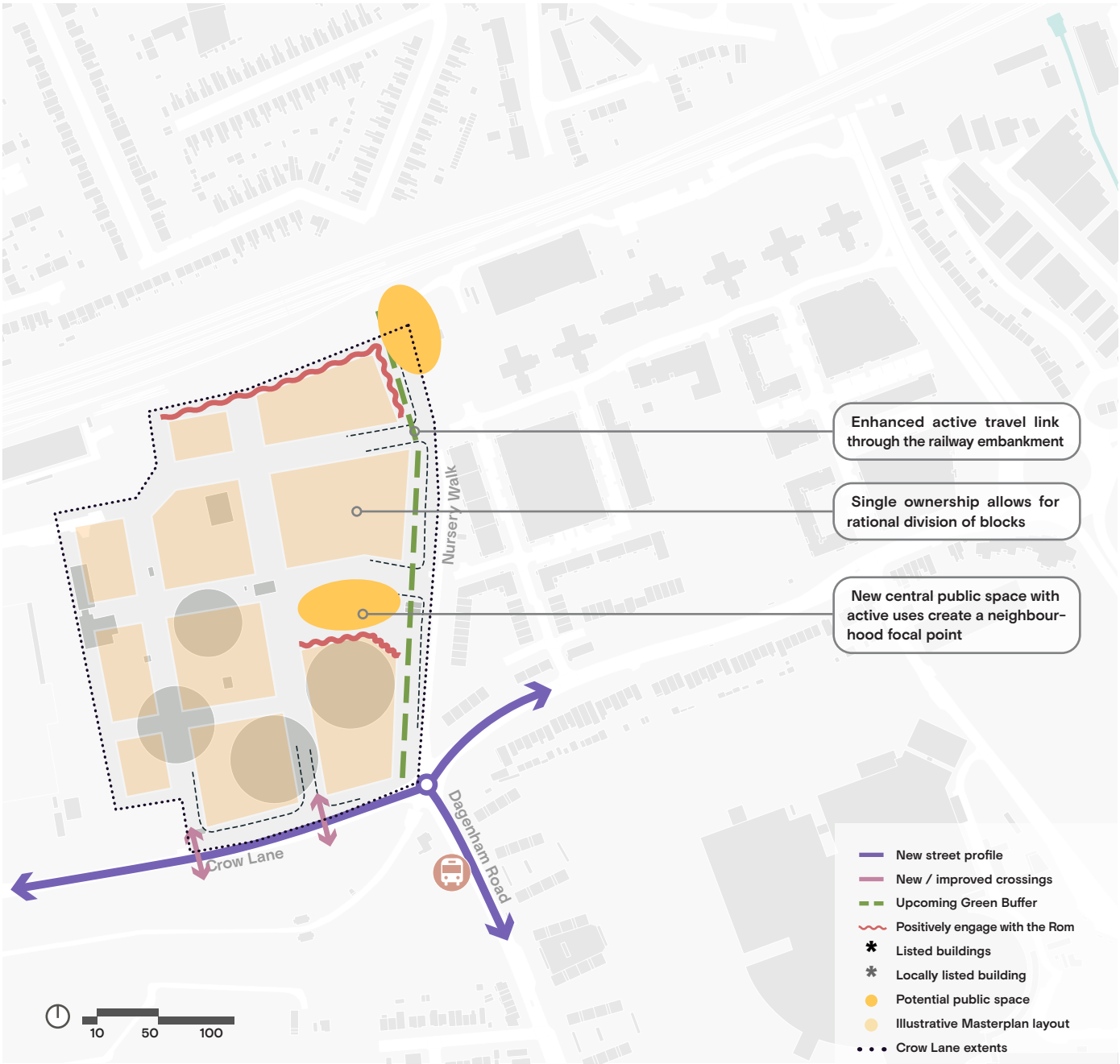


Fig. 136. Mercury site opportunities and objectives

6.11.3 Development Principles

6.11.3.1 Land Use

A primarily residential neighbourhood, Crow Lane can support a limited amount of retail and commercial spaces to support the local residential population. These should be clustered centrally to improve visibility and cross-usage

Employment uses, potentially creative workspaces, could be located next to the railway embankment to provide a buffer to residential uses. Due to the somewhat peripheral location to the town centre, these could be smaller-floor-plate buildings that could support, for example, SMEs or creative workspaces.

Table 32. Crow Lane Key Deliverables

Key Deliverables	Quantum
Public open space	Approx. 1.0 ha
Residential	50 000 - 70 000 m²
Retail and similar uses	1 000 - 2 000 m²
Employment / commercial	4 000 - 6 000m²
Total built area	70 000 - 90 000 m²
Public town centre car parking	On-street parking only

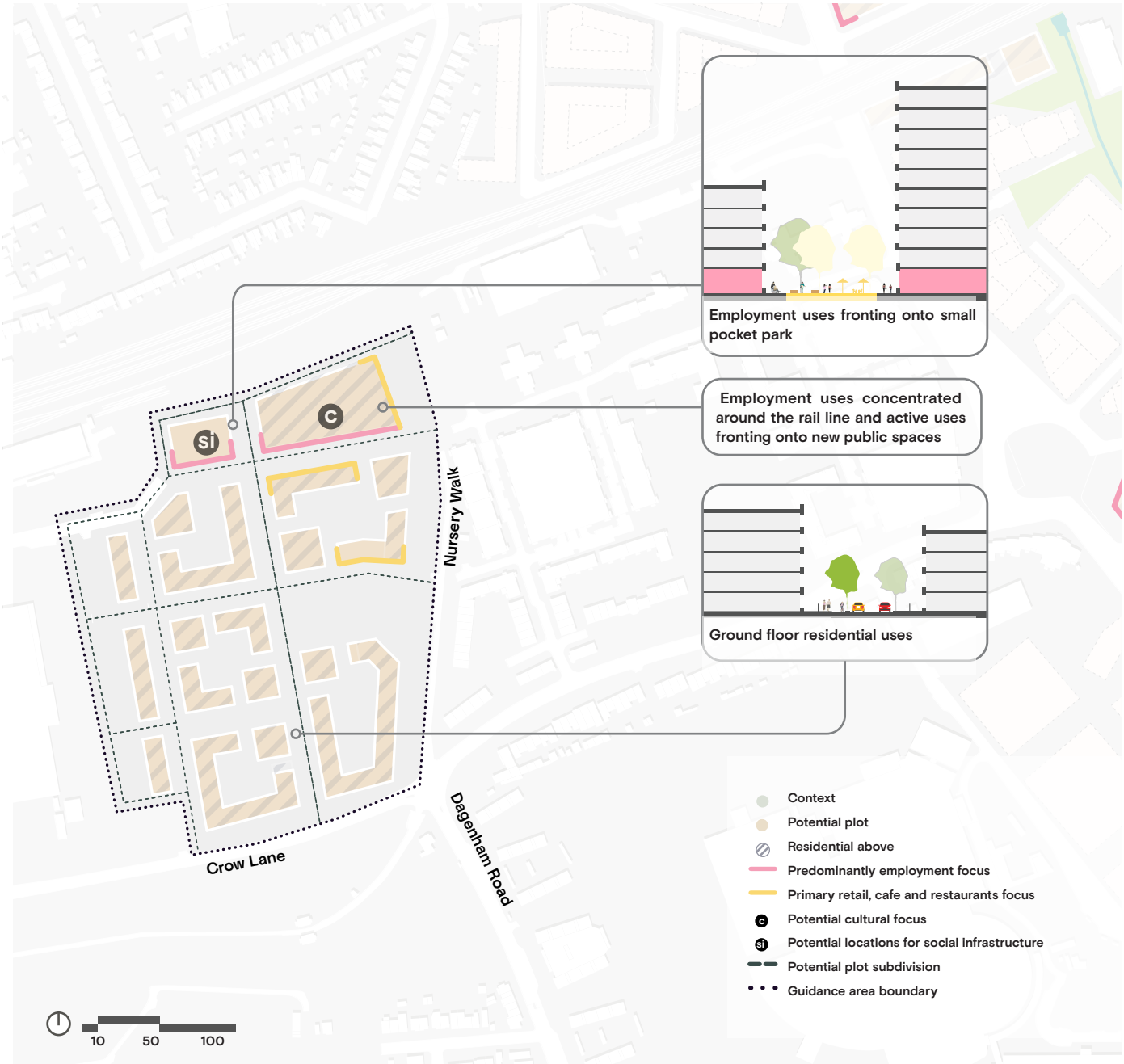


Fig. 137. Indicative ground floor uses strategy

6.11.3.2 Open Space, Streetscape and Ecology

There is an opportunity for a new local park, located centrally, to support the increased residential population. This should be connected with an improved north-south green link through the viaduct. This is envisioned as a green 'linear park' with spaces to sit, dwell, play or exercise along its length.

All streets within Crow Lane should be generously planted and provide active places to walk, cycle and meet. Local playspace opportunities should also be integrated into the street profiles.

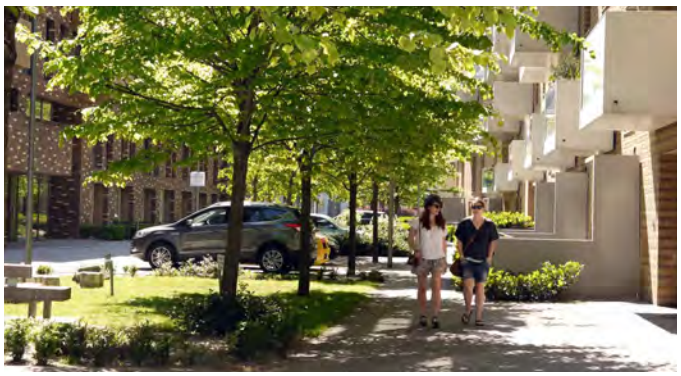
Providing generous, landscaped semi-public spaces within urban block courtyards – Eddington, Cambridge

Fig. 138. Indicative public open space provision and locations

6.11.3.3 Access and Movement

New routes should plug into the existing movement network and enhance permeability and connectivity to the wider context. All new streets should be active travel priority and reflect the character of the primarily residential context.

The new street along the northern end of Crow Lane, connecting to Union Road should provide an active travel route with segregated cycle lanes connecting to the town centre. Nursery Way should also be improved to provide a more desirable link north-south and under the railway embankment.



Residential street with generous planting, pedestrian footpaths and parking integrated into the landscape design – St Andrews, Bromley-by-Bow

Fig. 139. Indicative street hierarchy, access and route networks

6.11.3.4 Character and Townscape

A new-built residential area, Crow Lane should provide high-quality homes in courtyard or mansion-block typologies that provide generous landscaped spaces for residents.

Heights and massing should step down and create a transition to the low-rise context to the west and south. Taller elements could be located along the railway embankment with mid-rise development along Nursery Way that reflect the heights and massing of the contemporary development to the east.

6.11.3.5 Implementation

Crow Lane area is currently under single ownership which provides a unique opportunity for a rational layout with new routes that effectively link into the wider context. Priority should be given to improving the north-south connection through the embankment and delivering a local public space early to establish Crow Lane as a desirable residential area suitable for a range of ages including young families.

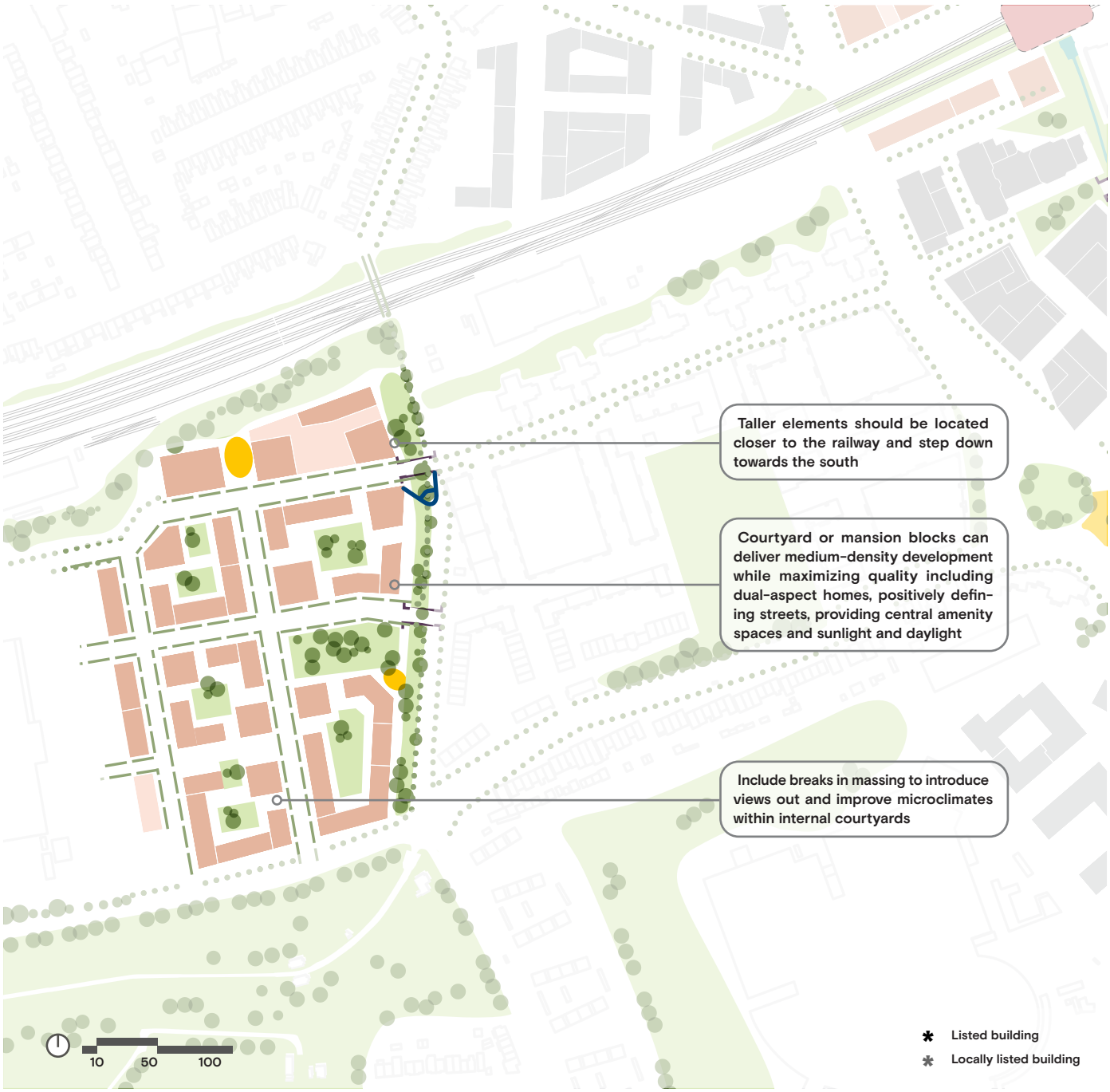


Fig. 140. Illustrative plan with key existing and proposed character features

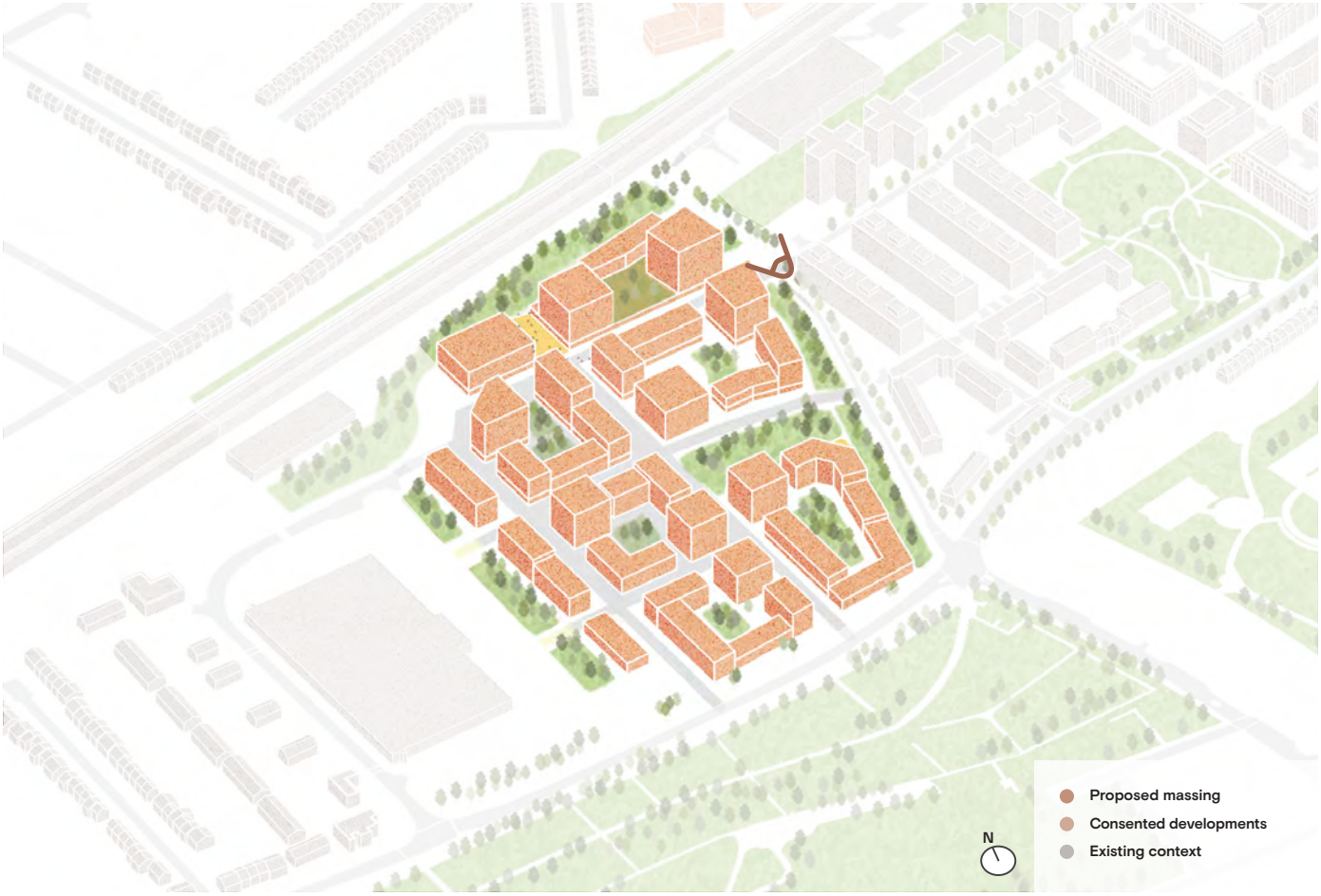


Fig. 141. Illustrative massing strategy

Fig. 142. New green space and upgraded link along Nursery Walk connecting under the railway embankment, with new active travel routes, planting and active ground floors

7 IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter sets out the anticipated level of growth the Masterplan could bring, and sets out an approach to implementation that should be incremental

7.1 INCREMENTAL IMPLEMENTATION

7.11.1 Delivery considerations

The Masterplan has been informed by market and delivery considerations to help ensure that it is deliverable and can succeed in facilitating a high-quality, successful place.

The Masterplan is intended to guide development and regeneration of Romford town centre over the long term. Given the scale and complexity of a number of the development brief approaches it is reasonable to assume that many will be delivered in phases over short, medium and longer time periods – allowing time for the market to adjust and demand and supply characteristics to change.

7.11.2 Delivery Periods

It is important to consider the likely delivery profile of growth, in order to plan properly for the expected stepped increase in residential population and activity. To do this, the Masterplan adopts the five-year housing periods in the Havering Local Plan and extends these to 2040 / 41. The Council has then profiled the delivery of additional homes, taking account of discussions with land owners and prospective developers, likely market absorption rates and the ability to deliver accompanying necessary social infrastructure.

7.11.3 Population Increase

The development of the Masterplan considered a number of growth scenarios, which were evaluated against a series of objectives including sustainability, design, socio-economic, social and high-level delivery considerations.

Based on the potential growth scenarios and the Council's infrastructure planning assumptions, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2018, of an average of 2.39 people per household and 2% of homes being vacant at any given time, the Masterplan allows for a population increase of between approximately 24,000 and 27,000 people. It should be stressed that such an increase would happen over time and be linked with the expected stepped delivery of homes and infrastructure.

It should be recognised that many variables could impact on this assumed level and rate of growth, such as changes to the housing market and economy. For this reason the Masterplan is formulated as a flexible framework which sets out a vision, objectives and growth assumptions that are to be regularly reviewed. This is discussed further under the Monitoring and Review heading below.

The Masterplan also provides for a significant change in the scale and mix of non-residential uses within the town centre, all of which will provide space to accommodate new jobs, and the Masterplan is confident that Romford will be able to deliver at least 2000 additional jobs by 2041.

In tandem with an increase in population and jobs comes an expected increase in expenditure in the town centre as well as further enhancements such as new and improved public spaces. By leveraging existing assets and bringing forward a series of development opportunities it creates significant opportunities for improved retail space, an expanded leisure / cultural offer, a broadening of the business / economic base alongside the uplift in the town centre residential provision.

Fig. 143. Illustrative view of St Edwards Way: recharacterising the ring road to become an urban street with active travel

Table 33. Growth Potential

Delivery Period	Growth Potential*		
	Additional homes	Additional jobs	Add. residential population
Short term (2021 / 22 to 2025 / 26)	2,550 - 2,750	100-150	5,865 - 6,325
Medium term (2026 / 27 to 2030 / 31)	5,150 - 5,550	1,400 to 1,600	11,845 - 12,765
Long term (2031/32 to 2035/36)	1,600 - 1,850	700 to 800	3,680 - 4,255
Future (2036/37 to 2040/41)	1,600 - 1,850	50-100	3,680 - 4,255
Cumulative	10,900 - 12,000	2,250 - 2,650	25,070 - 27,600

* Indicative and approximate only, based on potential growth scenarios

7.2 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

7.1.1 Collaborative Working

The Council will continue to work collaboratively with partners to support a comprehensive approach to regeneration. In doing so, it will:

- Work constructively with the GLA and TfL to use allocated GLA funding and Liveable Neighbourhood or similar funding to best effect
- Use its joint venture partnerships with private sector partners to deliver the proposed regeneration of the Waterloo Estate and Bridge Close sites
- Work collaboratively with land owners and developers to shape new development
- Work with the Romford Business District (BID) to realise shared objectives for the town centre
- Engage with the Environment Agency, Natural England and others over strategically important flood risk and nature conservation issues
- Use Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital to support new council housing in the area; including taking on additional borrowing in the HRA
- Use general fund reserves / borrowing and / or pension fund resources to fund affordable housing, Build for Rent housing

7.1.2 Romford Delivery Board

The Council will review how best to ensure/ monitor implementation which may include boards such as an officer level Delivery Board. A board could potentially contribute towards overseeing work on:

- Co-ordinating and driving forward the delivery of the Masterplan's vision and objectives;
- Commissioning further studies and strategies;
- Forming a Developers Forum to co-ordinate development;
- On-going engagement with local people and businesses, including the Romford BID;
- On-going liaison with infrastructure providers and developers to co-ordinate works;
- Liaison with other Boards, including the Health and Wellbeing Board; and
- Monitoring overall progress against identified milestones.

7.3 LAND OWNERSHIP

7.3.1 Council ownership

The Council owns significant locations within the Romford SDA and the Council will use its land ownership in ways which help deliver the Masterplan's vision and objectives.

There are a number of delivery routes which could be pursued that offer a range of risk and reward profiles. These include:

- Self delivery - where all of the construction and sales risks are borne by a single party. This does have the benefit that all the returns also flow back to that same party.
- Joint Venture – these are typical for larger more complex sites as they can be costly and lengthy to establish. Under a joint venture agreement both parties tend to operate on a 50 / 50 basis to bring forward a scheme with costs and returns shared amongst partners. This structure can be quite common between the public and private sector.
- Development Agreement – is a sale where there are obligations around performance such as planning consent and programme timing placed by the landowner on the developer. In the event that these conditions are not satisfactorily met there are remedies for breach which can include step in rights or an option to take the land back.
- Land Sale – this can be on the basis of 'Subject to Planning' or 'Unconditional', where a parcel of land is typically sold to a developer in return for an upfront sum of money. There are very few conditions attached to the sale so if the scheme does not progress there is little the former landowner can do to drive delivery.
- Strategic Master Developer – this is where a developer takes an oversight role in achieving a planning consent for a large / complex site. The delivery of these site can then either be taken forward by the developer or often plots of land are sold to individual parties to deliver in accordance with the planning obtained. This approach is often taken with large and complex sites where the strategic developer wants to mitigate their risk position.

7.3.2 Site assembly

In situations where a site (or sites) in third party ownership are not coming forward for development, the Council will be prepared to commence Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) proceedings and / or use powers under the Housing and Planning Act (2016) in order to achieve the comprehensive approach to delivery that it requires.

7.3.3 Comprehensive development

Adjoining land owners will be expected to work collaboratively to realise the full potential of sites that are in multiple ownerships and bring forward comprehensive development. This includes exploring the use of formal Collaboration and Equalisation Agreements, jointly commissioned site-wide Masterplans and the submission of single site-wide planning applications. To be acceptable, any planning applications for part of a large site in multiple ownerships will need to be accompanied by a site-wide Masterplan and delivery statement to demonstrate that proposals for that part of the site would:

- Make a positive contribution to the Masterplan's area-wide vision and objectives and, if covered by Site Guidance, the Guidance's site-specific vision and objectives
- Help deliver the area-wide Illustrative Masterplan and, if covered by a Site Guidance, the site-specific guidance of layout, scale and massing
- Not prejudice development of the remaining parts of the site (including those with extant planning consent) in line with the Masterplan's area wide vision, objectives and Illustrative Masterplan and, if covered by a Site Guidance, the Guidance's site-specific vision, objectives and guidance

7.4 INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY, AND MONITORING

7.4.1 Delivery

In order to help focus on delivery and assist monitoring, the Council will continue to identify Romford SDA infrastructure requirements in a discreet section in future Infrastructure Delivery Plans and include a separate Romford SDA heading in future annual CIL / S106 Infrastructure Funding Statements.

The Masterplan team have worked collaboratively with the Council to explore the approach to delivery over the Masterplan period.

7.4.2 Funding

The Council will seek to maximise funding from the following sources:

- Transport – Network Rail funding of Elizabeth Line improvement works at Romford Station, TfL's Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme for the ring road (between Rom Valley Way and North Street) TfL Local Implementation Plan funding and TfL's COVID-19 response Streetspace project
- Education – Basic Need Grant, SEND capital grant and funding from the Free Schools Programme
- Government's Developer Loans for School's programme (October 2019)
- Health – Estates and Technology Transformation Fund (ETTF)
- Section 106 planning obligations - financial contributions and provision of land and / or facilities in-kind
- Section 278 agreements – financial contributions
- Havering CIL monies
- The use of Council general fund reserves / borrowing
- Health & Wellbeing – work closely with the Havering Placed Based Partnership that promotes health and wellbeing.

The Department for Education has also recently published a leaflet for housing developers regarding loans to build schools to support housing growth. The developer loans for schools initiative will help to create new schools and extend existing schools to support housing growth.

The Council will use the Masterplan as an advocacy document to help bid for funding opportunities from the Mayor of London and the Government and its agencies as and when opportunities arise e.g. future rounds of the Mayor's Good Growth Fund, the Government's Future High Street Fund, Historic England's High Street Action Zones scheme and Arts Council funding.

7.4.3 Monitoring

Demographic changes, child care sufficiency and school places requirements will be monitored by the Council's Pupil Place Planning and School Organisation Team and will be reported in the annual update of the Council's Commissioning Plan for Education.

Demographic changes and the need for health care facilities will be monitored by the North East London Integrated Care Board and reported annually to the Havering Health and Wellbeing Board.

Transport Infrastructure need and delivery will be monitored on an annual basis and reported to the Romford Delivery Board.

7.4.4 Implementing key projects over time

It is important to consider that the key projects outlined in the Masterplan within the Site Guidance chapter will not come forward in the immediate term at once, but rather more that the town centre will evolve to deliver these schemes and proposed interventions over the next 5 – 20 years. This will be important to ensure that the existing vibrancy of the town centre is not negatively impacted and that the market is not flooded by a number of competing schemes at a single point in time.

Phased delivery approaches have been considered, and these can take account of decanting or reprovision of uses.

Within this Masterplan (including within the Site Guidance chapter) a number of infrastructure requirements and enabling projects are referenced. Many of these infrastructure requirements fall into specific, spatial infrastructure projects. These projects can collectively support the community as part of Romford's growth over time, and can help shape and enhance its future.

Fig. 144. Enhancing public spaces and greening Romford – Illustrative view of Rom Valley looking south along the River Rom

7.4.5 Infrastructure projects

The delivery of the vision for Romford will require a range of infrastructure to be provided to either before or in line with site development. The Local Plan identified the strategic infrastructure needs for Romford and the likely timing within which these should be delivered. Work is ongoing to unlock the funding of these interventions, including engaging with infrastructure bodies and funding programmes. Where development directly impacts the need for additional infrastructure, or where strategic infrastructure has a direct benefit to development sites, it is expected that contributions towards the identified infrastructure will be required from landowners / developers.

Table 34. Infrastructure projects

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescales	Estimated Project Cost
New Healthcare Centre at Bridge Close, Romford (part of Queens Campus & Central Romford Health Masterplan)	Project to deliver a new healthcare centre as part of the Bridge Close redevelopment in Romford. At the time of writing, the Bridge Close hybrid planning application has been submitted to the Council and is currently being reviewed. A health centre is included in the Outline phase of the application. The Healthcare Centre is planned to support increasing population densities in south and central Romford occurring as a result of the regeneration programme. At present, it is planned that ownership of the centre will be retained by the Council, with space then rented to NELICB. The project supersedes a similar project included in the 2018 IDP, and will also address healthcare floorspace need outlined in the Romford Masterplan. It should be noted that the Bridge Close redevelopment is displacing the London Ambulance Station Romford depot through a compulsory purchase order (CPO) and a new site for the new station has been selected (see Project ESO1). This project forms part of the Queens Campus & Central Romford Health Masterplan joint work between the Council and NHS partners.	Ongoing: Under review and system planning	Expected 2029 - 30	c. £10,000,000 - £15,000,000

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescales	Estimated Project Cost
New healthcare facility at Rom Valley Gardens (part of Queens Campus & Central Romford Health Masterplan)	Project to deliver expanded services and floorspace in the vicinity of Queens Hospital, Romford. The type of department that would be located in the expanded / satellite site is still to be decided. Satellite sites are being looked at as a possibility because Queens Hospital is landlocked, and land-ownership is complex (the hospital was developed using Private Finance Initiatives in the late 2000s). Because of PFI arrangements, the expansion work is being led by the Hospital Trust. As part of this review, a revised Queens Campus Masterplan will be presented which may include expansion and adjustments to the existing site. New healthcare provision at the former Ice Rink site is planned to be at least partly funded / delivered through S106. This project forms part of the Queens Campus & Central Romford Health Masterplan joint work between the Council and NHS partners, expected to commence in 2025.	Ongoing: Under system review and planning	Expected 2025 - 27	c. £20,000,000 - £25,000,000
Bridge Close early years places	Project to deliver 47 new early years places. This will be from a new building, delivered as part of wider regeneration ongoing in the Romford Strategic Development Area. At the time of writing, the Bridge Close hybrid planning application has been submitted to the Council and is currently being reviewed. An early years centre is included in the Outline phase of the application.	Ongoing: Progressing as planned	Expected 2028 - 9	TBC
2FE primary school needed in Romford area	The need for a new primary school in the Romford area is outlined in the Romford Masterplan, and as part of redevelopment of existing major sites in Romford including Seedbed and Homebase. The approved planning application for the Seedbed Centre on Rom Valley Way allows some area for the future provision of a new primary school (planning ref P2072.22, P2071.22).	Funding not confirmed	Not known	£12,000,000
Car park electric vehicle charging points	Project to deliver electric vehicle charging points across the borough. At time of publication, the Council had undertaken some pilot projects at the Town Hall. The Council is developing a strategy / technical feasibility document to plan out appropriate locations for charging points. This has involved estimating the rate and pace of the EV uptake, methods of installing charging points, and defining decision-making processes and consultations processes. Strategic planning of locations will also involve close co-operation with the National Grid and other external stakeholders. Funding from the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) has been made available which will see 68 charge points delivered in Council operated car parks and up to 80 on-street charging points delivered across the borough.	Ongoing: Progressing as planned	2024 / 25	£850,000

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescales	Estimated Project Cost
Improvements to wayfinding for walking and cycling at Queens Hospital	Project to improve wayfinding around Queens Hospital, where legibility is poor for pedestrians. An external consultant (Project Centre) were commissioned to carry out feasibility work in the area and identify suitable locations for wayfinding signage between Queens Hospital and Romford Station. Wayfinding should also be considered in long-term regeneration / public projects coming forward in the area, including Bridge Close, Rom Valley Way improvements scheme and River Rom public realm improvements. During the coronavirus pandemic, the project was paused. It is hoped that this project can be revisited in 2024 / 25 now that indicative LIP funding has been confirmed for Havering.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	£60,000
Development of River Rom channel in Romford into part of a continuous north-south pedestrian and cycle link	This is a pipeline project which needs to be further developed in terms of potential project scope and routes to delivery. However there is a recognised need to develop improved north-south walking and cycling connections in Romford, with significant opportunity to this along the River Rom riverbank specifically. Improvements to a stretch of the River Rom have been secured as part the approved scheme for the Seedbed Centre on Rom Valley Way (planning ref P2072.22). At the time of publication, improvements to further stretches of the River Rom are proposed as part of ongoing discussions for further planning applications, including Bridge Close (planning ref P1765.23) However, the project scope needs to be developed further in order that development along the River Rom can be properly utilised to help deliver this link. This project is closely linked to Project PR10, which seeks to commission a new strategy for the River Rom and its surrounding area. In addition, this project is closely linked to Project F08, which seeks to deculvert and naturalise sections of the River Rom in Romford town centre to fluvial flooding mitigation.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known
Romford Station improvements including new second entrance to station (just off South Street)	Project to deliver improvements to Romford Station, including improved public realm, a new station entrance at Brewery Gardens, and improvements to the ticketing hall. Improvements to the ticketing hall are already underway, and a Schedule 7 Planning Application was submitted to the Council as Havering's Local Planning Authority.	Ongoing: Progressing as planned	Delivered	£3,500,000

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescales	Estimated Project Cost
Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme (Western Ring Road, Phase 1)	The Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme is a programme of projects designed to improve Romford Ring Road. The proposed construction works seek to improve road safety; reduce crime and the fear of crime; improve air quality; make the ring road easier and more pleasant to cross on foot and by bicycle; and reduce bus journey times. It seeks to ensure that the street network in and around Romford is ready for the future. Cost estimates for the proposed work to the western side of the Ring Road were estimated to be c. £7m in 2017, although these costs have now increased due to inflationary pressures and rising costs of construction. The western side of the ring road was prioritised and planned as Phase 1 to support wider, long-term regeneration schemes in Romford town centre, including Bridge Close and Waterloo Estate. This will help promote economic activity in the town centre and provide active travel links across the ring road.	Ongoing: The programme was originally funded by TfL "Liveable Neighbourhoods" TfL withdrew this funding in 2021 and the aim is now to deliver the scheme in smaller phases that are being funded from Developer's S106 contributions, CIL and other external funding.	Initial North Street roundabout phase – expected 2025/2026 Future phases TBC	Initial North Street roundabout phase estimated at £2.5 million (cost from 2021) Future phases TBC
Greening central Romford	Project to provide additional green infrastructure through tree planting and rain gardens to the area around 21-23 North Street.	Ongoing, funding secured	2024	£3-400,000
Junction redesign at Romford Station	Project to deliver a redesigned junction at Romford Station, which will improve cycle movements around the Eastern Road / South Street junction. This is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre (not yet published or adopted).	Ongoing: Progressing as planned	By end of Romford town centre area-based SPD period	Not known
Modal filter on Mildmay Road	Potential project to deliver a modal filter on Mildmay Road, a residential area west of the Romford ring road. This is an emerging potential project from the Romford town centre SPD, which demonstrates the need to improve permeability and improved pedestrian / cyclist experience on the Romford ring road and neighbouring streets. Although this scheme would sit outside of the Romford ring road, it would complement existing planned public realm improvements as part of the Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme Phases 1 & 2 (see Projects PR03 and PR04).	Funding not confirmed	By end of Romford town centre area-based SPD period	Not known
New Toucan crossing between Willow Street and Cherry Street	Potential project to deliver a new Toucan crossing between Willow Street and Cherry Street. This is an emerging potential project from the Romford town centre SPD, which demonstrates the need to improve permeability and improved pedestrian / cyclist experience on the Romford ring road and neighbouring streets. Although this scheme would sit outside of the Romford ring road, it would complement existing planned public realm improvements as part of the Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme Phases 1 & 2 (see Projects PR03 and PR04).	Funding not confirmed	By end of Romford town centre area-based SPD period	Not known

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescales	Estimated Project Cost
Upgraded and relocated Toucan Crossing between St Andrews Road and Cottons Park	Potential project to upgrade and relocate an existing Toucan crossing between St Andrews Road and Cottons Park. This is an emerging potential project from the Romford town centre SPD, which demonstrates the need to improve permeability and improved pedestrian / cyclist experience on the Romford ring road and neighbouring streets. Although this scheme would sit outside of the Romford ring road, it would complement existing planned public realm improvements as part of the Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme Phases 1 & 2 (see Projects PR03 and PR04).	Funding not confirmed	By end of Romford town centre area-based SPD period	Not known
Deculverting sections of the River Rom in Romford town centre, to include fluvial flooding mitigation strategy	Project to deliver deculverted sections of the River Rom in Romford town centre, which would allow the river to return to its natural fluvial course in certain areas which would in turn mitigate flood risk. This is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre. At the time of publication, improvements to a stretch of the River Rom are secured as part the approved scheme for the Seedbed Centre on Rom Valley Way (planning ref P2072.22). Improvements to further stretches of the River Rom are proposed as part of ongoing discussions for further planning applications, including Bridge Close (planning ref P1765.23) This project is closely related to Project LCT10, which seeks to develop the River Rom channel in Romford into a continuous north-south pedestrian and cycle link.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known

In the following table are the longer term deliverables:

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescale	Estimated project cost
Expansion of Victoria Hospital, Pettits Lane, Romford (part of Queens Campus & Central Romford Health Masterplan)	Project to develop at site of the former Victoria Hospital, Pettits Lane, Romford. Initially planned to support additional primary care capacity in Romford, and to relocate services from converted residential dwellings which are less efficient to run. It is likely that project will involve expansion of the existing hospital site and / or development of a new building. The site is currently owned by NHS Property Services. It is anticipated that part of the site will be sold off to fund development works. There is currently no funding allocated for the scheme. It is hoped that some S106 contributions can be sought to support delivery of the scheme. This project forms part of the Queens Campus & Central Romford Health Masterplan joint work between the Council and NHS partners.	Ongoing: Under review and system planning	None	c. £20,000,000 - £25,000,000
Air Quality Monitoring Station (Romford)	Council-led project to deliver automatic air quality monitoring in Romford. This project is a revised version of a previous air quality monitoring project which was not financially viable. The automatic air quality monitoring station is expected to provide high-quality real time data on air quality in Romford, which will help the Council to understand if / when air quality presents a public health issue. NB: This is a Council-funded public protection / public health project (this project is not costed in HUDU model projections and will be funded through the Council, not the NHS).	Ongoing: Scope reduced	Not known	£190,000
New 6-8FE secondary school in Romford Strategic Development Area	This is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre (not yet published or adopted).	Funding not confirmed	During the period 2031/32 to 2035/36	TBC
Reprovision of bus standings at Brewery site	This is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre (not yet published or adopted). Project would involve collaboration with TfL to reinstate bus standings at the Brewery site in Romford.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known
Reprovision of bus standings at Romford Station Gateway site	This is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre (not yet published or adopted). Project would involve collaboration with TfL to reinstate bus standings at Romford Station.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known
Dedicated bus lanes on Romford Ring Road	This is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre (not yet published or adopted). Creation of dedicated bus lanes on Romford Ring Road would seek to improve public transport journey times; further capacity / feasibility studies would be required to take this project forward	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescale	Estimated project cost
Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme (Eastern Ring Road, Phase 2)	As set out above, Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme is a programme of projects designed to improve Romford ring road. The programme is made up of 2 phases: Phase 1 (western ring road, see Project PR03 above) and Phase 2 (eastern ring road,). Both phases of the Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme seek to improve road safety; reduce crime and the fear of crime; improve air quality; make the ring road easier and more pleasant to cross on foot and by bicycle; and reduce bus journey times. It seeks to ensure that the street network in and around Romford is ready for the future. Phase 2 of the programme is on hold at present due to TfL funding being withdrawn. At present, cost estimates for the programme (including Phases 1 and 2) are subject to change due to ongoing construction cost increases and wider inflation. It is estimated that costs are currently increasing by 25-30% per annum (including consultancy and construction). If the programme is delivered, it is not expected that highways maintenance costs to the Council would increase significantly This is because there is not expected to be much additional maintenance required when compared to existing maintenance costs for the Romford ring road. Phase 2 (Eastern Ring Road) is made up of improvements to the eastern side of the ring road, including St Edwards Way and Mercury Gardens. Although it is agreed that the eastern side of the ring road would benefit from improvements, the exact remit of Phase 2 has not been finalised. Initial plans to improve the eastern side of the ring road were referred to as 'Greening the Ring Road' and involved no major civil engineering works. Instead, capital works were limited to the installation of additional trees and planting to improve the feel of the eastern side of the ring road. Cost estimates for Phase 2 comprising this level of capital project were estimated at c. £400k in 2017. In summer 2021, the Council developed revised estimates for delivering a new scope of capital works to improve the character of the whole ring road, including the repurposing of the subterranean crossing at Mercury Gardens and crossing improvements at St Edwards Way. This work estimated the cost of total works to the ring road (including both western and eastern sides) were estimated to be around c. £10m. In light of this, the total cost of improvements to the eastern side of the ring road can be estimated to be c. £10m. Further scoping work will be necessary to give more accurate cost estimates. An initial phase is being brought forward in the North Street roundabout area in the shorter term.	Funding not confirmed	TBC, delayed due to TfL situation and uncertain funding	c. £400,000 - £10,000,000, depending on scope of works agreed

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescale	Estimated project cost
Improved cycle track on Marks Road, Romford	This is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre (not yet published or adopted). Project would seek to implement cycling infrastructure (e.g. separate bidirectional cycle lane) on Marks Road, connecting Romford town centre with residential areas.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known
Rom Valley Way public realm improvements	This project involves a number of improvements to streetscape and landscape at Rom Valley Way, an arterial road which lies south of the Romford Ring Road. These improvements to Rom Valley Way will complement existing planned works to the Romford ring road as part of Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme (Phases 1 & 2). A full feasibility study of proposed improvements was put together by external consultants (Urban Movement). A favoured option for improvements has been chosen, which includes widened footways, bidirectional cycle tracks, wide planting strips (to create additional greening and also separate cycle tracks from the carriageway), loading pads / bays, bus stop shelters and new seating. The planting of a significant number of additional street trees are an important part of proposed improvements to Rom Valley Way. Section 106 agreements are currently being negotiated on various developments in the vicinity of the scheme, including the Ice Rink site which was awarded planning permission in April 2024. These S106 contributions which will provide funding towards research, design and scoping work as well as the improvements themselves.	Funding partially secured	Not known	£4,500,000
Romford Market improvements	Project to explore options for improvements to the historic Romford Market. The project was paused in its early stages due to the Covid pandemic, but early considerations looked at options for: • Layout changes / potential to extend the market into South Street • Permanent market stall infrastructure and / or weather protection • Increasing trading days • Improving the market's identity / "look & feel". Early in 2020, Asset Management engaged Hawkins Brown Architects and an advisor from the Mayor's London Market Board to initiate some preliminary research on the historic Romford Market, and also undertake some initial consultation to understand what local residents / traders would like to see from the market. This work was undertaken with the aim of developing a series of initial options for wider consultation on improvements. This was paused at the beginning of the Covid pandemic and has not recommenced	Funding not confirmed	Not known, project paused since March 2020	£2,000,000

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescale	Estimated project cost
	At the time of publication, the Council's Regeneration and Asset Management teams were working together to develop potential early proposals for market improvements and identify likely funding sources if significant infrastructure investment is likely. Proposals for Romford Marketplace are supported by emerging work done for the Romford town centre SPD. Potential proposals include significant tree planting and landscaping, parking rationalisation and the provision of an event space.			
Rationalisation of Romford town centre car parking	Potential project to deliver large-scale rationalisation of Council car parks. It should be noted that is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre (not yet published or adopted). Rationalisation of existing car parks in Romford town centre including would require extensive consultation, modelling and planning to decide which car parks might be retained, which should be provided for, and which areas can provide additional on-street parking for the town centre. At the time of writing there is a proposal to develop the Council owned Angel Way car park. Further car parks including Mercury, Brewery and Liberty car parks are in private ownership	Funding not confirmed	By end of Romford town centre area-based SPD period	Not known
Integrated servicing plots in Romford town centre regeneration areas	Project to deliver integrated servicing plots as part of wider, long-term regeneration schemes in Romford town centre, including Bridge Close, Waterloo Estate, and any development which comes forward in the long-term as part of the area-based SPD for Romford town centre. Integrated servicing plots would promote good public realm by ensuring that shops, restaurants and business can receive deliveries / accessible access easily and without disrupting cyclists and pedestrians. They contribute to minimised disruption of the public realm.	Funding not confirmed	By end of Romford town centre area-based SPD period	Not known
Reconfiguration of street and public realm improvements between Trinity Methodist Church and Angel Way	Potential project to reconfigure the street layout and make public realm improvements at Trinity Methodist Church and Angel Way. This is an emerging potential project from the Romford town centre SPD, which demonstrates the need to improve permeability and improved pedestrian / cyclist experience on the Romford ring road and neighbouring streets. Although this scheme would sit inside of the Romford ring road, it would complement existing planned public realm improvements as part of the Romford Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme Phases 1 & 2 (see Projects PR03 and PR04).	Funding not confirmed	By end of Romford town centre area-based SPD period	Not known
Reprovision of existing Islamic Centre at Bridge Close	Reprovision of an existing Islamic Centre as part of wider regeneration at Bridge Close.	Ongoing: Progressing as planned	Not known	Not known

Project	Description	Project Status	Delivery timescale	Estimated project cost
New youth space in Romford town centre	Potential project to deliver a new youth centre / space by fitting out a vacant shop / commercial unit in Romford town centre. The project would help meet demand for more youth spaces / centres across the borough, particular in densely populated areas such as Romford. It is hoped that the space will include a youth lounge, counselling rooms and other facilities for young people.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known - TBC
Delivery of new public toilets at Brewery site	This is a potential pipeline project which has emerged from work done to develop a new SPD for Romford town centre (not yet published or adopted). Research undertaken during the course of the SPD demonstrated that Romford town centre would benefit from public toilet provision in this area.	Funding not confirmed	Not known	Not known
Romford Ambulance Deployment Centre	Project to deliver a new ambulance deployment centre in Romford as part of the Bridge Close regeneration scheme. Due to the ongoing regeneration programme at Bridge Close, the existing ambulance deployment centre in Romford is being acquired through a compulsory purchase order (CPO). A new site for the ambulance deployment centre has been selected, and London Ambulance Service (LAS), NHS North East London and the Council are working together to plan delivery of the new deployment centre. It is understood the new deployment centre will replace existing ambulance stations located in Havering at Romford and Hornchurch (as well as Ilford and Becontree ambulance stations located in London Borough of Barking and Dagenham).	Ongoing: Under review and system planning	Not known	c. £15,000,000 - £20,000,000
Romford District Energy Network and Low Temperature Heat Network	Discussions around potential need for alternative energy solutions in Romford have been part wider research for an area-based SPD in Romford.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known
	District energy heat networks allow localities to reduce dependency on the National Grid and whilst simultaneously incorporating local low carbon sources. Meanwhile, low-temperature district heating reduces the amount of energy lost in converting and transporting energy to buildings. It enables renewable and waste energy sources to be used for heating and cooling, such as solar thermal collectors, biomass-fired heating plants and large heat pumps. District-scale energy / heating projects such as this will support Havering to meet its target to become a carbon-neutral borough by 2040.			
Sub-station improvements at Brewery site	Discussions around potential need for substation improvements at the Brewery site in Romford have been discussed as part of wider research for an area-based SPD in Romford. Such improvements would need to be planned / phased in line with ongoing development in the area, and as such are still a pipeline project.	Funding not confirmed	TBC	Not known

7.5 EARLY WINS AND MEANWHILE USES

7.4.6 Catalytic projects

The Council may seek to consider the development of stalled projects such as the former ice rink site and under utilised components of the Liberty Shopping Centre to kick start major development across the town centre. Given the prominence of these sites their re development will have a major impact on the rejuvenation of the town centre and will send out a strong message to other developers. The Council may seek to take an active role in engaging with landowners to drive forward delivery across these sites.

7.6 POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

7.5.1 A positive approach to development management

The Council will use this Masterplan to take a positive approach to development management by:

- Capturing and steering emerging proposals through pro-active pre-application discussions
- Safeguarding the development potential of nearby land / buildings
- Using the Quality Review Panel to review and improve emerging schemes
- Shaping proposals and securing high quality details / specification through the effective use of planning conditions and obligations
- Using planning conditions to secure Construction Logistics Plans and Environmental Management Plans to minimise disruption during construction
- Using planning obligations to secure on-site social infrastructure, mitigation measures and financial contributions for local training / job brokerage and use of local services / businesses

7.5.2 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and S106 financial contributions

The Council's CIL Charging Schedule became effective on 1 September 2019.

The Council will use Havering CIL and S106 planning obligations together to best effect to deliver the infrastructure and mitigation measures necessary to deliver the Masterplan's vision and objectives.

The Council's annual Infrastructure Funding Statements will set out the infrastructure projects in Romford that the Council intends to be wholly or partially funded by CIL and S106 financial contributions

In addition to Havering CIL, developers will need to pay Mayoral CIL to help fund Crossrail 2.

7.7 MASTERPLAN MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Council intends to develop the Masterplan in to an SPD and this process, including further engagement with landowners / developers and consultation, will allow for review and changes.

The Council is committed to starting an early update of the Havering Local Plan. The Masterplan will be reviewed again once the Havering Local Plan has been updated and as necessary thereafter.

The Masterplan will be reviewed against its effectiveness in delivering the vision and objectives for the Romford SDA, including the proposed level of growth and accompanying social infrastructure, and the indicators in the Havering Local Plan monitoring framework set out in Table 10 of the Havering Local Plan. The Masterplan will be adjusted, where necessary, to make it more effective and to respond to any change to relevant Havering Local Plan policies.

Fig. 145. Illustrative view of Liberty Square: introducing a finer urban grain and new public spaces

APPENDIX

ABBREVIATIONS & GLOSSARY

Abbreviations

BHRUT	Barking, Havering Redbridge University Hospital NHS Trust
CFC	Chlorofluorocarbons
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CIRIA	Construction Industry Research and Information Association
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
GLA	Greater London Authority
HCFC	Hydrochlorofluorocarbons
LSIS	Locally Significant Industrial Site
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Romford SDA	Romford Strategic Development Area
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized enterprises, including micro-businesses
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance, prepared by the Mayor of London
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document, prepared by boroughs
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
TfL	Transport for London

Definitions

→ Affordable Workspace

Flexible workspace which is let to a Workspace Provider and which will allow for occupation by the end users in one or more sectors on terms:

- substantially below market levels of rents and charges when compared with an equivalent letting of the space and facilities on the open market; and
- at a rate comparable with similar facilities available in Havering or (if sufficient comparator premises do not exist in the borough) across London as a whole; and
- at rates which mean that occupation is feasible to a large number of small / start-up businesses in the relevant sector(s).

→ Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

This is a tool for the Mayor and the boroughs to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of the area. Where in place, it is a non-negotiable financial contribution paid by developers of most types of new development (subject complicated rules and exceptions).

→ Community Use Agreements

Are in place to secure community access for 'pay & play' opportunities for the general public and community club use. Community use agreements outline hours of availability, management arrangements, pricing policies and sports development plans.

→ Cultural infrastructure

The buildings, structures and places where culture is either consumed (Cultural Consumption spaces) or produced (Cultural Production spaces).

→ Development Plan

The London Plan, the Havering Local Plan, other Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Plans.

→ Family-sized housing
Homes with 3 or more bedrooms.

→ Flexible Workspace
Managed, commercial premises, particularly suitable for small / start-up businesses and which are divided into a collection of small units held by occupiers on a short-term, easy-in, easy-out basis and with communally-shared services, facilities and support for the entrepreneurial activities of the occupiers.

→ Locally Significant Industrial Site
Sites of local significance for industry and warehousing, in the context of Policy 20 of the Havering Local Plan.

→ Main town centre uses
Retail development, including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres; leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses, including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls; offices; and arts, culture and tourism development, including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities.

→ National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

→ Section 106 (S106) agreements
These agreements confer planning obligations on persons with an interest in land in order to achieve the implementation of relevant planning policies as authorised by Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

→ Social Infrastructure
Covers facilities such as health provision, early years provision, schools, colleges and universities, community, recreation and sports facilities, places of worship, policing and other criminal justice or community safety facilities, children and young people's play and informal recreation facilities. This list is not intended to be exhaustive and other facilities can be included as social infrastructure.

→ S106 obligation
A legal agreement entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal or a Unilateral Undertaking.

→ Strategic developments (applications referable to the Mayor)

The planning applications that must be referred to the Mayor under the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 and any amendments hereto.

→ Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
Explains how the borough will involve the community when preparing planning policy and guidance and deciding planning applications.

→ Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)
Gives guidance on the implementation of policies in the London Plan.

→ Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Gives guidance on the implementation of policies in the Havering Local Plan.

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Drawing Credit: ©MaccreanorLavingtonLtd

Romford Town Centre Masterplan Baseline Report

22nd August 2024

MACCREANOR LAVINGTON | AVISON YOUNG | GHPA | PERISCOPE | CIVIC ENGINEERS
MAKE:GOOD | USEFUL PROJECTS | AUTHENTIC FUTURES

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1 INTRODUCTION

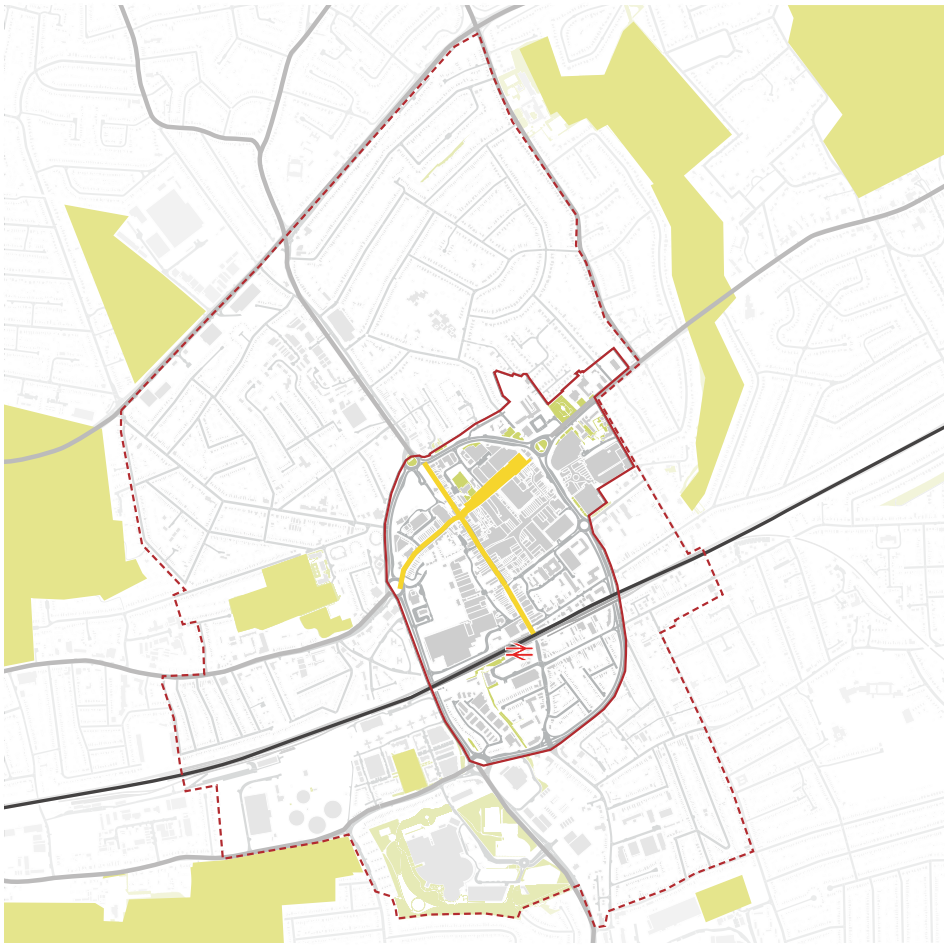


Fig. 01. Study Area - map showing Romford SDA boundary and Metropolitan Town Centre boundary

1.1 OVERALL PURPOSE

Maccreanor Lavington have been appointed by the London Borough of Havering (LBH) to lead a multidisciplinary team to develop a masterplan for Romford Town Centre.

The study area for the Masterplan is the Romford Strategic Development Area (SDA), with the core masterplan area focused on the central area of Romford. It is recognised that the masterplan areas of focus may evolve throughout its development and evolution, and that it may not strictly adhere to the Metropolitan Town Centre boundary.

This Masterplan will establish an ambitious physical vision and delivery plan to enhance and consolidate Romford's position within the wider context of London and the South East. Addressing key objectives to allow for sustainable and equitable growth, the main focus of the Masterplan is Romford town centre, however there are some proposals which take into account the surrounding areas, including linking Romford and Rainham and the impact of the Elizabeth Line. This masterplan will provide flexible design framework to inform the design of buildings, the quality of the public realm, the development of sustainable growth and the impact on the local and wider context.

The intention is that a masterplan document will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to support policies in the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031, and in due course inform site allocations in the proposed Specific Site Allocations Local Plan.

This report has been produced to provide a baseline for the Romford Town Centre masterplan. It includes an audit of available information, including the extensive evidence base prepared to inform the Havering Local Plan, and sets out research into the Town Centre and the wider area, which has informed an understanding of the key constraints and opportunities for Romford. The report concludes by establishing key themes which will underpin the development and evolution of the Romford Town Centre masterplan going forward.

2 ROMFORD IN CONTEXT

2.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

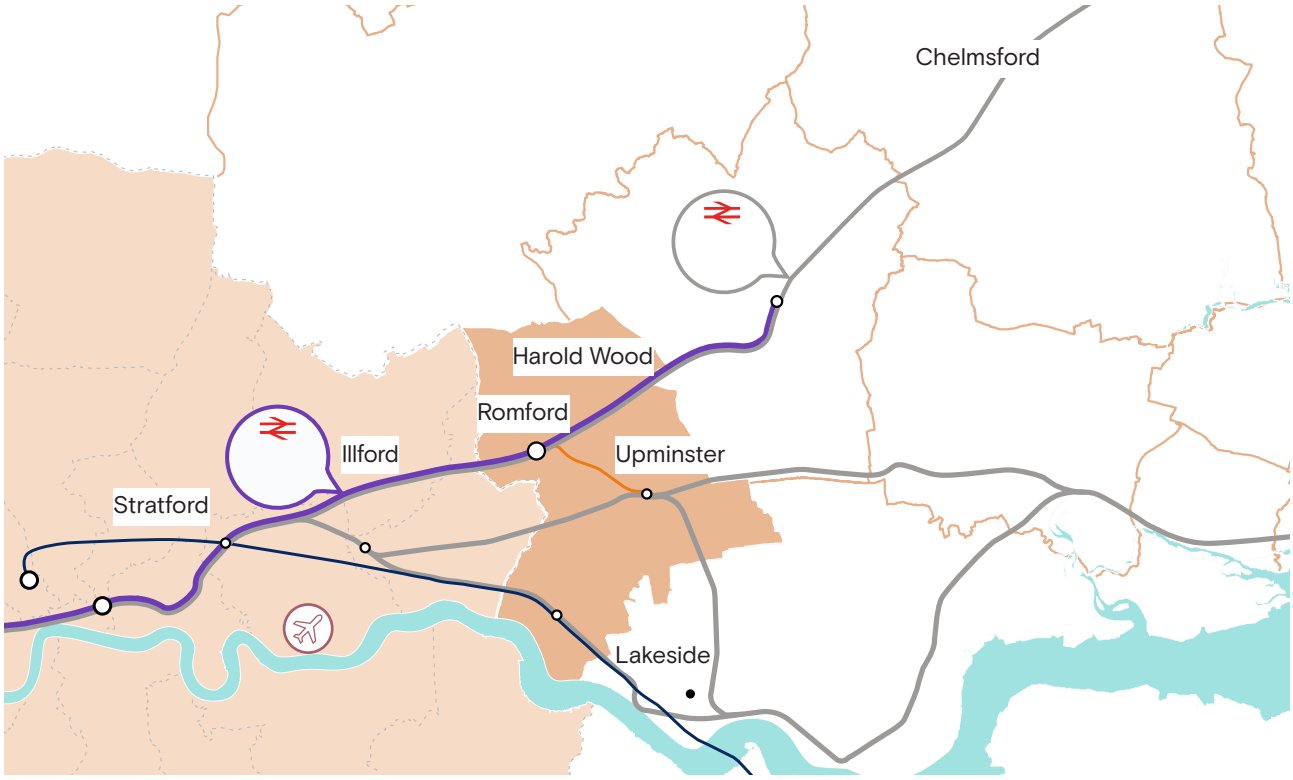


Fig. 02. Romford's strategic connectivity

2.1.1 Strategic location

Havering is uniquely situated at the edge of London and bordering Essex, and this juncture offers it the potential to form a pivotal node. To the north and east the boundary is with Essex, to the south by a 5 km River Thames frontage, and to the west by the neighbouring boroughs of Redbridge and Barking & Dagenham. It is mainly characterised by suburban housing, with almost half of the area dedicated to open green space, particularly to the east of the borough.

Romford town centre has potential for growth, and the arrival of Elizabeth Line will continue to positively impact the surrounding area significantly. The Havering Local Plan identifies the opportunity to deliver thousands of new homes and jobs as well as attract more shoppers and visitors to spend more time and money within Romford. Havering has the potential to be one of the capital's next big growth areas. Rainham and Beam Park, located within the London Riverside Opportunity Area, have the capacity to provide 26,500 new homes and Policies 1 and 3 in the Havering Local Plan require at least 6,000 new high-quality homes to be built in the Romford SDA over the plan period, with at least 5,000 in the first 10 years.

Romford's position between London and Essex is an undoubted strength, and this report seeks to outline the opportunities created by this strategic position.

2.1.2 Historic Market Town

With a Market Charter dating from 1247, Romford is one of the few market towns which have retained trading for over 700 years. The historical Market Square and crossroads is both figuratively and literally manifestation of Romford's pivotal regional location.

2.1.3 Metropolitan Centre

Romford is identified as a Metropolitan Centre within the London Plan (2021). The London Plan gives it a Night Time 2 Night-time economy classification, acknowledging its regional or sub-regional significance. In addition, the London Plan identifies Romford as Office Guidelines B, with capacity to accommodate new office accommodation within of mixed-use residential developments and identifies Romford as having high commercial growth potential, high residential growth potential and as a Strategic Area for regeneration.

2.2 CHARACTER, CONTEXT & IDENTITY

2.2.1 Romford in Context

Havering is London's third largest borough, covering some 112 square kilometres, located on the northeast of Greater London. The estimated population of the London Borough of Havering is 262,052, with one of the most ethnically homogeneous populations in London; 83% of its residents identify as White British[1]. In contrast to Havering as a whole, Romford town centre is densely populated and is classified as a metropolitan retail and night time entertainment centre. The southern part of Havering adjacent to the river Thames is within the London Riverside section of the Thames Gateway regeneration area.

Romford is well connected, via the A12, to the strategic road network. The centrally located Romford Station is located on a busy east-west train link with Overground services to Upminster and National Rail services linking to central London, Essex, and via connections at Shenfield further afield to Southend and Norwich. The arrival of Elizabeth Line now provides a quicker east-west service through to central London and east to Shenfield.

Havering's population is relatively affluent but there are pockets of deprivation to the north (Gooshays and Heaton wards) and south (South Hornchurch) of the borough. It has the oldest population in London with a median age of approximately 40 years old. The Borough experienced a net population loss of 6.3% from 1983 to 2002 but the population has increased year on year from 2002, with a 145% increase from 2002 to 2018.

Life expectancy at birth for people living in Havering is 80.2 years for males and 83.9 years for females. Life expectancy in Havering has been on the increase over the last decade and is higher than the England average and similar to London averages. For males, life expectancy at birth ranges from 76.6 years in the most deprived decile to 84.5years in the least deprived decile (difference of 6.7 years). This is smaller than the gap seen across London boroughs (difference of 9.7 years).

For females, life expectancy at birth ranges from 81.1years in the most deprived decile to 86.6 years in the least deprived decile (difference of 5.5 years). This is greater than the gap seen across London (difference of 4.4 years). [2]

1 Havering, A Demographic And Socio-Economic Profile, (https://www.haveringdata.net/a-demographic-and-socio-economic-profile, accessed July 2024)

2 Havering, A Demographic And Socio-Economic Profile, (https://www.haveringdata.net/a-demographic-and-socio-economic-profile, accessed July 2024)

Fig. 03. Population per hectare (2024) Havering has a population density in the second lowest percentile in London after Bromley.

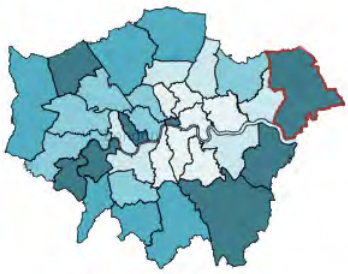


Fig. 07. Percentage age 65%+ (2018) Havering has the largest share of elderly residents of any London borough, with an average age of 39

Fig. 11. % that is greenspace (2005) 59% of Havering is greenspace, the highest percentage in London

Fig. 04. Employment rate 16+ (2017) The employment rate in Havering is below average in comparison to the rest of London

Fig. 08. Persons White British (2018) Havering has one of the most ethnically homogeneous populations in London, with 83% of its residents recorded as White British and 87% born in the UK

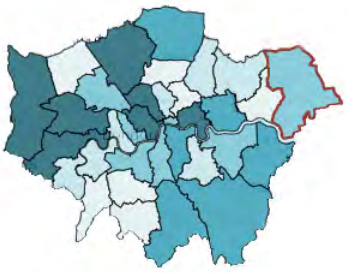


Fig. 12. Greenhouse gas emissions (2015). Havering has a medium rate of greenhouse gas emissions in comparison with London

Fig. 05. Unemployment rate 16+ (2017) Havering has a low unemployment rate in comparison to the rest of London

Fig. 09. All crime rate (2017-2018) Havering has comparatively low crime rates

Fig. 13. No cars in household (2011) Havering has the second highest rate of vehicle ownership with 77% of households owning at least one vehicle

Fig. 06. Mean gross annual pay (2017) Household median income within the borough is in the lowest quartile within London

Fig. 10. Medium house price (2017) House prices are relatively low in Havering, the average price as of 2017 being 350,000.

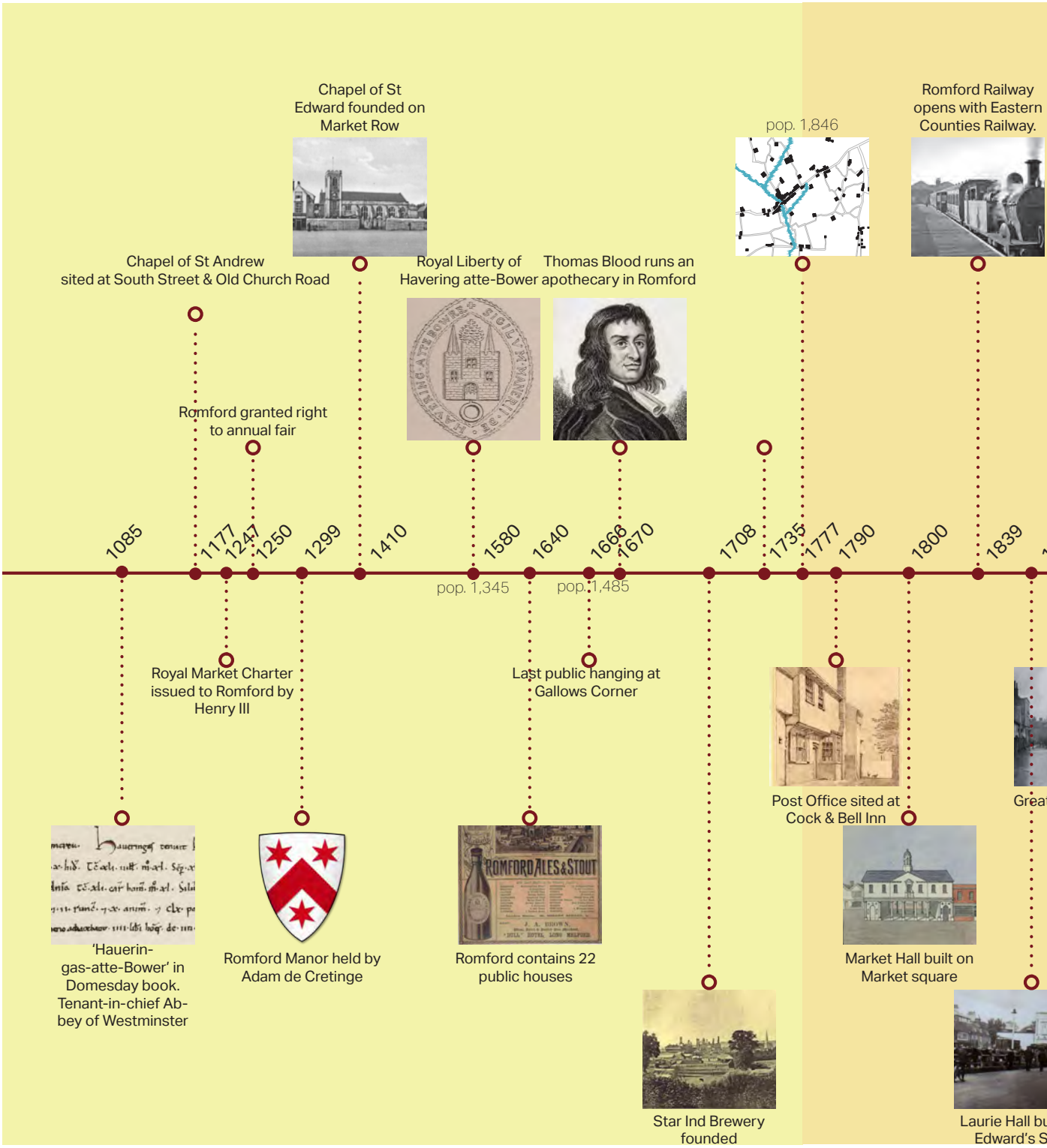
Fig. 14. Average PTAL level (2015) Havering has an average PTAL of 1B, in the lowest quartile in London.

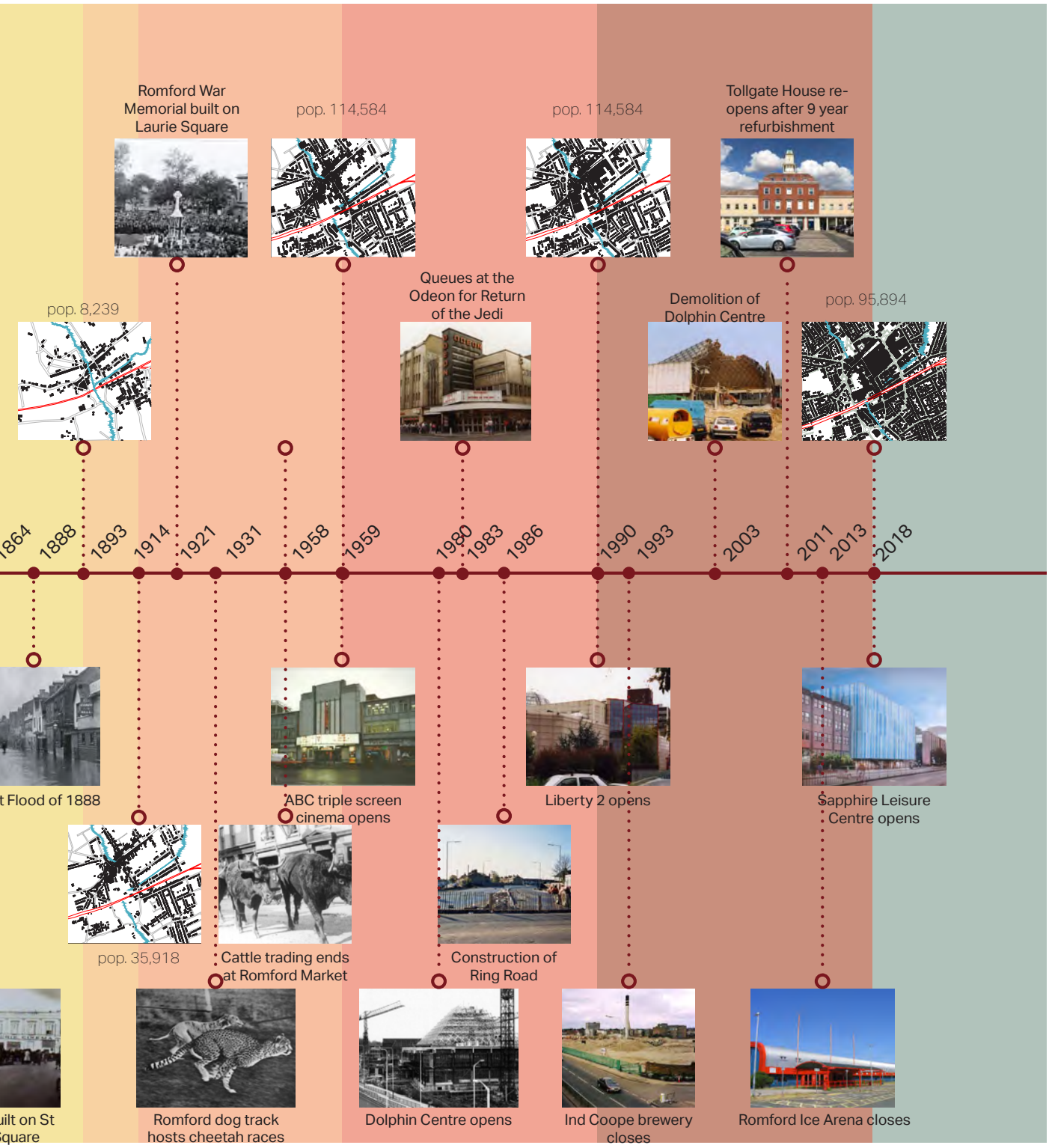
Source: https://data.london.gov.uk/london-area-profiles/

3 BUILT FORM

Liberty
SHOPPING ROMFORD
TO LET
1st
FLOOR
OFFICES
01708 731200
GREGGS
SALE
BUY 1
GET 1
HALF PRICE

3.1 ROMFORD TIMELINE




Romford War Memorial built on Laurie Square
pop. 114,584
pop. 114,584
Tollgate House re-opens after 9 year refurbishment
pop. 8,239
Queues at the Odeon for Return of the Jedi
Demolition of Dolphin Centre
pop. 95,894
1864
1888
1893
1914
1921
1931
1958
1959
1980
1983
1986
1990
1993
2003
2011
2013
2018
t Flood of 1888
ABC triple screen cinema opens
Liberty 2 opens
Sapphire Leisure Centre opens
pop. 35,918
Cattle trading ends at Romford Market
Construction of Ring Road
ilt on St Square
Romford dog track hosts cheetah races
Dolphin Centre opens
Ind Coope brewery closes
Romford Ice Arena closes

3.2 ROMFORD MORPHOLOGY

3.2.1 Morphology

Founded around a Roman crossing of the River Rom and along a trade route between Londinium and Colchester, Romford (the ford of the Rom) grew in a linear fashion to become a market town centred along two bisecting roads, focusing around Market Place and Main Road. It received a market Charter from King Henry III in 1247 and became a key destination on main trade routes to and from London, typified by long narrow land plots.

During the industrial revolution in the 19th Century, a large brewery and several industrial buildings were added to the south, creating an impermeable industrial enclave. Romford expanded rapidly the introduction of the railway in 1839 and the population tripled from 4,500 to 14,000. During the interwar period, Romford expanded to a population of around 40,000. Post war development established Romford as a satellite of London and a destination in Metroland. Badly damaged in the Blitz, rebuilding came slow to the town but increased during the early 60s and an encircling ring-road was introduced to aid congestion, resulting in the rebuilding of virtually all the town centre, emptying out much of the residential population and creating extensive monoculture commercial environments. Division and consolidation of plots resulted in 'back to front' buildings, with rear façades facing street and back alley entrances visible from main roads. The introduction of several large car parks and shopping centres has eroded much of the original character of the town and public realm, and along with the culverting of the River Rom in the 1960s, as part of the Inde Coope Brewery expansion, resulted in the decimation of much of the local ecology and green spaces.

The Market Place remains the largest civic space within the town, with little additional public space surrounding it. Before The Liberty was covered it contained a central meeting point for the town, 'The Fountain'. However a new focal point for the town centre was never established.

The connectivity of the town and the surrounding area requires significant improvement. The ring road around the edge of the town provides a physical barrier which limits the expansion and integration of the town centre, and the expansion of larger commercial sites in the 20th century has resulted in a lack of high quality civic or public space.

Fig. 15. Romford 1777 - population 1,846

Fig. 16. Romford 1914 - population 1,442

Fig. 17. Romford 1990 (?) - population 230,900

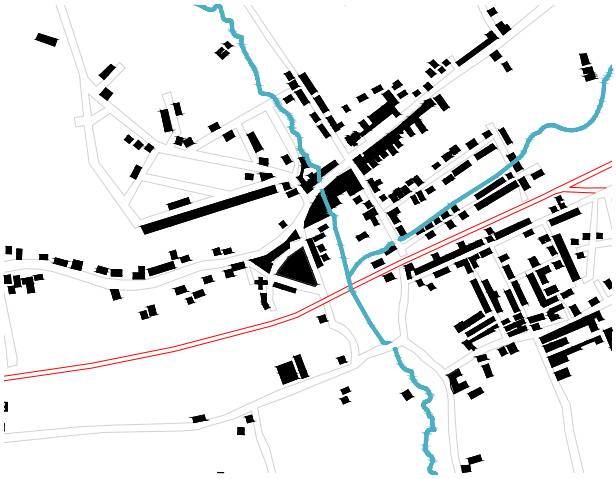


Fig. 18. Romford 1893 - population 13,915

Fig. 19. Romford 1959 - population 114,584

Fig. 20. Romford 2018 - population 255,407

3.3 CHARACTER REVIEW

3.3.1 Character Study

The London Borough of Havering is currently developing a Character Study which assesses and identifies the existing and emerging characters across the borough. The Character Study identifies Romford town centre as having the 'most strategic and significant role and reach' of Havering's diverse centres. Havering's only Metropolitan Centre, it has commercial, retail and night life significant for greater London and is identified as an area appropriate for transformative change and regeneration.

The Character Study also identifies Romford Town Center as having significant historic and cultural importance for the borough, dating back to its origins as a market town in the middle-ages. It sets out the important assets (Market Place, key buildings and natural landscape) as well as opportunities (overcome east-west divides, improving the setting of historic buidlings). This baseline study draws on the existing qualities, character and opportunities identified in the Character Study to build a layered picture of Romford town centre's character capturing building typologies and built form, heritage, and current uses and activities.

3.3.2 Building Typologies

Romford had two major periods of expansion, the first in the late 19th century with the introduction of the railway and the second in the mid 20th century with the expansion of the brewery. Residential buildings in Romford are typically late Victorian, built during the expansion of Romford in the late 1800s and representative of the quality and effort put into simple domestic homes, or more modern typologies built speedily during the interwar period.

Much of the commercial town centre was filled in during the 1960s expansion of the town and is typified by modernist post-war styles. The few listed buildings that remain are clustered around the historic market square and crossroads but there is little notable historic character remaining. The built footprint of the shopping centres restricts the possibilities for a finer urban grain and much of the remaining unbuilt space is given over to service yards and surface car parks.

Effort was made in the late 20th century to restore some of the historic character and create reproductions of key buildings but the success of these endeavours is debatable.

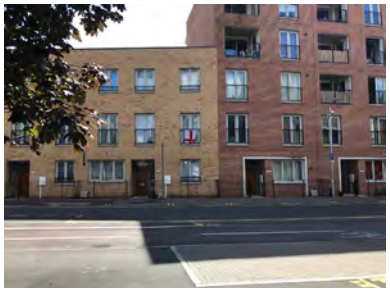
Civic /Historic

01.

02.

03.

Residential


04.

05.

06.

Mixed Use / Light Industrial

07.

08.

09.

Commercial / Employment

10.

11.

12.

Commercial

13.

14.

15.

Photographs located on following page

3.4 BUILDING USES

3.4.1 Building Uses

Romford Metropolitan Town Centre is the largest shopping centre in the sub region, and a key metropolitan centre. These centres have a strategic night-time function involving a broad mix of activity during the evening and should include most or all of the following uses: culture, leisure, entertainment, food and drink, health services and shopping.

The character of Romford Town centre has made a gradual shift from light industrial and residential to monoculture commercial. Building use was originally zoned along the axis of Market Place and South Street, with commercial spaces in the North East and South West and a business district running parallel to the railway in the South East.

Beyond the ring road there is a clear pattern of suburban residential streets with the exception of some light industry in the South and health (Queen's Hospital) and infrastructure (former gasworks) in the South West.

More recently, Romford's most radical changes have been retail related – the roofing over of the Liberty centre and its 1990 extension beyond the ring road (now the Mercury Mall and joined to the Liberty by an underpass) and the building of the Brewery out of town retail park and parking over much of the former Star Brewery site after its closure in 1993.

Since then, some small blocks of residential have returned to the town centre, most notably along the north-east edge of Market Place and in the back-lands to its rear. This new development is notably taller than earlier buildings around the market and has been joined by Tollgate House a neoclassical pastiche market hall that was completed after delays in 2011. At the same time, there has been a steady chipping away of historic fabric including the loss of entire locally listed buildings on Western Road and North Street.

Light industrial and out of town retail can be found to the south of the Town Centre; however, many of these sites have been earmarked for redevelopment as part of the Romford Town Centre Housing Zone, which was designated in September 2016 (discussed further in Section 6.4).

There has been some significant reduction in office space within the Office Quarter under permitted development rights (PDR). Since Office to residential PDR were first brought in 2013 and November 2018 (when data available), approx. 29,000m^2 (GIA) of office space was either lost or sanctioned to be lost via the Prior Approval process – allowing for an additional 577 homes.[1]

1 Review of Prior Approvals – Change of Use from Office to Residential, March 2019

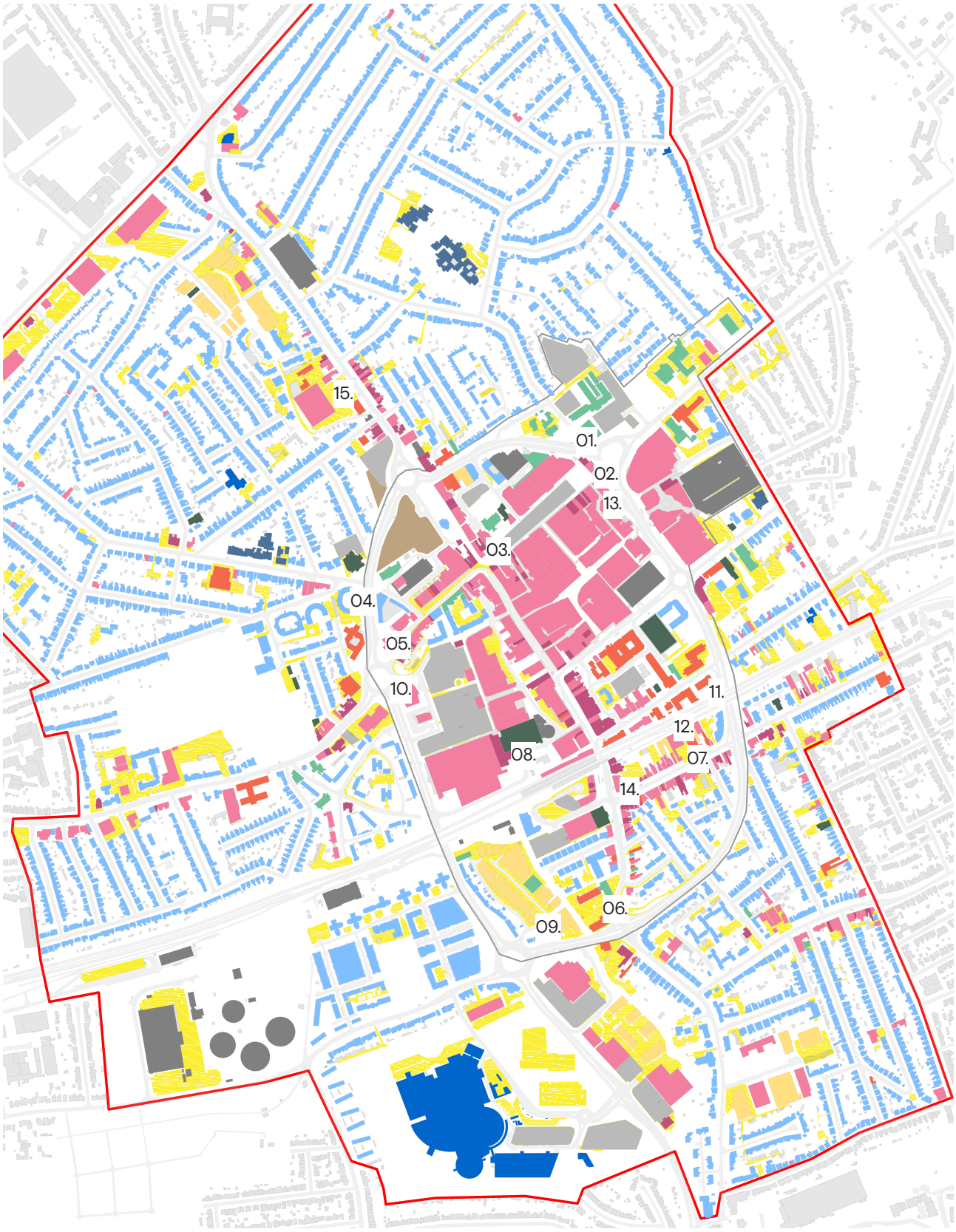


Fig. 21. Building Uses & Character

3.5 HERITAGE

3.5.1 Conservation Areas

Within the SDA boundary there are 12 Listed Buildings (Grade II), 30 Locally Listed Buildings, 4 Historic Parks and Gardens and the Churchyard of Edward the Confessor. Currently Romford has little or no heritage identity and the few listed buildings within the town centre are poorly maintained.

The Romford Conservation Area was designated in 1968 and is one of 11 in Havering, however the boundary is considered tight and drawn only along frontages. A proposal to extend the boundary was put forward in 2009 but was not adopted. The area immediately surrounding the crossroads consists of several different typologies primarily characterised by their date of construction. The entire Romford Conservation Area is on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register and its condition is identified as being 'Very Bad'; however, its vulnerability is considered 'Medium' with an 'Improving' trend.[1]

Policy 28 of the Havering Local Plan stresses the maintenance of up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and London Borough of Havering's Local List of non-designated assets. The Romford Conservation Area Appraisal is to be reviewed due to its 'at risk' status and its location within a Strategic Development Area.[2] Within the Conservation Area, developments should recognise the role of heritage in character.

A Conservation Area Appraisal of the Romford Conservation Area is underway, and key considerations include whether to extend the Conservation Area boundary to align with changing methodologies of good practice, and a potential extension to the Conservation Area further down South Street.

3.5.2 Historical buildings

There are several historical buildings around the crossroads which are of interest. The following table charts locally listed buildings. The churchyard of St Edward the Confessor is included in the London Parks & Gardens Trust's London Inventory of Historic Green Spaces for Havering as an open space with public access.

1 Historic England, Heritage at Risk Register - https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/list-entry/2228
2 The Havering Local Plan

01.

02.

03.

04.

05.

01 The Parish Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Edward the Confessor built in 1849 by John Johnson and designated as a Grade II* listed building by English Heritage in 1952.

02 The Lamb Public House is an early C19 painted brick building with ground floor sashes and stucco entablature. It has served as an Inn and public house and is Grade II listed.

03 Church House is a former chantry house which was a pub for many years until 1908 when it reopened as Church House. It may once have been part of a larger building and is Grade II listed.

04 Ind, Coope & Co.'s brewery was established on the High Street in Romford in 1799. It became Romford's main industry in the 19th and 20th century. At the height of its operation during the 1970s, the brewery covered 20 acres and employed over a thousand workers. The buildings fronting High Street remain as testament to its significance in the history of Romford.

05 Golden Lion Public House dates from the C17 onwards and is Grade II listed. The ground floor has a carriage entrance on left hand side and C19 bar front with central doorway and moulded cornice.

Table 1 - Listed Buildings in the SDA

The number of listed buildings is extremely limited in Romford town centre. They are:

Key/ No	Building Name	Building Address	Grade
1	The Golden Lion	2 High Street, Romford, RM1 1HR	Grade II
2	The Lamb Public House	5 Market Place, Romford, RM1 3AB	Grade II
3	Parish Church of St Edward the Confessor	Market Place, Romford, RM1 1XP	Grade II*
4	Church House	15 Market Place, Romford, RM1 1XP	Grade II
5	BMS Insurance	96-102 North Street, Romford, RM1 1DA	Grade II
6	Church of St Edward the Confessor	5 Park End Road, Romford, RM1 4AT	Grade II
7	Havering Town Hall	Main Road, Romford, RM1 3BB	Grade II
8	Romford War Memorial	Romford, RM1 3BH	Grade II
9	Vine Cottage	215, 215a and 217 North Street, Romford, RM1 4QA	Grade II
10	Salem Chapel	London Road, Romford, RM7 9QA	Grade II
11	Church of St Andrew	4 St Andrews Road, Romford, RM7 9AT	Grade II
12	Black's Bridge	Main Road, Romford	Grade II

Table 2 - Listed Buildings in the SDA

The number of listed buildings is extremely limited in Romford town centre. They are:

Key/ No	Building Name	Building Address
13	Trinity Methodist Church	Angel Way, RM1 1JH
14	Romford Brewery	High Street, RM1 1JU
15	Prudential Building	2-4 South Street, Romford, RM1 1RA
16	The White Hart (The Bitter End)	15 High Street, Romford, RM1 1JU
17	The Woolpack Inn	31a High Street, Romford, RM1 1JL
18	The Sun Public House	47 London Road, RM7 9QA
19	Romford Baptist Church	Main Road, Romford, RM1 3BL
20	The Bull Inn	74-76 Market Place, Romford, RM1 3ER
21	Lloyds Bank	1-3 Market Place, Romford, RM1 3AA
22	95 South Street	Romford, RM1 1NX
23	97-101 (odd) South Street	Romford, RM1 1NX
24	103-111 (odd) South Street	Romford, RM1 1NX
25	110 South Street	Romford, RM1 1SS
26	113-117 South Street	Romford, RM1 1NX
27	131 South Street	Romford, RM1 1NX
28	The Co-op Bank	1 South Street, Romford, RM1 1XP
29	The Moreland Arms (The Goose)	143 South Street, Romford, RM1 1PL
30	Odeon Cinema	112-116 South Street, RM1 1SS
31	Page Calnan Building	222 South Street, Romford, RM1 2AD
32	Quadrant Arcade	South Street, Romford, RM1 3ED
33	Romford Railway Station	South Street, Romford, RM1 1TU
34	The Prince Albert Public House	32 St Andrews Road, RM7 9BB
35	Old Mill Parade	6 Victoria Road, Romford, RM1 2JT
36	Station Parade	South Street, Romford, RM1 2BX
37	Raphael's Park	Romford, RM2 5EB
38	26 High Street	Romford, RM1 1HR
39	9 Market Street	Romford, RM1 3AF
40	28 Market Place	Romford, RM1 3ER
41	10 Gilbert Road	Romford, RM1 3BX
42	64 South Street	Romford, RM1 1RB

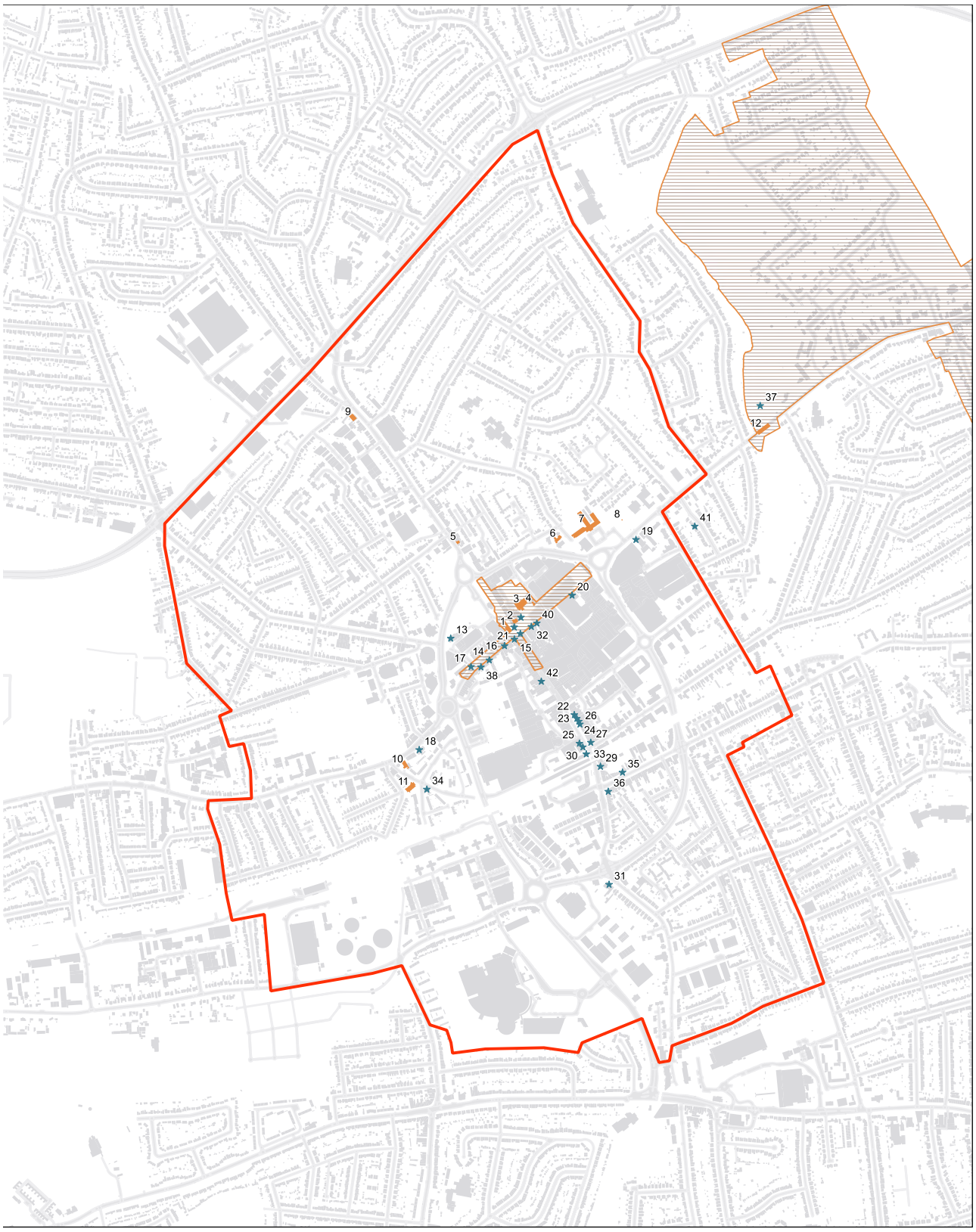


Fig. 22. Romford Heritage Map

3.6 ARCHAEOLOGY

3.6.1 Archaeological Investigations

Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) are known archaeological sites of importance or areas of archaeological landscape which may contain specific individual hotspots and are likely to contain other yet unknown sites awaiting future identification, often as a result of the development process over time. A total of 51 APAs have been identified within the LB of Havering, illustrated on the map opposite. These include six Tier 1 APAs, 41 Tier 2 APAs and four Tier 3 APAs.

The London Borough of Havering is responsible for the protection of these sites from developments which would adversely affect them, through the planning application process by consulting with Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service and applying their advice.

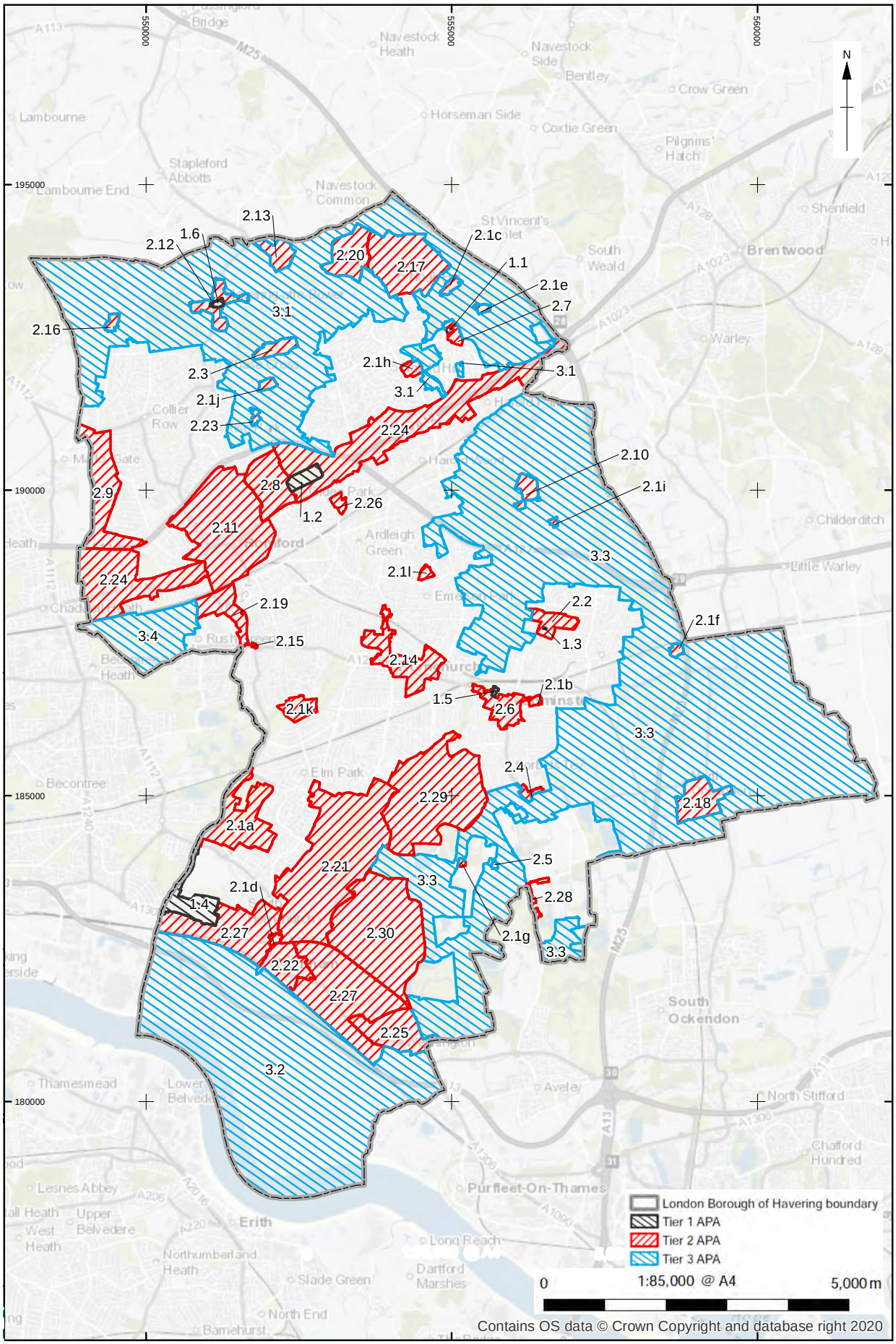


Fig. 23. London Borough of Havering New Archaeological Priority Areas 2024 (excerpt from the London Borough of Havering Archaeological Priority Area Appraisal Final Report May 2024)

3.7 BUILDING HEIGHTS

3.7.1 Building Heights

There are a range of different building heights present within the town centre area. Many of the later interventions have remained low rise, focusing on single or double storey commercial spaces, however there are pockets of concentrated height around the North East and South West of the SDA. More recent developments such as the Mercury are exceeding ten stories but for the most part the town centre and surrounding suburbs average three stories.

The London Plan Policy D9 Tall buildings states that the approach to tall and large building should be part of a plan-led approach through a holistic assessment of 'form, character and capacity for growth' to determine the appropriate locations for all buildings and maximum heights at a borough-wide level. Similarly, Historic England's Tall Building Advice Note 4 states:

"In a successful plan-led system, the location and design of tall buildings will reflect the local vision for an area, and a positive, managed approach to development, rather than a reaction to speculative development applications"[1]

Havering's emerging Character Study identifies Romford town centre as an appropriate area for transformational change and regeneration. It defines 'tall buildings' within Havering as those which are 6 storeys and above, and identifies the town centre as a potential location for tall buildings to "support a local economy and bring investment into the centre, with the appropriate services clustered to support new residents[2]".

Havering Local Plan Policy 1 makes clear that the Masterplan will determine the appropriate scale, height and form of development within the Romford SDA, beyond the definition within the Local Plan. Managing the evolution and intensification of Romford requires significant consideration of heights, and in line with Havering Local Plan Policy 1, the Masterplan will establish strategies for identified Character Areas, Townscape, Streetscape, Urban Grain and Views and Heritage which will help to manage building height across the town centre and its environs. It will also set out Site Guidance on building height for 6 key areas in and around the town centre.

1 Historic England Tall Building Advice Note 4

2 Havering Character Study (Draft 2024)

01 - Mercury Gardens - 14 storeys

02 - North House - 11 storeys

03 - Sapphire Leisure - 7 storeys

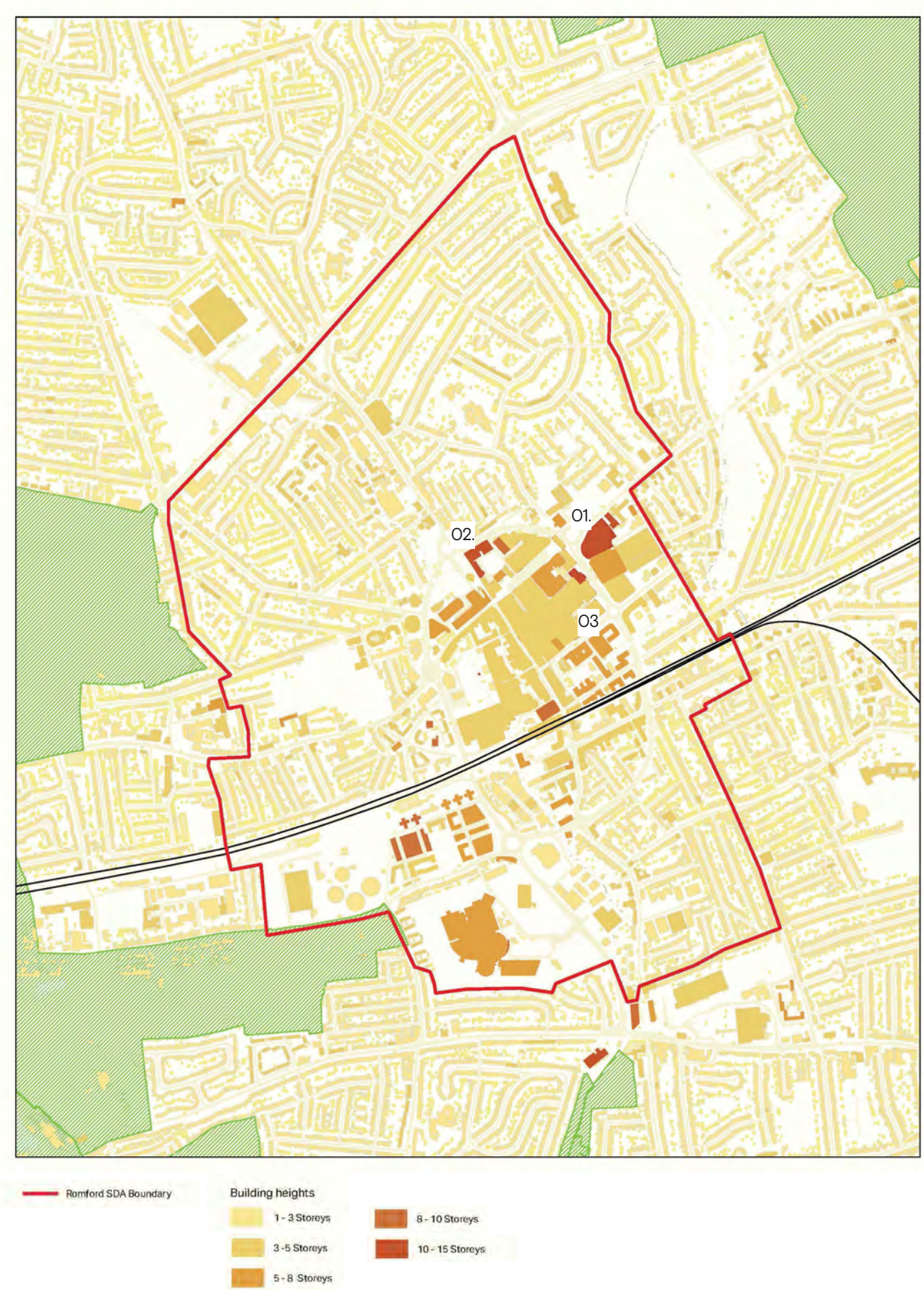


Fig. 24. Primary Building Heights

4 ECONOMY

4.1 ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

4.1.1 Key Themes & Trends

A study of socio-economic conditions has been undertaken as part of this project. The performance of retail units within the borough has been analysed in the context of the cyclical effects of recession, and in the wider context of the fundamental changes that are affecting the retail sector in general and the 'high street' in particular.

Romford is weathering changes to its retail and commercial offer, that provides an opportunity to reshape and rescope the provision to better need to meet of the existing and future resident profile. Demand is stable, despite large fluxes in economic condition due to the Covid-19 Pandemic largely, with a high growth potential and opportunity to maximise on the enhanced public transport capacity.

Whilst there have been challenges in recent years regarding true disposable income with rises in cost of living, there are strong employment rates for Romford residents with a high proportion in higher paying employment positions. Proximity to London makes the area a consideration for commuters and first time buyers in particular. The introduction and running of the Elizabeth Line will have a huge impact over time, likely driving further professionals, city commuters and more affluence to the area. There is a good mix of retail and leisure within the town for young children and families with some provision for young professionals and elderly residents – although this could be greatly improved. The catchment area includes a mix of older and younger groups of mid to lower affluence, and despite lower socio economic levels people in Romford are spending.

The total annual spend figure for Romford residents is £5,600 per person, slightly below the borough wide level (£5,696 per person), but slightly above the Outer London level (£5,595 per person). However, there is little difference in terms of the percentage split between comparison and convenience spend for Romford and its wider comparators. The spend proportion is skewed towards comparison spend (59%) rather than convenience spend (41%)[1] .

4.1.2 Economic Forecast

Between 2013 and 2023, the total number of enterprises in Havering has grown sharply to 10,350 businesses, showing growth of c.47%. This shows the strengthening of local economic activity within the Borough, but doesn't identify which parts of the borough are experiencing the greatest levels of growth.

In terms of business births, there is also a positive story in Havering. From 2017-2022, the percentage of births on average has increased year on year, despite a -10% drop in 2021 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. However, in 2022, 1,680 business births were recorded, a +12% growth since 2021.

When comparing business births to deaths, overall the pattern of growth and survival is similar to London. In 2022, the business birth rate for Havering was 1.3% higher than London. Looking at the five-year trend, the survival rate for businesses "born" in 2017 was 39.1% in Havering compared to 39.2% in London. This demonstrates a strong entrepreneurial spirit within Havering. It is therefore critical that employment floorspace is provided for to support start-ups and small businesses growth within the town centre. The ability of the existing office stock within the town centre should be assessed to determine its suitability to meet these needs, and the requirement to supplement or re-provide new supply to better meet flexible floorspace suitable for small businesses.

1 Avison Young updated baseline 2024

4.1.2.1 Sectoral split

In terms of sectoral distribution of enterprises in Havering, in 2023, it is evident that the dominant sector was Construction. This accounted for 2,785 enterprises. The next largest sectors are the Professional, scientific and technical (1,170 enterprises), Business administration and support (950 enterprises) and Retail (785 enterprises). Yet looking at the sectoral distribution trend for Havering between 2018 and 2023, it is evident that the sectoral trend is changing. The key growth sectors include Health, Business administration and support services, Professional, scientific and technical, and Construction.

4.1.2.2 Economic Growth

Havering Local Plan promotes the regeneration of Havering's Economy through the following methods:

- Regeneration of Romford Town Centre
- Protection of the borough's Strategic Industrial Locations (SIL) (Rainham Employment Area, Harold Hill Industrial Area, King George Close Estate and Freightmaster Estate) for continued industrial use;
- Protection of the borough's Locally Significant Industrial Sites (LSIS) (Harold Wood, Hillman Close, the Seedbed Centre, Lyon Road and Crow Lane) for continued industrial and employment use;
- Intensification of the borough's designated industrial areas to optimise the use of the land and support transformational new developments which will maximise the economic benefits for the borough

Table 3 - Floorspace growth requirement [2]

Type	Quantum
Comparison goods	Base year 2023, forecast to 2038: 2,323m² net Havering/762m² net (Romford)
Convenience goods	Base year 2023, forecast to 2038: 580m² net (Havering)/-17m² net (Romford)
Commercial leisure	Not reported by the updated study – but acknowledges that new, diversified uses including F&B will be required
Office space	Estimated additional net demand of approximately 33,250m² office floor-space in the planning period to 2041 for Havering as a whole. Space should be orientated to support local businesses, and delivery of smaller spaces (500m²). Applicable to consider for Romford

2 Havering Retail & Leisure Study 2024

4.1.2.3 Key Employment Locations

The office market in Havering currently comprised 189 properties, with approximately 146,000 sqm net internal area (NIA) floorspace. The majority of this floorspace is located in Romford, principally in the former Office Quarter and elsewhere in the town centre with a further limited presence in Rainham, Hornchurch and Harold Hill. The projected growth in office floorspace is mainly attributed to ongoing demand for space within Romford Town Centre. Forecasting exercise estimates that there is additional net demand of approximately 33,250 sqm office floorspace in the planning period to 2041[3].

The most suitable location in the borough to accommodate this forecast demand is Romford Town Centre. This includes space both within and outside of the Romford Office Quarter and close to the Station. Other complementary town centre uses could be introduced on underutilised sites within Romford Town Centre to help create a more vibrant mixed-use employment area, as long as there is consideration of delivering renewed, fit-for-purpose office stock alongside this.

Largely the opportunity lies in delivering flexible and smaller size office workspace units which should be promoted within Romford Office Quarter where there is capacity, as well as elsewhere in Romford Town Centre, including above shops and as part of mixed use regeneration schemes. This could include coworking spaces for residents or local businesses.

4.1.2.4 Permitted Development Rights

There have been a high number of permitted developments which has depleted the current stock. However, Romford does have affordable rents in comparison to its competitors. With its excellent connections to central London it could have a small role in being a more affordable, secondary office market to Stratford or Canary Wharf.

Table 4 - Havering Planning Pipeline[4]

Use Class	GIA (gained m²)	GIA (lost m²)	Net gain
E(g)(i)	34,081	106,384	-72,303
E(g)(ii)	0	291	-291
E(g)(iii)	17,391	15,751	1,640

3 Havering's Employment Land Review 2024
4 Planning London Datahub, 2023

4.2 ROMFORD SECTOR DYNAMICS

4.1.3 Romford Market Context

This section explores the current market dynamics for Romford town centre for retail/leisure office, workspace, and residential. This shows how well these sectors currently perform in Romford which helps to determine the growth opportunities and the expected nature of demand going forward.

Romford is situated close to a number of town centres and established retail centres including large, renowned shopping centres such as Lakeside, Bluewater and Westfield Stratford City. To broaden the understanding of Romford town centre's commercial offer and its commercial role in the wider borough and market areas, a comparator analysis, opposite, has been undertaken for office and retail / leisure uses. This comparator analysis enables the determination of potential gaps and/or areas that could be strengthened in commercial provision within the wider area which Romford could seek to incorporate as part of its future town centre offer.

4.1.3.1 Retail and Leisure Sector Dynamics

The retail and leisure sector is currently weathering challenging market conditions which are fundamentally changing town centres, shifting away from the traditional activities that have until this point anchored their offer.

These challenges have been brought about a complex web of influencing factors including changing consumer habits, technological innovations and digital disruption, alongside unprecedented economic factors (such as the Global Pandemic) and increasing pressure on town centre property assets. The rise of internet retailing and 'click and collect', as well as the change in behaviour towards 'top up shopping' for groceries rather than a weekly shop is having significant implications for space requirements and retail formats in town centres, with knock-on impacts for occupiers. The requirement for small shop footprints with more focused and nimble stock is emerging as a result of the full integration of online and physical stores, and there is also much greater importance being place on the retail 'experience'.

This sets a challenging context for the Masterplan, which requires a flexible and innovative approach towards the mix of uses that will anchor activity and attract residents, workers and visitors to use the town centre throughout the day and evening, responding to the existing strengths of the town centre, as well as the nature of town centres in the wider area.

Romford Retail Provision

Romford town centre has an extensive retail and leisure provision clustered around major streets and thoroughfares and includes retail units, shopping centres, cafes and bars, and local community uses. A unique characteristics of Romford town centre is the location of a successful retail park within the south west quadrant of the town centre boundary; The Brewery Shopping Park. This offers large floorplate retail units, and strengthens the retail offer in Romford.

The Market is also a unique selling point for Romford. Despite its history and longevity, we have been informed that in recent years the market has been in decline, demonstrating the increasing pressure facing traders from discount retailers, and in the increasingly challenging trading conditions for the retail sector which is impacting of the health of town streets and high streets across the country. There is a clear opportunity to revitalise the Market to make it a key part of the character and offer of the town centre.

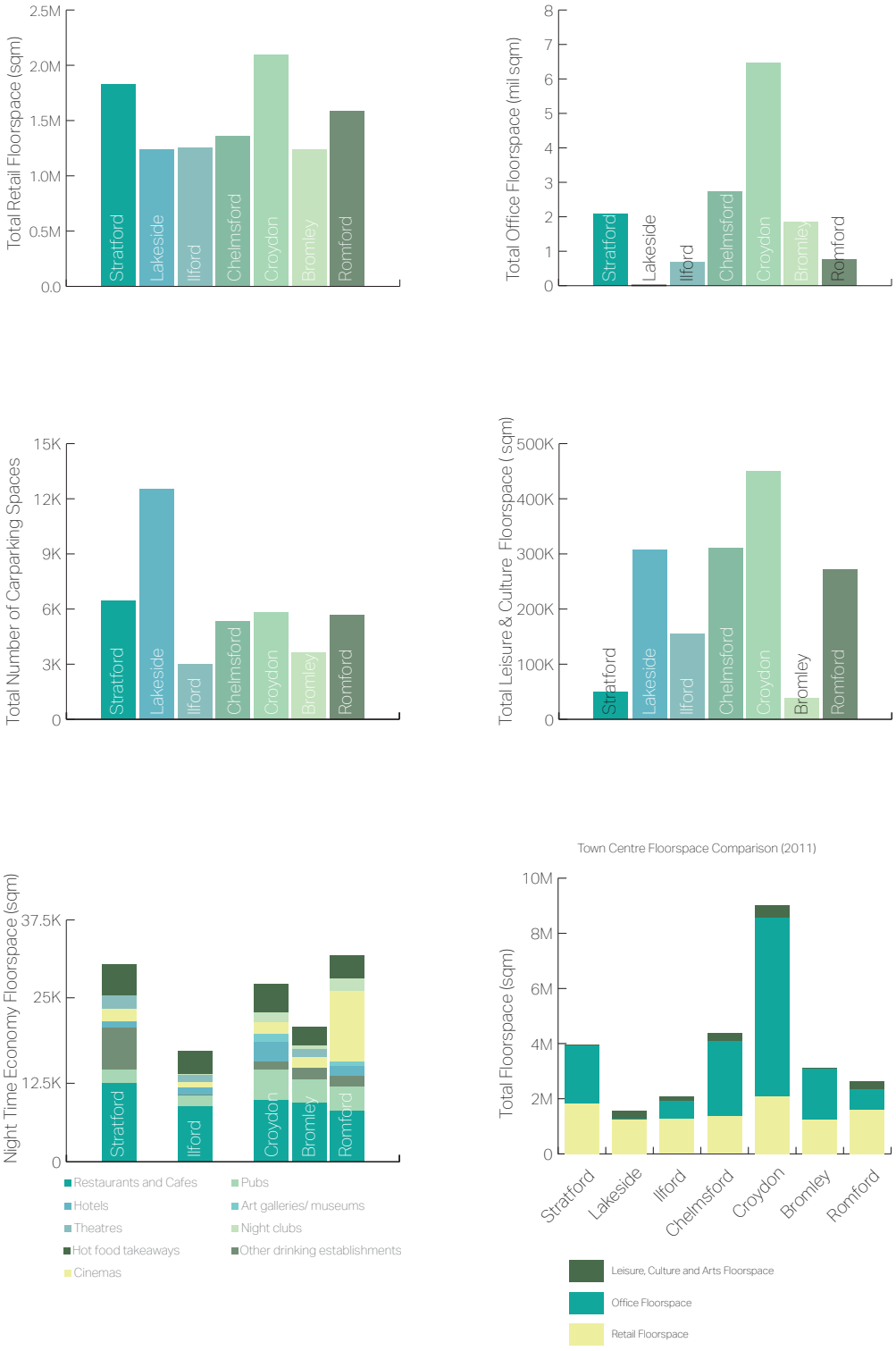


Fig. 25. Romford comparator analysis

Romford Leisure Provision

Romford's leisure provision is fairly locally-orientated, and relatively average in comparison to competing areas such as Stratford and Chelmsford. Much of the leisure provision in the town centre is family focused, and limited to the daytime/ early evening. However, it is evident that Romford has a thriving night time economy as there are a number of clubs, pubs and bars which PMA report has grown significantly since 2023.

Leisure uses should form a key part of Romford town centre's vision, however the breadth of the offer should be expanded to ensure diversity and inclusivity. The vision should promote the full range of daytime and night time activities to encourage use of the town centre throughout the day, evening and night, and by the broadest range of visitors possible. Therefore part of the vision should be to support the existing provision of bars and clubs in Romford, but more importantly consider opportunities to diversify the night time offer to be more inclusive for other age brackets.

The leisure offer should also seek to respond specifically to the demographic and socio-economic trends in Romford and the nature of the offer in the wider area. This suggests leisure uses catering for families and young people are likely to be in particular demand, and could therefore form an important part of the town centre leisure mix.

Romford's retail and leisure offer does face substantial competition from the larger established shopping centres which offer more than just shopping with a greater array of food and beverage choices, and leisure options. The same is true for neighbouring town centres, ie Chelmsford, which has had significant investment and extensions to its retail provision, including its restaurant quarter. The diversity of the wider retail and leisure offer is there are where Romford town centre could improve its offer to improve the vibrancy.

Fig. 26. Brewery Shopping Centre Romford

Fig. 27. Liberty & Mercury Shopping Centres Romford

4.1.3.2 Office and Workspace Sector Dynamics

Post Covid-19 Pandemic, the office sector continues to experience a dynamic shift in the demand for traditional office space. Much like the retail sector, the office sector has had to adapt to the disruption caused by technology.

There is a growing requirement for a more flexible approach to providing office space as technological advances drive rapid change in the way individuals work and the ways in which businesses are organised. Therefore, there has been a decline in the demand for traditional, large floorplate offices, and a rise in the demand for workspace. Growth in London co-working spaces have increased tenfold in recent years, with these spaces emerging as a significant component of the office market in response to global and London-specific trends. The Pandemic created a 'test-bed' for several sectors to explore the use of hybrid-working or remote working – further reducing the demand for traditional office floorspace in favour of more flexible working arrangements, and inevitably workspace.

Creative industries, and in particular the digital technology sector, have grown in the capital, creating new clusters of activity that requires flexible space. However, the rise in demand has created a surge in workspace prices worsened by the recent policy changes (permitted development rights), negativelyimpacting on the potential future supply of viable workspace opportunities. These changes could have serious implications for small businesses, artist and charities that use open workspaces. Whilst individual Councils and charities have both separately and come together to help battle this issue, it remains a key characteristic

and challenge within the inner, and now outer London areas. For years, there has been a continuous 'push' outwards to the east, as businesses have been forced to consider periphery and fringe locations due a shortage of supply of affordable commercial space. Owing to the now up-and-running Elizabeth Line, many of the periphery locations are becoming more accessible and attractive with businesses willing and able to consider move further out.

Romford Office and Workspace Provision

Whilst Romford was once considered to be an office location in its own right, the reality is that the demand for office space outside of larger, more established office locations in central London (i.e. Stratford) is dwindling – particular as there are very few, large employment anchors present in Romford remaining.

Despite these changes, Romford provides an attractive offer for businesses and their staff with good amenities, a diverse retail offer, and is extremely well connected. As a result of the wider trends in the commercial market this creates an opportunity for Romford to become a more attractive proposition for businesses. Due to the Elizabeth Line, Romford now has fast connections to key office clusters such as Stratford and Canary Wharf and with the continuous rise in rents in these clusters and the periphery/fringe locations, Romford could be considered an affordable option for businesses; especially those in the supply chain who do not need to be in the central London hotspots.

There remains a key opportunity to support greater workspace provision within the town centre to cater for SMEs, and the new businesses within the growing creative sector. With the current contraction of commercial floorspace in the town centre due to the implementation of permitted development rights (office to residential conversions), this could provide a positive solution to ensure that new commercial floorspace is delivered to support existing and new businesses. Moreover, this opportunity would be supported by the hybrid working and working near home trend, expedited by the Pandemic.

Despite the Pandemic dampening the demand for traditional office space, Romford's geographical positioning and excellent connectivity (due to the Elizabeth Line) does continue to ensure that it can be a strong contender to provide more 'affordable' office / workspace for businesses being 'pushed' out east from Central London. There continues to be a strong consideration that Romford could still be a good location to capture and support businesses shifting eastward due to affordability reasons.

Parallel to this, it is still expected that Romford town centre could additionally support South Essex businesses who wish to be closer to central London, without relocating there. Romford could distinguish itself and be an attractive location for the supply chain businesses linked to the established clusters, offering good transport connectivity, competitive and affordable rents, as well as more varied and flexible space that would be otherwise be unobtainable in central London.

4.1.3.3 Residential Sector Dynamics

Within the town centre, there are a number of flatted schemes that have recently been built or are under construction. Many of which form part of mixed-use regeneration schemes, private developments, or are Built to Rent.

Looking at new build developments coming forward in Romford town centre and its immediate periphery, provides an understanding of how the audience dynamics in the town centre may evolve. The majority of new build development is flatted or for private sale. It is likely this will cater to a certain demographic; young professionals and families who are priced out of more central locations within London. At this point in time, it is clear there could be an opportunity to consider accommodation for the growing 65+ age group and for families who are currently not provided for in the town centre. By encouraging a more balanced residential mix, this could help to support town centre activity throughout the day and evening.

In the context of increasing affordability pressures in London which is resulting in an eastward population squeeze along the Thames Gateway corridor, combined with the opening of the Elizabeth Line services through Romford which has changed the perception of Romford as an outer London borough to investors, developers and occupiers, residential development should form a key part of the future town centre development mix.

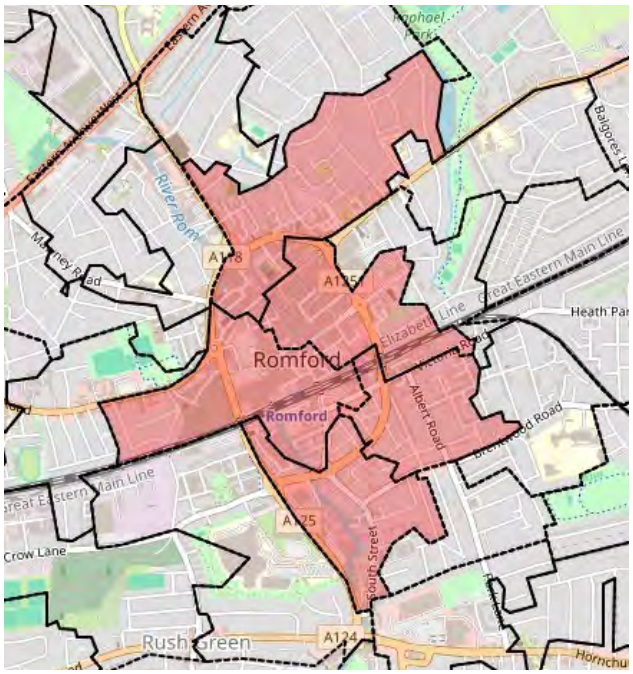
5 PEOPLE

5.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

5.1.1 Introduction

By understanding the nature of the local population profile and a range of relevant socio-economic indicators we can establish who is currently living and working in Romford, and consider how they might be using the town centre. Investigating the current population alongside key population trends and other strategic drivers is key to understanding how the catchment is likely to change and how this may impact the town centre and its future offer.

This section looks at the and compares demographics within wider Havering Borough, Romford Town Centre, London and England. For the purposes of this section, these boundaries have been linked to ONS Output Areas with the geographical definition of Romford Town Centre covering the area shaded in red below.



5.1.2 Population & gender

The estimated population of Havering is 262,703 1 (48% Male and 52% Female)[2] and ONS population forecasts indicate that this could grow by 18,697 to 283,400 people by 2034. The general split of the population within Romford Town Centre is set out below:

Table 5 - Age Profile 2021[3]

	0-15	16-24	25-49	50-64	65+
Romford Town Centre	20%	10%	44%	15%	11%
Havering	20%	10%	34%	19%	18%
London	19%	11%	41%	17%	12%

The population of Romford is slightly younger than Havering as a whole, with more children and working-aged people and fewer pensioners; a split more similar to London. This likely reflects the Town Centre's role as Havering's primary office location and the importance of catering for a young audience for the town centre in particular, as well as the older population.

Table 6 - Change 2011-2021[3]

	0-15	16-24	25-49	50-64	65+
Romford Town Centre	+24%	-12%	+12%	+18%	+1%
Havering	+18%	-6%	+13%	+10%	+9%
London	+2%	-3%	+4%	+27%	+15%

The borough has an ageing population with the greatest level of change in the 50-64 age category over the past 15 years, in line with London and national trends. However, the growth in the 0-15 age group has been particularly significant in the past c.5 years.

1 Census Data 2021
2 https://www.haveringdata.net/population-demographics (accessed July 2024)
3 ONS, Census 2021

5.1.3 Ethnicity and origin

Table 7 - Ethnic make-up (2021)[4]

	Romford town centre	Havering (%)	London (%)
White - British	46.8%	66.5%	36.8%
White - Irish	1.2%	1.1%	1.8%
Gypsy	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
Other White	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%
Overall white	17.0%	7.4%	14.7%
White & Black Caribbean	2.5%	1.8%	3.7%
White & Black African	1.5%	0.8%	1.7%
White & Asian	4.5%	4.3%	7.5%
Other Mixed	3.1%	2.2%	3.3%
Indian	3.2%	1.7%	4.6%
Pakistani	7.0%	5.4%	7.9%
Bangladeshi	2.4%	1.8%	3.9%
Chinese	1.2%	1.0%	1.7%
Other Asian	1.1%	0.9%	1.4%
Black African	0.9%	0.6%	0.9%
Black Caribbean	1.6%	1.2%	1.5%
Other Black	1.4%	1.0%	1.9%
Arab	1.0%	0.3%	1.6%
Any other ethnic group	2.9%	1.7%	4.7%

The table above sets out the ethnic make-up of Romford SDA. This demonstrate that Romford is less white and ethnically more diverse than Havering as a whole and England, but significantly more white and less diverse than London as a whole.

Table 8 - Country of birth (2021)[5]

	Romford SDA (%)	Havering (%)
United Kingdom	63.5%	80.6%
Ireland	0.9%	0.8%
Europe - Other	18.4%	8.0%
Africa	5.5%	4.0%
Middle East and Asia	9.1%	5.4%
The Americas and the Caribbean	2.4%	1.1%
Antarctica and Oceania (including Australasia) and Other	0.2%	0.1%

The above table shows that in 2021, 63.5% of residents of Romford town centre were born in the UK (as opposed to 80.6% in Havering as a whole).

5.1.4 Households

Table 9 - Household makeup (2021)[6]

	Romford TC	Havering	London	England
One-person household - 65 and over	12.5%	12.7%	9.1%	12.8%
One-person household - Other	13.6%	13.1%	20.1%	17.3%
Overall	26.1%	25.8%	29.3%	30.1%

The above shows that the town centre area has a one-person household profile that is similar to London as a whole. However, a number of the LSOAs in the town centre area have a particularly high proportion of working-age one-person households.

4 ONS Census Data 2021
5 ONS Census Data 2021
6 ONS Census Data 2021

5.1.5 Summary

Havering has the oldest population in London, with a median age of approximately 40 years old (fig. 1). Havering has experienced the largest net inflow of children (0-15 years) across all London boroughs in recent years. From 2011 to 2016, 4,580 children have settled in the borough, and the biggest inflows of children into Havering in 2016 have come from neighbouring Outer London Boroughs, Barking & Dagenham (342 children) and Redbridge (407 children)[1].

Considering the demographic profile, Havering's population has grown steadily since 2002, with a 13.7% increase from 2002 to 2017[1]. The main demographics of Romford's metropolitan town centre originate from working class labourers who came to work at the brewery and surrounding factories which sprang up in the 19th century. Looking at Romford the age profile differs slightly from the wider borough population demographics. Between 2001 and 2021, Romford saw an increase in young adults aged 15-24 and a decrease in the retired aged 65 and over[2].

Some of the increase in young adults could be attributed to the Havering Campus of the London South Bank University in Harold Wood, which offers courses in adult nursing to 700 students. In addition there are three colleges which offer higher education; Havering Sixth Form College, Havering College of Further & Higher Education, and Havering Adult College Despite this, Educational Attainment though comparable to neighbouring boroughs (fig 3) is still lower than the London average.

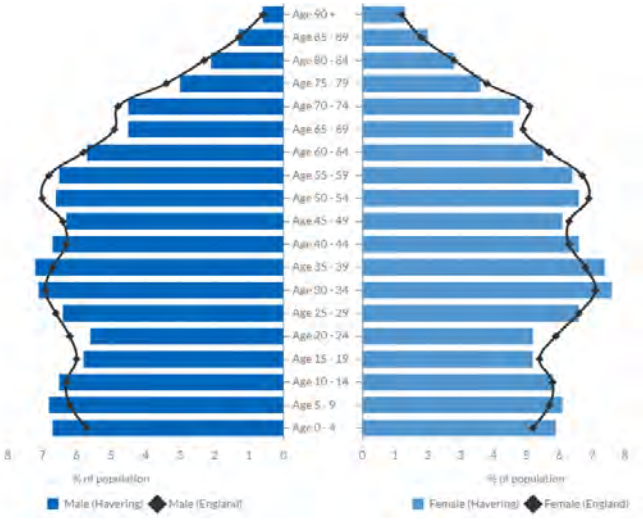


Fig. 28. Age Profile 2021 (source ONS)

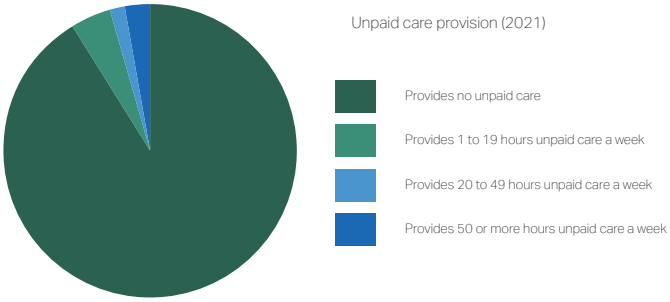


Fig. 29. Care Provision (source ONS)

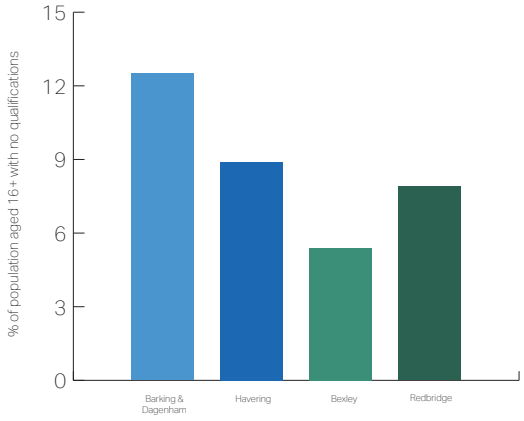


Fig. 30. Education Attainment (source London Data-Store)

1 This is Havering: A demographic & socio-economic profile, (2019)
2 PMA / POMIS (source)

5.2 DEPRIVATION

5.1.6 Indices of Multiple Deprivation

In terms of deprivation, Havering is mid-ranking within the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation. Measured by the 'rank of average rank', in 2019. Havering was the 187th most deprived borough out of all 317 local authorities in England.[1] It is the 10th least deprived borough in London (with Richmond upon Thames being the least deprived and Barking and Dagenham being the most deprived).

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) ranks every small area (LSOA) in England from 1 (most deprived) to 32,844 (least deprived), based on measures of different types or dimensions of deprivation. Havering has 1 LSOA which is in the 10% most deprived neighbourhood in England and 9 LSOAs that are in the most 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England.

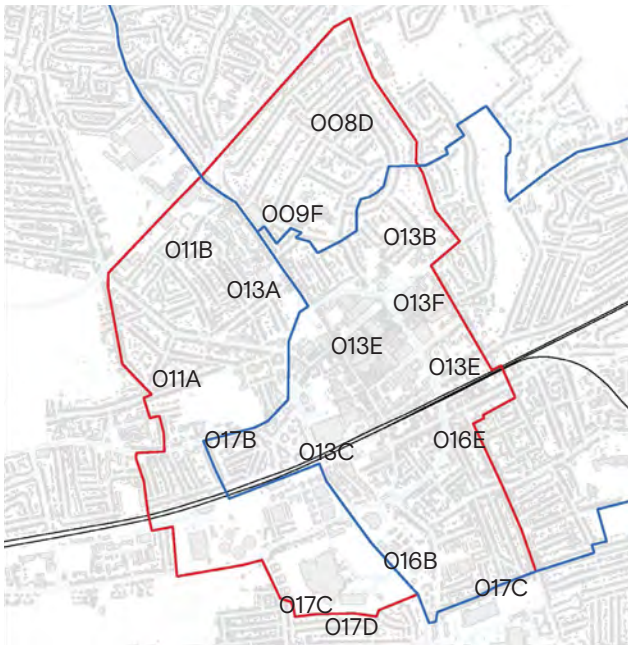


Fig. 31. LSOAs within the Romford SDA area

IMD statistics are a measure of relative deprivation, not affluence. However, on average people living in deprived areas, lower socio-economic groups and marginalised groups have poorer health and poorer access to health care than people resident in affluent areas and people from higher socio-economic groups.[2]

Table 10 - Deprivation

LSOA in Romford SDA	Rank out of 32,844	Decile
O08D	29.691	10
O09F	26.207	8
O11A	15,215	5
O11B	16.221	5
O13A	7,880	3
O13B	18.644	6
O13C	6.369	2
O13E	15.465	5
O13F	15,714	5
O16B	9.974	4
O16C	22.391	7
O16E	17,520	6
O17B	14,389	5
O17C	13,331	5
O17D	13,869	5

Source: English indices of deprivation 2019 (accessed July 2024)

At a sub-borough level, levels of deprivation are lowest in the central and eastern areas. In line with this, within Romford SDA, there are pockets of deprivation, with more affluent households situated within neighbouring areas to the east as shown on the facing page (where yellow shows the areas where there is the greatest proportion of households which do not experience any measure of deprivation and red shows those area with the least).

Despite the low deprivation ranking and high employment rates, the average gross household income in Havering is £40,374 as measured in 2023. This is less than the Outer London average of £43,761, and significantly lower than the London average of £47,301. However, it is higher than the England average of £35,955. It is in the lowest third of all London boroughs. This suggests the need for providing an affordable town centre offer for local residents, as well catering for higher levels of spend from those with greater disposable incomes.

1 English indices of deprivation, 2019. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019-mapping-resources (accessed July 2024)
2 This is Havering: Demographic Profile (2017)

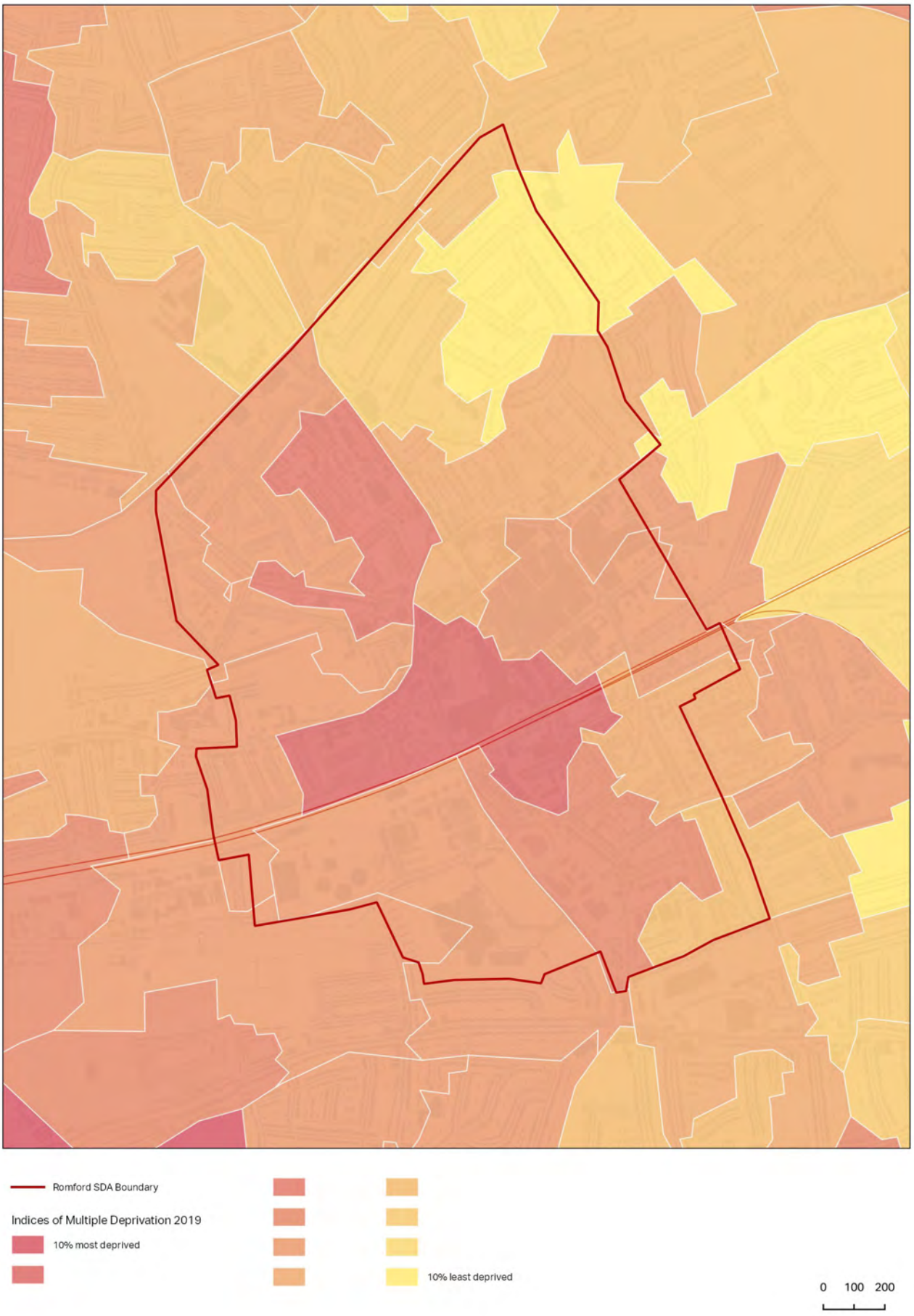


Fig. 32. Romford Indices of Multiple Deprivation

5.3 HEALTH & WELLBEING

5.3.1 Health & Wellbeing

Under the Health and Social Care Act (2012) it is Havering's duty to improve and protect, using all means, the health and wellbeing of the population. Already much good work has been done to prioritise healthy lifestyles within Havering. Havering's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2023-2024 Demographic Profile sets out the overarching health outcomes and challenges facing the borough. Havering's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy summarises the borough's top priorities and a comprehensive strategy for improving the health and wellbeing of all residents and Havering's Healthy Weight Strategy 2024-2029 provides a 'systems' approach to reducing overweight and obesity.

5.3.1.1 Health outcomes summary

A significant proportion of life expectancy in Havering (19% for men and 23% for women) is impaired by ill health and disability resulting in poor quality of life and significant need for health and social care services. Approximately 15.3% of people living in Havering have a disability or long-term illness. Of this, 6.6% reported that this limited their daily activities a lot and 8.7% reported that this impacted their daily activities a little[1]. These are lower than both the England and London averages.

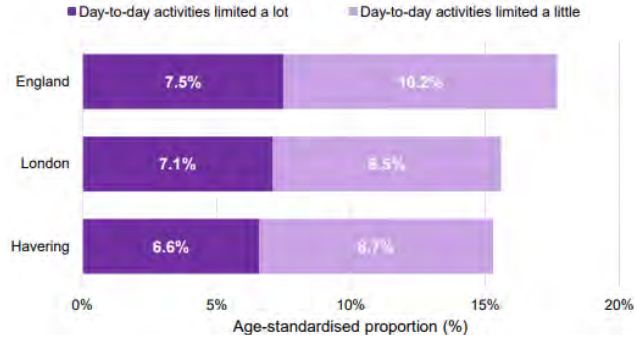


Fig. 33. ASP % of population with a disability[1]

In 2021, the estimated number of people in Havering aged 18-64 living with impaired mobility is 8,653, a rate of 5,463 per 100,000 population. This rate is significantly higher than the London average (4,945) but similar to England's (5,515). Havering Local Plan supports the provision of appropriate housing to meet the specialist needs of local people. The levels of accessibility in the public realm vary across the SDA, and the masterplan should support increased levels of accessibility throughout the town centre to make active travel choices available to everyone.

Almost half (48%) of all one-person households in Havering are occupied by persons aged 65 years and over, which is the highest proportion in London[2]. At the same time, older people are at increased risk of living with multiple long-term conditions that include dementia and experiencing falls. Isolation can become a real issue if older people feel that they cannot access shops and services, or simply connect with other people.

Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy in Havering for men and women are broadly aligned to national averages although slightly lower than London but higher than the England averages. . In line with national trends, life expectancy in Havering has increased over the past decade with the increases slowing, albeit increasing, since 2000 with a slight recent downturn that is most likely the result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 11 – Life expectancy[2]

Life expectancy	LBH	London	England
Life expectancy (F)	83.3	84.4	83.2
Life expectancy (M)	80.2	80.3	79.3
Healthy life expectancy (F)	63.8	65.0	63.9
Healthy life expectancy (M)	64.6	63.8	63.1

1 Havering Demographic Profile: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2023-2024

2 https://www.haveringdata.net/a-demographic-and-socio-economic-profile, accessed July 2024

The pandemic will likely also have further impacts, not all yet evident, on health and wellbeing and compounding lower life-expectancy rates impaired by ill health and disability. Residents living in the most disadvantaged decile were more likely to be negatively impacted by the pandemic and already have significantly lower life expectancies when compared to the rest of Havering.

Encouragingly, an estimated 219,777 (83%) residents reported either having 'good' or 'very good' health in 2021. This is higher than both London (81.9%) and England (81.7%).

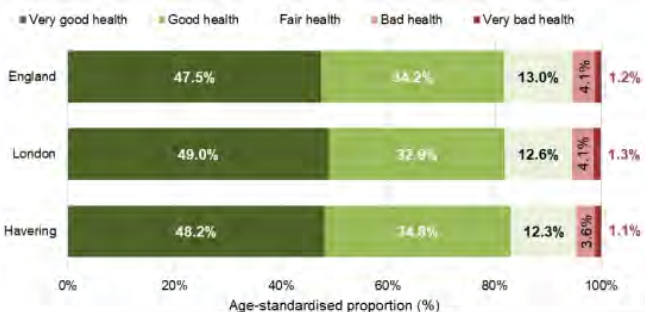


Fig. 34. Self Reported Health[1]

5.3.1.2 Supporting healthy lifestyles

Our environments and circumstances have a large impact on the daily choices we are able to make. Unfortunately, many modern-day environments make it harder for us to be physically active on a daily basis and make opting for unhealthy food choices easier[3].

The London Borough of Havering has set an ambitious target for 65% of residents to be walking, cycling and using public transport by 2041. The masterplan should contribute to meeting this goal by making active travel choices easier and more attractive options.

People are more likely to walk and cycle when routes are perceived as safe, well-lit and activated. This is particularly true for women, who are nearly twice as likely as men to list personal safety as a barrier to walking, cycling and taking public transport[4]. The masterplan should seek to improve on the experience of walking and cycling in the town centre by identifying key active travel routes and opportunities to improve upon them including increasing connectivity, design of cycle lanes, street greening and quality of the public realm design.

Furthermore, the masterplan should support Havering's health and well-being objectives by seeking to incorporate local food growing opportunities such as shared gardens or small allotments, distributing public spaces and amenities equitably within easy reach of people's homes and workplaces and by improving access to public transport where possible.

3 Havering Healthy Weight Strategy 2024-2029: Everybody's Business

4 LLDC handbook: Creating places that work for Women and Girls 2024

6 PLANNING & POLICY

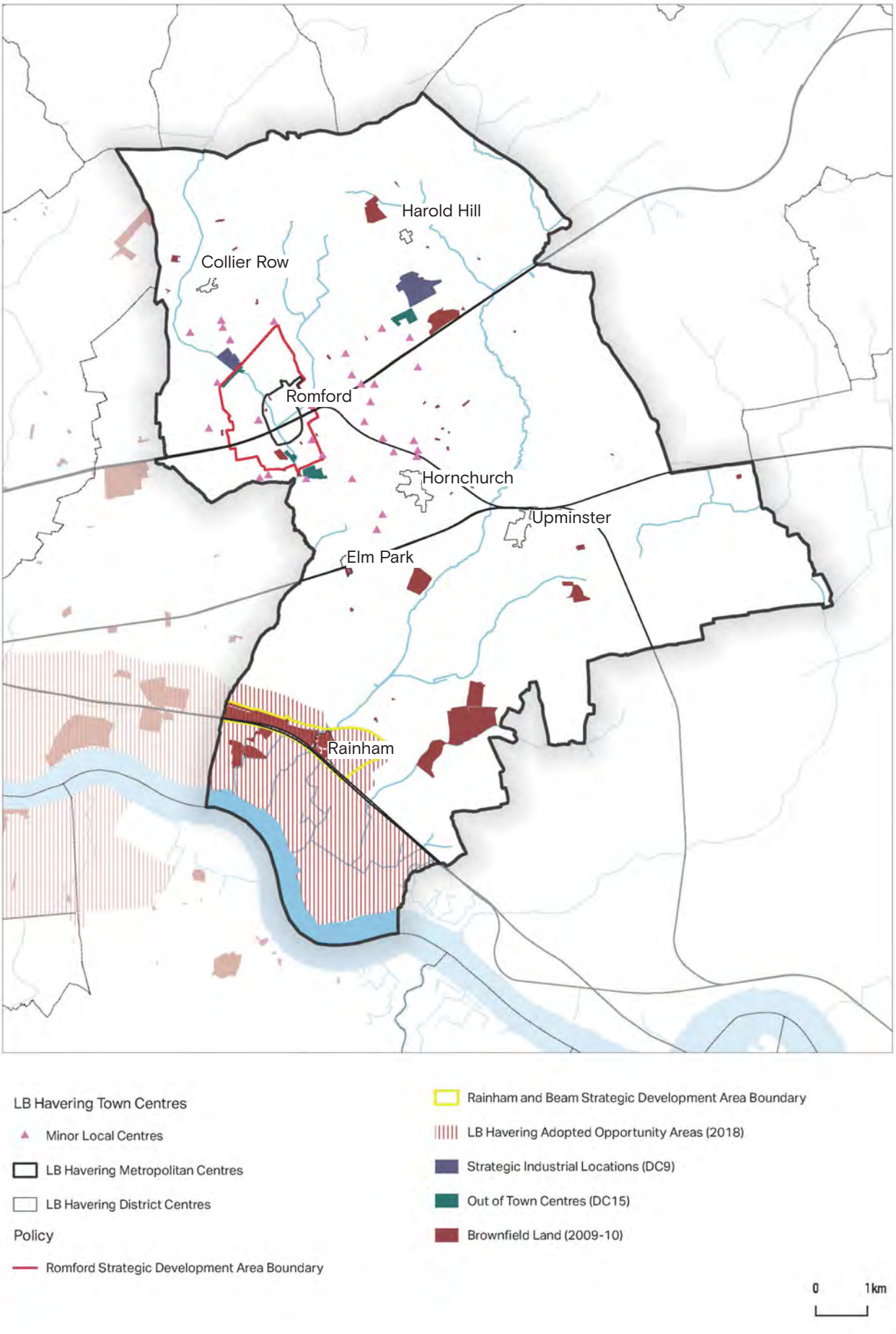


Fig. 35. Havering Planning Policy Map

6.1 PLANNING & REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

6.1.1 Policy Hierarchy

The current planning framework is set out in the diagram on the facing page. The planning framework is illustrated in the diagram opposite and outlined below:

- The London Plan 2021, published by the Mayor of London and adopted March 2021, is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. It establishes Mayor's vision for Good Growth, and sets out a framework for how London will develop over the next 20years. The Plan is part of the statutory development plan for London, meaning that the policies in the Plan should inform decisions on planning applications across the capital. Borough's Local Plans must be in 'general conformity' with the London Plan.
- The Mayor of London has produced a number of London Plan Guidance – including Characterisation and Growth Strategy; Optimising Site Capacity: A Design-led Approach; Small Site Design Codes; Housing Design Standards; Public London Charter; Urban greening factor; Be Seen energy monitoring; Circular economy statements – which provide further information about how the London Plan should be implemented.
- The Havering Local Plan 2016-2031, adopted in 2021. The Havering Local Plan sets out the Council's ambitious vision and strategy for future growth and sustainable development up to 2031. The Council has committed to an immediate update of the Local Plan in the context of the new London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 which have both been published since the Local Plan was submitted for Examination. The immediate update of the Local Plan will also take account of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 that came into force on 1 September 2020.
- Havering adopted a revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule in July 2019 and this became effective on 1 September 2019.

6.1.1.1 Major Policy Designations

The following key designations are summarised below.

- London Plan Opportunity Area (Romford)
- Metropolitan Town Centre
- Primary and Secondary frontages
- Strategic Regeneration Area
- Strategic Development Area
- Romford Conservation Area
- Romford Archaeology Priority Area
- Listed buildings
- Locally listed buildings:
- Open Spaces
- Site of Nature Conservation Interest (Borough Importance) (railway tracks to the west of Romford Station)
- Tree Preservation Orders

6.1.1.2 Other Areas of Note

- Romford Housing Zone
- Area immediately adjacent to River Rom and Black's Brook in Flood Zone 2, with small areas in Flood Zone 3b
- North west part of the Romford SDA is a Critical Drainage Area.
- London Borough of Havering is an Air Quality Management Area (Nitrogen Dioxide)
- London Plan Air Quality Focus Area
- London Plan Heat Network Priority Area

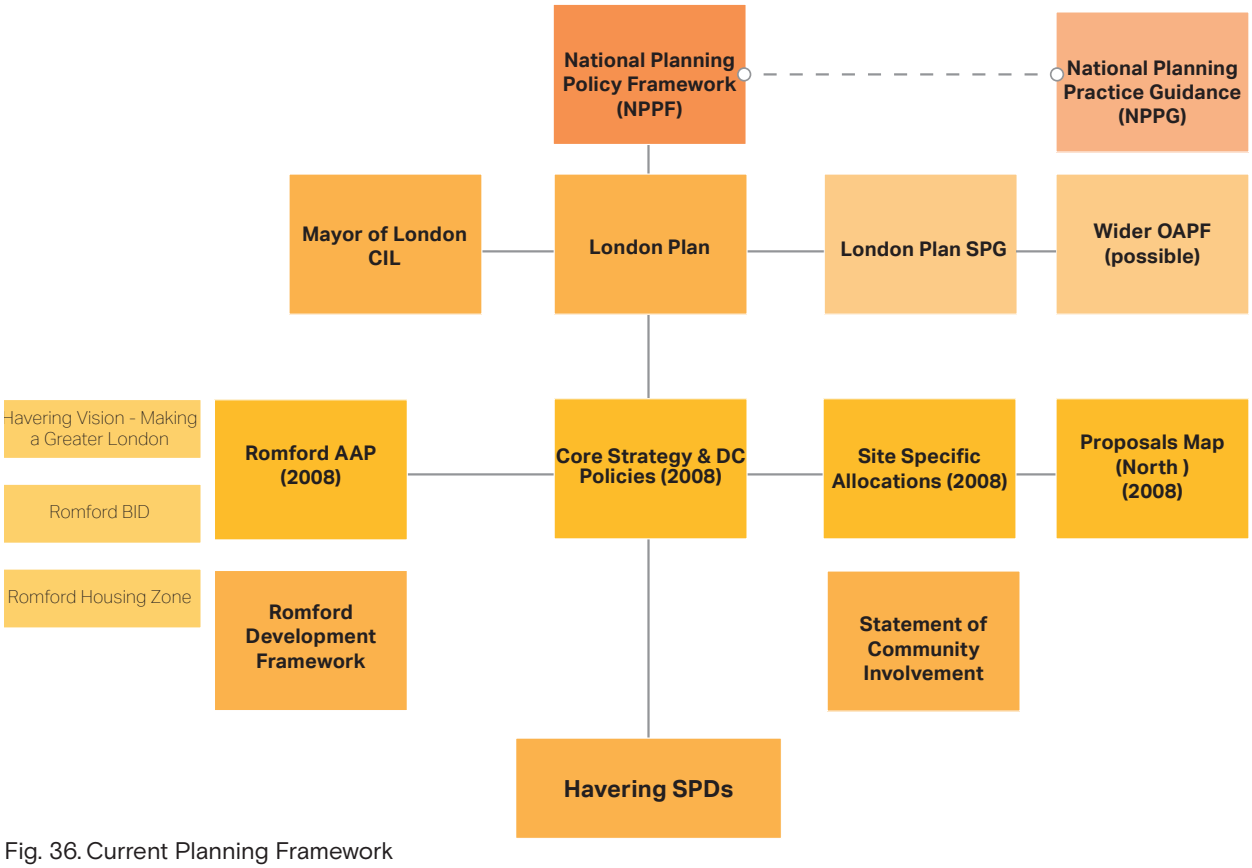


Fig. 36. Current Planning Framework

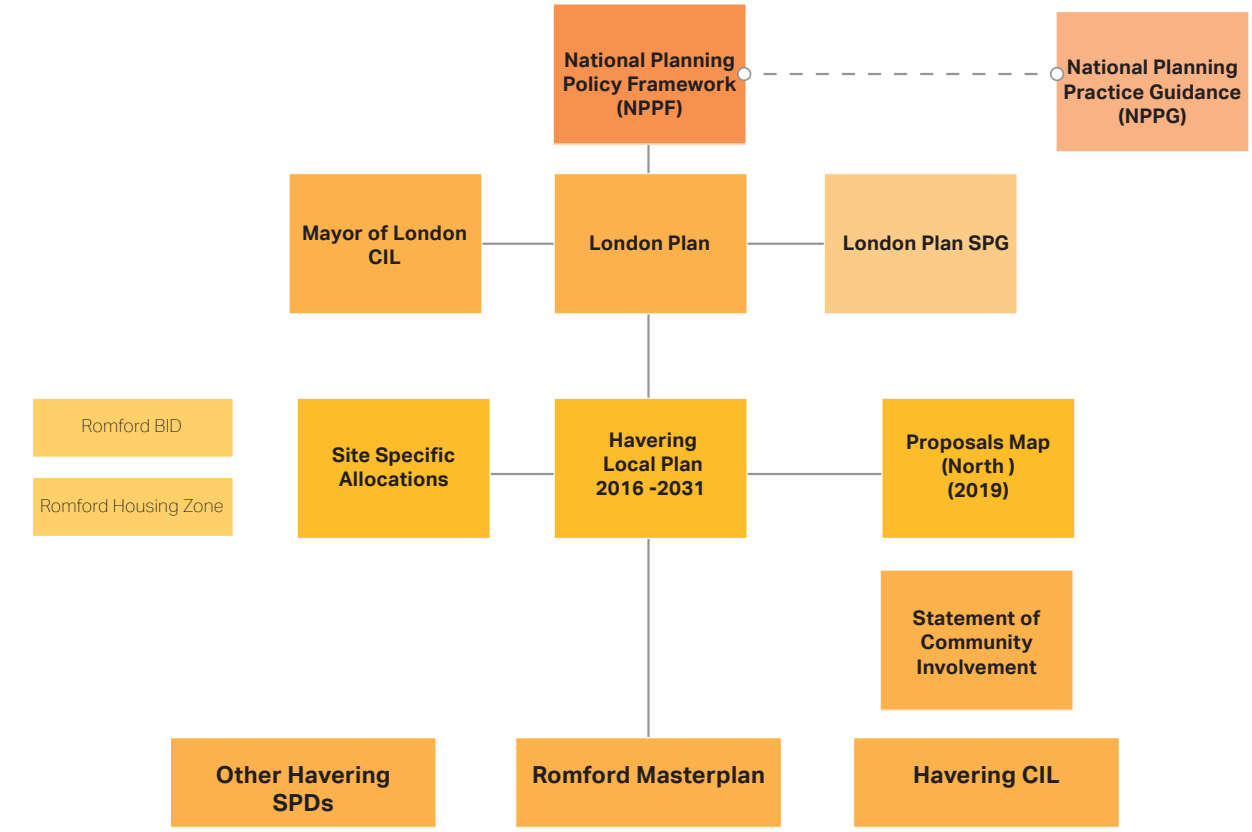


Fig. 37. Emerging Planning Framework

6.2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

6.1.2 London Plan

The London Plan Policy SD6 (Town Centres) provides strategic guidance in relation to town centres. The policy states that town centres' vitality and viability should be promoted and enhanced.

It is clear from the policy that new housing development should be the focus within town centres, including for smaller households. It is also clear that there is a need to carefully manage the loss of other uses, such as offices and affordable workspace, to bring this forward sustainably. Moreover, the policy identifies that town centres should be adaptive to change and reactive to the challenges and opportunities associated with multi-channel shopping and changes in technology and consumer behaviour.

The London Plan Policy SD7 identifies that the changing role of town centres should be proactively managed in relation to the town centre network as a whole. This process should support sustainable economic growth across the Greater London boundary to enhance the vitality and viability of London's centres and complement those in the Wider South East. Metropolitan town centres should be the focus for the majority of higher order comparison goods retailing, whilst securing opportunities for higher density employment, leisure and residential development in a high-quality environment.

Romford town centre has a NT2 night time economy classification which relates to an area of regional or sub-regional significance. The London Plan Policy HC6 outlines supporting the night time economy. The policy seeks to recognise, support and maintain the rich diversity of London's night-time economy. It encourages diversifying the night-time mix of uses, considering a 24-hour offer, championing inclusivity but ensuring that management strategies and mitigation measures are in place to prevent and balance negative impacts.

The London Plan Policy S13 of the London Plan outlines that boroughs and developers should establish the future energy requirements and infrastructure arising from large-scale development proposals such as Opportunity Areas, Town Centres, other growth areas or clusters of significant new development. Energy masterplans should be developed for large-scale development locations which establish the most effective energy supply options.

The London Plan Policy T3 includes transport capacity, connectivity and safeguarding, including the Elizabeth line.

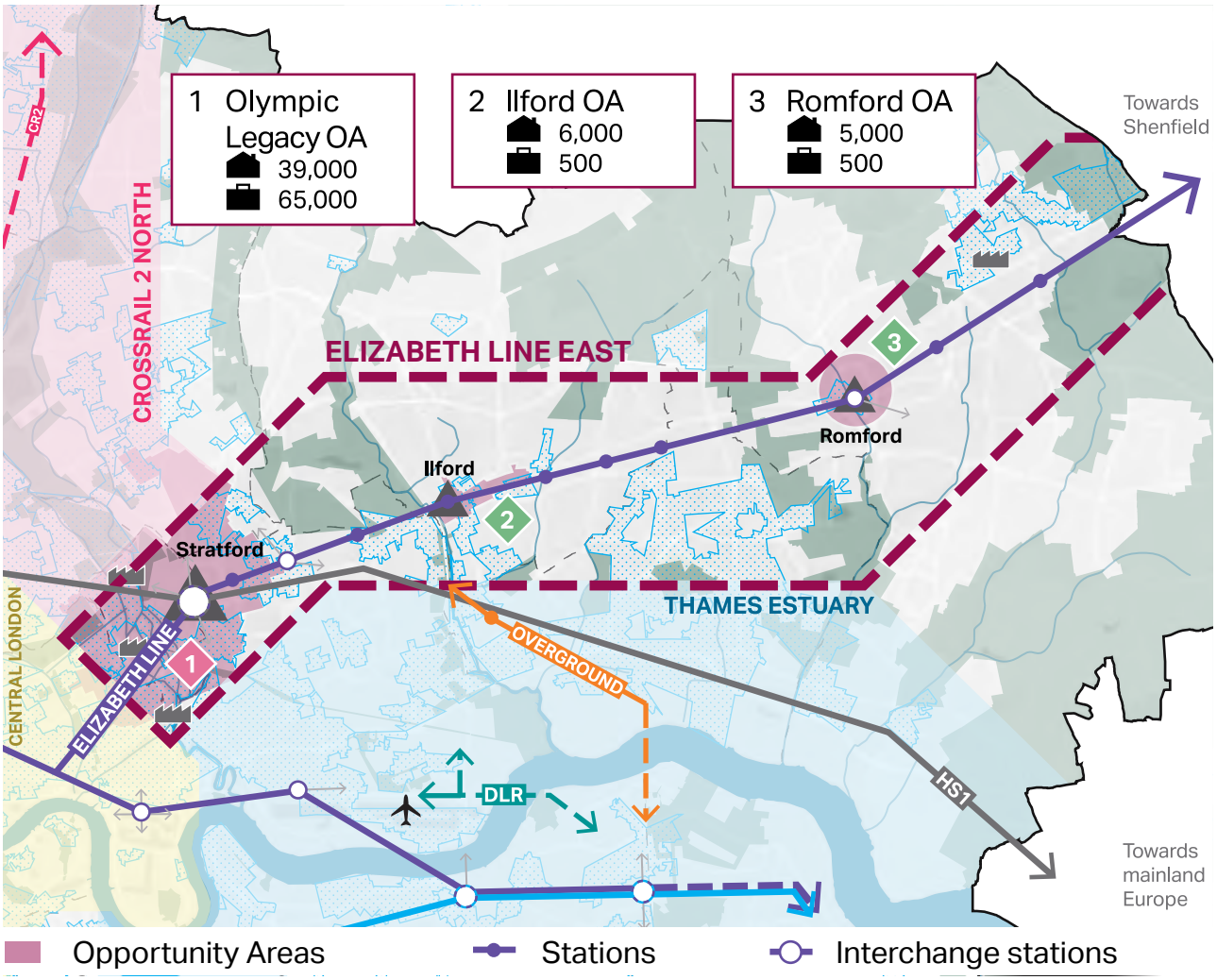


Fig. 38. London Plan, Elizabeth Line East Opportunity Area Map

6.3 PLANNING DESIGNATIONS

6.1.3 Local Policy Objectives

The Havering Local Plan identifies Romford town centre as part of the Romford Strategic Development Area (SDA) (Policy 1).

Havering Local Plan Policy 1 sets out detailed policy requirements for the Romford SDA The following key requirements are highlighted:

- The delivery of at least 6,000 high-quality new homes up to 2031, with 5,000 in the first 10 years.
- New retail development that enhances the existing offer and/or provides new modern units
- Provides new fit-for-purpose office development / affordable office accommodation
- Transforms the Market Place into a high-quality civic space, accommodating a reconfigured market, new public space and enhanced retail and restaurant offer1

Consistently through the Havering Local Plan policy, there is significant emphasis on delivering more mixed-use development within the town centre. Specifically, the Havering Local Plan states that there is a need to provide new housing above commercial space provided at ground floor level where this does not prejudice the operation of the ground floor for retail and town centre activity.

The Havering Local Plan outlines the vision and strategy for the council over the next 15 years up to 2031, providing the policy directives for new infrastructure, homes and jobs.

It should be noted that the Havering Local Plan has a 10-year housing supply target (2016- 2026) of 11,701 – which is in line with the London Plan 10-year housing supply target (2015- 2025) of 11,701 (1,170 per year). However, the London Plan includes a larger 10-year supply target (2019/20 – 2028/29) for Havering of 12,850 plus a small sites/housing developments 10-year target of 3,140. To address this, The London Borough of Havering has said that it would undertake an early review of housing numbers of the adopted Havering Local Plan.

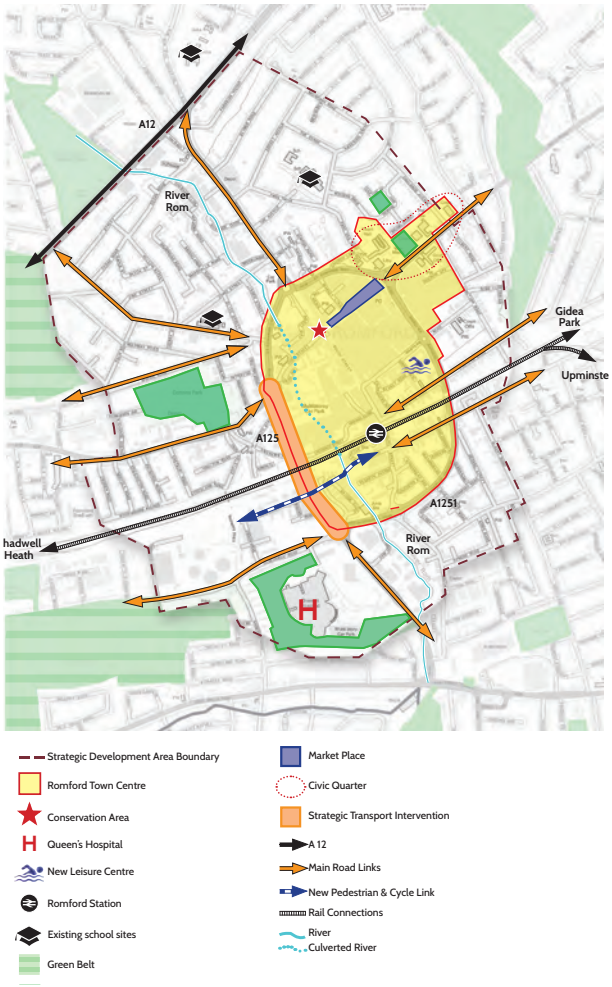


Fig. 39. Havering Local Plan Development Strategy Map

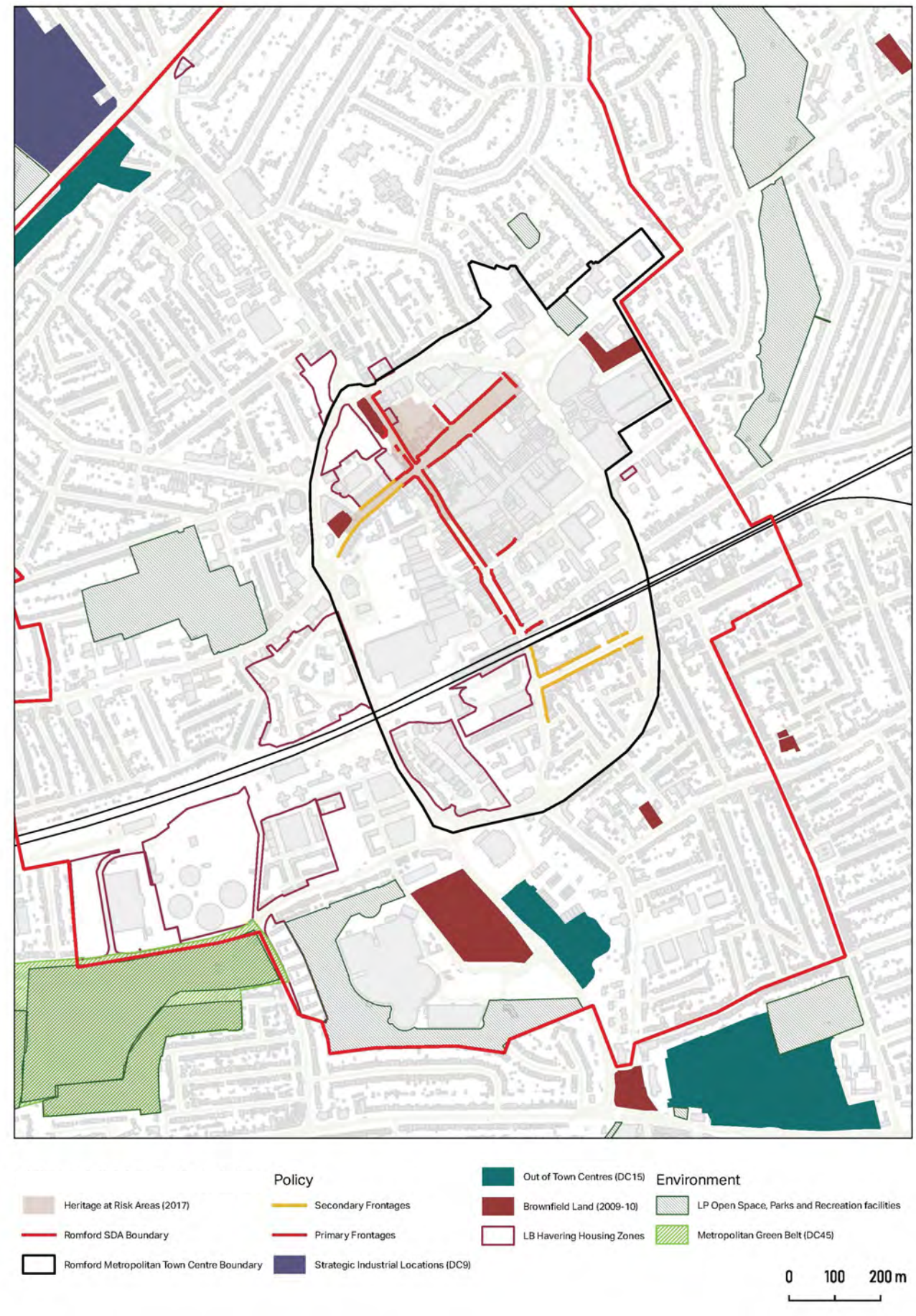


Fig. 40. Romford Policy Map

6.4 IDENTIFIED AREAS

6.1.4 Business Improvement District

Following a successful ballot in June 2018, a Romford Business Improvement District (BID) was launched in Autumn 2018 – lasting five years to 2023. The BID area is smaller than the proposed town centre boundary.

Fig. 41. Business Improvement District

6.1.5 Housing Zone

The Romford town centre was designated a Housing Zone in September 2016 and funding of £34.9 million was indicatively allocated to the zone to unlock housing and to regenerate the area.

The London Borough of Havering Housing Zone Submission document identifies the following sites:

Table 12 - Housing Zone Sites

Core Housing Zone Sites (GLA Funded Direct)	Number of units with HZ
Bridge Close	840
Old Church Hospital	64
Waterloo Road Estate	220
Como Street	160
Angel Way/High Street	300
TOTAL	1,584
Adjacent Sites within the Housing Zone but not direct Council involvement	**Number of units with HZ**
Station Quarter South	670
Gas Works site	450
Former Decathlon Site	350
North Street	100
Sandgate Close (former Gas Works site)	150
TOTAL	1,720
Grand total	3,304

7 LANDSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM

7.1 LANDSCAPE

7.1.1 Landscape regional structure & designations

More than 50% of the London Borough of Havering is Green Belt[1], which includes the highest proportion of designated green space of any London Borough.

7.1.2 Landscape – local features & designations

Landscape designations within the borough include Wildlife Corridors and Tree Protection Orders along with Green Belt Designations and Open Space.

There is distinct a lack of green open space within the town centre. The only such space within the ring road is St Edward the Confessor Church's churchyard. However, there are a number of nearby parks a short walk beyond the ring road; these include Lodge Farm Park (off Main Road), and Cotton Park (at Mark's Road). Any future proposals for the town centre should contribute to a greener Romford. The Brook and Lodge Farm Park are key green assets which could be linked to the town centre and also to Black's Canal Lake.

01 - Angel Way

02 - River Rom Regarth Avenue

03 - Edward the Confessor Churchyard

04 - Lodge Farm Park

1 Havering Draft Character Study 2024

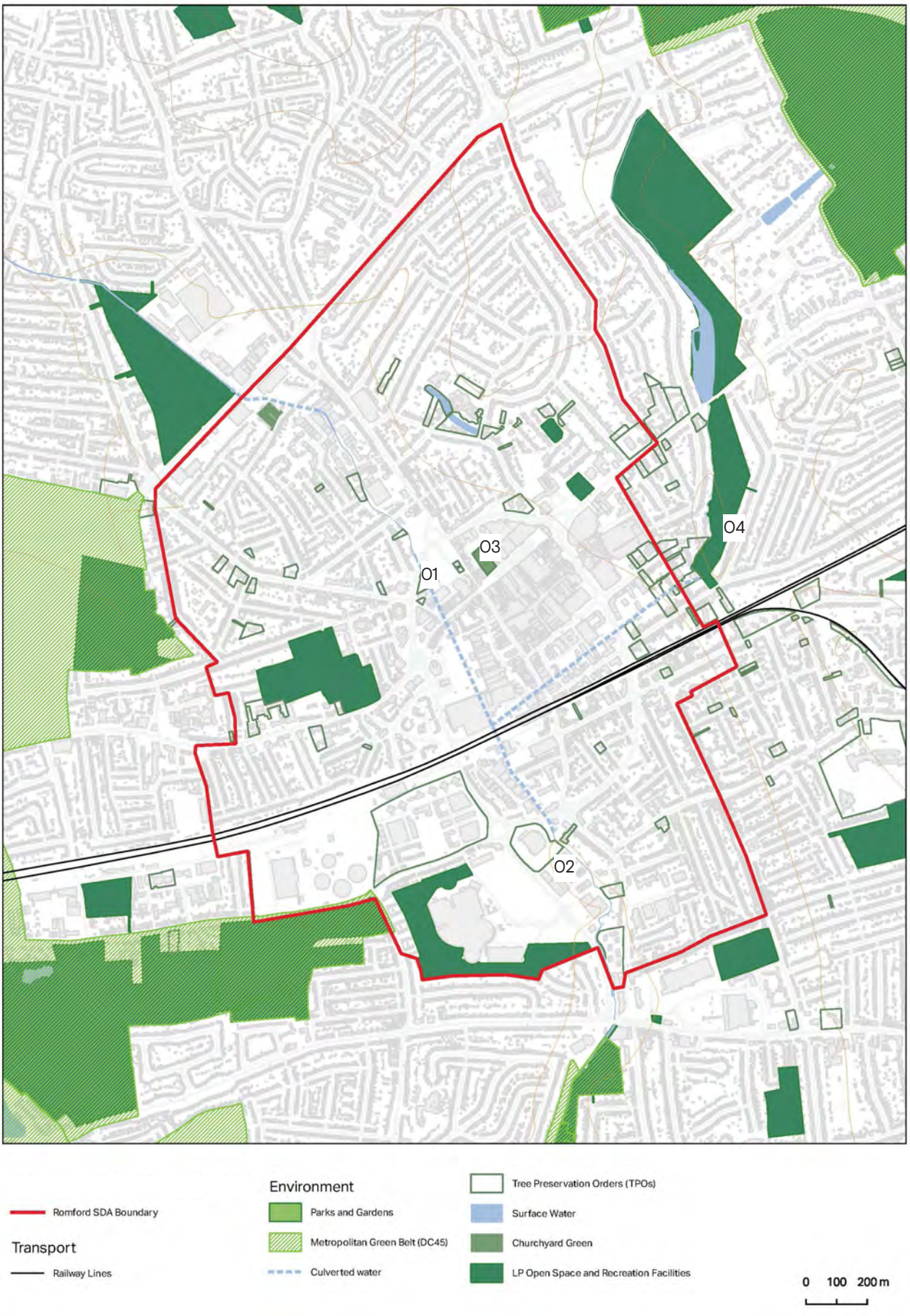


Fig. 42. Romford Open Space

7.2 PUBLIC REALM

7.2.1 Public Realm Context

The public realm, despite recent improvements around Market Street, is generally poor in quality. Through TfL's Crossrail Complementary Measures and Havering's Liveable Neighbourhood programmes, the Council is delivering public realm improvements around the vicinity of Romford station to better integrate the station into its surroundings and to improve accessibility between the busy bus interchange south of Romford Station and the station entrances.

The Council's Retail and Leisure Report identifies that there is significant scope to improve the appearance of the shopping streets in the town centre, that there is a lack of open space, trees and planting in the town centre, and that the ring road acts as a barrier to movement. An enhanced public realm will provide a pleasant and safe experience to encourage visitors to spend more time and money in the centre, and will support high quality development and other investment.[1]

Market Place is one of Romford's greatest assets and has potential to provide a key civic public space within the town centre. Consolidation of the market is key to allowing for the flexibility of the public realm. A new cluster of cafés and restaurants around Market Place leading to longer dwell times and additional footfall in the north of the town centre would be supported by the London Borough of Havering.

7.2.2 Pedestrian Access

Most pedestrian movement in Romford now operates in an east-west direction, between the three shopping centres. Some of these routes suffer from blank façades and terminate at the ring road where crossings are neither pedestrian nor cycle friendly. Some of these crossings are currently provided by way of subways.

The ring road in particular creates a barrier to the town centre and an under whelming entrance for visitors. The Council will look to improve these routes. Proposed developments adjacent to these crossings will be expected to contribute to their improvement. Development should also seek to open up blank façades with new active frontages and entrances.

South Street is the main pedestrian area and acts as the north south spine through the town, connecting residential areas with the station, main retail area and historic cross roads with the High Street and the Market Place. However, the quality of the public realm along this route is tired and in need of improvement. The Market Place is the main public space in the town centre, but is currently undermined through extensive provision of surface car parking which could be rationalised to enhance the quality, usability and enjoyment of this space.

1 Havering's Retail & Commercial Leisure Needs Assessment (2015 & Update 2018)

01. Key Opportunities

02. Back end sites front pedestrian routes

03. The ring road creates a hostile environment for pedestrians

8 TRANSPORT & MOVEMENT

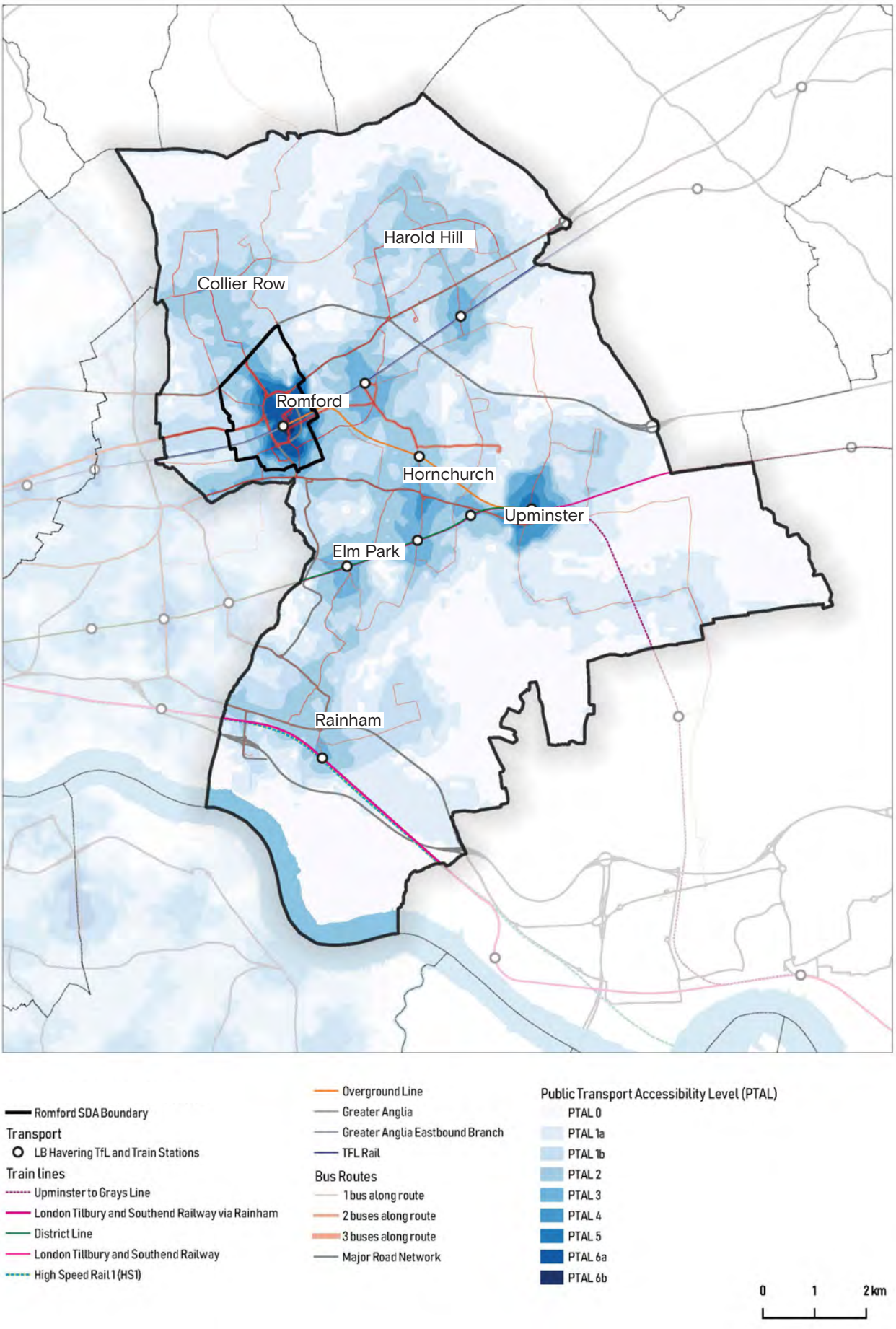


Fig. 43. Romford Transport Routes

8.1 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

8.1.1 Transport Strategy & Wider Context

In addition to London-wide policies in the London Plan and other strategic/local policies in the Havering Local Plan, there are also other strategic plans including Transport Strategy which is consistent with national policies.

Romford is the most accessible and well-connected area within the borough and has an important role as a transport hub.

Havering Local Plan Policy 23 also refers to a proposed rapid transport link to improve north-south connectivity across the borough, in particular improving connectivity between Rainham, Romford and Harold Hill. The Council is working with TfL on a high- level feasibility and route options study.

8.1.1.1 Active Travel

There is a lack of transport choice which excludes pedestrian and cyclists over motorised transport modes. TfL's report on active travel highlights the benefits of walking and cycling.

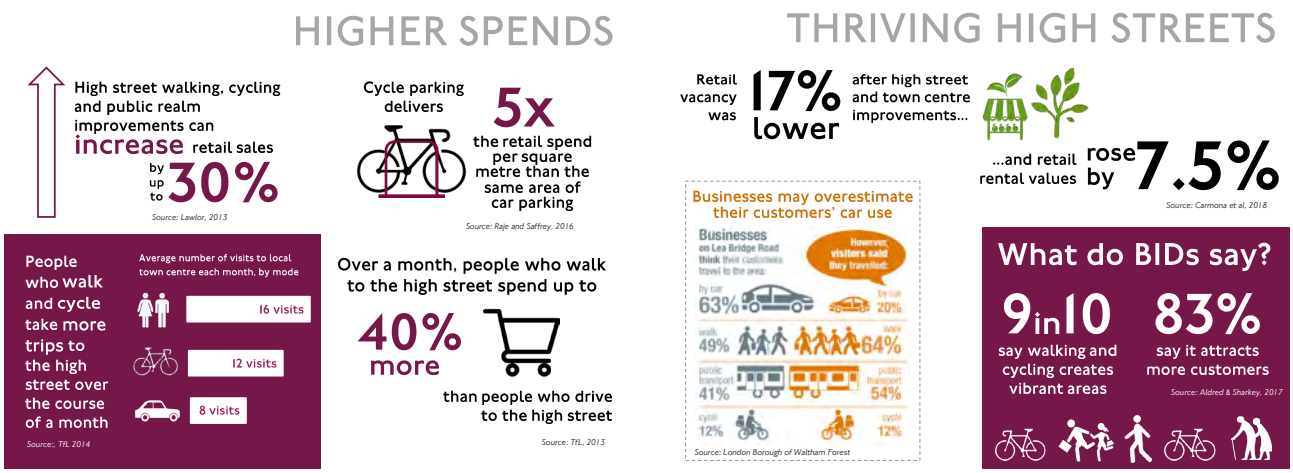
8.1.2 Trains

The arrival of the Elizabeth Line in May 2022 has improved east-west connectivity and alongside the relative affordability of this area is a key driver of growth. The area's significant growth potential is recognised through its designation as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan. The Council aims to build on its positive relationship with the Mayor of London to further enhance Romford as a place to live and work and for businesses to invest.

The station is a key entrance point to the town centre, but the railway line acts as a barrier between the north and south areas of Romford. The railway arches create a dynamic backdrop and have the potential to house meanwhile uses such as kiosks, shops or temporary pavilions.

Currently the station and nearby bus depot have limited crossing places for pedestrians and vehicle, little or no visual permeability and does not engage with the wider context of the River Rom or South Street.

The station has regular departures to London Liverpool Street (up to 12 services per hour at peak times), and out to Shenfield, in Essex. Additionally, Elizabeth line trains provide direct access to Heathrow Airport from Romford. London Overground services connect Romford with Upminster via Emerson Park.



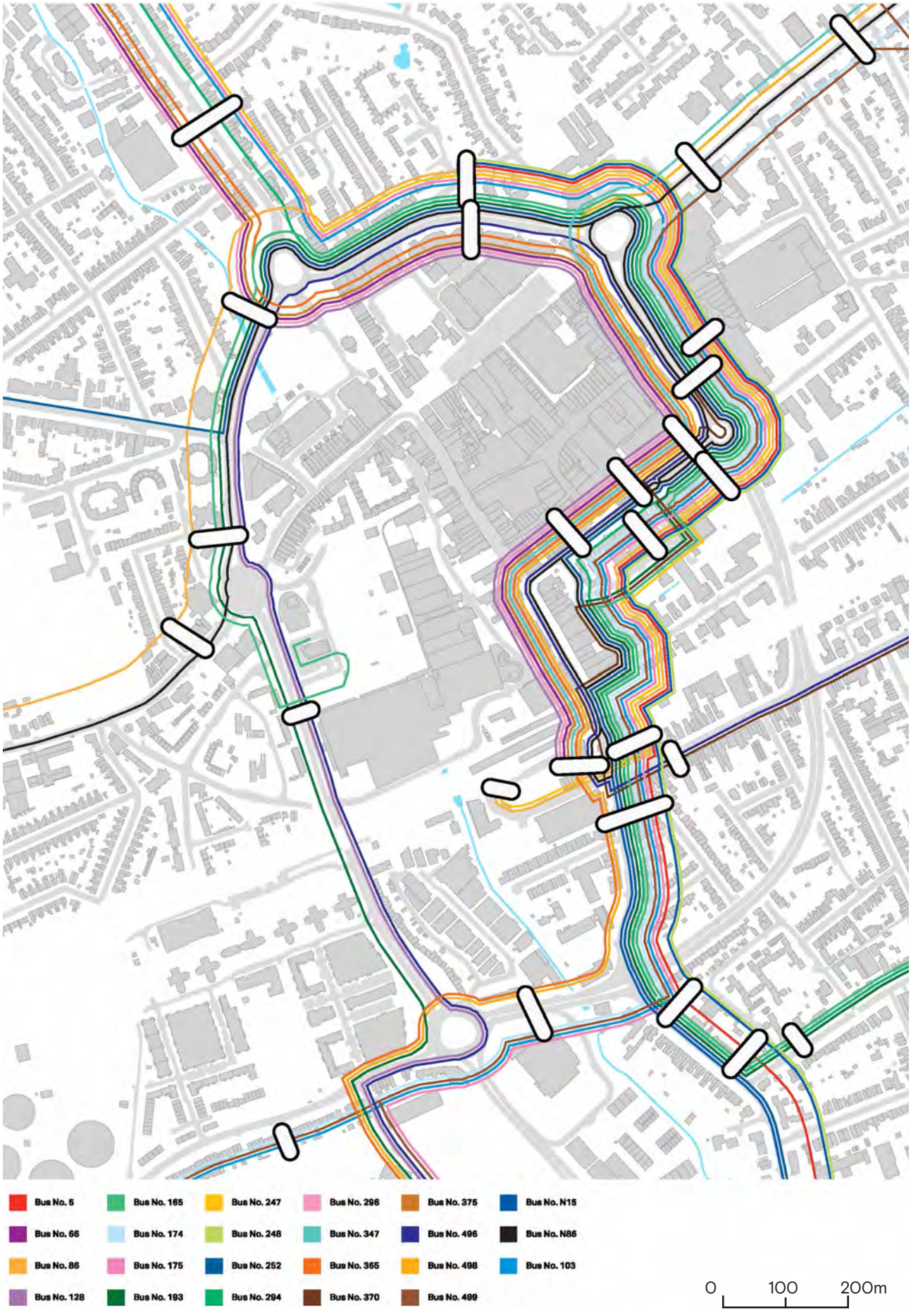


Fig. 44. Romford Bus Routes

8.2 BUSES

8.1.3 TfL Bus Stop Location & Routes

The Town Centre is easy to access by bus, with multiple routes reaching the railway station and shopping areas. One third of surveyed visitors in the Town Centre (32.8%) indicated they travelled by bus.[1]

8.1.3.1 Bus Frequency

Assessment of bus frequency indicates that weekday buses in the the Town Centre extremely frequent.

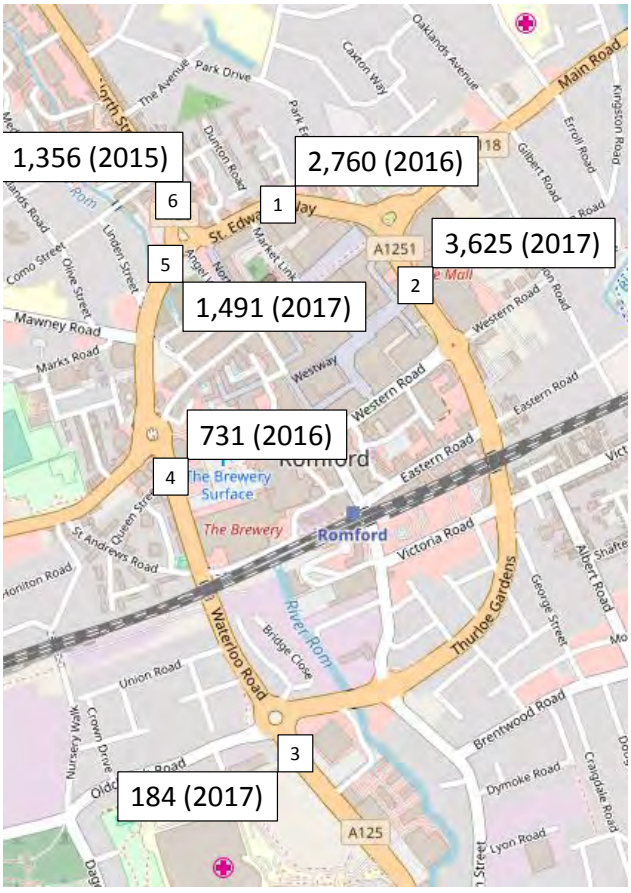


Fig. 45. Bus count figures (2016 /2017)

1 Parking Robert West (2015)

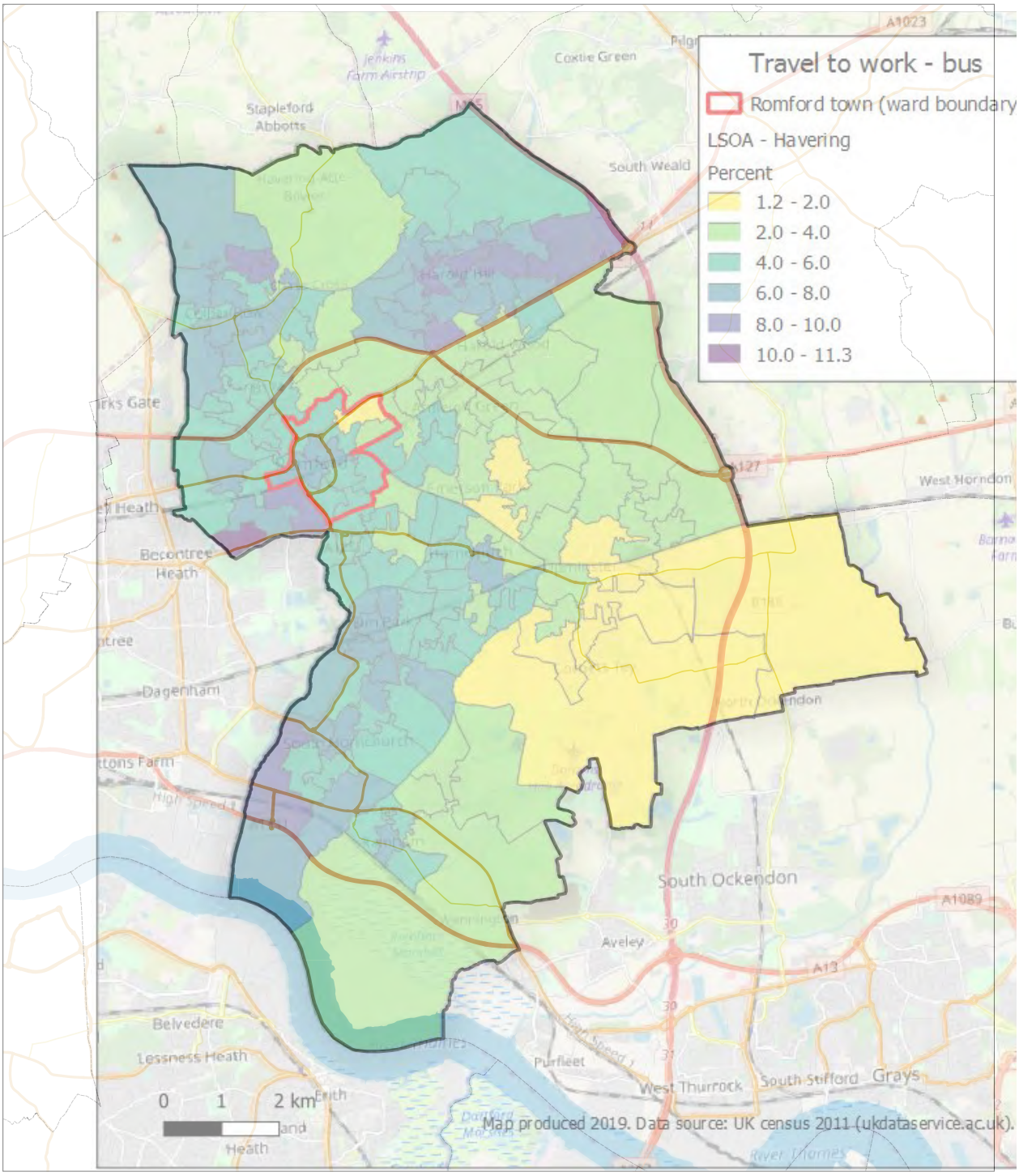


Fig. 46. Travelling to work by bus

8.3 VEHICLES

8.2.1 Vehicles and Parking

The number of cars and vans available to households in Havering was 117,634 in 2011. Of this, 77% of households in Havering have at least one car and, compared to other local authorities in London, Havering has the second highest proportion of households (32.8%) with two or more cars.

This is visible in the amount of car dominated space in the centre of town. 10.3% of the total area of the SDA is given over to car parks, and a further 11.7% is given over to road surface, making a total of 22% of the available land given over to automobiles.

Parking provision in the HLP states that London Plan maximums standards apply across the borough.

Table 11 of the Havering Local Plan sets out minimum parking standards for PTAL's 0-1. Applying minimum standards to some specific parts of the borough that are PTAL 0-1 recognises that the London Plan provides outer London boroughs with the opportunity to apply a more flexible approach to parking standards in these areas.

Some areas of the borough (such as central Romford and Upminster) have good or very good access to public transport. In areas well served by public transport and therefore with high PTAL levels, the Council has an obligation under the London Plan to reduce private car use and provide fewer parking spaces in comparison to other parts of the borough.

Havering Local Plan outlines that parking provision in new shopping and leisure developments should serve the centre as a whole and not be reserved solely for use in connection with the development proposed. Disabled parking and cycle parking should be located closest to town centres and the entrance of the facilities and should include provision for long and short stay use. Such provision should be in line with the requirements as set out in the London Plan

Car park utilisation data indicates that for much of the year there is plenty of spare capacity. Overall the total occupancy levels for all car parks in Romford town centre did not exceed 59% during the weekend survey period and 61% during the weekday survey period.[1] The redevelopment of a car park into additional office or retail space without its own dedicated parking would increase the demand for all travel options (car, rail, local bus, walking, cycling, and park and ride).

Table 13 - Romford Car Public Parking Spaces

Car Park	Spaces	
	Sat & Sun	Mon-Fri
The Brewery MSCP	1,126	1,126
Brewery Surface Car Park	616	616
Slaney Road	100	100
Angel Way	480	480
Como Street	180	180
Oldchurch Rise	82	82
Shopping Hall	252	252
Market Place	160	160
Town Hall	434	61
The Mercury Mall	1000	1000
The Liberty	850	850
High Street (disabled)	43	43
TOTAL	5,323	4,950

1 Parking Robert West 2015

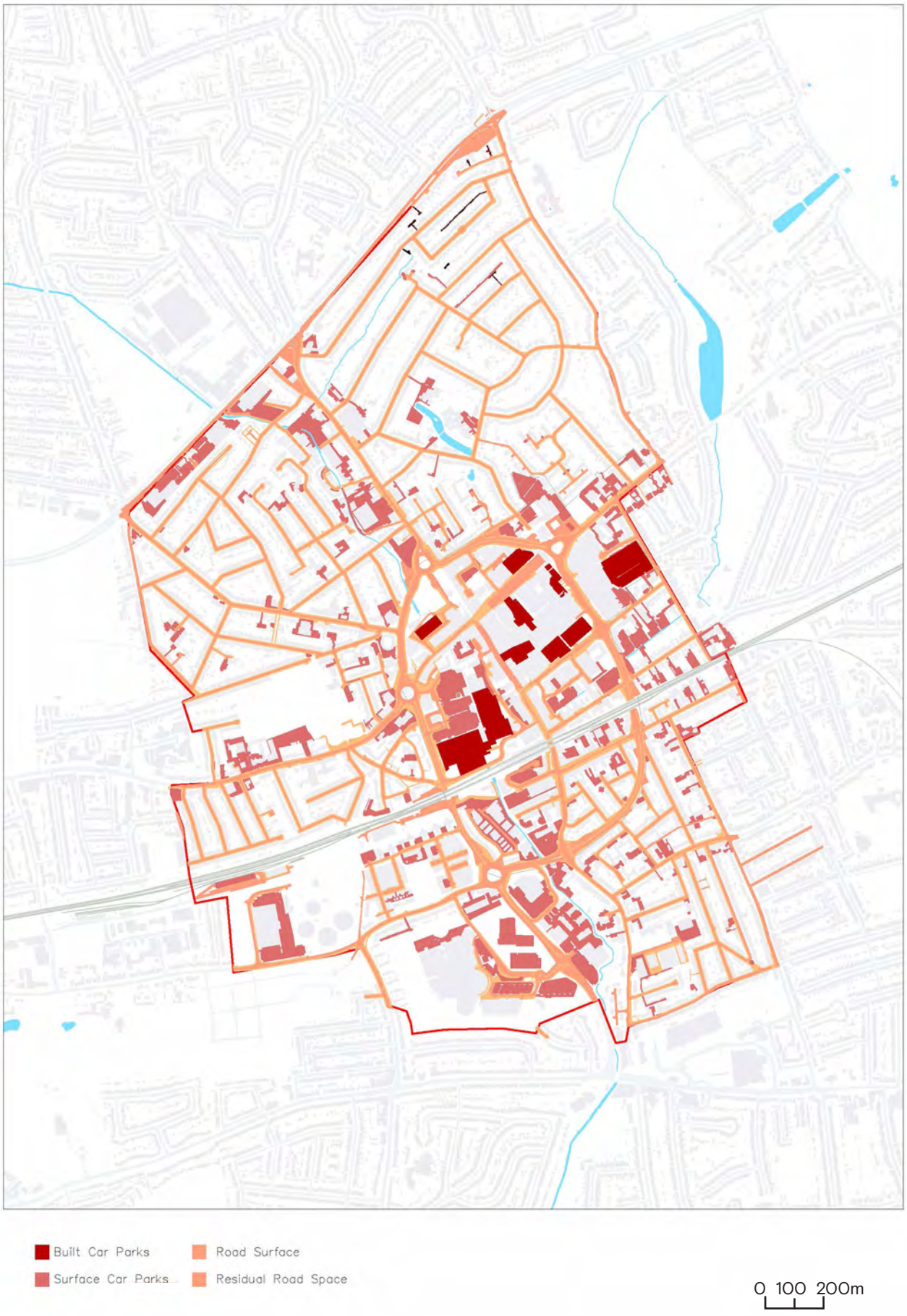


Fig. 47. Romford Road Surfaces

8.2.2 Strategic Road Network

TfL's Strategic Road Network map highlights the importance of the A12, A13 and the A127 as key routes around outer London.

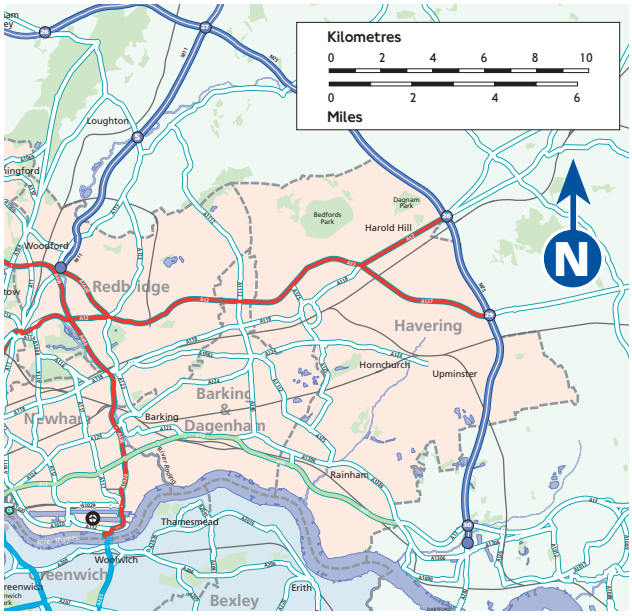
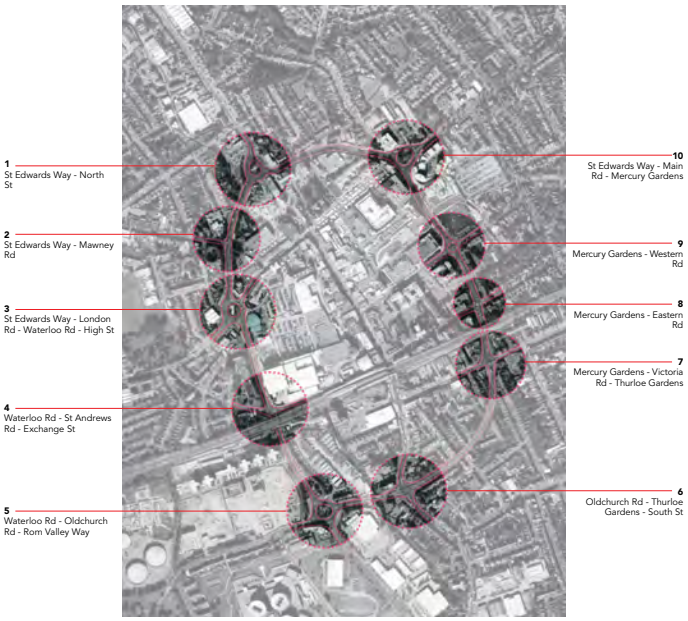


Fig. 48. TfL Strategic Road Network

8.2.3 Liveable Neighbourhoods

London Borough of Havering is committed to delivering transformational work to the ring road - focusing on the section between Rom Valley Way and North Street (clockwise). London Borough of Havering has been developing a scheme to transform the ring road improving connectivity into the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists and reducing its perception as a barrier to sustainable travel. This project will focus on in particular on the section between Rom Valley Way and North Street (clockwise).



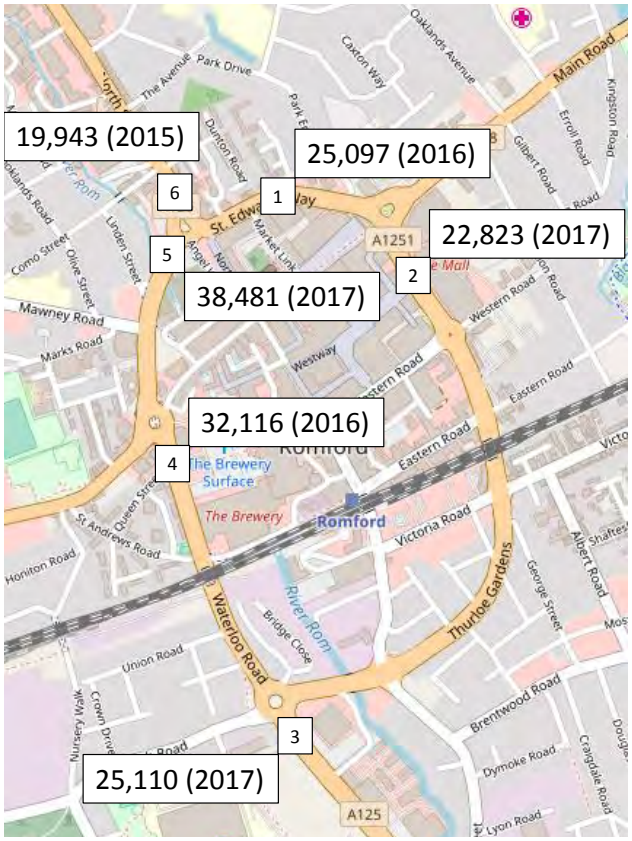
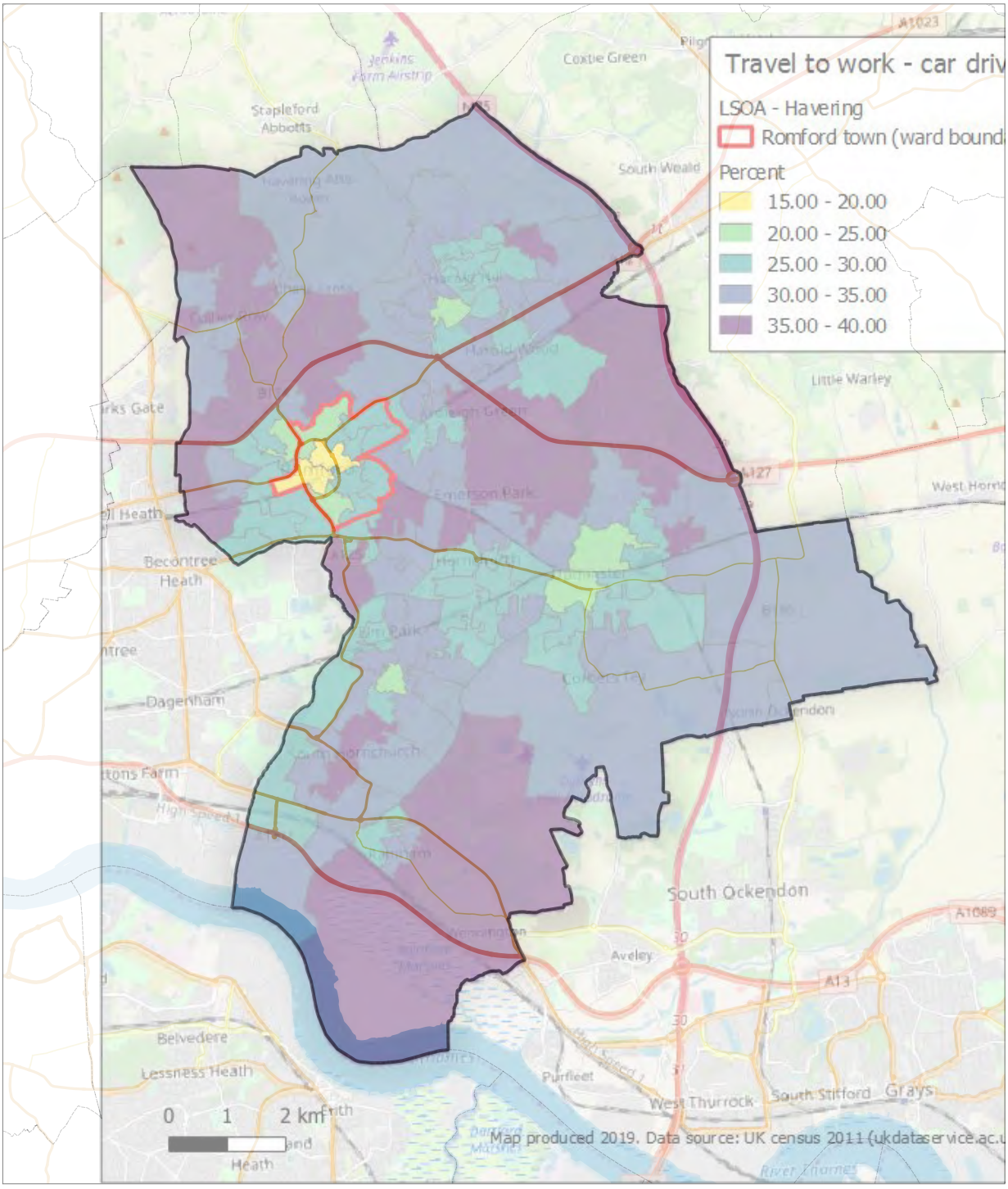


Fig. 49. Car count figures (2016 /2017)



Borough administrative boundaries

Environment

Tidal Water

Road network

Trunk Roads (Transport for London Road Network (TLRN))

Primary Roads

Motorway

Secondary Roads

0 1 2 3 km

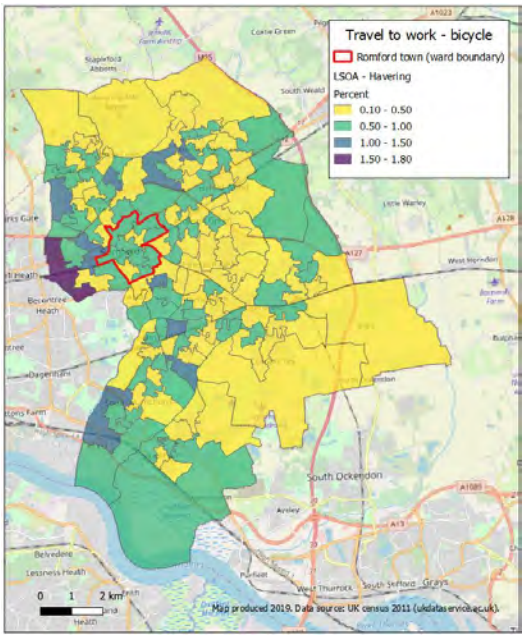
Fig. 50. Travelling to work by car (%)

8.4 CYCLING

8.4.1 Cycling Routes

The existing cycling routes are fragmented and poorly connected. Proposal 82 in the Mayor's Transport Strategy[1] makes clear that OAPFs should set mode share targets that are significantly more ambitious than elsewhere in London and will require boroughs and other stakeholders to demonstrate how development plans will contribute to mode shift away from car use towards walking, cycling and public transport. Havering Local Plan highlights a Romford town centre scheme which will create a better street environment around the ring road, with enhanced crossings for pedestrians better environments for pedestrians and cyclists.

Very few surveyed visitors in the town centre indicated they cycled(0.7%).[2]At present there is very poor cycle access within Romford town centre and few connected routes to the borough beyond.



1 Mayor's Transport Strategy (May 2018)
2 Parking Robert West (2015)

O1 - High Street

O2 - South Street

O3 - The Brewery

O4 - South Street.

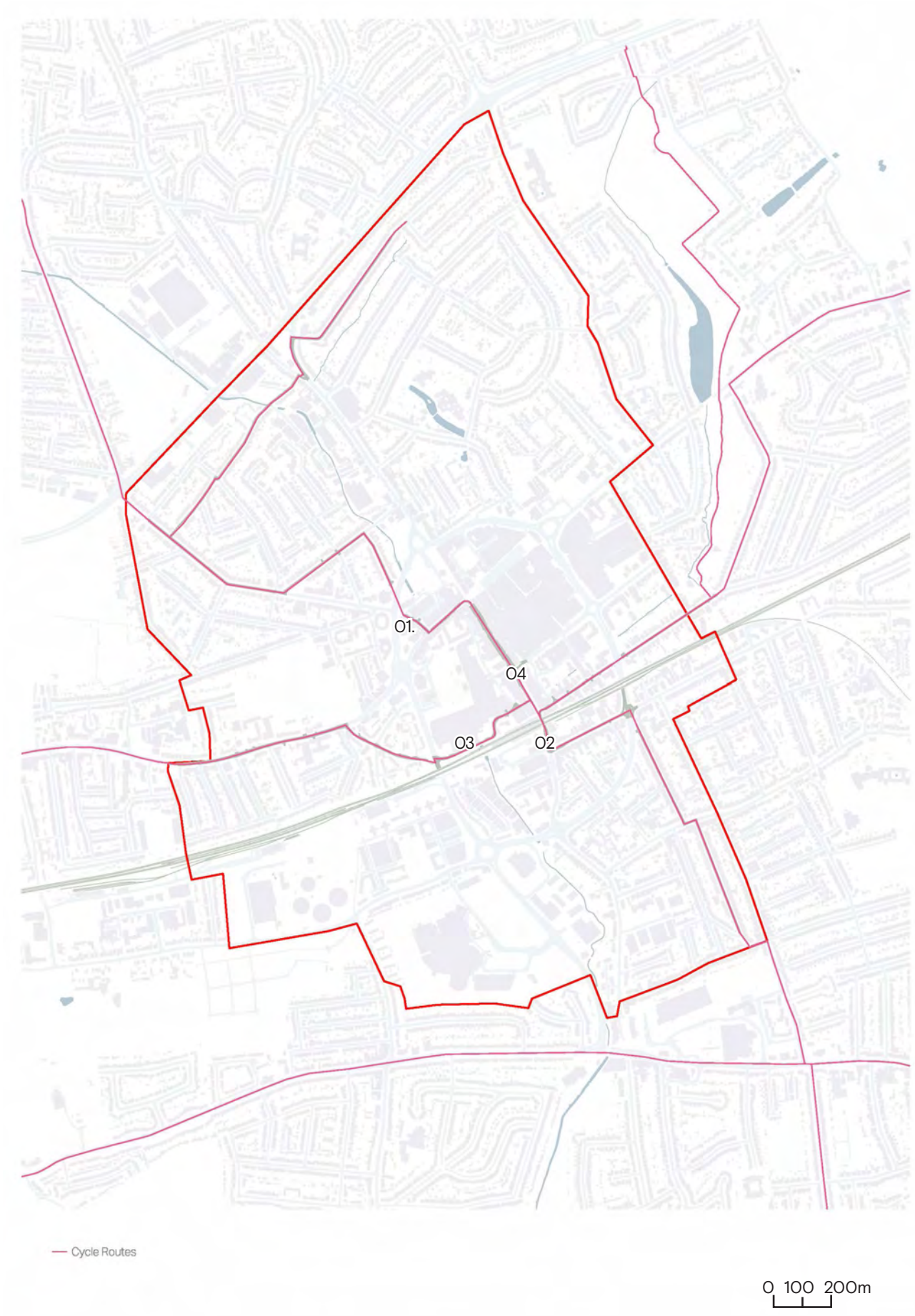


Fig. 51. Romford Cycle Routes

8.5 PEDESTRIANS

8.5.1 Pedestrian Routes

Romford is a challenging place to be as a pedestrian, surrounded penned a circular highway with air and noise pollution mounting during the rush hours. There are only six designated pedestrian underpasses which allow the crossing of the ring road. Here, light levels shift suddenly and dramatically as the steps or long ramps wind under the road[1].

Existing public realm is dominated by car parking, and service yards dominate the streetscape. The ring road presents a particular challenge, even for those with no mobility impairments, as 46% of people living in Romford have no access to a car.[2] For the most vulnerable and less advantaged people of Romford, whose only options are to walk, cycle or take public transport, the ring road is either a hostile challenge to cross or a reason to stay at home. This disproportionately affects the most vulnerable people, whether they are elderly, less well-off, disabled or young.

Ring road crossings are limited and are particularly inaccessible for pedestrians as well as cyclists. People climbing over barriers in an attempt to cross the ring road is a common sight in Romford. The detour to a subway or an existing road crossing seems often too onerous for the pedestrian.[3]

Growth and change in the town centre must be accompanied by improvements to the quality of the public realm. The continuous pedestrian guardrails on the central reservation of the Ring Road resemble the infrastructure of a high speed traffic corridor. These barriers are excessive considering the ring road has a 30mph speed limit. If not required for safety reasons they should be removed to improve accessibility and the quality of the streetscape[4].

01 - Thurloe Gardens

02 - Victoria Road

03 - South Street

04 - Romford Roundabout underpass

1 Greening the Ring Road (2011)
2 TfL Town Centre Report (2013)
3 Greening the Ring Road (2011)
4 Greening the Ring Road (2011)

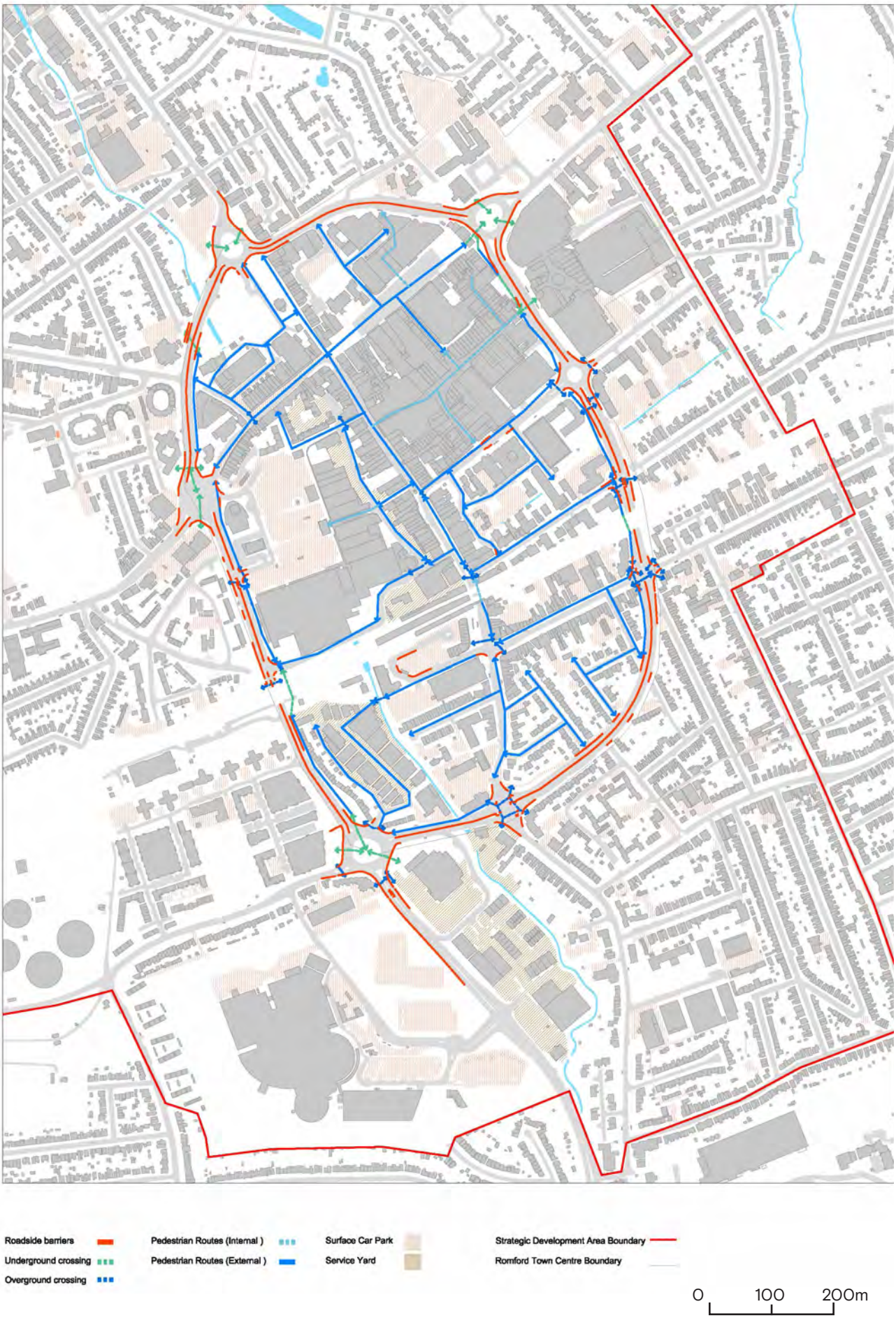


Fig. 52. Romford Pedestrian Routes

9 ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

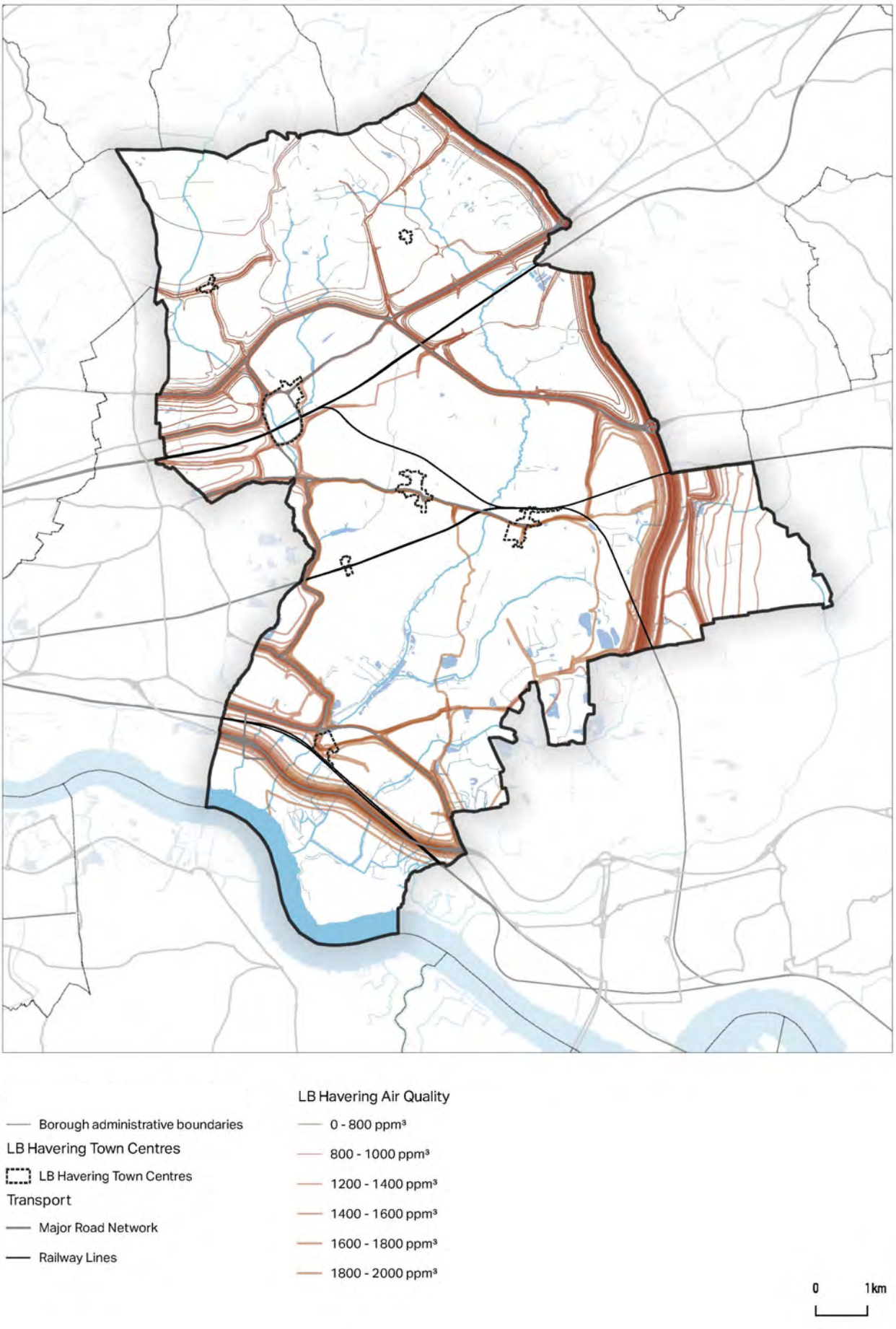


Fig. 53. Havering Air Quality

9.1 ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

9.1.1 Topography

The topography of the borough is characterised by a gentle undulating slope towards the river estuary. Views of the surrounding area are marked out by raised spurs in the north and west of the borough.

9.1.2 Watercourse Network

Policy 31 of the Havering Local Plan outlines the objectives to optimise the role of rivers and river corridors and fulfil important biodiversity, recreation, place-making, amenity, freight transport and flood management functions. In addition, the Council has the ambition to enhance the River Rom as part of its development aspirations in the Romford SDA. The Council is engaging with the Environment Agency to explore possible measures. The River Rom is currently hidden. If un-culverted and naturalised the river could provide a public amenity through the heart of the town centre.

9.1.3 Flood Risk Areas

Policy 32 of the Havering Local Plan refers to flood management, and states:

'Apart from the requirements in the NPPF and London Plan, site-specific flood risk assessments will also be required where drainage problems are identified by the Council. This specifically includes development in the Havering Critical Drainage Areas (HCDAs) as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Site-specific flood risk assessments are particularly important as these HCDAs have known localised flooding problems which can cause significant damage.'[1]

Current data shows the area around Romford Station being in Flood Zone 2 and the north west part of the Romford SDA being an HCDA.

9.1.4 Weather & Wind

Policy 36 of the Havering Local Plan outlines the pursuit of low carbon design, decentralised energy and renewable energy, with particular guidance on wind generation, detailed as 'Area Suitable for Wind Energy Development' on the Proposals Map.

9.1.5 Ecology

Havering Local Plan Policy 29 outlines that the London Borough of Havering will seek to maintain and expand the network of green spaces and natural features in Havering and optimise the benefits of green infrastructure to the environment, economy and community. Policy 30 includes support for conserving and, where possible, extending wildlife corridors; preserving 'veteran' trees and ancient woodland outside protected areas; and supporting development that provides appropriate new biodiversity features on site.

9.1.6 TPOS

There are limited existing Tree Protection Orders within Romford Town Centre.

9.1.7 Fauna

There is currently no safeguarded biodiversity in the masterplan site. Biodiversity can be incorporated into development through wildlife-friendly landscapes, careful choice of plant and tree species, installation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and features such as green walls, and nesting and roosting spaces. Such measures also contribute to the protection and promotion of habitat links with adjacent areas.

9.1.8 Green Spaces

The term 'green space' is broad and covers many aspects of the public realm, including semi-public and private green spaces. The drawing on the facing page represents only formalised, publicly accessible open space. Landscaping schemes should demonstrate a commitment to promoting biodiversity, having regard to the Havering Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Strategy (2014)[2]. Wherever possible, the opportunity to create new areas of wildlife habitat should be taken.

1 London Borough of Havering Local Plan

2 London Borough of Havering Local Plan

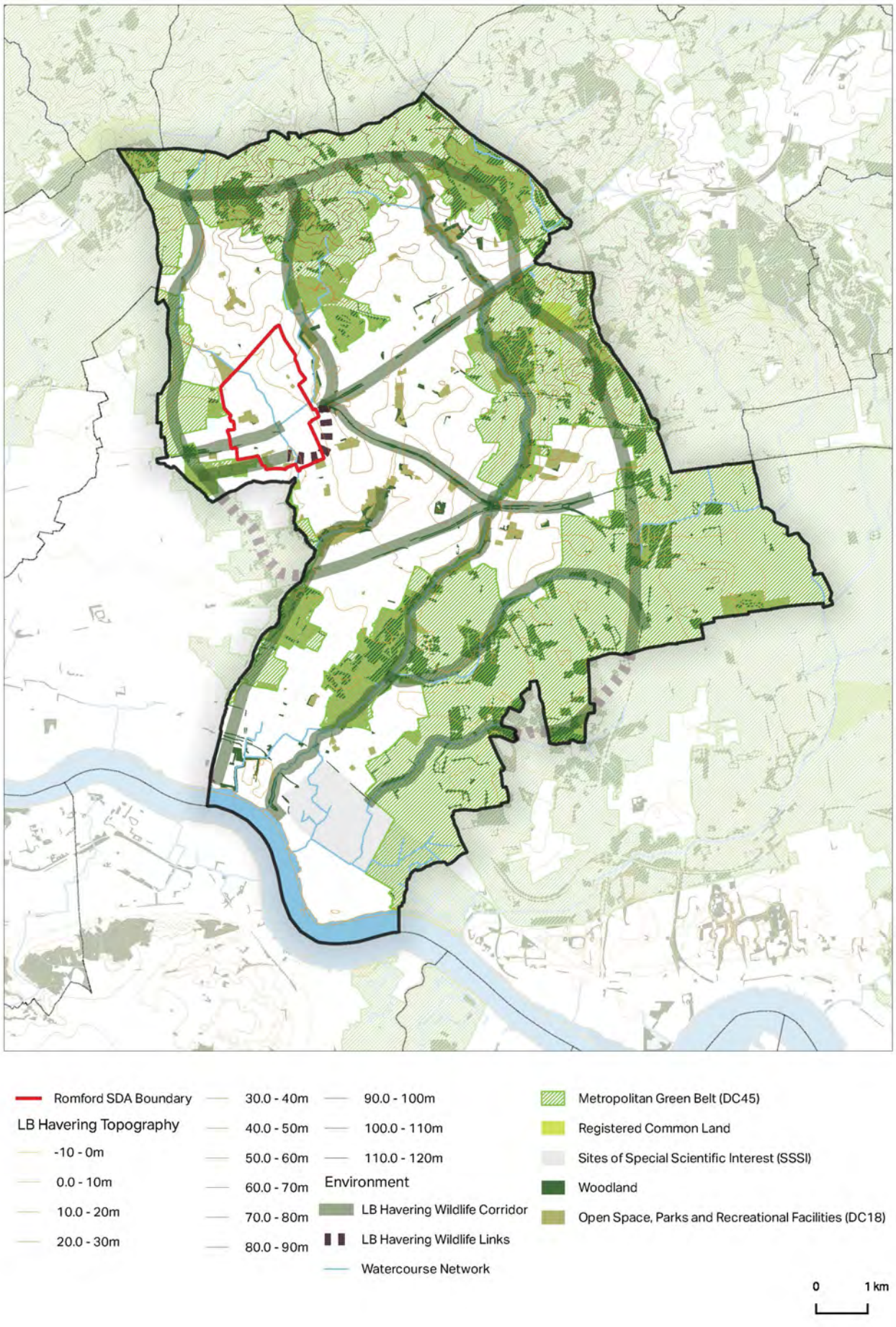


Fig. 54. Havering Wildlife & Ecology Map

9.2 POLLUTION

9.2.1 Noise

Havering Local Plan attaches great importance to the reduction of noise pollution, the improvement of air quality and the promotion of biodiversity.[1]

Noise can have an effect on health, wellbeing, productivity and the natural environment. It is estimated that the annual social cost of urban road noise in at a similar magnitude to road accidents. A report published by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in March 2018 identified environmental noise as the second largest environmental health risk in Western Europe.[2]

Noise pollution has a measurable impact, on sleep disturbance and annoyance, and is associated with a range of effects on health. It has also been linked to lower productivity - through distraction, fatigue and interrupting communication. Noise can have a notable impact on the natural environment, disturbing wildlife and damage sensitive ecosystems.[3]

Detailed analysis is required where the noise impacts may be substantial or have a large effect. Noise pollution is measured across various time periods and environmental noise indicators used vary depending upon the type of sound that is being measured. Data includes the maximum sound level reached in a period of time, the average sound level over a period of time and indicators that are weighted to account for sound at disruptive times of the day such as evening or night.

Recommendations are made for planning based on limiting exposure to noise above 60dB.

1 London Borough of Havering Local Plan
2 WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region (2018)
3 Environmental Noise: Valuing impacts on: sleep disturbance,annoyance, hypertension, productivity and quiet. (2014)

9.2.2 Air Quality

Poor air quality damages health and the quality of life. In London it is estimated that air pollution brings forward 1,600 deaths and contributes to 1,500 respiratory hospital admissions each year. The main source of these pollutants is vehicle emissions, which contribute to approximately 60% of emissions in London [4].

Policy 33 of the Havering Local Plan refers to an overarching commitment to improve air quality. The whole of the borough is an Air Quality Management Area on the basis of Nitrogen Dioxide levels.[5] Havering Local Plan states that future development should be air quality neutral and should meet the targets for carbon dioxide reduction in the London Plan.

9.2.3 Social Sustainability

Havering Local Plan promotes the design of places that encourage social interaction and promote health lifestyles, for example in encouraging active lifestyles and using public transport.

4 London Plan, Sub-Regional Development Framework: East London, 2006; Air Quality and Noise,
5 Havering Local Plan 2016-2031

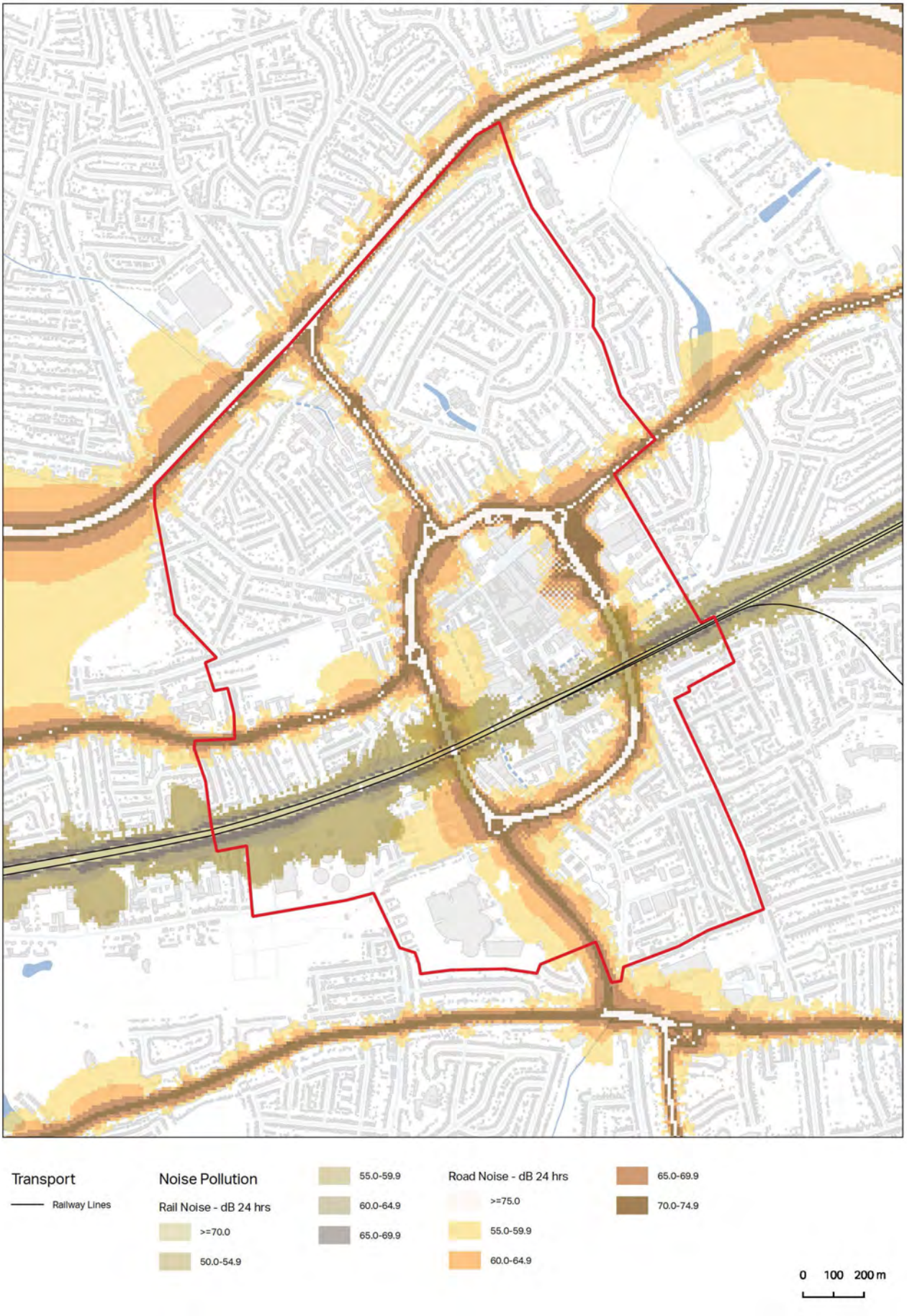


Fig. 55. Romford Noise Pollution Map

9.3 GROWTH & IMPACT

9.3.1 Social Sustainability

The Havering Local Plan promotes the design of places that encourage social interaction and promote health lifestyles, for example in encouraging active lifestyles and using public transport.

9.3.2 Growth & Impact on social infrastructure

According to the Greater London Authority (GLA) Local authority population projections Housing-led Model[1], the population of Havering is projected to increase to:

- 276,645 in 2023 – a 7% increase from 2018
- 294,665 in 2028 – a 14% increase from 2018
- 303,769 in 2033 – a 18% increase from 2018

The population aged 25-64 will remain the largest age group up to 2033. The population of Romford town centre is one of the regions that is expected to experience the largest growth in population. This is mainly due to the growing economy combined with new housing developments making the town centre a more attractive place to live.[2]

Substantial housing development planned in Romford will require new primary schools and new secondary schools. A three form of entry primary school (630 places) is proposed on the Bridge Close development site and the new school should be sufficient to meet demand for the additional primary places needed over the next five years. Further development will need careful assessment undertaken in order to assess the impact on education infrastructure.

Planned Provision In line with Havering Local Plan Policy 1, the emerging Bridge Close scheme (P1765.23), submitted in November 2023, includes a community centre and health centre of 2,768sqm combined.

1 This is Havering: A demographic and socio-economic profile, 2019)
2 This is Havering: A demographic and socio-economic profile, 2019)

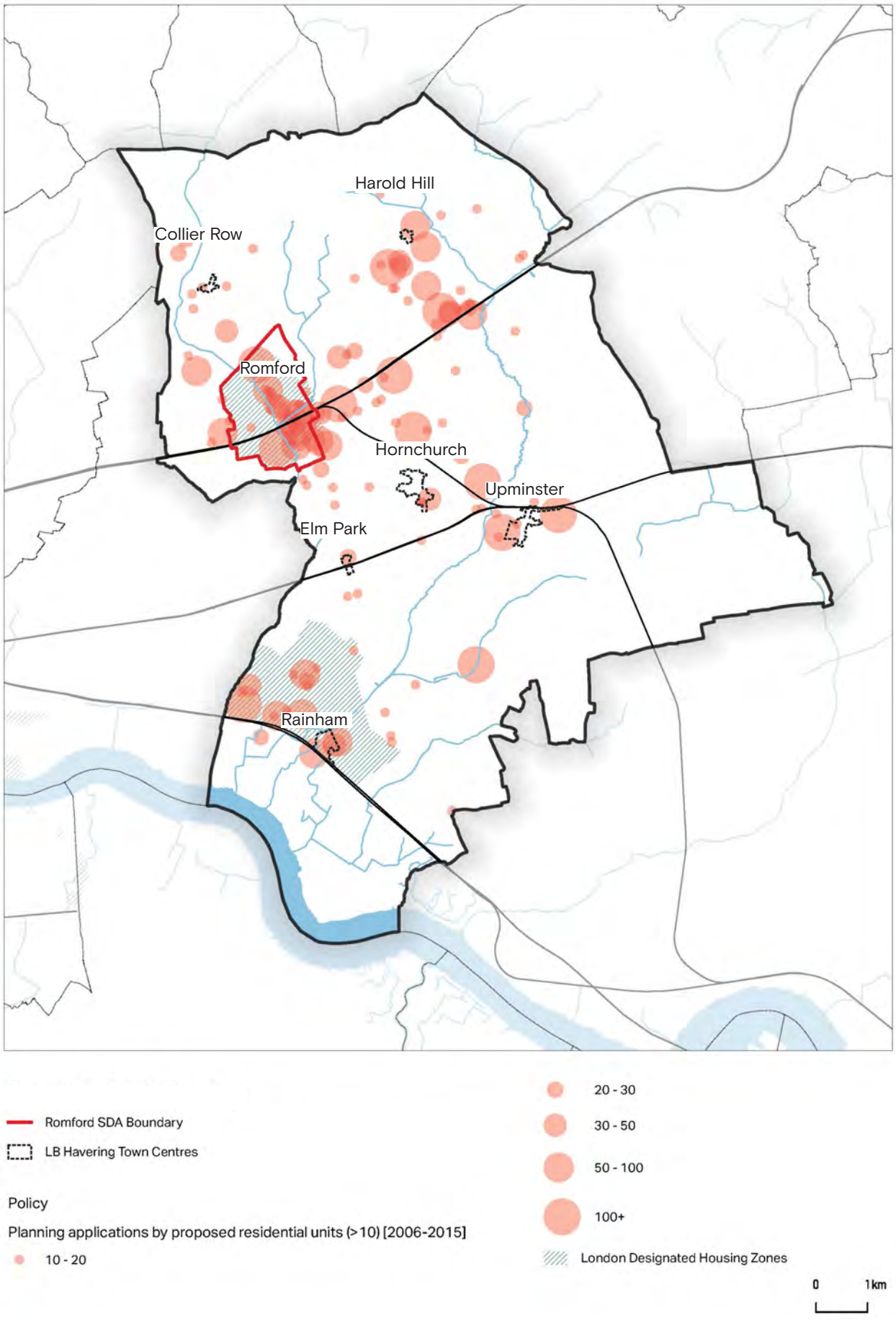


Fig. 56. Romford Future Growth Map

9.3.3 Health Care

The responsibility for health care provision is fragmented across a number of organisations and is complex The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (March 2018)[1] provides a good overview and this note draws heavily on this document.

Havering is divided into three healthcare regions, for planning purposes (North, Central and South). The Romford SDA is within the Central Locality. The NHS Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU) has used their model to calculate the population yield from new housing and to assess the subsequent healthcare impacts and floorspace requirements. The model estimates population growth estimates for each locality for two five-year periods (2016/17-2020/21 and 2020/21-2025/26). For the Central Locality, population increases over these periods are estimated as being 4,665 and 8,025 (15,804 in total).

The HUDU model estimates primary care requirements by locality and phase in terms of full time equivalent GPs and primary care floor space, to meet the estimated population growths.

Previously the CCG undertook a preliminary desktop review of current facilities and development sites on offer to determine which might be the most suitable sites to be allocated for health and in which time period they will be required. New, fit-for-purpose premises are needed to cater for the significant population growth, to facilitate primary care at scale, and enable patient access to a wider range of integrated services.

For the Romford SDA, this is estimated as being the provision of a primary and community care hub of 4,500sqm.

In line with Havering Local Plan Policy 1, the emerging Bridge Close scheme (P1765.23), submitted in November 2023, includes a community centre and health centre of 2,768sqm combined.

It is not clear whether the emerging scheme affects the existing Ambulance Station. Further investigation is required to identify opportunities to improve connections with existing primary health/GP facilities and the areas they serve, including opportunities for additional facilities, as the western area has no GP coverage at the moment.

The connection of Queens Hospital with the wider area by public transport should be considered in future proposals.

Table 14 - Existing Provision

Acute Care Facilities		
H1.	Queens Hospital	Opened in 2006 (bringing together services previously run at Oldchurch and Harold Wood Hospitals). Queens is the only acute hospital operating an Accident & Emergency department in Havering.
H2.	Romford Ambulance Station	14 Bridge Close, RM7 0AD.

Primary Care Facilities		
H3.	Mawney Medical Centre	7 St Edwards Way, RM1 2DQ.
H4.	Western Road Medical Centre	99 Western Road, RM1 3LS.
H5.	North Street Medical Centre	274 North Street, RM1 4QJ.
H6.	The Surgery (Dr Martis Practice)	107 Brentwood Road, RM1 2SB.
H7.	The Surgery (Dr NK Gupta)	206 Mawney Road, RM7 8BU.
H8.	Modern Medical Centre	195 Rush Green Road, RM7 0PX.

1 https://www.havering.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1951/lbhlp31_havering_infrastructure_delivery_plan_2018.pdf

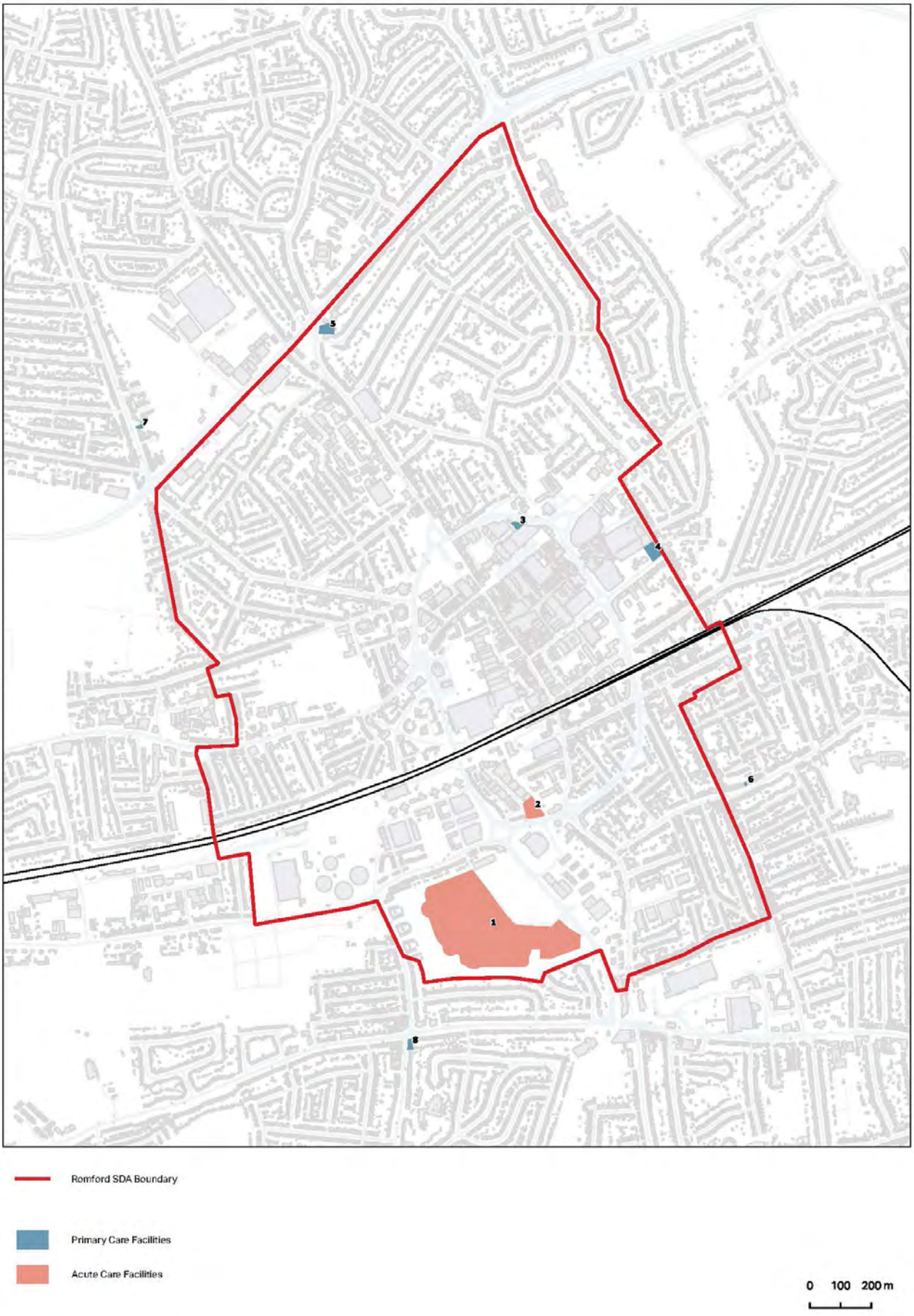


Fig. 57. Romford Healthcare Services

9.3.3.1 Future Needs

Previously the CCG undertook a preliminary desktop review of current facilities and development sites on offer to determine which might be the most suitable sites to be allocated for health and in which time period they will be required. New, fit-for-purpose premises are needed to cater for the significant population growth, to facilitate primary care at scale, and enable patient access to a wider range of integrated services.

For the Romford SDA, this is estimated as being the provision of a primary and community care hub of 4,500sqm (and a likely cost of circa £20.3m).

Table 15 - Predicted Requirements

Locality	Phase 1 2016/17-2020/21		Phase 2 2020/21-2025/26		Total	
	FTE GPs	Primary Care m2	FTE GPs	Primary Care m2	FTE GPs	Primary Care m2
North	0.7	118	0.2	36	0.9	159
Central	2.6	426	4.5	735	7.0	1196
South	1.9	309	2.6	422	4.4	753
Total	5.2	853	7.2	1,193	12.4	2108

Note: 426sqm + 735sqm = 1,161sqm (not 1,196sqm)

9.3.3.2 Policy 1 (Romford SDA) – as proposed to be modified

The relevant part of Policy 1 (Romford SDA), as proposed to be modified, is set out below, together with relevant justifying text. This draws on the findings of the Commissioning Report, which are also incorporated in to the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

9.3.3.3 Social Infrastructure

To support growth in the Romford Strategic Development Area and to assist in ensuring it is a successful place to live the Council will work with developers and service providers to ensure the delivery of (amongst other things):

A new health hub, including the sexual health services relocated from Queens Hospital.

The Council is working closely with the Barking Havering Redbridge University Hospital NHS Trust (BHURT) on their emerging travel plan which will be monitored to ensure that progress is being made against targets for modal shift away from the car. There are currently 9 bus services (and a community bus) that access Queen's Hospital. Whilst this number of bus services accessing an outer London Hospital is very good, Queens has a very large catchment area and there continues to be pockets of the east London sub region that require at least two bus journeys in order to access Queens. Additionally, the Council will continue to work with agencies such as the Clinical Commissioning Group and BHURT to explore the scope for services to be provided within the wider community to reduce the need for people to travel to Queen's.

There is also a need to increase bus access here to provide people with an alternative to using private vehicles as parking spaces at the Hospital are at a premium. Work is currently being progressed on a detailed design of Queen's Hospital bus interchange where an additional bus stop is proposed to increase bus capacity and allow more bus routes to stop at Queen's Hospital.

9.3.3.4 Planned Provision

In line with Havering Local Plan Policy 1,submitted in November 2023, includes a community centre and health centre of 2,768sqm combined.

9.3.4 Childcare and Education

9.3.4.1 Childcare Future Needs

Current projections show that there are 13,481 children aged 1-4 living in Havering as of 2019. The table below shows the projected child population 1-4 age groups in Havering over the next five years.

Table 16 - Predicted child population

Year	1-4 years Borough Total
2019/20	13481
2020/21	13628
2021/22	13708
2022/2023	14181
2023/2024	14509
2024/25	14654

Data source: GLA 2017 - based BPO Projections - ward and borough projections.

The Council's Childcare Sufficiency Report 2019-20 (3.2) goes on to note that based on our current projections, there are sufficient funded 2 year old places in Havering ; however Elm Park, Hacton, Harold Wood, Hylands, Pettits, Romford and South Hornchurch wards are showing potential shortfall of funded 3 & 4 year old Early Years places within the next five years.

The populations in Romford Town, Brooklands and South Hornchurch wards are expected to increase the most over the next fifteen years. The Sufficiency Report notes that projected increase in population in Romford Town is mainly due to its rapidly growing economy and new housing developments; whereas inflow migration from neighbouring boroughs mainly account for the projected population increase in Brooklands and South Hornchurch.

9.3.4.2 School Places Need

The Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision (2019-2023) (Updated September 2019) sets out how it seeks to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet demand for early years, secondary, post-16 and special school places across the borough. Set out below are extracts from its Executive Summary.

1.6. Havering's school age demographic trends. In Havering, we have seen an increase of 52% in the number of births between calendar years 2002 to 2016. This includes a 19% increase in the birth rate from 2012 to 2016. Havering saw the highest birth rate increase over this period for a London Local Authority. The next highest birth rate increase for a London Authority over this period was less than 5%, with the majority of boroughs seeing a decrease in their birth rate.

The number of primary age pupils (reception-year 6) is expected to continue to rise from 22,700 to 25,368 over the next five years. Beyond this point strategic forecasts show that the number of pupils will continue to rise.

The number of secondary age pupils (years 7-11) in Havering schools is expected to rise significantly from 14,555 in 2019-20 to 15,700 in 2023-24. Beyond this point the longer-term strategic forecasts indicate a further increase in pupil numbers.

However, these long-term strategic forecasts are heavily influenced by new housing development – which has been taken account of based on forecasting methodology set out in the Council's forecasting methodology which is set out in the London Borough of Havering School Data Pack.

1.7. Early Education and Childcare. We are aware

that assessing the childcare market and ensuring a sufficiency of provision is both a complex and a constantly moving challenge. Analysis of childcare places for 0-4-year olds shows that across the borough there is a surplus of places.

However, a number of wards namely; Elm Park, Hylands, Harold Wood, Hacton, Romford, Pettis and South Hornchurch have a deficit of places. We will continue to work with providers, schools and potential providers to encourage the establishment of additional provision where this is required. When a new school is delivered according to the ESFA baseline design a nursery space will be included.

1.8. Havering's Primary and Secondary School Forward Plan – by planning area.

Detailed analysis, at planning area level, of the future need for primary and secondary school places is contained in Section 8 of this Plan. This clearly sets out what provision needs to be commissioned, where, and when. We will consult on the proposals in line with statutory responsibilities and agreed procedures

Table 17 - Reception places needed by FE

Planning Area	By 2019-20	By 2020-21	By 2021-22	By 2022-23	By 2023-24
Collier Row	0	0	-1	0	0
Elm Park	0	-1	-1	-2	-1
Harold Hill	0	-3	0	-2	-2
Hornchurch	0	0	-1	0	-1
Rainham & S Hornchurch	0	0	0	-1	-1
Romford	0	0	-1	-1	-3
Upminster & Cranham	0	-1	-1	0	-1

*FE = Form of entry or 30 children.

The Commissioning Plan (Page 25) takes account of the above tables and notes that due to the housing growth planned for Romford, a 3 form of entry primary school (630 places) will be needed. The Plan goes on to note that the new school should be sufficient to meet demand for the additional primary places needed over the next five years. Further primary places are expected to be needed beyond this period.

In terms of secondary schools, the Plan (Table 8.14) identifies no need for additional Forms of Entry in the Central Planning Area by 2024/25. See below:

Table 18 - Year 7 places needed F

Planning Area	By 2019-20	By 2020-21	By 2021-22	By 2022-23	By 2023-24	By 2024-25	By 2025-26
North	0	0	0	-1	-2	-2	-1
Central	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
East	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South	0	0	0	0	0	-2	-2

9.3.4.4 Policy 1 (Romford SDA) – As proposed to be modified

The relevant part of Policy 1 (Romford SDA) in the Havering Local Plan is set out below, together with relevant justifying text. This draws on the findings of an earlier version the Commissioning Report. Similar messages are also incorporated in to the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

9.3.4.5 Social Infrastructure

To support growth in the Romford Strategic Development Area and to assist in ensuring it is a successful place to live the Council will work with developers and service providers to ensure the delivery of (amongst other things):

xxiv. Additional school places in line with the Council's Commissioning Plan and Schools Expansion Programme over the Plan period;

xxv. Additional primary school provision equivalent to 3 forms of entry (FE) in the first 5 years of the Plan and a further 6FE need for primary school places beyond the first five years. A 3 form of entry primary school (630 places) has been approved on the Bridge Close development site and the new school should be sufficient to meet demand for the additional primary places needed over the next five years. A further 6FE is needed for primary school places beyond the first five years.

xxvi. A6/8FEsecondary school in the second phase of the Plan period (5-10 years);

Development proposals that generate a primary school child yield equivalent to one additional form of entry will be expected to provide adequate space on site for the provision of a school. The Council will only support proposals without this provision where it can be robustly demonstrated that existing or planned education provision can cater for the additional demand for school places

6.1.22. Education provision is particularly challenging in Romford. Existing schools within the area are already at full capacity and whilst the Council's school expansion programme will assist in meeting future demand, this will not offer sufficient capacity over the Plan period. In order to meet the need for primary school places in the Romford area over the next five years a 3 form of entry primary school (630 places) has bene approved on the Bridge Close development site and the new school should be sufficient to meet demand for the additional primary places needed over the next five years. There is a further 6FE need for primary school places beyond the first five years. This will need to be delivered through new schools. This will be addressed via the Site Specific Allocation Plan that will identify specific sites for future schools. If further sites come forward for housing development the Council will need to assess whether further education provision will be needed. A 6/8FE secondary school is required in the second phase of the Plan period (5-10 years). The Council will seek to identify sites suitable for additional education provision through the Romford Masterplan and Site Specific Allocations Local Plan.

6.1.23. Due to the particular challenges in Romford and in advance of the delivery of the Site Specific Allocations Local Plan, the Council will require all development proposals that generate a primary school child yield equivalent to one additional form of entry to provide adequate space on site for the provision of a school or robustly demonstrate how this need will be accommodated through other developments.

6.1.24. When estimating the number of children that a new housing development will generate, and that will require a school place (yield), Havering takes account of the number of houses and flats that are suitable to accommodate children. Student and elderly accommodation are excluded. The primary school yield from qualifying homes is thirty pupils per one hundred homes (0.3 per dwelling). For secondary schools (including post 16 education or sixth form places) the yield is 20 pupils per 100 qualifying homes (0.2 per dwelling).

6.1.25. 210 primary aged pupils represent one form of entry, across seven-year groups, and this number is likely to be generated by approximately 700 new homes. However, this is dependent on the type and size of homes proposed and consequently sites delivering under 700 units may still generate a child yield that equates to one form of entry. Each proposal will be considered on a case by case basis.

9.3.4.6 Planned Provision

Childcare

The Council's Childcare Sufficiency Report (2019-21) identifies a number of measures to ensure that it meets its commissioning obligations. These include:

- Ensure that a nursery provision is part of the space when a new free school is being delivered according to the ESFA baseline design.
- Developing new or expanding nursery provision at school sites where schools are being expanded as a result of increasing pupil numbers, including establishing new maintained nurseries in schools with high surplus capacity where there is a deficit of Early years and childcare places.
- Working with providers to broker solutions that will deliver additional Early Years and childcare places needed in areas of unmet demand and provision of flexible childcare that meets the need of working parents;
- Continue to support the set-up of new childcare businesses and expansion of existing provisions;
- Continue to work with commercial and letting properties to develop and establish new provision especially in areas of future housing developments

There is a role for the masterplan to encourage appropriate provision of childcare facilities, in line with Havering Local Plan policies 16 and 17 – which give general support for additional community facilities.

Primary

In line with Havering Local Plan Policy 1, the emerging Bridge Close scheme (P1765.23), submitted in November 2023, includes a 3FE primary school with associated nursery.

The Masterplan should help identify suitable sites for additional primary school places (expanded and/or new schools) to cater for additional growth.

Secondary

Policy 1 explicitly refers to the need for a new school, rather than expanded schools. The Masterplan should investigate options for a secondary school site within the SDA area and/or identify potential for extension of the three secondary schools just outside. It should also identify opportunities to improve connections of the SDA with nearby schools.

Table 19 - Existing Childcare Facilities Provision

Childcare Facilities		
C1.	Chatterbugs	33-35 Mowbrays Road, Collier Row, RM5 3ET
C2.	Cotton Buddies	Cottons Park Pavillion, 6 Cottons Approach, RM7 7AA
C3.	Fledglings Day Nursery	61 Eastern Road, RM1 3PB
C4.	Great Child Nursery	42 Mawney Road, RM7 7HT
C5.	Little Eden Pre School & Day Nursery	73 Jutsum Lane, RM7 9HJ
C6.	Little Explorers Day Nursery	Rom Valley Way, RM7 0AG
C7.	Little Market Day Nursery	Wykenham Centre, Market Place, RM1 3AB
C8.	Little Robins Montessori Nursery	2 Craigdale Road, RM11 1AE
C9.	Montessori Minds	62 Eastern Road, RM1 3QA
C10.	New Beginnings (The White Horse) Nursery	50 Main Road, RM1 3DB
C11.	Oakfields Montessori Day Nursery	27 Heath Park Road, RM2 5UB
C12.	Over the Rainbow	7 Victoria Road, RM1 2JT
C13.	Rising Stars Romford	St Cedd Hall, Sims Close, RM1 3QT
C14.	Spectacular Kidz Preschool Nursery	1A Carlisle Road, RM1 2QP
C15.	Star Bright Day Nursery	St John's Vicarage, Mawney Road, RM7 7BH
C16.	St Kilda's Community Hub and Children's Centre	90 Eastern Road, RM1 3QA
C17.	The Old Station House Day Nursery	22 Collier Row Lane, SM5 3BP
C18.	The Scrumptious Early Years Nursery	63 Pettits Lane, RM1 4HA
C19.	Tiddly Winks Playgroup	Princes Road, RM1 2RD

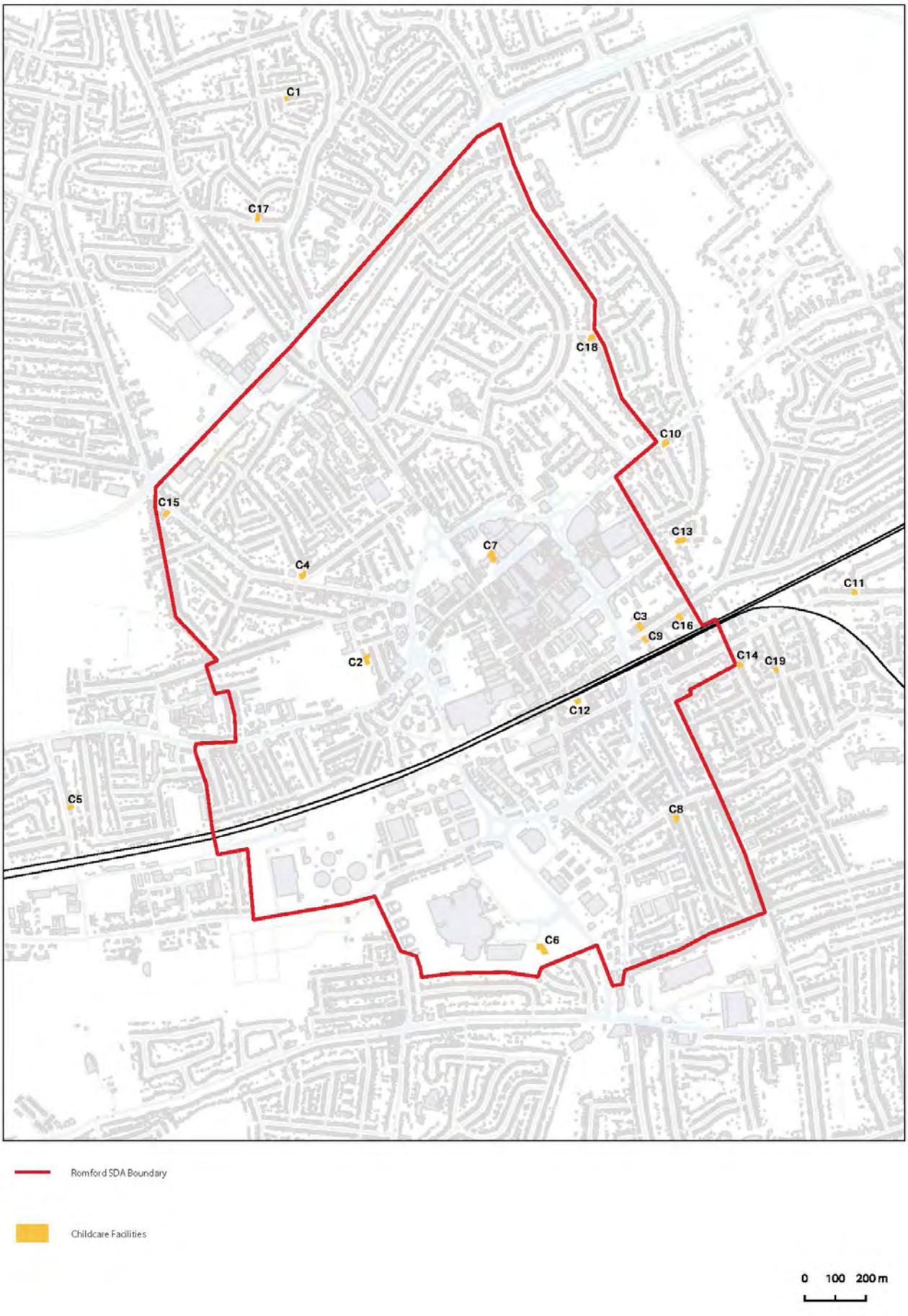


Fig. 58. Romford Childcare facilities in and around Romford SDA

Table 20 - Existing Primary Schools Provision

Romford Primary School Planning Area		
P1.	Concordia Academy, Union Road, RM7 0HG	Opened in September 2016. Plans to be an all-through Primary School by the year 2023, with a capacity of 630 students. PAN = 90
P2.	Crowlands Primary School, 22 Lessingham Avenue, RM7 9EJ	Nursery & Primary. 3FE. PAN = 90
P3.	Gidea Park Primary School, Lodge venue, RM2 5AJ	Primary. 2FE. PAN = 60
P4.	Hylands Primary School, Granger Way, RM1 2RU	Primary. 3FE. PAN = 90
P5.	St Edward's Church of England Primary, Havering Drive, RM1 4BH	Voluntary aided Nursery & Primary. 3FE. PAN = 90. Overall capacity 652
P6.	St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Dorset Avenue, RM1 4JA	Primary. 2FE. PAN = 60. Overall capacity 420
P7.	The Mawney Primary School, 29 Mawney Road, RM7 7HL	Foundation Nursery and Primary. 3FE school. PAN = 90

Collier Row School Planning Area		
P8.	Parklands Junior School, 48 Havering Road, RM1 4QU	Junior. 4FE. PAN = 120
P9.	Parklands Infant School, 48 Havering Road, RM1 4QU	Nursery and Infant. 4FE. PAN = 120. Overall capacity 420

Hornchurch Primary School Planning Area		
P10.	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Park Lane, RM11 1XY	Primary. 2FE. PAN = 60

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham		
P11.	Rush Green Primary School, Dagenham Road, RM7 0RL	4FE. PAN = 120

Table 21 - Existing Secondary Schools Provision

Secondary Schools		
S1.	Marshalls Park Academy, Pettits Lane, RM1 4EH	PAN = 240
S2.	St Edwards Church of England Academy, London Road, RM7 9NX	PAN = 210 places each year. Sixth form capacity?
S3.	The Frances Bardsley Academy for Girls, Brentwood Road, RM1 2RR	PAN = 240

Table 22 - Further Education

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham		
FE1.	Barking & Dagenham College, Dagenham Road, RM7 0XU	16-18-years-old. Approx. 12,500 students

https://www.havering.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2585/school_planning_data_pack_autumn_2018.pdf

https://www.havering.gov.uk/downloads/download/396/infant_and_primary_school_statistics

https://www.havering.gov.uk/downloads/file/1848/secondary_school_statistics_2018pdf

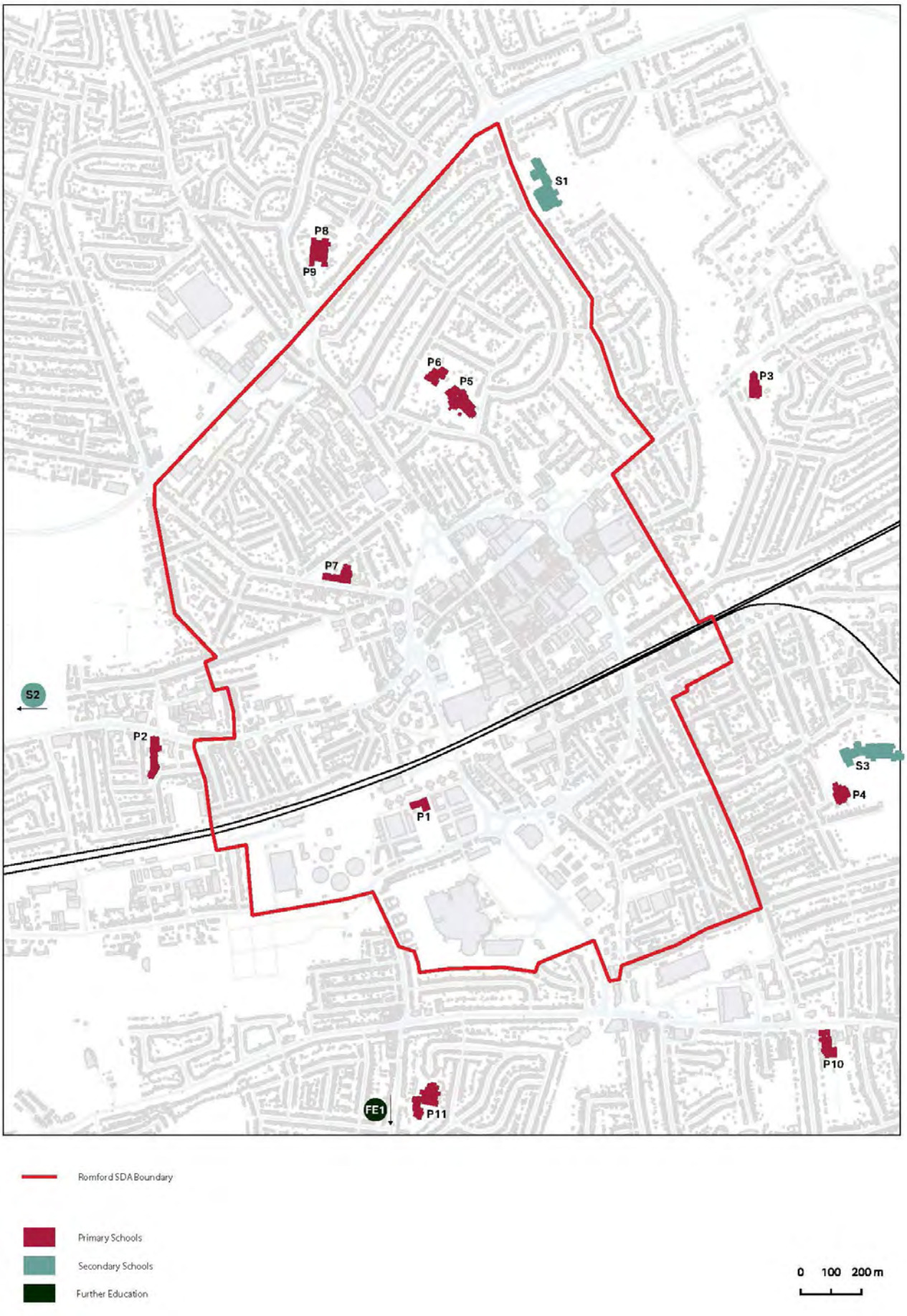


Fig. 59. Romford Primary, Secondary and FE facilities in and around Romford SDA

9.3.5 Community & Cultural Infrastructure

The following community-cultural-leisure uses are in and around Romford Town Centre. Please note – this area of search is more restricted than in and around the SDA (used for Childcare and Education and Health).

The list also excludes commercial food and beverage outlets (including pubs – other than those that serve as live music venues) and commercial gyms and fitness centres.

Table 23 - Existing Provision

Community-Culture-Leisure infrastructure		
CCL1.	Market Square	Market Place, RM1 3ER
CCL2.	St Edward the Confessor Church	Market Place, RM1 3AB.
CCL3.	Wykenham Hall	Market Place, RM1 3AB
CCL4.	The Lamb (music venue)	5 Market Place, RM1 3AB
CCL5.	The Retailery (now 80-84 Market Place)	82 Market Place, RM1 3ER
CCL6.	Romford Christian Spiritualist Church	20 St Edwards Way, RM1 4DD
CCL7.	Mercury House	Mercury Gardens, RM1 3SL
CCL8.	Central Library	St Edwards Way, RM1 3AR
CCL9.	Havering Town Hall	40 Main Road, RM1 3BS
CCL10.	Romford Magistrates' Court	Main Road, RM1 3BH
CCL11.	Romford County Court	2a Oaklands Avenue, RM1 4DP
CCL12.	Premiere Cinemas	Mercury Shopping Centre, Mercury Gardens, RM13EE Venue for annual Romford Film Festival (now in its third year)
CCL13.	Romford United Reformed Church	48-50 Western Road, RM1 3LP
CCL14.	Romford Royal British Legion	54 Western Road, RM1 3LP
CCL15.	Sapphire Ice & Leisure	24 Western Road, RM1 3JT
CCL16.	Brookside Theatre	21a Eastern Road, RM1 3NH
CCL17.	Romford and District Affiliated Synagogue	15 Eastern Road, RM1 3FA
CCL18.	Havering Association of Voluntary and Community Organisations (Havco)	Community House, 19-21 Eastern Road, RM1 3NH
CCL19.	Royal Air Force Club (music venue)	18 Carlton Road, RM2 5AA
CCL20.	Romford YMCA	29 Rush Green Road, RM7 0PH
CCL21.	Rush Green Social Club	Rush Green Road, RM7 0LB
CCL22.	Romford Greyhound Stadium	London Road, RM7 9DU
CCL23.	Havering Islamic Cultural Centre	91 Waterloo Road, RM7 0AA
CCL24.	Vue Cinema	The Brewery, RM1 1AU
CCL25.	Namco Funscape – Bowling Alley	The Brewery, RM1 1AU
CCL26.	St Andrew's Church	4 St Andrew's Road, RM7 9AT
CCL27.	The Sun (music venue)	47 London Road, RM7 9QA
CCL28.	Romford United Services and Social Club (music venue)	28 Mawney Road, RM7 7HB
CCL29.	Trinity Methodist Church Romford	Angel Way, RM1 1JH
CCL30.	The Salvation Army	49 High Street, RM1 1JL
CCL31.	Havering Museum	19-21 High Street, RM1 1JV
CCL32.	Public toilets	Market Place toilets, RM1 3ER South Street toilets, RM1 1RH Mercury Shopping Centre, Mercury Gardens, RM1 3EE Liberty Shopping Centre, RM1 3RL
CCL33.	Shopmobility	Liberty Shop, RM1 3RL Brewery Shop, RM1 1AU

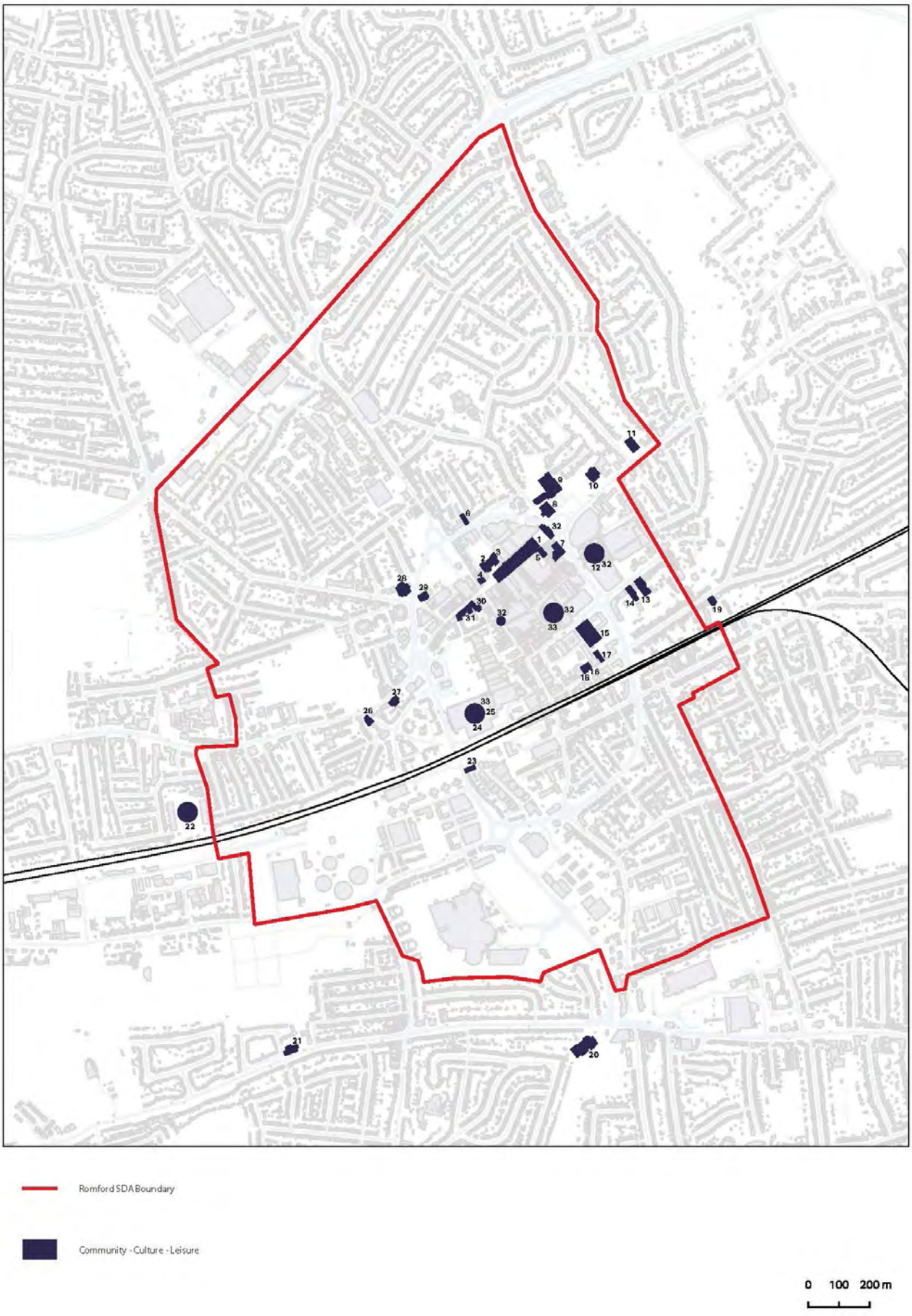


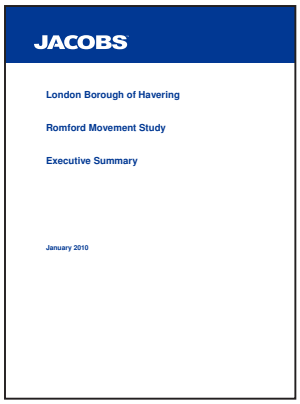
Fig. 60. Romford Community-Culture-Leisure infrastructure

10 PREVIOUS STUDIES

10.1 EXISTING VISIONS & OBJECTIVES

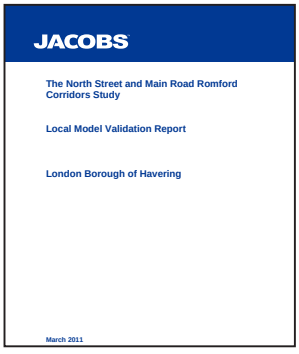
10.1.1 Review of Existing Documents

Whilst older formally adopted documents (including Haveing's Core Strategy and the Romford AAP) have been reviewed and will inform thinking, the approach the design team has been to build upon the objectives set out in key recent and emerging strategies. An audit of recent and emerging material has been outlined and tabled in a matrix. Key objectives from this review will help shape the priorities of the masterplan.



Romford Movement Study Executive Summary (Jan. 2010)

- "*Contribute to the sustainable regeneration of Romford Town Centre*" (Page 4)
- "*To manage growth and achieve the optimum balance between the needs of different road users to maintain the free movement of motor vehicles as far as possible whilst making it more convenient to walk, cycle and use buses*" (Page 4)
- "*To maintain an effective road network, maximising the effective capacity of the network through innovative solutions and some highway improvements to improve congestion 'hotspots*" (Page 4)



North Street Main Road Corridors Study (Mar. 2011)

- "*Contribute to the sustainable regeneration and economic prosperity of the Romford Town Centre in the context of increasing volumes of traffic and pressures from existing and new neighbouring retail centres such as Westfield and Lakeside*" (Page 10)
- "*Manage growth and achieve the optimum balance between the needs of different road users to maintain the free movement of motor vehicles as far as possible whilst making it more convenient to walk, cycle and use buses*" (Page 10)
- "*Maintain an effective road network, maximising the effective capacity of the network through innovative solutions and some highway improvements where necessary to improve congestion 'hotspots*" (Page 10)
- "*Tackle congestion and ensure no significant overall increase in road capacity, whilst reducing capacity in sensitive areas.*" (Page 10)
- "*Any capacity increases due to localised highway improvements should be used for the benefit of public transport, pedestrians and cyclists and, to a lesser extent, cars*" (Page 10)
- "*Safeguard servicing and access arrangements*" (Page 10)

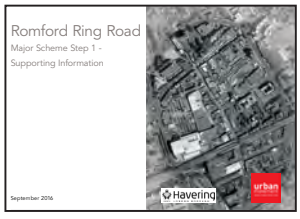
- "*Maximise the opportunities presented by any new developments and transport investment, particularly through S106*" (Page 10)
- "*Highlight opportunities to achieve public realm improvements as these [Main Road and North Street] are important approach roads to Romford*" (Page 10)
- "*Recognise North Street as an important commercial area in its own right and ensure any options for change support local business*" (Page 10)
- "*Ensure that key historic buildings and conservation areas are acknowledged including Gidea Park and the Romford Conservation Area, and that options for change serve to enhance rather than detract from these important sites*" (Page 10)

Greening Romford Ring Road (Dec. 2011)

- "*... a vision emerged of the Ring Road no longer as a barrier...*" (Page 5)
- "*... but as a public space where people can connect with each other...*" (Page 5)

Public Realm Romford Masterplan Report (Dec. 2011)

- "*Improve the convenience and ease of access for pedestrians and disabled.*" "*Introduce a 20mph zone.*" "*Green the town centre.*"
- "*Simplify the palette of paving materials.*" "*Invest in the town centre as a destination to attract visitors.*" (Page 49)



Ring road Major Scheme (Dec. 2011)

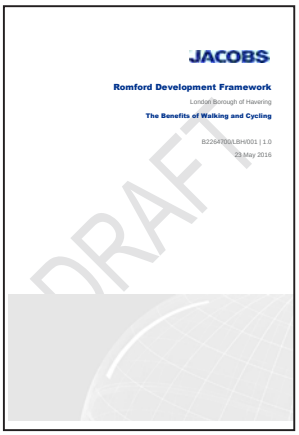
- "*...will help to improve the social fabric of the area by creating streets that encourage interaction at a human scale and at human speeds.*" (Page 73)
- "*...help to support the economic success of Romford by encouraging more people to arrive by the mode that has the highest weekly spend in the town centre, namely those who walk.*" (Page 73)
- "*...help to improve the environment by encouraging more people to walk and cycle.*" (Page 73)
- "*...help to encourage healthier lifestyles by promoting physical activity, improving air quality and reducing those injured or killed through road traffic collisions.*" (Page 73)
- "*...encourage shorter trips by more sustainable modes.*" (Page 73)

Urban Realm Framework Final Report (Dec. 2013)

- "*The overarching Vision for Romford is to become a truly mixed and lived-in town centre in the East of London. It will enhance its competitiveness as a poplar retail and leisure destination for its hinterland and expand its role as a place to live and to work.*" (Page 21)
- "*To make it a place with a distinct character and clear identity.*" (Page 21)

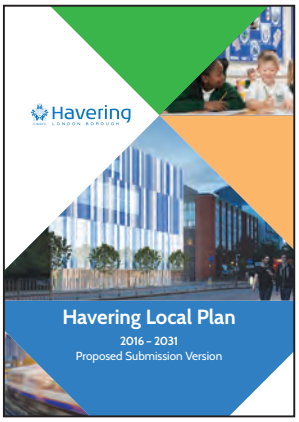
Romford-Development-Framework-Launch (Nov. 2015)

- "*To strengthen Romford's role as a Metropolitan Centre by better serving the retail and leisure needs of local and neighbouring communities.*" (Page 40)
- "*To promote an economically active and sustainable community, delivering residential development that is integrated within the town centre that contributes significantly to the Borough's housing need.*" (Page 40)
- "*To remain an important employment centre, attracting inward investment and supporting businesses to grow or locate in the town centre*" (Page 40)
- "*Build on the distinct character and fabric of the town centre bringing new vibrancy and activity to Romford's historic cross-roads and market area whilst respecting and capitalising on its heritage*" (Page 41)
- "*To portray a modern and vibrant aspirational identity for Romford's future whilst retaining its distinctiveness*" (Page 41)
- "*To deliver a high quality well-connected public realm and improve access by public transport, walking and cycling.*" (Page 41)
- "*Create active and attractive frontages onto existing and proposed pedestrian routes and generally improve the pedestrian environment and accessibility of the town centre.*" (Page 44)
- "*Seek the introduction/densification of residential and employment uses on upper floors.*" (Page 44)
- "*Provide appropriate levels of car parking in line with GLA standards, accepting car free living, consolidating town centre car parking and ensuring that commercial uses have access to appropriate levels of car parking to make them commercially viable.*" (Page 44)



Benefits of walking and cycling (May 2016)

- "*Increased footfall in retail areas.*" (Page 30)
- "*Improve access to employment, particularly for lower socioeconomic groups.*" (Page 30)
- "*Improve public health and physical activity levels among the population.*" (Page 30)
- "*Reduced journey times on the local network.*" (Page 31)
- "*Improve access to the town centre to facilitate multi-modal trips by active modes and public transport.*" (Page 31)



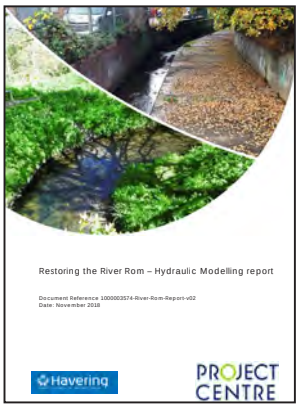
Proposed_Submission_Local_Plan_2016_2031

- "*To enable vibrant, inclusive, healthy and happy communities*" (Page 10)
- "*To provide opportunities for businesses and local people to thrive*" (Page 10)
- "*To create successful, high quality places where people choose to live, work and spend time*" (Page 10)
- "*Romford will have benefited from Crossrail and improved accessibility into Central London and beyond. The town's extensive residential and commercial development opportunities will have been realised and it will be thriving as the largest and most successful town centre within the borough and wider sub-region competing successfully with Stratford to the west and Lakeside and Bluewater to the east. As a key residential growth area Romford will offer high quality integrated town centre living and will be viewed as a place with a mixed and balanced community in which residents will wish to live and stay. There will be additional school places and a new health hub to serve both existing and new residents. The residential population will be supporting exciting new businesses and employment and entrepreneurial opportunities and Romford will be seen as an excellent place in which to do business. It will have built upon its historic character as a market town, with a successfully remodelled Market Place and a wide range of contemporary retail, service and leisure opportunities including an enhanced, and higher quality, restaurant and cultural offer.*" (paragraph 2.2.4)

The above vision for Romford in 2031 is supported by Policy 1 - which sets out detailed policy requirements in relation to residential development, commercial development, connectivity, social infrastructure and design and heritage.

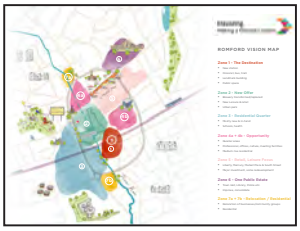
Liveable Neighbourhood Submission Draft (Oct. 2017)

- "*Deliver tangible improvements to the quality of people's lives by making it easier and more attractive to access Romford Metropolitan Centre on foot, by bicycle and by public transport through improvements to the Ring road and adjacent areas*" (Page 45)
- "*Improve the road safety record on the Ring road for all road users.*" "*Facilitate desirable forms of development on adjacent sites by addressing the hostility of the Ring road.*" "*Maintain or improve the bus passenger experience.*" "*Increase the mode share for walking, cycling and bus use.*" (Page 47)
- "*Create 'Quiet Cells' in the residential neighbourhoods that surround the Ring road to encourage walking and cycling from/through these areas.*" (Page 47)
- "*Create Healthy Streets 'Oasis' around the Ring road (informal play, fully accessible, places to rest, noise suppression, shaded, green, SUDS).*" (Page 47)
- "*Facilitate the continuing expansion of Havering Cycle Network, including the Romford Station Cycle Super Hub.*" (Page 47)
- "*Minimise disruption during construction.*" "*Maximise value for money.*" (Page 47)



River Rom Design Guide(2017)

- "*Use environmentally sensitive design to enhance the river environment for the wildlife, including the creation of new habitats.*" *(Page 1)* "*Ensure the design of the development at Bridge Close make the most of opportunities to enhance the river environment.*" (Page 1)
- "*Promote improved public access to the river and increase awareness of it.*" (Page 1)
- "*Increase the role of the river terms of its contribution to public realm, contributing to the open space network in the Borough and promote opportunities for informal recreation and leisure.*" (Page 1)
- "*Create an environment that encourages public participation in active management of wildlife habitats, such as appropriate river bankside management.*" (Page 1)

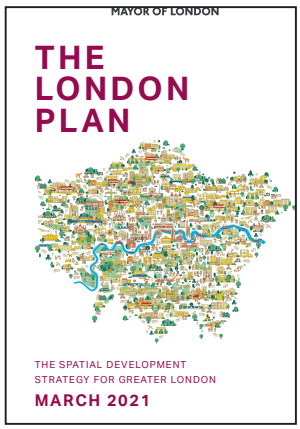


Romford Vision Map_C&P_060218 (Feb. 2018)

- "*New station*" "*Quieter areas*" "*Medium rise residential*" "*Landmark building*" "*Improve Public Space*" "*New leisure & retail*"

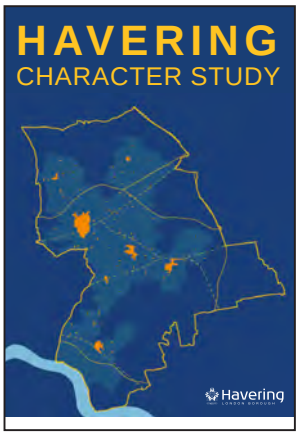
Romford Business Improvement District Business Plan (2018)

- "*...promote the town as a prime destination...*" "*encourage and support more diverse businesses, creating a better balanced offer that enhances the vibrancy of our town centre.*" "*making Romford clean, green and safe ensuring a warm welcome for all...delivering exciting public realm improvements*" (Page 10)



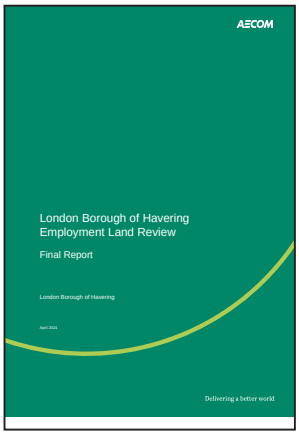
The London Plan (March 2021)

- "*The concept of Good Growth – growth that is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable – underpins the London Plan and ensures that it is focused on sustainable development.*" (paragraph 0.0.18)
- "*provide access to good quality community spaces, services, amenities and infrastructure that accommodate, encourage and strengthen communities, increasing active participation and social integration, and addressing social isolation*" (Policy GG1, C)
- "*identifying locations for mixed-use or housing-led intensification to optimise residential growth potential, securing a high-quality environment and complementing local character and heritage assets*" (Policy SD6, A, 2)
- "*The management of vibrant daytime, evening and night-time activities should be promoted to enhance town centre vitality and viability, having regard to the role of individual centres in the night-time economy and supporting the development of cultural uses and activity.*" (Policy SD6, F)
- "*...boroughs should allocate appropriate edge-of-centre sites that are, or can be, well integrated with the existing centre, local walking and cycle networks, and public transport*" (Policy SD6, A, 2)
- "*Car parking should be restricted in line with levels of existing and future public transport accessibility and connectivity.*" (Policy T6, A)



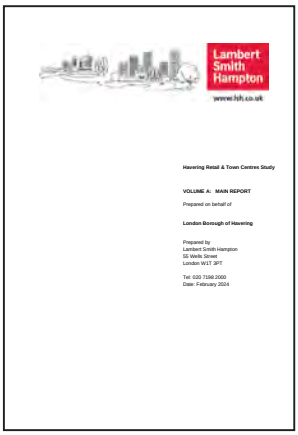
Havering Character Study (Draft 2024)

- "Central Romford and the Rom Valley will be the most significant area of change in the borough." (Page 50)
- "Romford is the borough's Metropolitan Centre - important for its role in retail, leisure and entertainment uses. Tall buildings in Romford would support a local economy and bring investment into the centre, with the appropriate services clustered to support new residents." (Page 114)
- "The borough has a well-valued and diverse network of natural landscapes which...are part of the character of the borough today and need to be drawn through and celebrated as part of borough's future character." (Page 4)
- "Opportunities to overcome [east-west physical infrastructure] divides and the impact they have on neighbourhoods should be explored as part of future growth scenarios." (Page 4)
- "Very generally, the borough's history is either ancient 'gems'- early centres and churches, or attractive examples of early 20th century suburbia. The Character Study... recommends finding opportunities to further honour these protected assets." (Page 5)
- "The borough's network of centres has markedly different character... Each have strong individual identities which should be enhanced through growth and investment." (Page 5)
- "Numerous large sites within opportunity areas at Romford Town Centre and at Beam Park are allocated for redevelopment to reimagine the existing character." (Page 5)



Havering Employment Land Review

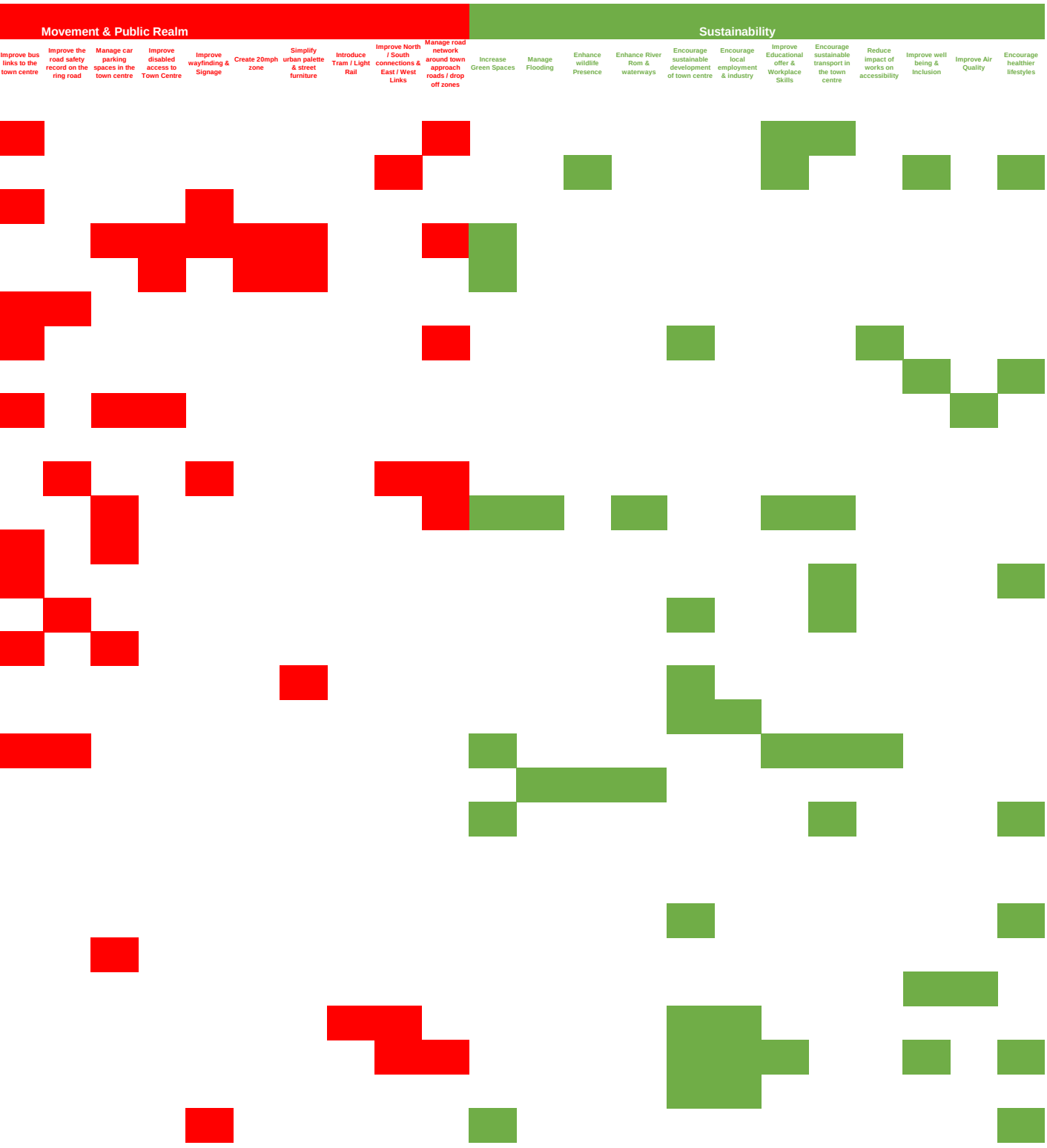
- The former Romford Office Quarter is no longer denoted as a designated office area in local planning policy. Redevelopment (mainly through Permitted Development Rights (PD) has converted the office stock to residential. Demand for office typologies were already diminishing when analysed in the 2015 ELR.
- The condition of the remaining office buildings is either good or average quality, but with no new premises which would meet current office occupier specifications.
- An additional (net) demand for approximately 33,249 sqm office floorspace in Havering. However, the projected demand for office floorspace up to 2041 is in balance (-32 sqm).
- In Romford specifically, the existing office stock should be retained where feasible and refurbished to meet modern requirements.



Havering Retail and Town Centres Study 2024

- Retail and town centres are changing and have been expedited due to the recent economic shifts driven by e.g. Covid-19 Pandemic – the main consideration is that there is a declining role of retail in town centres, with Romford following this principle. The retail health check suggests that there is an oversupply of retail floorspace, and a need to consolidate the retail offer – likely to be centred on the Liberty Centre in the future but with a mix of other uses support it in the future.
- Romford should remain the metropolitan centre for Havering (as defined by the London Plan) and should remain the main focus for retail, leisure and services uses that are intended to meet the needs of Havering's residents and the areas beyond.
- The demand for retail space is in decline, but the identification of Primary Shopping Areas (PSA) as the focus for existing and new retail and other Class E uses remains appropriate. This would be expected to include the areas currently identified as Primary Frontage, including the Liberty Centre.
- Outside of these areas a wider mix of leisure, F&B and other main town centre uses will be appropriate, as will residential development in appropriate locations. This should include policy support for the night time economy given Romford's identification as a NT2 centre in the London Plan. Diversification of this offer should expand beyond uses which focus on alcohol consumption, to avoid fuelling anti-social behaviour.
- Strategies should promote retail and Class E uses around South Street and the Liberty Centre; encourage a wider mix of leisure uses at the Brewery Centre and around Romford Station, and include evening and night time activities and residential around the Mercury Centre.
- Support is also required to build on the market and historic core. This could potentially be in the form of requiring any new development proposals within the town centre to avoid harm to the market and, where possible provide enhancements to the market itself or its setting.

10.2 KEY OBJECTIVES MATRIX


Movement & Public Realm
Sustainability
Improve bus links to the town centre
Improve the road safety record on the ring road
Manage car parking spaces in the town centre
Improve disabled access to Town Centre
Improve wayfinding & Signage
Create 20mph zone
Simplify urban palette & street furniture
Introduce Tram / Light Rail
Improve North / South connections & East / West Links
Manage road network around town approach roads / drop off zones
Increase Green Spaces
Manage Flooding
Enhance wildlife Presence
Enhance River Rom & waterways
Encourage sustainable development of town centre
Encourage local employment & industry
Improve Educational offer & Workplace Skills
Encourage sustainable transport in the town centre
Reduce impact of works on accessibility
Improve well being & Inclusion
Improve Air Quality
Encourage healthier lifestyles

11 SUMMARY

11.1 SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

Built Form & Character

- Redefine Romford's identity
- Enhance and protect conservation area
- Build on character and heritage in town centre
- Add landmarks to the town centre
- Promote the town as a prime destination for locals
- Improve legibility and navigability of town centre
- Create quieter areas in town centre
- Create buffer zones around the Ring road

Housing

- Intensify residential use in the town centre
- Provide 7,500 new homes across the London Borough of Havering

Employment & Economic Development

- Improve Educational offer & Workplace Skills
- Encourage local employment & industry
- Increase the footfall and spending in the town centre
- Add new leisure & retail units to town centre
- Improve business offer

Community & Cohesion

- Reduce impact of works on accessibility
- Improve Well-being & Inclusion
- Encourage healthier lifestyles

Landscape and Public Realm

- Maximise value for money
- Create/improve public realm in the town centre
- Improve wayfinding & signage
- Simplify palette for urban public realm
- Provide civic space for events

Connectivity & Movement

- New train station/public realm
- Improve pedestrian access to the town centre
- Improve cycling access to the town centre
- Improve bus links to the town centre
- Improve the road safety record on the ring road
- Manage car parking spaces in the town centre
- Improve disabled access to Town Centre
- Create 20mph zone
- Reduce traffic
- Introduce Tram / Light Rail
- Improve North / South connections
- Improve East / West Links
- Manage road network around town approach roads
- Create school drop off zones

Environment & Sustainability

- Increase Green Spaces
- Manage Flooding
- Enhance Wildlife Presence
- Enhance River Rom Environment
- Encourage sustainable development of town centre
- Encourage sustainable transport
- Improve Air Quality

12 APPENDICES

12.1 HERITAGE AUDIT

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Romford Town Centre
History &
Heritage Assessment

Authentic Futures

October 2020

Cover Image: *Looking past Laurie Hall to the market place and church spire c.1905*

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by heritage consultant Robert Bevan, director of Authentic Futures. Robert has qualifications in architecture, planning and urban design and has worked as a heritage specialist in government and in private practice.

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Romford Town Centre

History & Heritage Assessment

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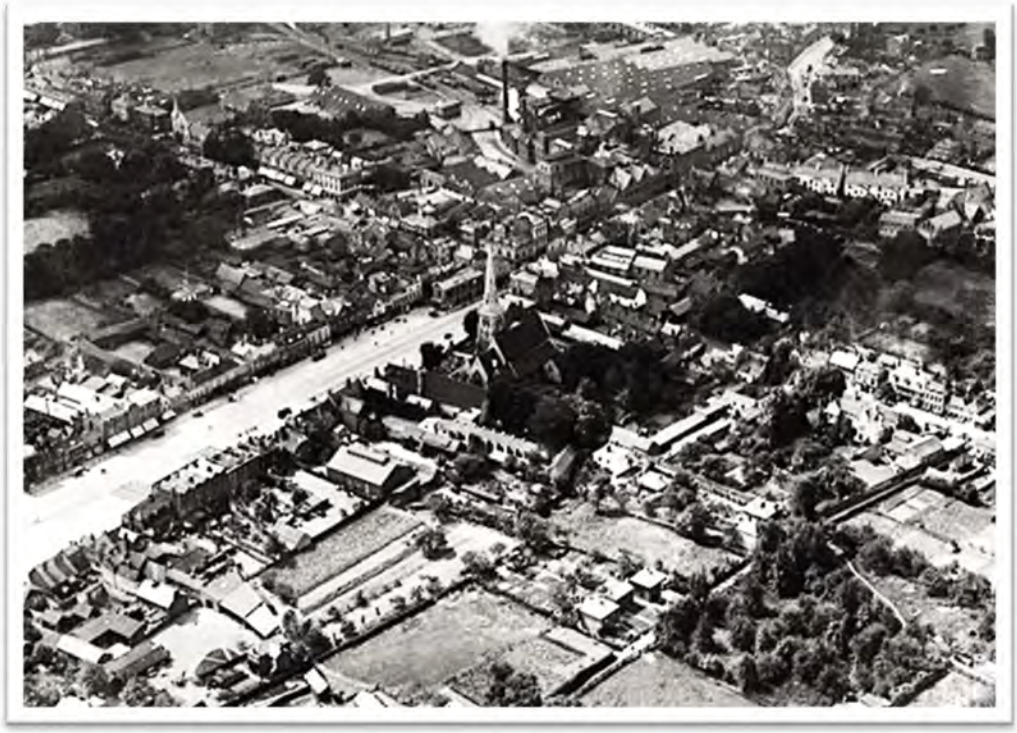


Romford from above in 1920 with rear yards and green spaces still dominating the backlands behind the Market Place frontages.

1.0 Introduction

This report by Authentic Futures is one of a suite of documents that has informed the emergence of a masterplan for Romford Town Centre, a project being led by architects Maccreanor Lavington and a team of specialists. It informs the baseline assessment on heritage matters. The history of Romford is outlined, concentrating on its morphological evolution and physicality, then heritage assets are identified and some initial recommendations made in the light of heritage-related opportunities and threats.

Romford is identified as an Opportunity Area in the emerging London Plan and is at the centre of a Strategic Development Area identified in Havering's emerging Local Plan. Crossrail is also arriving in the town soon which will likely add to considerable housing pressures. At the same time, retail, which is the life-blood of central Romford today, is undergoing considerable flux. A masterplan is needed to guide opportunities in a way that respects Romford's qualities and history, strengthens pride in the town, and makes it a distinct and attractive place to live, work, and visit. The masterplan focusses on a core area in and immediately around the town centre, with some strategies covering a wider area. This heritage report similar concentrates on the area within the existing ring road with some discussion of areas beyond it.

Romford has a long-standing identity crisis – is it part of London or a part of Essex? This is reflected in the physical environment of its town centre. Romford historically was a small market town and its market place a livestock market. Looking at archive photographs and sketches of its older buildings, and it is this rural, Essex aesthetic that is notable but one that has almost entirely vanished today beyond the form of Market Place itself and a clutch of key buildings.

Tasks for Romford include setting out an understanding of how its character emerged, what that character is today, and build upon it to reinforce local identity. This can be done by understanding the value of its heritage assets and their settings, identifying an underpinning narrative that is authentically Romford, then developing a strong development management framework that includes a design code and additional controls such as an expanded conservation area in order to deliver that narrative.

Even though much of Romford's historic built fabric has been lost, tracing its morphology, the persistence of its layout through the centuries, helps us identify its surviving but sometimes hidden history. What remains of historic environment gives us clues as to where to go next and how the add layers around existing

kernels of quality. This includes identifying the best of its inter-war heritage – a defining period of Romford's shopping story but one whose value has been much overlooked. This is not an argument for pastiche but for contemporary architecture that understands Romford's history and piece-by-piece creates a specific identity that resonates as Romford.

What follows focuses purposefully on the physical make-up of the town rather than a socio-economic history – although the pattern of town centre uses, of course, matter. It also uses the cardinal points to more easily identify the town's quarters while recognising this is a shorthand for what's on the ground.

2.0 History and Morphological Evolution

2.I A Market Town Emerges

The Roman road towards Colchester left London at Old Ford through the great forest of eastern England and some ten miles later had to cross a ford in the River Rom – hence Romford. (The Roman settlement at Durolitum was once nearby).

The river was broader before it was controlled and water extracted – to the point that a (at least seasonal) lagoon may have existed in the vicinity of today's market place and the first pre-historic settlement is thought to have been at Marshalls, on higher ground behind today's library and town hall. The crossing of the river by road on a gravel terrace some 50ft above sea level persisted as Romford's basic form for centuries.

The first building mentioned is the chapel of St Andrew (1177 and abandoned before 1410) which once stood by the junction of Oldchurch Road and South Street so the nucleus of Romford or a separate settlement may once have been here. But it was the chapel of St Edward that came to dominate – originally some way north of today's market, a market sited on common ground bedside the Great Essex Road and then straddling it and widening it out. The old chapel of St Andrew fell into ruin in the late 1300s and was replaced by a new church on the market that was completed in 1410. It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St Edward the Confessor. An orphanage at its western end became St Edward's School.

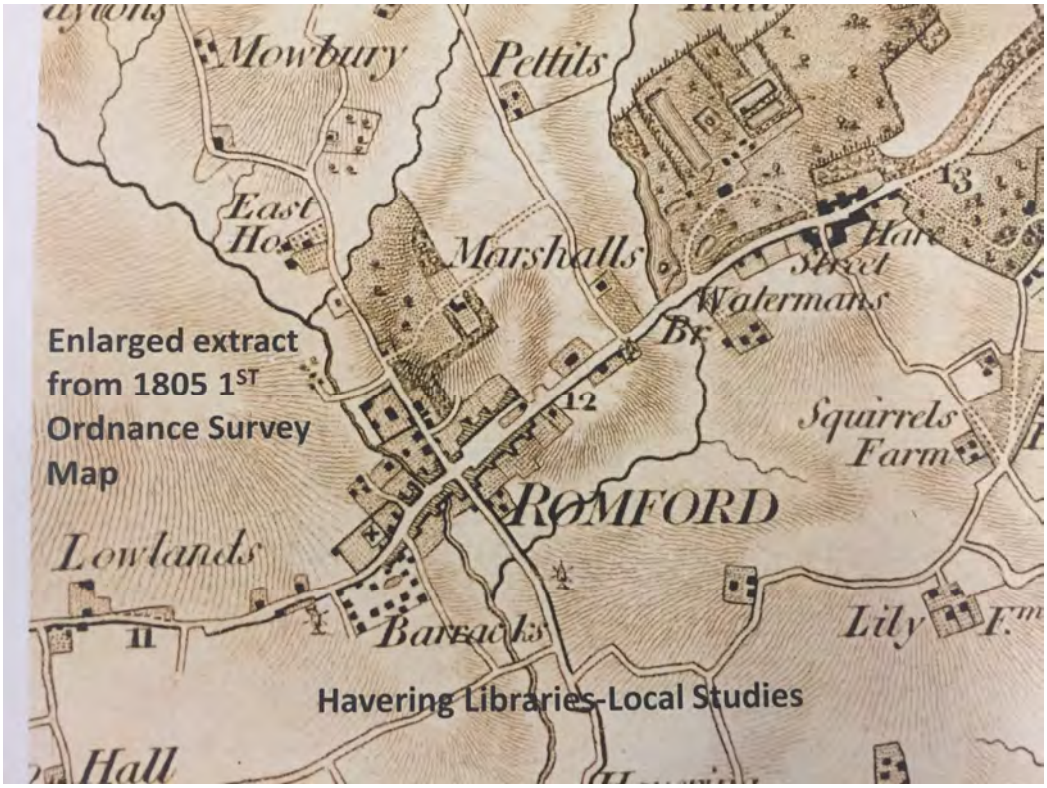
The town grew around the market and not the royal retreat of Havering Palace that may have had Saxon origins and stood in the nearby village of Havering-atte-Bower and was in occasional use by royalty until Cromwell's Commonwealth (it declined and was demolished in the decades following). The area had an unusual governance status being the Liberty of Havering-atte-Bower as well as a royal manor consisting of Havering, Hornchurch and Romford and in possession of the crown from the 11th to the late 19th centuries. The whole was also the Parish of Hornchurch.

Romford as a manor (called Mawneys) is first recorded in 1299 but it already had a weekly general market on Wednesdays in 1247 serving as an animal and produce market for its agricultural hinterland with later a Monday market for calves (until 1816) and a Tuesday market for hogs (from at least 1633). There was an annual fair by 1250. The Saturday market was a more recent development, beginning some time before 1907.

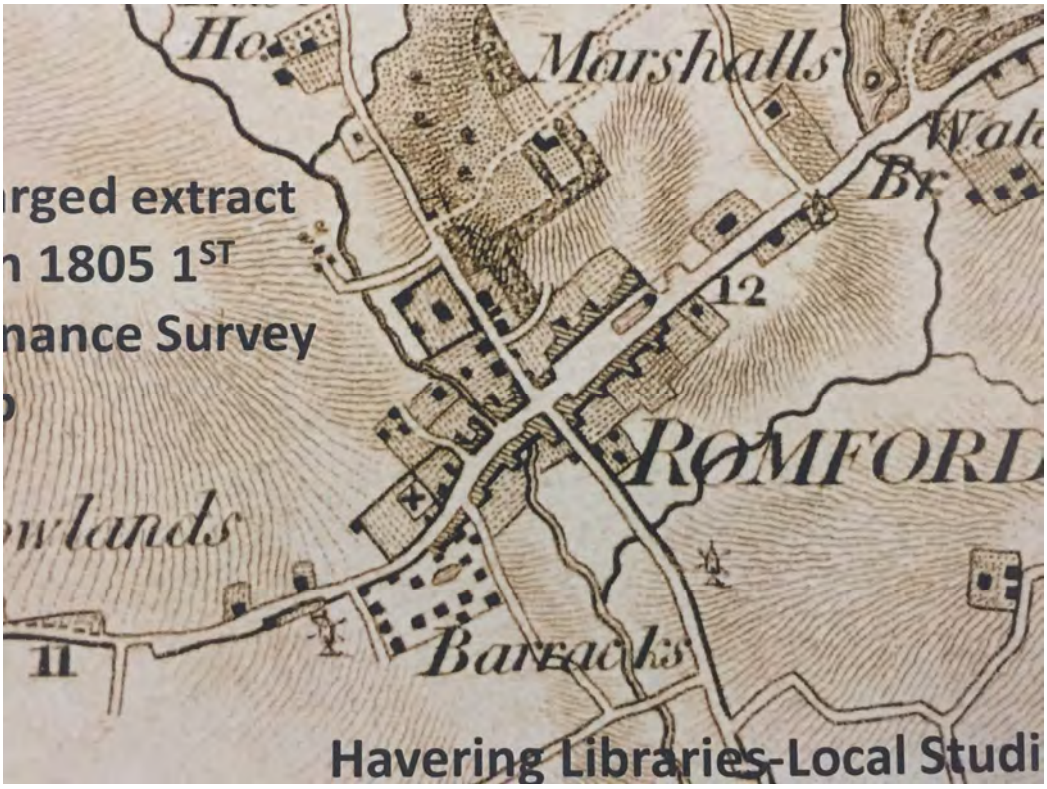
For much of its existence Romford was, essentially, a substantial village of houses and inns around the market, the High Street and the eastern end of London Road, but already in the 1600s it was being described as a ‘great market town for corn and cattle’. In 1670 it has been estimated that there were 323 houses in Romford (184 centrally) and this had grown to some 522 houses and a population over 3,000 by 1801.

Liberty of Havering with Romford at centre c.1610

Chapman and Andre 1777 map: Romford's early linearity is beginning to expand into a settlement of four quarters around a crossroads although the expansion is chiefly along the north arm as well as east-west. Market Place is the dominant space but in this depiction at least, the High Street is also broad.



Above 1805 Ordnance Survey



1805 detail: At the beginning of the 19th century, the pattern of settlement remains much has it had some two decades earlier but the barracks located

where the London Road met today's Waterloo Road is in place and there is more development in the north west corner (ie west of today's North Street).

The Market Place developed to about 400 by 50 metres with, in the early 19th century, still large areas devoted to cattle – one of the largest near London. By the 1870s, the eastern end was used for pigs and cattle and the western reaches for farm tools, clothing and produce. The cattle market remained significant until shortly after the Second World War and it finally closed in 1958, with the market remaining for household items, clothes and food. From at least the 18th century until 1933, the Market House stood at the western end by the crossroads. It held a courtroom, gaol and the official measures for weighing goods. It was a two-storey classical building with an arcaded ground floor and crowned by a small cupola.

Romford has lost almost its entire collection of Georgian buildings including many frontages on the north side of Market Place. The shambles was on the north side outside the church.

Romford Market House, c.1800. (Havering Libraries Local Studies and Family History Centre)

The Market Place remained the through route for Romford until 1970. In the 18^{tth} century it had become a toll road used by coaches and wagons with the nearest tollgate further south down the High Street. Romford Bridge carried the road over the High Street in the vicinity of today's surviving brewery buildings and was rebuilt a number of times – the last in 1921.

2.2 Victorian and Edwardian Romford

The still linear town's first notable expansion was the Napoleonic War-era barrack ground off London Road that covered 12 acres towards the later line of the railway and which was subsequently developed as New Romford, some 200 cottages with two or more factories. The site today is the estate off Waterloo Road.

The early arrival of the Eastern Counties railway in 1839 was the tipping point for rapid change with Romford's population jumping from 5,317 to almost 14,000 in 1901 then to more than 40,000 in the inter-war period. The station's location on South Street stimulated further growth along that arm of Romford's central crossroads. Development also spread up Collier Row Lane (later North Street) from an earlier hamlet of artisan's cottages. The first station was joined by a second opposite that later linked the LMS line to the GER/LNER before the stations were amalgamated in 1934 and one entrance closed and converted into shops.

Gotto map of 1848: Romford is still a small country town and building along South Street is still very limited despite the arrival of the railway embankment. There is a gas works located by the station in the vicinity of today's Art Deco former cinema building. Western Road is in place on the Stewards Estate. The long-standing windmill south of the line is shown and there is development on the site of the former barracks to the south west of the centre.

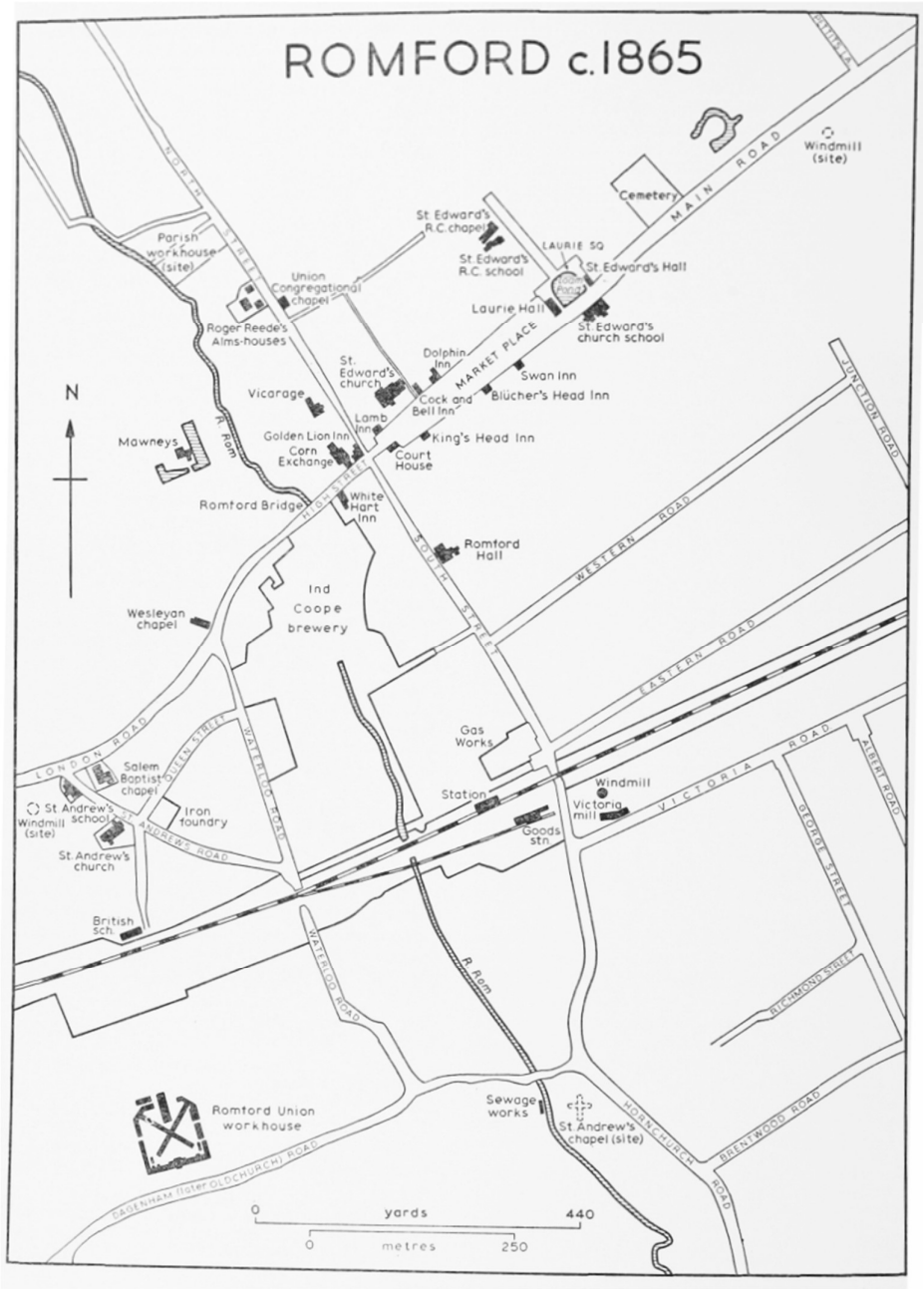
The Market Place is still the main feature along with the crossroads. Romford Brewery on the open River Rom has begun to occupy the south-west quarter of the town centre but otherwise there is largely open country beyond the back gardens and yards of the frontage buildings. South of Market Place, the long, thin Medieval burgage plots remain a defining feature of the south east quarter.

The railway on its embankment formed a hard, southern edge roughly parallel to the line of High Street and Market Place. From c.1850, Laurie Town, a small enclave of villas around a square with two a pond and two public halls was

developed adjacent to the market. Laurie Hall separated this new development from the old market but the whole remained the principal route though Romford. The town developed further when the former manor of Stewards east of South Street and the market was laid out by 1854 with first Western Road and then Eastern Road and Victoria Road.

50 Looking south through the railway arch. The rail line was disadvantaged by the limit placed on the traffic it could handle on its two tracks throughout the 1920s. This view of *c.*1910 shows the beginning of the slope up to the platform; horse-drawn traffic is waiting at the bottom.

South Street to the railway embankment looking to south. The Star pub on the right was replaced by the Times Furnishings building.



DIAGRAMATIC ROMFORD c.1865 from the Victoria County History *volume on Essex. Romford is still essentially a market place and cross roads but the railway station parallel to the main east-west road will increasingly define the southern edge of the town centre. The vicarage is shown on North Street and the Corn Exchange next door to the Golden Lion. The moated manor of Mawneys is still in place in the north west quarter. It is notable that a town grid is not emerging. Minor routes in the town centre beyond the cross roads are limited to Chapel Lane leading to St Edward's RC chapel and meeting the path from the Anglican church at right angles. Eastern Road has joined Western Road as parallel routes in the south but these do not form part of a gridded network. Laurie Square is marked – a secondary space to the Market Place east of Laurie Hall.*

Commercially, agriculture remained dominant with Romford's Corn Exchange opening in 1845 (enlarged 1861, closed c.1935) in the building adjoining the Golden Lion. The town's post office was originally at the Cock and Bell in the market until it relocated to South Street in 1870.

To the north east, near today's library, was built the Roman Catholic church – also dedicated to St Edward the Confessor and built in 1856 by Daniel Cubitt Nicholls in a Pugin-inspired early Gothic style in stone and brick. A day school was built at the same time then replaced with a larger school (probably by George Sherrin) along with a presbytery and later, in the 1930s, a North Chapel. The school eventually became a social club.

The Anglican Church had itself been recently rebuilt by architect John Johnson using similar materials – some of which came from the demolished Regent Street Quadrant by John Nash. Its spire is 162 feet high and the interior incorporates older memorials.

The second edition OS map of 1873 showing the steady expansion of Romford including the building up of South Street. Buildings such as the County Court are now located there as well as the relatively newly built Romford Hall. Eastern and Western Roads are slowly being built out and the brewery is growing and has its own sidings. Laurie Town and Laurie Square are more defined and built up but around the Market Place, the long thin plots and yards remain the defining features. Other than the brewery, the open land behind the crossroads frontages is still very present but the wider town south of the railway line is becoming built-up as is the area west of Waterloo Road.

Romford High Street as it widened into London Road c.1908

The central crossroads structure with Romford town centre divided into quadrants was becoming well established and the town expanded again in the 1880s with the development for housing on the manor of Mawneys north west of the crossroads. Development also followed in the north of the town and by 1900, Romford was also expanding westwards and southwards, always around its central cross.

Romford remained unusual in not having either a tangle or a grid of streets beyond its main crossroads and this situation has continued into the present day. Despite the building of Western Road, the town's south-east quadrant was largely impenetrable beyond the yards of the coaching inns around the Market Place and the south-west quadrant became entirely taken up with industry – most notably brewing.

1873: The south-east quarter of Romford in greater detail. The south side of the Market Place is still characterised by long thin burgage (borough) plots with the frontages occupied by inns and other businesses. The yard typology behind this frontage is very evident with outbuildings such as stables surrounding the yards. There is also a side street of the north side of Market Place and the building out of Laurie Town with a formal, axial route towards the site of the present town hall. School buildings are shown – in the vicinity of today's ring road and Asda. Beyond the yards, the south-east quadrant is still a green space of gardens, orchards and plant nurseries. Beyond the linear High Street and Market Place, the character remains predominantly residential with South Street, Eastern and Western Roads and Victoria Road all partially lined with detached or semi-detached villas. The Rising Sun (now the Goose) opposite the station is shown as is the soon to be defunct windmill.

The Ind, Coope & Co.brewery was set up in 1799, when Edward Ind bought the Star Inn, with a small brewery attached, beside the River Rom in the High Street. The brewery site was greatly extended towards the railway as the 19th century progressed and in the early 20th century it had sidings linked to the station and more than 400 employees – by far Romford's largest single business.

The brewery served a cluster of local pubs, some of which had already been in existence for centuries – serving the market and travellers. According to one source, by 1686, Romford had enough beds in its inns for 139 people and stabling for over 400 horses. This created a pattern of development – particularly around the Market Place and High Street of long, thin buildings occupying medieval burgage plots, often with an arch leading to yards and stabling at the rear. In 1762 there were 22 pubs including the White Hart on the High Street, which had been in business since at least 1489, the King's Head on Market Place and the Golden Lion at the corner of North Street. Most have since been rebuilt or demolished entirely.

Other central industries included tanneries, candle production (a noxious works existed on South Street after 1849, a mineral factory on Market Place and a comb factory near the Old Barrack Ground by Waterloo Road. There were also a number of small metal workshops, a millwright and a coach-builders. There were also three windmills in Romford town, including the South Street mill behind the Rising Sun pub (now The Goose) that literally had the wind taken out of its sails when the railway embankment was built close by.

There was no mains water until the second half of the 19th century. Before this, Romford relied on the Loam Pond east of the market and a public well at the eastern end of the market itself. By 1905 there was mains water throughout the town. Mains sewage arrived with the Oldchurch works from 1862 but the Rom continued to be polluted until new works were built near Hornchurch.

Romford had a town gas works in South Street from the early 19th century but a new works was built in 1892 south of the station – this was a 25-acre site by 1938. Before a much-delayed power station for south Essex was built at Barking after the First World War, electricity came from a private sub-station on the Ind Coope site.

Physical public institutions were few with, perhaps, only a single theatre in the 19th century and (from 1930) a library in the market place. However, there were many cultural societies and sports clubs using facilities beyond the centre. And well into the 20th century, there was much green space within the town centre –

hidden behind the commercial frontages. Dedicated parkland was outside the centre – notably Raphael Park which opened in 1904 on Gidea Hall land.

Romford Town Mission – in Laurie Hall – with market day animal pens

Laurie Hall from the East (c1905) with the greenery of Laurie Square at right

Romford was also a town – at least in its centre – with remarkably few churches. When the Salvation Army opened in Romford in 1881 it railed against the "brewery blighted town." The main Anglican church remained St Edward the Confessorwhich was rebuilt on the site of the medieval church from 1844 by John Johnson in Kentish ragstone with Bath stone dressings.

As well as the Roman Catholic church mentioned above, the Church of St Andrew was erected in 1862 on the former barrack ground by Waterloo Road. Non-conformist places of worship also included an Independent Church on North Street, the Baptist Salem church on London Road and Romford Baptist Church on Main Road. The Zoar (Strict) church existed on the Market Place before moving on to North Street. The Trinity (Wesleyan) church, Mawney Road (now Angel Way), originated by 1827 when a chapel was built in High Street. In 1887 the old chapel was sold to the Salvation Army, and in 1888 the present Trinity church was built and a school added nearby in 1899. It became the centre of the 'Romford Revival' but was damaged by bombing in 1840. There is also Romford United Reformed church on Western Road, originating in the late 17th century on another site and rebuilt on this site repeatedly until 1965. A permanent synagogue arrived just before the war, moving to Eastern road in 1954.

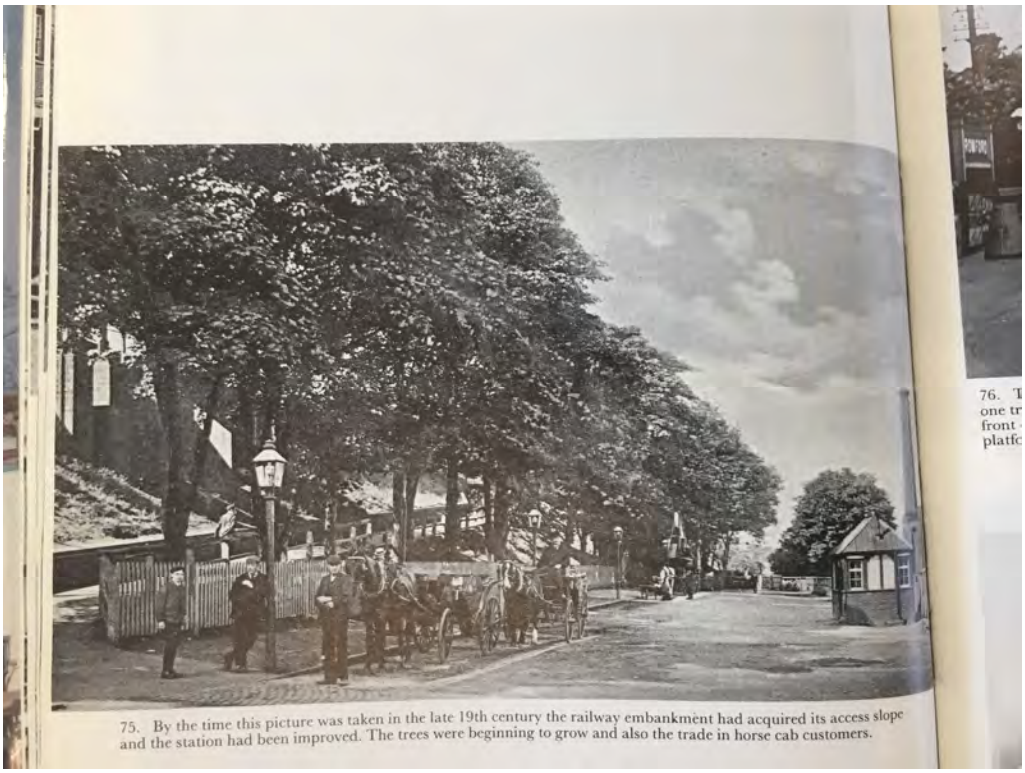
By 1896, the picture remains much the same in central Romford (see above map with the notable enlargement of the brewery that is now occupying a significant part of the south west quadrant. There is also a further intensification of building at the West end of the High Street/London Road and its environs. The Mawneys manor estate was also developed (it was sold for building in 1883) with secondary streets occupying the north-west quadrant including Mawneys Road, Linden and Olive Streets.

At the beginning of the 20th century then, Romford's town centre is growing far more rapidly west of the crossroads than east which remains much more green. Mawneys manor house was demolished in 1935 (for the United Services Club)

but ten years earlier the developed estate had already been subdivided into a central and peripheral area by the building of Eastern Avenue.

There is also an intensification of activity around the two railway stations (plus the Goods Station) but the workhouse and infirmary remained isolated, outside the town proper.

Residential and tree-lined Eastern Road in 1908

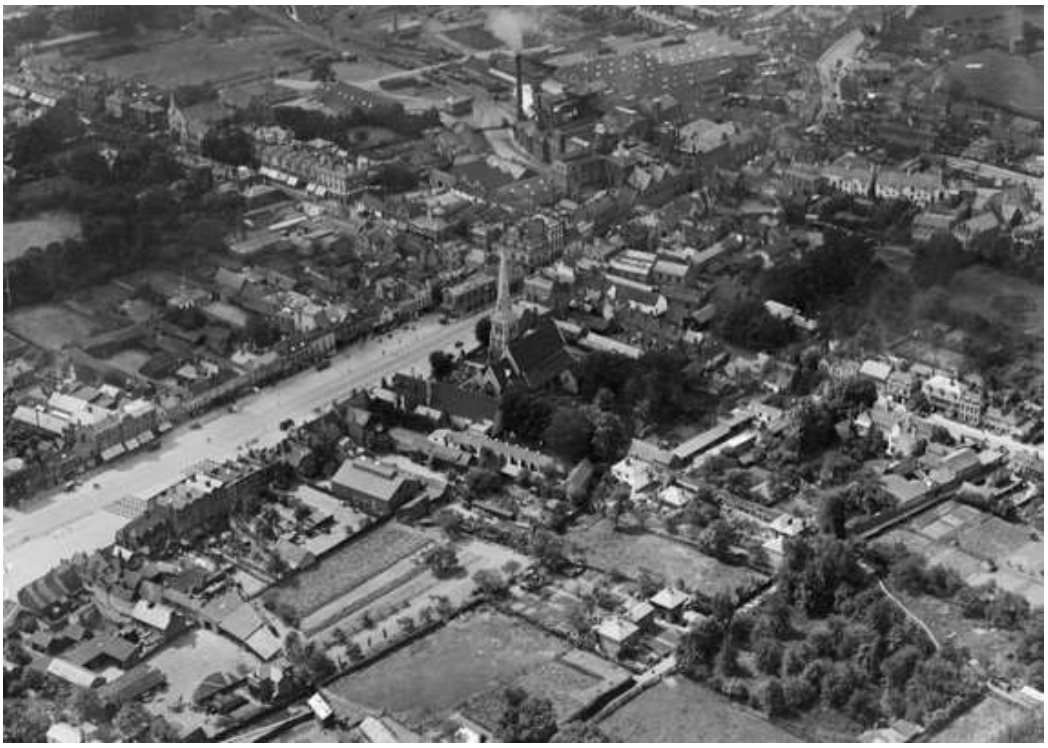


75. By the time this picture was taken in the late 19th century the railway embankment had acquired its access slope and the station had been improved. The trees were beginning to grow and also the trade in horse cab customers.

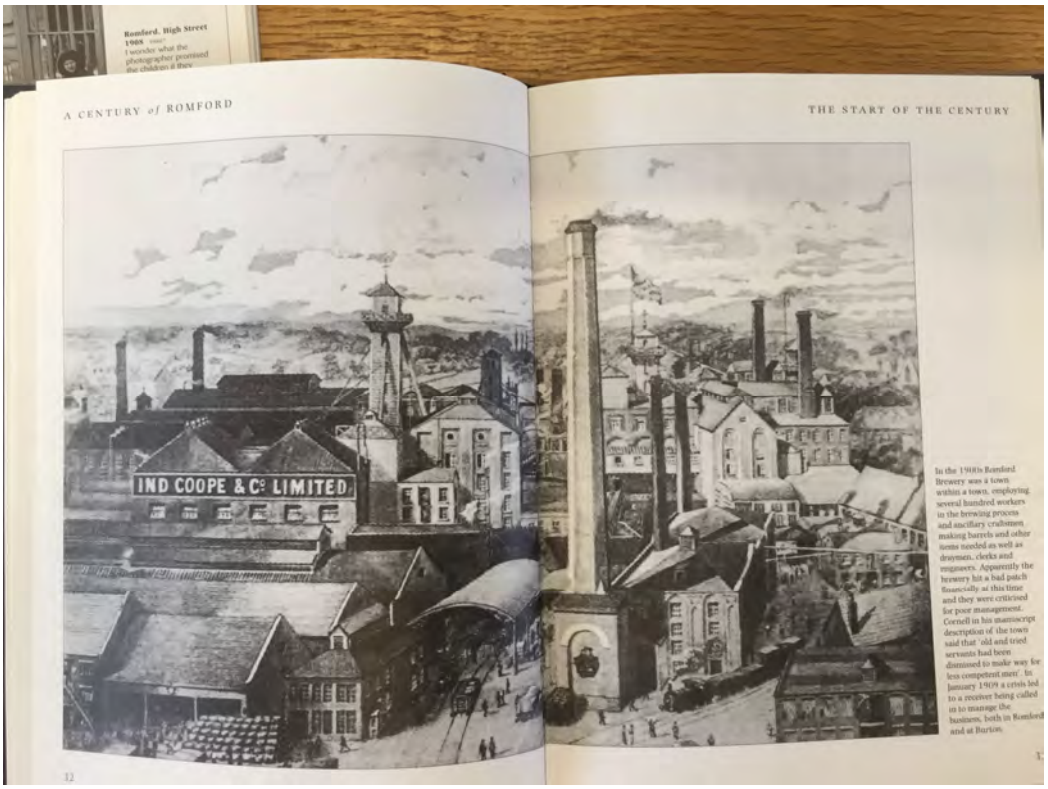
The wooded railway embankment ramp

Weatherboard buildings propped in Bazier's Yard (1905)

Remarkably, central Romford just after the First World War was not essentially different from the 1870s or 1890s. The brewery had grown relentlessly but otherwise the early morphology of the town centre remains, organised around the original market and crossroads. Secondary routes are still few within the town centre – an unusual pattern of development for English towns of this size – as can be seen by the remarkable amount of greenery and open land in the town centre east of the cross in an aerial photograph of the time (below). This was before the 1930s developments that were about to bring great change.



Rumford Shopping Hall – the beginnings of the indoor market – now remodelled as Romford Shopping Hall. There was still a village scale to much of the Market Place.



Ind Coope brewery c.1900. Its stacks and towers would have been prominent, vertical but slender elements in the townscape.

2.3 Romford Between the Wars

It was the inter-war period that saw Romford's next most defining time of expansion and physical change. London was burgeoning and modernising with Metroland spreading across the Home Counties. This was not just a matter of housing but new building types such as cinemas and new styles such as Art Deco, its more simplified sister, the Moderne, and a Neoclassical revival – particularly Queen Anne inspired. Romford became a municipal borough, with its town hall opening in 1937. After the First World War Romford expanded from 19,442 people in 1921 to 35,918 in 1931. This necessitated building housing, from 1924, on the largest green area left close to the centre, the Marshalls Estate that once covered the area behind the civic row from North Street to Pettits Lane from 1924.

In the spirit of the age, Romford modernised rapidly, demolishing historic buildings in the process – the Market House, for instance. The Laurie Cinema had opened at Laurie Hall at the end of the Market Place in 1913 (and had

closed by 1939) and was followed by others between the wars. The Havana on South Street opened in 1936. its Art Deco design was by well-known cinema architects Kemp & Tasker. It later became an Odeon before closing and reopening as two nightclubs. The large building adjacent to the Odeon (112-116) South Street is often taken to be part of the Odeon but was built as the Times Furnishing Store and very much in the chain's house style. More cinemas arrived and there were four operating in Romford by1951.

South Street was widened to accommodate a new and brighter shopping era. The plain Romford Arcade was first, followed by a much grander venture, The Quadrant, that was built from 1934 in Art Deco style with dog-leg arcades running from South Street into the Market Place. It was developed in phases beginning in 1934 with its double fronted façade to South Street (with a dance hall above) and was completed in 1935 with the demolition of Market Place buildings including the historic Market House. It was an enormous commercial success and marked the beginnings of a new character for central Romford.

Glitteringly lit in green and gold neon, the Quadrant was also the first large-scale retail incursion into the greenery of the south east quarter of the town centre. South Street's widening caused the loss of many historic structures and shifting its character substantially to retail uses.

On the opposite side of the market, the interwar Romford Shopping Hall provided an indoor facility to stallholders but South Street had now taken over from High Street as prime shopping frontage.

In the same period, the railway station was remodelled and given a veneer of inter-war classicism.

101a James Walker's two shops lined either side of the Market Place of the Quadrant Arcade entrance until the 1970s.

Display cases and neon lighting gave the Quadrant Arcade enormous glitter

1938 Ordnance Survey map of Romford: It is unclear if The Quadrant shopping arcade is partially shown (the map may have been based on an earlier survey).

1939: This map is on an older base so not entirely up to date but usefully shows the expansion of Romford on its periphery before the Second World War. The stations have been combined and rebuilt.

2.4 Post-War Romford

Bomb damage map for Romford. Particularly devastating was the destruction of the area around the crossroads and the High Street.

The 1950s saw some building activity in the town centre including replacements for bomb damaged buildings along the High Street but it was most marked by rapid expansion on the town periphery with, for example the massive Harold Hill housing estate imposed on the area in 1948-58. The population of Romford rose from 88,000 in 1951 to more than 114,000 only a decade later and in 1965 it was united with Hornchurch U.D. to form the London borough of Havering.

However, in the 1960s comprehensive clearance and renewal was the prevailing doctrine for town and city centres. Both the town and the county (under the County of Essex Plan) began a programme of radical change with a schema for Romford that proposed an encircling ring-road and the rebuilding of virtually all the town centre, emptying out much of the residential population and creating extensive new shopping facilities.

Much demolition ensued and the town's inner wards and hinterland were cut off from a centre that became increasingly mono-cultural and reached by mostly unpleasant subways – standard procedure for Modernist post-war planning and

its large-scale zoning and desire to segregate pedestrians from free-flowing cars. Many facilities were to be re-provided outside the centre.

Laurie Square and Laurie Hall were demolished to make way for St Edward's Way (leaving the market without an end stop) and a new central library near the town hall. The market was closed to through traffic by 1969 when there were still some 300 or more regular stall-holders.

Proposals for a major new shopping centre for Romford had been underway since at least the early 1960s and in 1962 the council compulsory purchased the extensive bowling greens that had existed since 1898 behind the Kings Head Hotel. It was to be a major transformation from green space in the town centre into shopping that had been seen previously with the demolition of much of South Street and the building of the Quadrant Arcade.

The new, open-air Liberty Shopping Centre, between the Market Place and Western Road was began in 1968 and completed in 1972. It had over 100 shops, including branches of the major department stores. Debenhams, on the Market Place, occupied the site of the earlier Stones department store and a row of older buildings on narrow plots. Tall buildings including the Mercury House office block were erected at the Ring Road end. Romford also became devoted to the car, building many multi-storey car parks across the town centre.

In the quarter west of South Street, the brewery was also expanding after becoming part of Allied Breweries and had some 1000 workers in its 20-acre, closed-off site by 1970. From the 1960s on then, the town's historic fabric was steadily reduced.

The 1976 County Plan for Essex was a product of its age with its vision of large-scale use zoning, free flowing traffic and segregation of vehicles from pedestrians. It also had little regard for Romford's heritage with large areas of the town designated for rebuilding – including the new Liberty shopping centre and vast areas including Church Lane, the west end of the High Street and the east end of Market Place among those parts of the medieval, Georgian and Victorian fabric scheduled for demolition.

The movement plan envisaged drew the tight belt of the ring road around the town centre north and south of the railway. At its heart was still the cros roads but with its arms truncated and pedestrianized. This central zone was segregated from its natural hinterland by traffic and underpasses. Service roads would wind into each quarter of the town including Exchequer Street (the lengthening of an inter-war service road). With multi-storey parking in each quarter too, the car had priority over people in the new Romford.

A new town square with links to the Market Place and Western Road was envisaged. While this new public realm created the vital secondary connections that Romford had never previously had, this was limited to one corner of the town and came at the price of the removal of historic fabric and the city centre's green spaces.

On their own terms, the 1960s and '70s proposals were successful in that they were largely implemented. Shopping, offices and cars became virtually the only players within the ring road apart from the brewery. For a time, the changes assisted with the retail-led growth of Romford but, arguably, in the long term the radical changes marked the beginning of the town's environmental decline. The large-scale zoning removed the vitality that mixed-use places offer and the positive aesthetic qualities – the heritage assets, housing and green spaces – aspects that attract the contemporary citizen and foot-loose shopper – were removed from the town centre.

In their place was proposed an orthogonal town, a rectilinear environment that took little account of the morphology of the town as it had developed over several hundred years. Little was to survive with the exception of the interwar buildings of South Street. Even the Golden Lion was slated for redevelopment and the Market Place was to be almost entirely rebuilt in Modernist fashion. The only cultural and recreational uses identified for the town centre were a bowling alley and ice rink envisaged for the north side of the market with an adjoining restaurant. It was a functional view of the world that had little regard for pleasure.

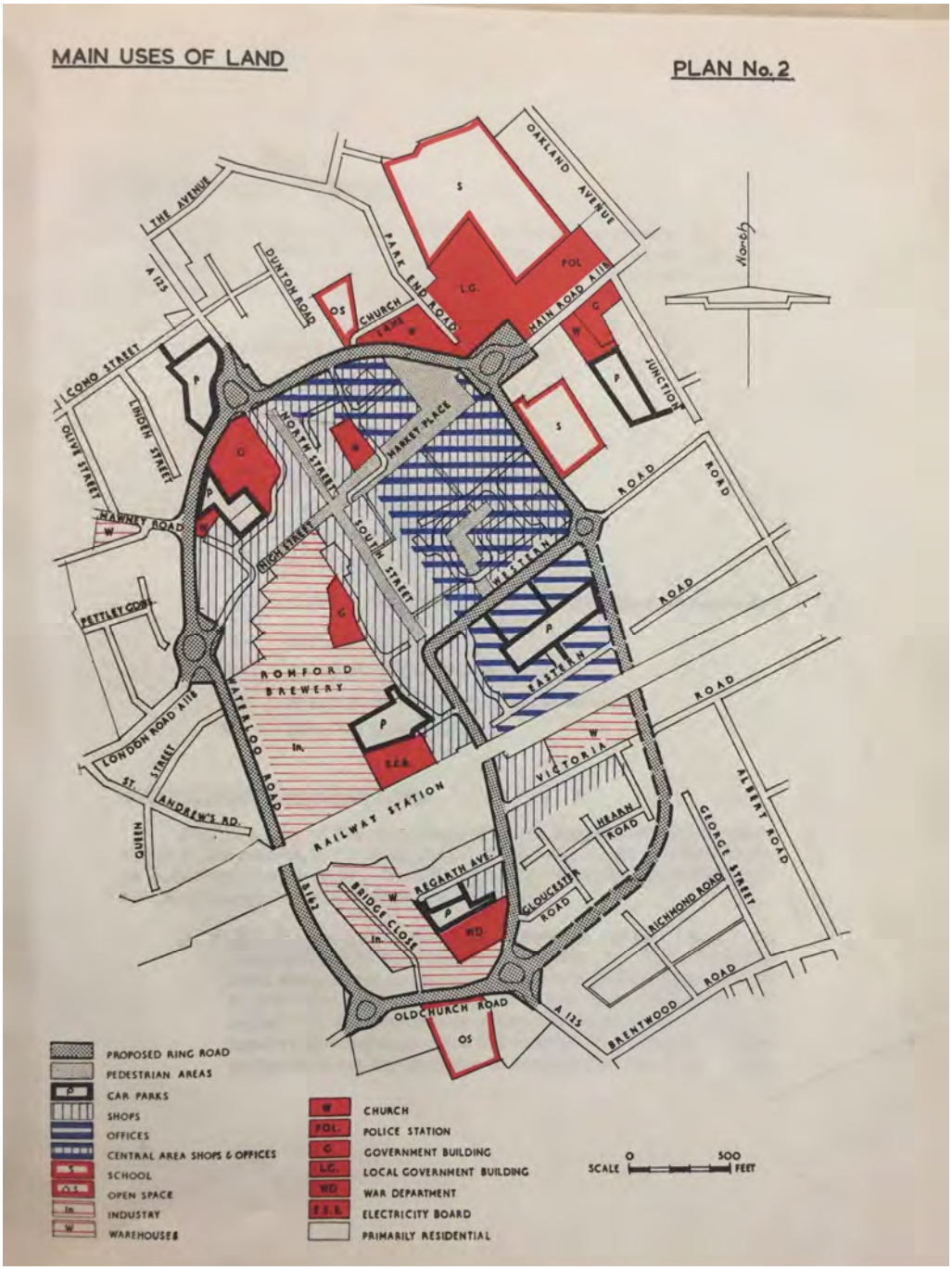
1959: The expansion of retail and commercial activity along South Street is particularly evident but Laurie Square remains in place, as does Chapel Lane. Junction Road meets Main Road but there is still very little porosity within the town centre beyond the traditional routes leading from the crossroads.

1961: The eastern end of Market Place, and the first hints of radical change are apparent. Buildings have been cleared along Church Lane where there is now an empty site and a car park. Laurie Square too has been partially demolished,

1961: The southern end of the town centre. The de-densification of the western end of High Street and beyond (including the north west quarter in preparation for Angel Way) is in progress pending large-scale rebuilding but the brewery still dominates the south west quarter of the town centre. In the south-east quarter, much greenery remains behind the frontages including two bowling clubs.

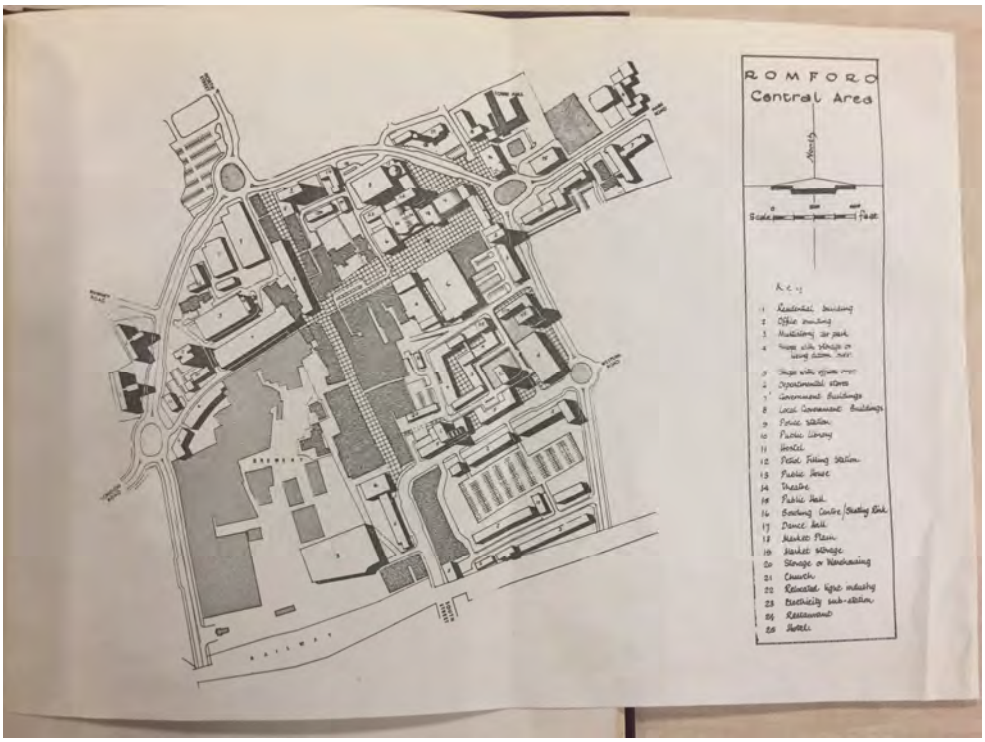
Laurie Square with its paired villas and informal green spaces some decades before their demolition.

The movement plan envisaged with ring road around the town centre north and south of the railway and segregated central zone.



Land use zones in the 1960s plans

The 1976 County Plan for Essex proposed large-grain zoning, free flowing traffic and segregation of vehicles from pedestrians.



The new, rectilinear environment took little account of the morphology of the town as it had developed over several hundred years

Three dimensionally, the rectilinear box was to be the dominant form as captured here in the main square of the Liberty shopping centre. It was fundamentally a different Romford from barely a decade earlier.

By the early 1970s, little remained of the Romford prior to the mid 19th century. As well as the Market House, the parish workhouse, North Street (1787), and the Corn Exchange, High Street (1845) had also been demolished, as well as St. Edward's Hall and the Laurie Hall. Romford Hall, a large house off South Street had already been demolished after the First World War. The public baths on Mawney Road (Angel Way) that had been built in 1900 were levelled in 1975 and the former Market Place central library, housed in 1930 in the former St Edward's charity school was cleared away. In 1967, the Salvation Army opened a new citadel and its previous home, the Wesleyan chapel in High Street was demolished to make way for the London Road roundabout. The old alms-houses in North Street were sold in 1959 and later demolished with new housing provided elsewhere.

Among the few pre-20th century survivors within the Romford ring road were some of the inns around the market, the 19th century brewery buildings and Church House next to St Edwards (for many years itself a pub). Other slivers of an older Romford survived just beyond the ring road including a house on North Street and the St Edwards RC church complex close to the library and town hall. Georgian Romford, such at the townhouses once facing the market, has almost entirely disappeared. Apart from the brewery with its tall chimney, industry was also largely confined to the outskirts of Romford including on several large industrial estates and in the mid-1970s there were still some 50 factories in existence. On the other side of the tracks, close to the station and along Victoria

Road it is the interwar incarnation of Romford that survives alongside more recent infill.

Green space was now only to be found outside the Ring Road and that mostly some distance away with the exception of Coronation Gardens (1953) on the site of an old cemetery. Romford's War Memorial was relocated here in 1970 from the demolished Laurie Square. The roofing over of the Liberty Centre effectively closed off much of the town centre outside shopping hours, leaving a very limited active frontage behind – a monoculture of closed shops after working hours.

More recently, Romford's most radical changes have been retail related – the roofing over of the Liberty centre and its 1990 extension beyond the ring road (now the Mercury Mall and joined to the Liberty by an underpass) and the building of the Brewery big box retail park and parking over much of the former Star Brewery site after its closure in 1993.

Since then, some small blocks of residential have returned to the town centre, most notably along the north-east edge of Market Place and in the backlands to its rear. This new development is notably taller than earlier buildings around the market and has been joined by Tollgate House a neoclassical pastiche market hall that was completed after delays some five years ago. At the same time, there has been a steady chipping away of historic fabric including the loss of entire locally listed buildings on Western Road and North Street and unsympathetic changes to other buildings that, if restored, could contribute positively to the character and appearance of the town centre. In terms of cultural investment, the Havering Museum opened within the former brewery buildings on the High Street and the Sapphire Ice and Leisure Centre opened on Western Road in early 2018.

The pastiche Tollgate House, completed c.2013 to close the east end of the market in a manner akin to the prior Laurie Hall.

3.0 Summary of Principal Morphological Changes

Romford shifted as a settlement from the high ground of Marshalls to vanished St Andrews (at Oldchurch) then to lower ground by the ford of the Rom. From then on, the town developed over centuries in, at first, a linear manner along today's London Road, High Street, Market Place and Main Road, with the wide Market Place being its focus. This linearity quickly took the form of a cross with the routes to Colliers Row and Hornchurch intersecting at the Market Place crossroads. These later arms of the cross remained secondary routes for many more centuries but they established Romford as a town divided into four quarters or quadrants. It is a pattern of development quite different from English towns that developed from, say, a Roman colonia grid or where local topography influenced a more meandering street pattern that responded to landforms.

For hundreds of years these quarters remained largely open land with only a few incursions such as the moated manor of Mawneys until the arrival of the Star Brewery. Expansions instead consisted of intensification along the four main routes or satellite developments such as New Romford.

The arrival of the railway in the mid-19th century created a parallel route to the main road but was also a significant barrier to southern expansion apart from outlying uses such as the infirmary and workhouse.

Over time, these four quarters became in-filled – notably by the brewery and the redevelopment of the Mawneys Manor lands. Eastern Road and Western Road were added as parallel routes but still a town centre grid of streets did not emerge.

Around the market, however, some depth was provided by the yards of the coaching inns and other secondary alleys and spaces off the main market place. Similarly, small-scale infill occurred behind St Edward's church including the along Church Lane that led to the later RC church.

The self-contained world of the brewery meant that the south-western quadrant was, until the last few decades, outside the limited public realm of Romford – an impermeable industrial enclave. Remarkably, the south-eastern quadrant between Market Place and Western Road remained a green hinterland for centuries up until the radical redevelopments of the 1960s.

This large-scale reordering of Romford threw a ring of traffic around the quadrants and crossroads, severing the outer areas from the town's centre. And while, at first, the Liberty shopping centre introduced some limited permeability to the town that was otherwise notably absent, the subsequent enclosure of this area has created a private enclave that is closed-off to the public realm.

Central Romford's public realm and active frontages today remain essentially those leading off the crossroads. The complexity of yards and alleys that once added variety, depth, and lengthened the active frontages – like an indented coastline – have largely been smoothed out.

The unsentimental redevelopment of this morphological armature has also seen the character of Romford change utterly. For much of its existence, the country town had a medieval appearance with many timber-framed buildings with weatherboard and gables – very much the pattern of rural Essex and eastern England. There were Georgian additions, now almost entirely lost, but while the Victorian age transformed the face of Romford – as it did most places across the country – it was the steady absorption of Romford into London – notably in the inter-war period – that began to change the character of Romford from a distinct Essex market town with a still active agricultural hinterland to a Metroland extension of London. This transformation was completed by the radical restructuring of the 1960s that erased much of central Romford's remaining more rural identity at the same time as turning the town centre into a mono-cultural zone devoted almost exclusively to shopping.

4.0 Town Centre Heritage Assets

4.1 Introduction

The list of heritage assets below includes designated heritage assets (listed buildings and conservation areas) and non-designated assets – in this instance, locally listed buildings. The latter enjoy more limited protection against demolition or alteration – especially if outside a designated conservation area.

The list below is startlingly short given Romford's long history. There are only four statutorily listed buildings within the ring road and a handful more on the town centre's fringe.

The locally listed buildings within and close to the town centre are also set out. Excluded are those locally listed buildings that had been demolished between 2011 when Havering published its list and a review of 2014. Further changes are likely in the future.

4.2 Romford Conservation Area

Romford Conservation Area was designated in 1968 soon after the legislation facilitating the creation of conservation areas was passed by Parliament. It is one of 11 conservation areas in Havering. These focus on historic settlements or substantial institutions. The conservation area boundaries have remained unchanged since.

An undated report (but c.2008) by heritage consultant Paul Drury has since served as a conservation area appraisal document. Central government guidance is that such documents are reviewed at least every five years.

With the exception of the inclusion of the area to the rear of the Parish Church of St Edward the Confessor, the boundary of the conservation area was tightly drawn along property frontages ie around the public realm, the streets themselves, rather than around entire buildings or building plots. The area protected was limited to the Market Place, the High Street and North Street within the ring road and a short stretch of South Street.

Such a tight drawing of a boundary – one that excluded many of the buildings that provided the framing and context of the historic market and crossroads – has been regarded as inadequate and not meeting good conservation practice. This was also identified in the Romford Heritage Strategy (2000).

The consequences of the tightly drawn boundary mean that Havering's ability to preserve and enhance the area and its setting have been limited and many buildings that once contributed positively to Romford's town centre have been lost are radically altered.

The Drury report makes logical and limited recommendations for change – including the expansion of the boundary – that have been carried over into its adaptation as a conservation area appraisal. These recommendations have not been acted upon.

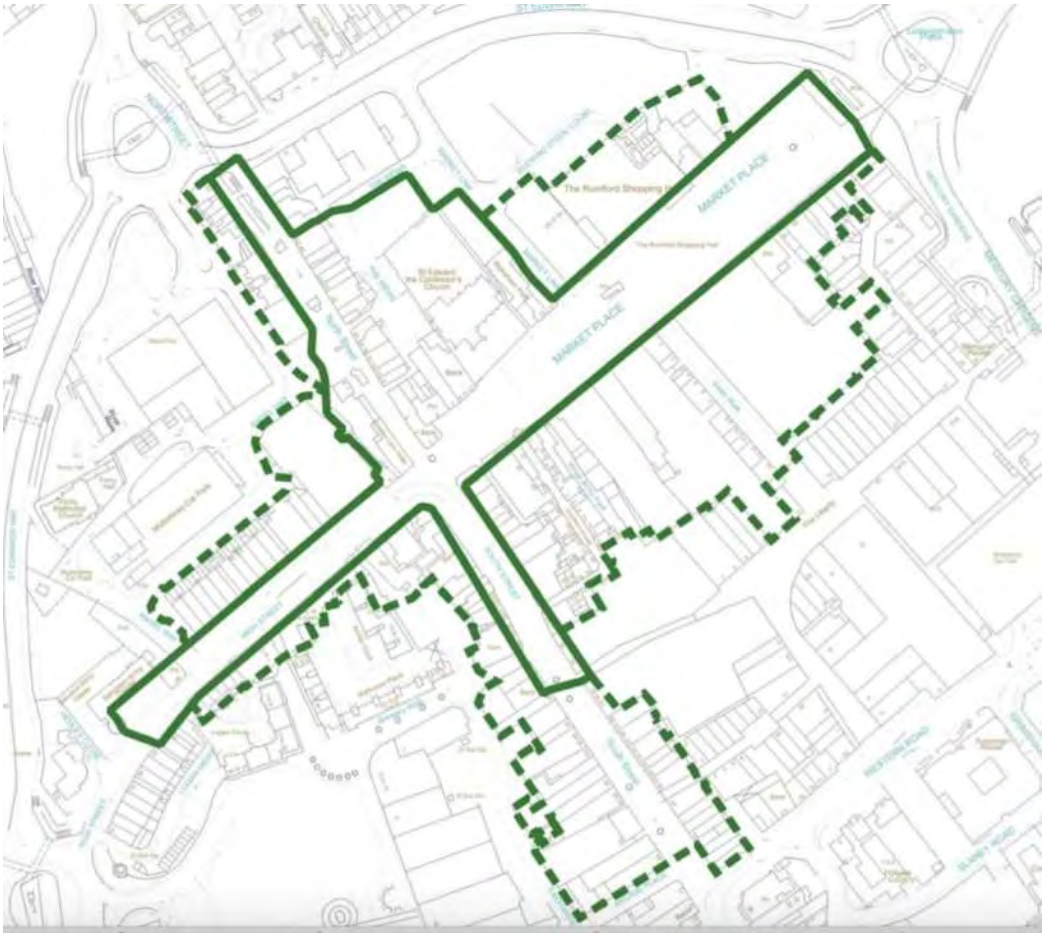
The report/appraisal contains limited content regarding the conservation areas qualities, townscape and views analysis. It does, however, note that the original boundaries of the conservation area were based on where views were available of the listed buildings. This is not a sound basis for the designation of conservation area boundaries or for making planning decisions within them.

The report also notes many blank facades to streets, the loss of architectural details, shopfronts that relate poorly to their host building, and the development of an unsympathetic backdrop to the conservation area as a result of tall buildings and highways decisions.

The appraisal is somewhat out-of-date and does not take into account changes such as the developments at the eastern end of Market Place or a re-evaluation of inter-war buildings since the original designation.

The entire conservation area is now on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register where it is regarded as being in very bad condition and vulnerable although improving.

There have been recent planning decisions that have sought to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area such as the refusal of the Premier Inn proposal on the Market Place on the former C&A/T J Hughes site (today the B&M store).



The existing conservation area boundary and the unimplemented extension recommendations (dotted). Interwar buildings further drown South Street and the RC Church of St Edward group should be among those considered for inclusion in any future boundary.

4.3 Statutorily Listed Buildings

The number of listed buildings – ie those of national importance that demand great weight be attached to preserving the special interest of the structure and its setting – is extremely limited in Romford town centre. They are:

i. Parish Church of St Edward The Confessor, Market Place

Grade II*listed (TQ5119588957)

Listing description summary: *1849 by J Johnson in a curvilinear Decorated style. Rubble, ashlar dressings, patterned red tile roof 162 ft spire. Three excellent C16 and early C17 monuments, especially that of Sir Anthony Cooke died 1576. (RCHM).*

ii. Church House, 15, Market Place
Grade: II

TQ 5088/5188 5/3 4.7.52 II

Listing Description Summary: *C15 or C16 with early C19 alterations. Painted plaster; old tile roof. Two storeys and attic. Ground floor has 2 canted bays, with door between, continuous frieze and cornice. First floor 2 double hung sashes in reveals. Gable with sash at attic level. West side return elevation facing the Church of St Edward has oversailing 1st floor on moulded beam and 2 brackets. Restored 4-centre moulded arch to door. Plaque between 1st floor windows with armorial cresting.*

Some historians describe this building as a former chantry house wch others dispute. It was a pub for many years until 1908 when it reopened as Church House. It may once have been part of a larger building that fronted the market with a yard to the rear.

iii. The Lamb Public House, 5, Market Place

Grade II

TQ 5088/5188 5/4 I

Listing description summary: *Early to mid C19. Painted brick, modern tile roof. Two storeys central recess with parapet, pedimented side bays breaking forward. One-one-one 1st floor casements. Blind semi-circular openings in pediment tympana. Ground floor sashes, stucco entablature. Reeded pilasters with paterae to central door and windows.*

iv. The Golden Lion Public House, 2, High Street

Grade II

TQ 51156 88880

Listing description summary: *Inn of various dates from the C17 onwards. Front to High Street late C18 or early C19; 3 storeys, 4 bays, rendered with stucco rusticated quoins; ground floor has carriage entrance on left hand side and C19 bar front with central doorway, pedimented door hood on scrolled brackets and moulded cornice. First floor with 4 flush sashes*

with moulded hoods on scrolled brackets; 2nd floor 4 sashes with moulded wooden frames. Cornice with fragment of parapet above. Old tile roof hipped at east. Front to North Street: return wall of High Street front jettied above ground floor, the jetty projecting further at the north than the south. Two sashes to 1st floor with architraves and 2 small modern windows to 2nd floor. Further north is a C17 or early C18 timber-framed building of 2 storeys with a jettied 1st floor. Brick plinth, ground floor partly weatherboarded, partly rendered with a variety of window openings. Rendered 1st floor with 5 sashes. Old tile roof with one stack through ridge. To the north are the remains of a further timber-framed range. In the angle between the High Street and North Street ranges is an early C19 brick addition of 3 storeys with hipped slate roof.

v. 96-102, North Street

Grade: II

TQ5100189142

Listing description summary: *Nos 96 to 102 (even) Late C17 timber-framed building consisting of 2 parallel ranges, that in front taller than the one behind. Two storeys, rendered, altered ground floor with modern shop fronts. Three modern windows to 1st floor. South end wall tile hung, rear wall rendered. Rebuilt stack in valley at south.*

Although listed as BMS Insurance on statutory list, the building is now occupied by a solicitor's office.

vi. Roman Catholic Church of St Edward the Confessor, 5 Park End

Grade II

Listing description summary: *Roman Catholic Church built in 1856 by Daniel Cubitt Nicholls with donations by the Twelfth Lord Petre. Gallery added 1917. North Chapel added 1934 and gallery rebuilt. C13 Early English style. Coursed ragstone with red tiled roof and Bath stone dressings. Chapel of yellow brick laid in English bond. Aisle-less nave, chancel, sacristy to north-east and porch/gallery stair tower to south-west. Later North Chapel at west.*
The chapel has windows in a more elaborate Decorated style, door set in a Tudor arch and pitched roof with flat-roofed vestry.
The stained glass in the east window dates from 1885. It depicts scenes from the life of St Edward, is by Hardman and Co of Birmingham, a major supplier of stained glass during the Gothic Revival, notably for the Palace of Westminster. A relatively rare example of a gentry-funded, mid-C19,

rural Roman Catholic church, in a period where most Catholic churches built were in urban locations.

vii. Havering Town Hall, Main Road

Grade II

List description summary: *Built as Romford Town Hall, designed in 1935 by architects H R Collins and A E O Geens in International Moderne style and extended by three bays to the south west in 1960 in matching style and materials. The 1988 south eastern wing is not of special interest. Steel-framed with Leicester silver grey facing bricks and Swanage stone facings and plinth. Flat roof. Plan was L-shaped and a proposed refreshment hall and assembly hall was never built. Staircase Hall has large imperial staircase with metal handrails, hall lined in Bath stone with rusticated courses and columned entrances to Council Chamber and Committee corridor. Council Chamber retains Austrian oak Public Gallery with giant piers, dado panelling and dais and large skylight to ceiling.*

viii. Romford War Memorial, Coronation Gardens, Main Road

Grade II

List description summary: *A First World War civic memorial, 1921 designed by the architect JW Hammond, recording the names of the fallen of that conflict and the service and the civilian dead of the Second World War.*

It consists of a plain wheel-head cross on a tall tapering plinth with a moulded cap and base on a two-stepped plinth. Sunken panels on the faces of the plinth are inscribed on the front.

Although it has been moved, it retains its interest as an elegant monument, which is redolent of its interwar date. The inscription was amended to include the dates of the Second World War and to pluralise 'WARS', but the main commemoration for that conflict was the Romford

War Memorial Old Folks (now Social) Club, opened in 1953. Portland stone.

ix. Church of St Andrew, St Andrews Road

Grade II

TQ5085788400

List description summary: *1862 by John Johnson. Ragstone church comprising nave, chancel and south aisle. Windows mostly small and of 2 lights with Decorated tracery. Large west window above 3 small circular windows. West tower inside the gable with battered plinth and angle buttresses. Shingled broach spire; stone turret with hexagonal cap with ball-flower ornament and small quatrefoil windows over west end of south aisle. Prominent south porch. Ornamental slate roof with decorated red ridge-tiles. Octagonal vestry to north-east with paired lancet windows under trefoil heads.*

x. Salem Chapel, London Road

Grade II

TQ 50843 88470

Listing description summary: 1*847 (date plaque on building). Baptist Chapel; stock brick, principal elevation to London Road 3 bays wide 2 storeys high. Projecting central bay with stucco quoins to ground floor and wide central doorway with stucco pilasters: paired brick pilasters to upper floor with open pediment and central Egyptian window with stucco architrave. Flanking bays with small square windows to ground floor and Egyptian windows above with hoods on tapering brackets, plain stucco plaques over. Stucco parapet. Return elevation to St Andrews Road of 3 bays with segmental-headed windows in recessed panels. Original cast-iron railings, standards and gates by Wedlake Thompson of Hornchurch. Additional buildings include lecture room added in 1868.*

4.4 Locally Listed Buildings

The 2014 Heritage Asset Register Buildings of Local Heritage Interest sets down the locally listed buildings in Romford. It updates a previous list of 2011 after a

number of inclusions and losses. Five out of 12 of these losses have been in Romford. There have been some additional losses from the list since such as the former doctors' and nurses' home on Union Road – the former infirmary and workhouse (including other buildings on the local list) has been demolished despite a 2013 GLA objection on heritage grounds. The list of those locally listed buildings that remain in the town centre and its fringe follows. The text and most images are from Havering's 2014 Register.

Trinity Methodist Church, Angel Way, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Church.Current Use: Church.

Construction Date/Period: 1888.

Full Description

Cross-shaped plan in red brick with slate roof. Later additions to eastern end in similar materials. Detailed western elevation with central pitched gable and two smaller pitched gables flanking. Three-light went window above central double door with triangular pediment. Brick detailing at first floor level.

Architectural and Historical Interest

Trinity Methodist Church was founded in 1827 in a chapel on Mawney Road (later Angel Way). In 1887 the chapel was sold to the Salvation Army and a new church was built to serve the rapidly developing Mawneys Estate. Later elements were added in 1923 and 1936, and the church was bombed during the Second World War in 1940.

Romford Brewery, High Street, Romford

Conservation Area: Romford.Original Use: Brewery.Current Use: Residential and commercial. Construction Date/Period: 1799.

Full Description

Extensive range of late C19 buildings fronting the High Street. Central section 3 storeys high, stock brick, 6 windows wide, with red brick piers and window arches to ground floor. Semi-circular headed windows to ground floor under relieving arches with a pair of small circular windows overhead. Above a stucco band terminating in flat scrolls. 6 sash windows to upper floor set in square recessed panels. Brick on edge cornice. 2 large gables and large semi-circular headed windows. Later additions to E. and W. in similar style.

2 stones set in front wall with the following inscriptions:

'GEORGE II REGIS / Anno Imperii Decimo / Readificatus'

'This stone was removed from the parapet of the old bridge in the High Street. Demolished 1906'.

Architectural and Historical Interest

Ind, Coope & Co.'s brewery was established on the High Street in Romford in 1799. It was greatly extended in the later 19th Century, and again after the Second World War, steadily becoming Romford's main industry. At the height of its operation during the 1970s, the brewery covered 20 acres and employed over a thousand workers.

The brewery was closed in 1993 and much of the site was demolished. The buildings fronting High Street remain as testament to the brewery and its significance in the history of Romford. Today the buildings have been redeveloped to form part of a shopping centre, and to house the Havering Museum.

Prudential Building, High Street, Romford

Conservation Area: Romford. Original Use: Commercial. Current Use:

Commercial. Construction Date/Period: 1930s.

Full Description

Four storey brick construction with mansard slate roof, forming the shoulder of South Street and High Street. Ground floor has been converted to shop fronts. Sash and case windows throughout, with arched lintels at first floor level. Two pedimented window surrounds to two windows on first floor. Fourth storey at roof level, with dormer windows protruding.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The Prudential building is part of the principal group of buildings for which the Romford Conservation Area was designated to protect. It is part of a key view from South Street to North Street through the crossroads, and makes a positive contribution to the street scene in the town centre. It is a high quality historic building, forming one corner of the historic crossroads at the bottom of Market Place, and complements the classical design of the other two locally listed buildings.

The White Hart (The Bitter End), High Street, Romford

Conservation Area: Romford.Original Use: Public House.Current Use: Partial commercial use, majority vacant. Construction Date/Period: 1896.

Full Description

A large rectangular brick building with a pitched plain tile roof and three small chimney stacks.Shop/venue frontages on ground floor of front elevation divided by a vehicular entrance to a rear yard. Rebuilt in 1896 in English Domestic Revival style, with a symmetrical upper floor of big oriel windows joined under a cornice running the length of the elevation. On the upper floor, four pairs of twelve-over-twelve sash and case windows with gauged brick lintels, below four dormers which break the eaves.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The White Hart Inn can be traced as far back as 1489 when it was a significant coaching inn. During the Civil War in the mid-17th Century, the building was used to hold meetings between Deputy Lieutenants and Parliamentary Commissioners. The White Hart In was Romford's main hotel during the 18th and much of the 20th century. The current building was built in 1898, and stands on the same site as the 15th century coaching inn.

Linked to the coaching inn, the White Hart had a large yard containing a stables and farrier, so this area has been a significant hub of activity for much of its past. Today, the White Hart Inn is renamed The Bitter End. The building stands at the top of the High Street near the Market Square, and is a significant entity in this row. It contributes to the historic core of Romford, which is designated as a conservation area.

The Woolpack Inn, High Street, Romford

Conservation Area: Romford. Original Use: Public House.Current Use: Residential. Construction Date/Period: c. 1890s.

Full Description

'L'-shaped plan, three storeys with projecting gables over third floor windows. Dental string course around both frontages at first floor level, with moulded corbels. Casement windows of differing sizes.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The development of the Mawneys Estate saw the creation of Mawneys Road, the south eastern end of which is now called Angel Way. The Woolpack was built sometime after 1888 when severe flooding damaged much of the property at the site. It was mainly occupied by dwellings and shops.

Today, the Woolpack occupies a key site on the corner of Angel Way. It is an important historic building on this streetscape and that of the High Street, sitting amongst much modern development. The building retains much of its external features and aesthetic, and the recent (2013/14)

works to refurbish and reuse the building have respected this.

The Sun Public House, London Road, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Public House.Current Use: Public House. Construction Date/Period: Late 1930s.

Full Description

1930s Art Deco design. Brick construction with one-three- one bay pattern. Plain tile hipped roof with three dormer windows in the centre of the front elevation. Three brick chimney stacks, one on each flank wall and a smaller one centrally in the roof. Central entrance under portico with two pillars supporting. Two balconies at first floor level, either side of entrance. These display attractive sun-ray designs typical of Art Deco.

Architectural and Historical Interest

An inn by this name was first built on this land in 1632. This building was

demolished in 1936, and the present building was constructed.

The Sun Inn uses many architectural features which are typical of the Art Deco style. It is a substantial building, a prominent building in the streetscape, and notable for its clear architectural design.

Romford Baptist Church, Main Road, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Church.Current Use: Church.

Construction Date/Period: 1934.

Full Description

Large red brick building with tiled pitched roof over main body, flat-roofed transepts to northern end. Large round headed windows. Single storey extension on northern elevation with central entrance under pitched roof. Two storey later extensions to rear.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The Romford Baptist Church was built in 1934 and by 1971 was one of the largest Baptist churches in England. It is an example of the proliferation and diversification of religious dissent away from the Church of England from the mid-19th Century.

The Bull Inn, Market Place, Romford

Conservation Area: Romford. Original Use: Public House. Current Use: Public House. Construction Date/Period: 1928.

Full Description

Two-storey red brick building with white render detailing and a pitched roof behind flat parapet. Main entrance in centre of front elevation under substantial entablature and oriel window. Two bays of leaded casement windows either side, with smaller entrances at the outer edges of the front elevation. Arched coach entrance to rear courtyard at the eastern end.

Architectural and Historical Interest

There have been three different buildings called the Bull Inn on this site since the late 17th century. The first was demolished and replaced in 1880, and the second was demolished and replaced in 1928 giving us the current building.

Where the market place was once almost surrounded by drinking establishments, the Bull Inn is one of few which remain. It is an important venue in the centre of town, with a long association as a popular meeting venue. The building itself has an attractive frontage, with visual and historic interest when compared to its low-quality 1960s and 70s neighbours.

88 and 90 North Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Unknown.Current Use: Commercial and Residential. Construction Date/Period: Unknown.

Full Description

88 North Street is a 2 1⁄2 storey rendered building with tile mansard roof and dormers creating an attic storey. The ground floor of the building has been much altered by a poor quality shop frontage.

90 North Street is constructed of painted brick and has had a modern roof and window replacement. The ground floor of the building has been

much altered by a poor quality shop frontage.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The provenance and history of these buildings is unknown.

Lloyds Bank, North Street, Romford

Conservation Area: Romford.Original Use: Bank.Current Use:

Bank.Construction Date/Period: Late 1930s.

Full Description

Rebuilt in the late 1930s in Classical style with red brick and Bath stone and lotus leaf columns.

Architectural and Historical Interest

Lloyds bank is part of the principal group of buildings for which the Romford Conservation Area was designated to protect. It is part of a key

view from South Street to North Street through the crossroads, and makes a positive contribution to the street scene in the town centre. It is a high quality historic building, forming one corner of the historic crossroads at the bottom of Market Place and complements the classical design of the other two locally listed buildings.

95 South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Commercial.Current Use: Commercial.Construction Date/Period: c. 1920s-30s.

Full Description

2 storey site with a narrow frontage and a flat roof and parapet. White rendered. Commercial shop frontage on the lower floor. No openings on the upper floor, but there are remains of a window, now filled in.

Architectural and Historical Interest

This building has seen much unsympathetic external alteration, so its heritage value is harder to discern. It is likely to have been built in the 1920s or 30s, evidenced by the flat roof, white render, and the formation of the window still discernible in the upper floor. As such, the building has group value in its relationship with other buildings on South Street of that era.

There may also be internal fixtures and fittings which speak of the building's provenance. An aerial view of the building also shows it to have been extended from a partially demolished earlier house to the rear, built of brick with a grey tiled roof.

97-101 (odd) South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Commercial and possibly residential.

Current Use: Commercial.Construction Date/Period: 1920s-30s.

Full Description

97 South Street – now Betfreds.Two-storey, three-bay brick building with brick detail quoins and window lintels. Flat roof and brick parapet, with stone capping and pediment. Unsympathetic modern shop frontage on ground floor, but three surviving sash and case windows above. Central window has prominent surround and pediment above.

99-101 South Street – now The Moon and Stars public house.Three-storey, seven-bay brick building with stone detailing. Hipped roof hidden by brick and stone parapet. Modern venue frontage on ground floor, with casement windows above. Centre second and third floor windows have blind balcony between, and a blind arch above filled with brick laid in herringbone bond.

Architectural and Historical Interest

97-101 South Street are buildings demonstrative of a wave of Art Deco-style construction on South Street during the 1920s-30s, which, for example, included the neighbouring buildings at no.95 and the Quadrant Arcade. The ground floors would originally have been used for commercial purposes, however the upper floors may have been used either for the same or as residential space.

The buildings have been altered extensively on their ground floors to accommodate modern shop frontages, however much architectural detailing, indicative of the era, remains on the upper floors giving the buildings good aesthetic value.

103-111 (odd) South Street Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Commercial and possibly residential.

Current Use: Commercial.Construction Date/Period: c. 1920s-30s.

Full Description

3-storey, 8-bay building with a white-yellow render. Flat roof with a stone clad parapet with a zig-zag design. Upper two storeys project over the ground floor frontage, supported by seven Tuscan pillars.

Architectural and Historical Interest

103-111 South Street are buildings demonstrative of a wave of Art Deco-style construction on South Street during the 1920s-30s, which, for example, included the neighbouring buildings at no.95 and the Quadrant Arcade. The ground floors would originally have been used for commercial purposes, however the upper floors may have been used either for the same or as residential space.

The ground floor pillars may be original, creating a covered walkway commonly found in inter-war shopping venues. The building has been altered extensively on their ground floors to accommodate modern shop frontages, however much architectural detailing, indicative of the era, remains on the upper floors giving the buildings good aesthetic value.

110 South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Commercial.Current Use: Commercial. Construction Date/Period: c. 1930s.

Full Description

Narrow building frontage, flat roofed and completely rendered, with low quality modern shop frontage below, and three small windows above.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The original frontage to this building consisted of tiling in a linear formation, much like that seen on the neighbouring cinema. However, this was removed and replaced with off-white render in 2205, at which point the windows frames were also replaced with uPVC.

Despite the loss of much of the building's external architectural detail, it still retains a sense of its provenance in the 1930s. It is also valuable in terms of its relationship with other buildings on South Street, demonstrative of a wave of Art Deco-style construction on South Street during the 1920s-30s, which, for example, included the neighbouring buildings at no.95, the Quadrant Arcade and the World's Inn.

113-117 South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Commercial and possibly residential.

Current Use: Commercial.Construction Date/Period: 1920s-30s.

Full Description

Three-storey brick building with linear features between windows picked out in white render. Panels between second and third floor are laid in a vertical stretcher bond. Four-pane crittal windows remain in upper floors, whilst ground floor is taken up by a modern pub frontage. Flat roof with brick and stone pediment.

Architectural and Historical Interest

113-117 South Street is demonstrative of a wave of Art Deco-style construction on South Street during the 1920s-30s, which, for example, included the neighbouring buildings at no.95, the Quadrant Arcade and the Odeon Cinema. The ground floor would originally have been used for commercial purposes; however the upper floors may have been used either for the same or as residential space.

It has clear architectural and historic interest in its Art Deco style and detailing, and group value when seen amongst several other 1920s-1930s buildings on South Street.

131 South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Commercial. Current Use:

Commercial. Construction Date/Period: 1937.

Full Description

Two-storey building with generous roof space. Brick construction with brick quoin detailing. White rendered detailing around main entrance in apex of building, with arched pediment and dentillation. Plain tile hipped roof. Sash and case windows, three with balconettes.

Architectural and Historical Interest

131 South Street was built as a gas company showroom, but has most recently been converted for use as a series of social venues and night clubs.

It is demonstrative of a wave of Art Deco-style construction on South Street during the 1920s-30s, which, for example, included the neighbouring buildings at no.95, the Quadrant Arcade and the Odeon Cinema. The building uses high quality materials and design indicative of its era, and has a substantial presence in the street scene as you exit the station onto South Street. In terms of group value, 131 South Street is also similar in design to the locally listed 1930s buildings at the northern end of South Street, namely the Co-op, the Prudential Building and Lloyds Bank.

The Co-op Bank, South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: Romford. Original Use: National Provincial Bank. Current Use: Co-operative Bank. Construction Date/Period: 1932.

Full Description

Three-storey building in red brick and portland stone, with anthemion leaf detail over corner entrances. Crittal casement windows survive, with three Juliet balconies at second floor level.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The Co-op bank is part of the principal group of buildings for which the Romford Conservation Area was designated to protect. It is part of a key view from South Street to North Street through the crossroads, and makes a positive contribution to the street scene in the town centre. It is a high quality historic building, forming one corner of the historic crossroads at the bottom of Market Place, and complements the classical design of the other two locally listed buildings.

The Moreland Arms (The Goose), South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Public House. Current Use: Public House. Construction Date/Period: 1931.

Full Description

Off-white render with black paint detailing. Central gable flanked by flat-topped bays with a hipped roof and ridge tiles and chimneys on either side. Leaded casement windows on upper storey of front elevation, four single and two three-bay. Main entrance is in centre of front elevation, two pairs of doors.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The Moreland Arms has previously been named The Rising Sun, and is now called The Goose. As well as its 1930s Art Deco design, this building is notable for its social associations and value as it was often used as an

after-show venue for artists performing at the nearby Havana/Odeon Cinema (also locally listed).

Odeon Cinema (112-116), South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Cinema.Current Use: Commercial.

Construction Date/Period: 1935.

Full Description

Four-storey square-plan construction with cream tile cladding. Ground floor converted to shop frontage. Five bays of three windows, divided by strong vertical linear projecting features.

Architectural and Historical Interest

112-116 South Street was not the Odeon Cinema, which actually sits behind the locally listed building. This building was originally a Times Furnishings store, with the entrance to the cinema at the right hand side

of the building, opening onto the street. This is probably where the misnomer arose; where the signage for the cinema was in close proximity to the frontage of 112-116. The two-storey curved portion on the north elevation of the building was a public house called The Star.

The store was built in the 1930s, and its original use as a furniture store is indicative of the emerging social trend of owner-occupied housing, where large numbers of people were beginning to own and furnish their own houses.

The building is of a striking Art-Deco style, with characteristic strong linear features and proportions, and a tile façade. It is demonstrative of a wave of Art Deco-style construction on South Street during the 1920s-30s, which, for example, included the nearby buildings at no.95 and the Quadrant Arcade. The building uses high quality materials and design indicative of its era, and has a substantial presence in the street scene as you exit the station onto South Street.

The Times Furnishings Company boomed in the 1930s, and there were several stores across London. Because of this, 112-116 South Street has group value with other surviving buildings, the nearest of which is in Ilford and shares a distinctive Art Deco style.

Page Calnan Building, South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Timber Merchants. Current Use: Restaurant. Construction Date/Period: c. 1933.

Full Description

Brick construction with stone cladding to front elevation. Diocletian window to rear.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The Page Calnan building was constructed in the early 1930s, and was used as a timber merchants. The building has many of the architectural features of the 1930s.

Quadrant Arcade, South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: Romford. Original Use: Shopping Arcade. Current Use: Shopping Arcade: Construction Date/Period: 1934-35.

Full Description

An 'L' shape building with frontages onto Market Square and South Street.Market Square frontage: three-storey brick construction, with a partial brick parapet to the left side. Linear feature above main entrance, which is covered by a semi- circular canopy. Crittal windows with multiple lying panes typical of the Art Deco style.

South Street frontage: three-storey brick and stone. Strong horizontal emphasis in stone work on front elevation, and strong vertical emphasis in six brick pilasters and the central stone element with 'Quadrant Arcade' engraved. Semi-circular pediment at roof level over main entrance, and semi-circular canopy over main entrance on ground level.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The Quadrant Arcade was designed and built by W. Goodchild between 1934 and 1935. It is an L-shaped arcade with frontages on the Market Place and South Street.

Built of brick, it is of a classic Art Deco design with crittal windows and strong linear features. Originally, the building frontage was lit at night using green and gold neon lights. The arcade highlights a period of Romford's history, when it had a reputation as a significant shopping hub in the south East of England.

The old Council Chamber [Market House] was demolished to make way for this arcade, and the building scheme gained support because of its potential to create jobs both during construction and afterwards in retail. During the Second World War W. Goodchild offered space within the arcade to accommodate the Romford wing of the Air Training Corps.

Romford Station, South Street, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Station.Current Use: Station.

Construction Date/Period: 1830s.

Full Description

Red brick building with brick corner detailing, stone cornice, and stone door and window surrounds. A mixture of circular and six-over-six sash and case windows. Interior largely modern. Four covered platforms with

wrought iron railings. Platform canopies have timber valances edging roofline.

Architectural and Historical Interest

Romford Station was opened in June 1939, and was the eastern terminus of the Eastern Counties Railway line from Mile End. In 1893 a second station was opened on the site to serve the London, Tilbury and Southern Railway, and later in 1934 the two stations were combined.

The Prince Albert Public House, St Andrews Road, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Residential. Current Use: Public House. Construction Date/Period: 1842.

Full Description

Three-bay wing with projecting gable in centre of front elevation. Slate tile hipped roof with central chimney stack. Brick construction, with roughcast render on second floor and smooth white render below. Sash and case windows, with shutters to the upper floor.

Architectural and Historical Interest

The Prince Albert is a good example of an early Victorian building, surviving in an area which has seen a large amount of modern housing development. It is also significant for its long association as a social meeting point in the area. The building itself is a simple design typical of pub architecture.

Old Mill Parade, Victoria Road, Romford.

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Steam Flour Mill. Current Use: Commercial. Construction Date/Period: 1851.

Full Description

Two-storey brick construction. Six bays, eachwith a shop on ground floor with three windows above. Painted brick parapet on roof, with metal railings.

Architectural and Historical Interest

Old Mill Parade originated as a flour mill, working in conjunction with a windmill which stood in South Street. The building was enlarged later in the 19th Century, closed in 1928, and occupied by a parade of shops in 1928. The Old Mill Parade is an important building for highlighting the more rural nature of Romford's past, and the development of different industries in the town.

Station Parade, Victoria Road, Romford

Conservation Area: No.Original Use: Commercial.Current Use: Commercial. Construction Date/Period: 1920s – 30s.

Full Description

Three-storey parade, with modern shop frontages on the ground floor. Storey and bays divided by stone string courses and quoins. Two frontages onto South Street and Victoria Road. Stone parapets above third floor, with 'Station Parade' engraved. Casement windows replaced.

Architectural and Historical Interest

An inter-war shopping arcade, common among London suburbs, which contributes towards the representation of Romford's history and reputation as a significant shopping hub in the south east of England.

4.5 Beyond the Town Centre

As identified elsewhere in this report, there are clusters of assets remaining outside the town centre proper. Chief among these are what remains of the New Romford area developed on the former barracks site from the early 19th century. These include St Andrews and The Prince Albert and, on London Road, The Sun pub, the Salem Chapel and the neighbouring row of cottages.

4.6 Unidentified Heritage Assets

The list of designated and non-designated assets above is comprehensive but additions might include the railway viaduct which is an impressive piece of brick engineering with finely shaped recesses and the inter-war bus garage on North Street but the latter is beyond the town centre fringe. Further investigation of the building adjacent to the Golden Lion should also take place – the location of Romford's Corn Exchange.

4.7 Historic Park and Gardens

Havering's 2011 Heritage Supplementary Planning Document identifies historic parks and gardens in the borough.

Those identified at borough level include:

Lodge Farm Park

Raphael Park

Romford Cemetery

St Edward the Confessor Churchyard

The churchyard is also included on the London Inventory of Historic Green Spaces. Raphael Park is a section of the former landscaped estate of Gidea Park. It includes the listed Black's Bridge but is not included on Historic England's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The Park's Management Plan (2016, reviewed 2017) is very detailed in some respects but does not pay particular attention to the park as a whole as a heritage asset or any potential heritage structures within it.

The SPD also includes historic views in the borough including townscape views but does not included any views within Romford. This is an omission as the role of the parish church spire within Romford is important. Other views should include those across the Market Place and High Street.

4.7 Archaeology

This report does not address below-ground archaeology but it is noted that large areas of central Romford are included within an Archaeological Priority Area (APA) including the whole of the Romford Conservation Area and the area around the former Mawneys manor and sections of the Roman Road.

5.0 Opportunities, Threats, Responses

5.1 Overview

Urbanistically, Romford has two major problems. The first, well recognised, is the barrier between centre and hinterland put in place by the inner ring road.

The second is that the retail street frontages have, in large part, lost their immediate hinterland. The rear blocks have been swallowed up by covered shopping centres so that the long, narrow plots, that were once characteristic of Romford, have almost vanished. This is compounded by Romford not being, historically, a town with a grid of streets.

There is actually very little of Romford that is an active frontage after dark – most is locked away internally. There are very few actual streets in Romford in comparison to other town centres. Too much of the town centre has been lost to service yards and the degree of blank walls to such yards, to multi-storey car parks and shopping centre flanks is problematic – and especially acute in places such as Exchequer Street which is an exposed service street opened up as a route between the backs of properties.

The front-back confusion with the resulting blank walls is also evident in other parts of the town – particularly where the ring road has sheered through the backlands of properties – few properties probably face Romford's largest and busiest road. Even recent developments have compounded this relationship such as the mixed-use buildings in the north-east corner of the market that, while offering more enclosure to Market Place, add to the barrier of the ring road between the retail and civic areas outside the ring. This pattern continues between the Main Road roundabout and Western Road where pedestrians are driven underground.

The consequences of 1960s, large-scale zonal planning has also meant that Romford town centre has become far less diverse with limited uses beyond retail and parking.

Taken together, this means that it is, at present, very difficult to foster a post-work vitality. This is reflected in the marked lack of independent or multiple cafés and restaurants in the town that serve an evening clientele (as opposed to shoppers on a break). At weekends, late-night revellers fill bars and clubs again but this is a very different pattern of use from an early evening economy where an attractive public realm is essential. This is compounded by most of Havering's cultural uses such as theatre being located elsewhere in the borough.

This large-scale zoning of previous masterplan proposals does, unfortunately, continue in some more recent plans that envisage office enclaves in one part of the town, residential in another, civic functions in a further zone, instead of ensuring that mixed-use developments across the town centre create activity at different times of the day and evening across the centre.

The demolition of much of the historic fabric of Romford is a loss that cannot be rectified. This means that what remains is all the more important as the context-setting armature for new developments and for the inspiration that the heritage fabric provides for reinforcing local identity – for example, knitting back together severed routes within and beyond the ring road with more continuous routes lined with appropriately scaled buildings with active frontages.

This includes the morphology of Romford. Most of its alleys and yards have been lost to post-war redevelopment but some remain, particularly around the market place and offer variations in space and place, a memory of the past and opportunities for surprise and discovery that are common in many towns and cities but largely absent in Romford.

In addition, there has been an accumulation of small slights that has diminished the quality of what positive pre-war fabric survives. Poor shopfronts, insensitive signage, and replacement windows have chipped away at the character of these survivors beyond the clutch of statutorily listed buildings.

Until c.2008, Romford's strategy of relying on the pull of its retail offer was successful but changes to patterns in shopping – particularly the rise of online shopping and the rise of mega-centres such as Stratford Westfield as well as issues such as rising business rates – mean that Romford is now suffering.

Today, some 25 percent of fashion purchases, for instance, are made online instead of on the high street and if shopping centres are to thrive, they need to diversify their streets and activities to allow more services, food and beverage, local specialists to thrive.

At present, the town's poor-quality environment is mitigating against the success of such a strategy.

Many of the above issues have been recognised within Havering's recent planning and regeneration policies and initiatives, however, the heritage environment and its relationship to an urban design approach for central Romford has yet to be fully explored.

5.1 Conservation Area Extension

There has been a previous recommendation to expand the Romford Conservation Area to protect the setting of assets and the public realm and strengthen the council's hand in raising the design quality bar in the town centre but this opportunity has not been realised to date.

This has become a priority and its extension should also consider the setting of the conservation area as a whole and examine the length of South Street to the station for potential inclusions.

5.2 Valuing Romford's Interwar Heritage

Very often the heritage focus in Romford is on its 19th century fabric and (understandable) lamentations for what has been lost. Yet Romford also has an unusually extensive collection of interwar buildings from the Times Furnishing Store and Odeon to the Quadrant Arcade, from the former Post Office and train station to the Town Hall and a number of well-made inter-war pubs.

Despite the inclusion of some buildings from this period, a number of inter-war buildings have been lost to redevelopment and others are threatened.

It is true nationally that interwar buildings which are not Modernist but other styles, have been overlooked as potential heritage assets. However, within Romford, the fate of many of these buildings may be an expression of a desire that the town reinforce its sense of itself as a market town separate from London's Metroland. However, this is not an either/or choice, especially within the context of the prior loss of many heritage assets from all periods and the value of what remains.

The qualities of many buildings have been hidden by later alterations that have diminished their worth – but not irreversibly. For the immediate present, at least, these buildings remain in sufficient numbers and groups to form a distinctive local environment in the town centre whose story can be marketed following their restoration. The Quadrant in particular has many qualities as a 'vintage' locale and features such as its green and gold neon could be restored as part of a refurbishment. It provides an opportunity for small independent retailers. Occupancy rates fell to some 50 percent in 2014 but this has now risen again to some 95 percent with initiatives such as pop-ups and diversifying the tenant mix. The building, especially if lost detail and lighting is restored, has the potential to

be positive local attraction within the retail mix offered by the town. This should be a priority.

The loss of the Romford Arcade means that the Quadrant is also one of the few central shopping arcades that offer smaller scale units centrally (apart, that is, from the very different environment of indoor market stalls). The arcades also offers a small degree of permeability that is notably lacking in Romford town centre as a whole. Those arcades without architectural merit – such as Laurie Walk could be unroofed – akin to the 'daylighting' of the River Rom while others could be redeveloped in a manner that looks to successfully refurbished arcade districts such as those in central Leeds, Melbourne or Paris.

101b A night-time display, 1938. Hills & Steele 'the 3d. to £5 store' soon gave way to British Home Stores.

Quadrant Arcade shortly after opening.

Romford's Post Office survives, much altered, on South Street

5.3 Other Frontage Improvements

There are many buildings within the conservation area with inappropriate signage, replacement windows and lost details that detract from each building's, and the totality's, overall quality. Restored shopfronts and upper floor frontages within the conservation area would provide an improved appearance, enhancing the shopping, living, and cultural environment for Romford. Opportunities for living or working on vacant floors above shops should also be explored to bring back more intensity and diversity of activity back to the town centre. Maintaining separate access to upper floors is vital to allowing this to happen.

Some key heritage assets need attention to restore their frontages and act as exemplars for improvements elsewhere – these including the White Hart and The Lamb. Public sector involvement in key buildings can encourage private sector investment elsewhere.

5.4 Reinforcing Local Identity – smaller scale, plot and secondary circulation

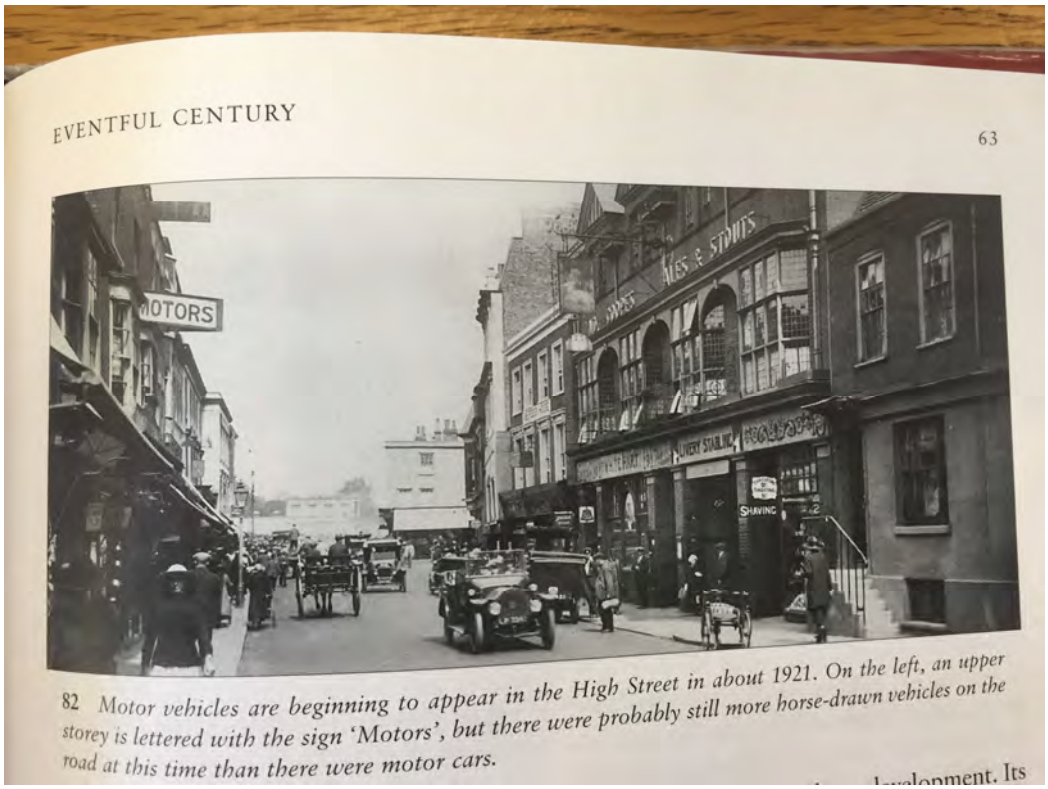
Re-establishing a physical environment that is more distinctively Romford cannot be achieved quickly but is a long-term, steady task that will rely on years of development control decisions backed by a strong design guide, development briefs and other actions such as extending the conservation area boundary.

Future developments should learn from local typologies where these work and which have relevance in contemporary life and assist in Havering achieving its strategic goals. This includes embracing the best legacies of all eras but particularly those that have helped establish Romford's particular character.

Resisting the loss of yards and alleyways and in some circumstances recreating them. This is of particular importance around the market place where long deep plots with yards and small backland developments once dominated and could, to some degree again, re-establishing a particular feel. In the post-war period many of the former, long narrow plots and yards have been combined or lost altogether. This is inevitable as life and economies change but Romford has lost the variety of spaces that once made it distinctive. Arguably, there are more than sufficient retail spaces of sufficiently large size that, in redevelopments, some smaller grain plots can be reintroduced as well as narrow side streets to add interest, variation, surprise and different economic opportunities – including after retail hours.

Those alleys that survive should be protected and activated but not roofed in and enclosed separately from the public realm. This includes, if possible, Swan Walk and, perhaps, other failing retail sites including some of the minor malls such as Laurie Walk that could be transformed into an internal street – part of a network of small secondary routes between the Market Place and the Liberty shopping centre. This would have the effect of reinstating Romford's lost second scale spaces, grain and buildings and creating the secondary grid that Romford failed to develop historically.

The once important yard at the rear of the White Hart (later, the Bitter End) pub. could also be re-established among others.


EVENTFUL CENTURY 63

82 Motor vehicles are beginning to appear in the High Street in about 1921. On the left, an upper storey is lettered with the sign 'Motors', but there were probably still more horse-drawn vehicles on the road at this time than there were motor cars.

The decorative frontage of the White Hart, right, could be restored

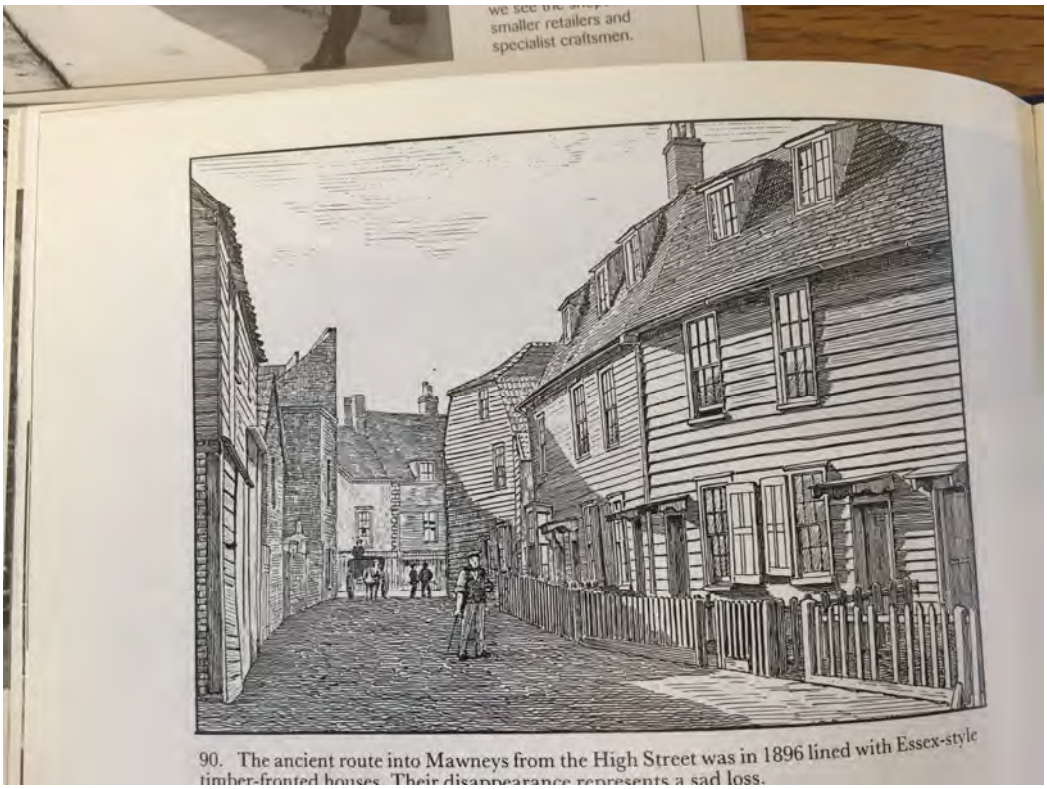
These can be attractive spaces in their own right as the varied rear forms of the Golden Lion demonstrates. Smaller, narrower arcades may also have a place if extended opening hours are possible but this is not ideal because they limit the public realm.

Essex has a strong history of design codes dating back to the Essex Design Guide and an urban version particular to Romford could provide a powerful decision-making framework, allowing planning officers to up the design quality threshold. This could begin to reintroduce an Essex typology in places to sit alongside the later outer London typology and subsequent 'anywhere' typology that entirely lacks local distinctiveness. Such objectives are more easily achieved within a conservation area with the requirement to preserve or enhance in place.

yard was a hive of activity during the coaching era.

100. The *Coach and Bell* viewed from another angle in April 1895. The shop on the right is a ladies' hairdresser. The [illegible] with the bucket is probably carrying water from a standpipe in one of the High Street yards to a house without water

101. A rare glimpse of backyard Romford in 1895. The less public side of the *Coach and Bell* is a neatly-kept house. Over the top of the roof, to the right, the brewery frontage can be seen.



Weatherboarding – an Essex vernacular

5.5 Activating the Market Place

Market Place has been much studied and various proposals have come forward to re-energise the space. The halted Market House proposal was an interesting attempt to move in this direction. Arguably, however, it was in the wrong place, adversely affecting the setting of the heritage assets including the parish church.

The desire to break down Market Place into smaller elements has a rationale in seeking to create two more intimate and manageable spaces but it runs counter to the foundational space of Romford and suggests a lack of confidence in the ability to make the market work as one, grand space.

There are three major issues to resolve – the public realm and activity within it, the frontages surrounding the market, and its connections beyond the ring road. Market Place is unlikely to be revived without tackling all three.

Removing car parking and surface works would be a strong statement of commitment to a revived market place. It can then be used for more activities (including non-retail entertainment uses) on non-market days. Arguably, there is also an opportunity – without being kitsch – to re-introduce a softer, more

agrarian character to Market Place – using timber rails and bollards, for example, as well activities such as a more frequent farmers market that re-animates Romford's connections to its Essex hinterland.

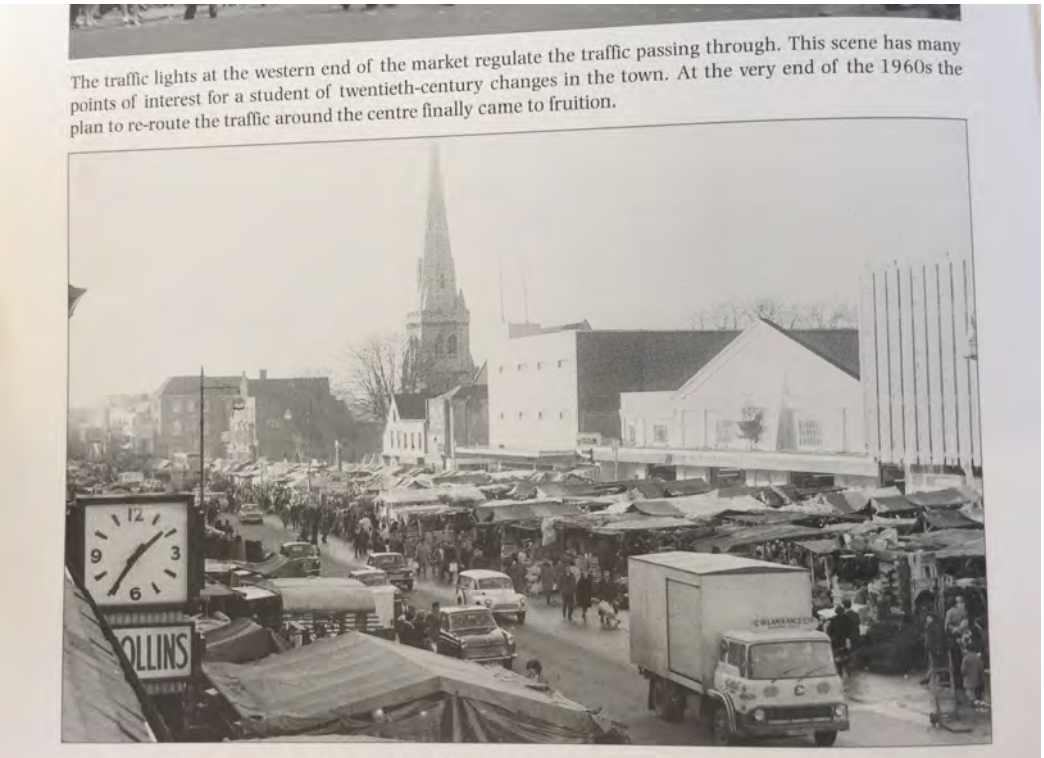
Physical connections to the wider area also have a role and tackling the ring road from the flank of Mercury Gardens around to North Street would reintegrate centre and periphery, reinstating severed connections to assets such as the RC Church, the Town Hall and the parklands further east.

The proposals in the previous section regarding yards and alleys are, of course, most pertinent here. The buildings and secondary spaces on the market place need more complexity and to better respect the grain of the area.

The redevelopment of key frontage sites such as Littlewoods and B&M represent opportunities to reinstate narrower frontage bays, secondary hidden spaces (including green spaces) and some smaller scale plots as part of mixed-uses including housing above active frontages.

Some past studies have suggested that Romford's town centre needs more large format retail premises rather than less. Those old assumptions need revisiting in the current retail environment where high quality physical spaces, historic interest, and the individuality and localism of the offer are becoming an essential part of a sustainable mixed-use economy.

Stone's department store stood on the site of today's Debenhams – note the carriage entrance to a rear yard



The traffic lights at the western end of the market regulate the traffic passing through. This scene has many points of interest for a student of twentieth-century changes in the town. At the very end of the 1960s the plan to re-route the traffic around the centre finally came to fruition.

The Market Place in the 1960s. Many of the old public clocks in Romford have now disappeared like the one in

5. 5 Softening the Ring Road

Breaking the neck-lock of the inner ring road, replacing subways with surface crossings where possible and re-connecting attractive areas such as the Town Hall and Roman Catholic church grouping back to the town centre is essential.

This would also have a great heritage benefit – creating far greater continuity of frontages along historic streets such as North Street and linking heritage assets in the centre with those further out – creating a greater sense of a grouping of heritage assets.

One example would be the reconnection of High Street with what remains of New Romford – there is a cluster of heritage assets and well designed buildings on and near London Road such as the Salem Chapel and Sun pub that could be re-integrated with the town centre given alterations to the ring road and the re-development of intervening buildings that have a negative impact on the physical environment. Instead large-scale proposals in these locations threaten to overwhelm these assets and their potential group value.

The cluster of assets including St Andrews at New Romford. These survive amid redevelopment

It is also an opportunity to introduce further greenery back into the town centre. As set out in the map-regression above, the lack of greenery in Romford Town Centre is only a phenomenon of recent decades. For many centuries, inner Romford was immensely green – especially east of the North Street-South Street axis. There are substantial green areas beyond the centre including Coronation Gardens and Raphael Park as well as notable avenues of mature street trees but these do not at the moment connect with the town centre.

The remaining ring road could itself be boulevarded with the introduction of grass verges/suds and avenues of street trees on either the outer-edge of the carriageways or on a central reservation or both.

Developments and the remodelling of existing buildings should have frontages that address this calmed ring road as well as the town centre itself which presently turns its back on the encircling route.

The council has long recognised that the ring road acts as a barrier to pedestrian and cyclist movement and cuts off the heart of the town centre from its suburban hinterland.

The 2008 AAP notes that : “Remedying this will help encourage more people to walk and cycle into the town centre and cut the number of unnecessary car journeys with potential benefits in regard to reducing congestion, and environmental and amenity benefits”.

Pedestrians and cyclists should be at surface level and the removal of subways would facilitate this. Even the most attractive of the subways – that from the Market Place, which is only a short stretch underground and opens onto greenery beyond the ring road – militates against a thorough reintegration of the town centre with the rest of Romford.

5.6 Mixed-Use Developments

Character is generated by uses as well as the physical form of buildings and the spaces between. While more housing has been reintroduced to the town centre and its periphery over recent years, the large-scale zoning separation of the 1960s and 70s needs to be further undone.

There is also evidence of large-scale zoning thinking in some more recent Havering planning documents. For instance, the identification of Eastern Road and Western Road as an office enclave.This is not especially useful when attempting to re-activate the town centre (particularly in a time of retail flux) when fine-grain mixed uses would bring activity at different times of day and the evening across the town centre. Arguably, all new developments should be mixed developments – work, retail, housing in order to bring life to all Romford’s town centre streets.

This incudes a food and drink offer that a present caters to either late-night revellers or is about chains within malls. This does not encourage residents or visitors to dwell longer in the town centre and does not cater well for office and other works at lunchtimes. Food and drink offers should consider micro-climate and adjacent activities.

The covered market still has a part to play and, with changes, could function like Oxford, Borough, Leeds or Brixton’s covered markets – providing evening activities as well as daytime retail. Permanent stalls are able to stock some rapidly perishable foodstuffs that temporary stalls within the Market Place itself struggle.

Romford's town centre is also notably devoid of cultural uses beyond the museum and the skating/leisure centre and the cineplexes within the malls. The only independent appears to be the Brookside Theatre on Western Road.

Solutions for Romford need to be found within an understanding of Havering's cultural offer – such as the theatre at Hornchurch – and which identifies gaps in provision. This could include educational uses and it is noted that the redevelopment of the central library is under consideration. The present library, while an interesting design has had many original elements removed and cannot be regarded as a heritage asset. It is also very poorly sited and inhibits making stronger connections between the town centre and the periphery. Its relocation into the town centre or a placement that facilitates connections across the ring road would improve the mix of uses and activities within the town centre. The notion of civic quarter zone is unnecessary beyond the practical need of proximity for council departments.

5.7 Recognising Embodied Heritage Value

Nurturing diversity and the encouragement of creative uses, start-ups and other small enterprises is difficult to achieve in new-build premises. This is because new buildings have to recoup their construction costs in higher rents.

The value of long-standing buildings to a diverse and flexible economy is important in this respect. Non-prime shopping parades can also house such business at ground level – especially where they provide activity to the street. Basic, turnkey premises with simple remediation are best suited to new businesses who cannot afford large outlays of fitting-out capital.

5.8 Working with Positive Fragments

While much of Romford's historic environment has been degraded over the decades, what remains of these assets within the town centre, even if fragmented should provide the starting point for improving the built environment. The focus should be on vacant site and the redevelopment of buildings that detract from the town's character and appearance even ahead of relatively low-value assets (as locally listed buildings are usually regarded).

A prime example would be North Street which at present is blighted by poor frontages and incomplete construction sites. Yet the Golden Lion and the bank

corners provide high quality fabric to which designs can respond. The modern weatherboard building behind the Golden Lion is a pastiche response but contemporary interventions can contribute equally if of appropriate scales and materials. Horizontal boarding and framing, for instance, can be used in a more contemporary manner. There are alleys and routes off North Street that can be activated with small-scale, more intimate development that leading to backland developments and network of smaller routes instead of surface car parks to frame the rear churchyard of the parish church.

Similarly, the listed building at 96-102 (even) North Street beyond the ring road is an important building for Romford but sits within a degraded group of older buildings that could be sensitively restored and reconnected to the inner part of North Street by the remodelling of the roundabout that separates them. This would restore continuity between centre and periphery in this direction.

The Roman Catholic Church enclave is now isolated outside the ring road

5.9 Revealing the River Rom

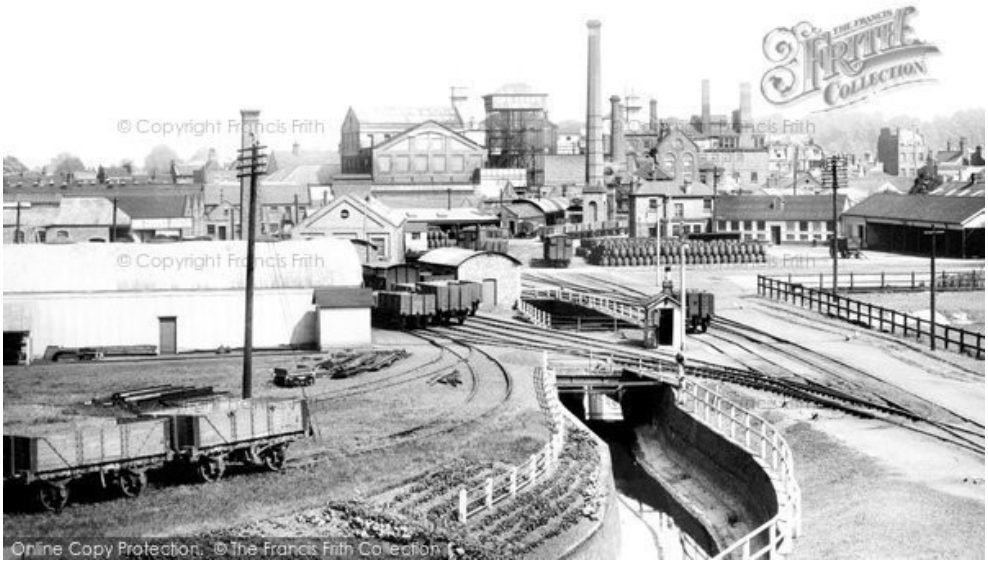
Open up the River Rom has been a long-standing local ambition and would re-establish the centrality of the river to Romford's history. It could also be part of a new blue-green infrastructure and perhaps relate to a SUDS strategy so that the initiative is purposeful rather than simply decorative.

The opening up of lost rivers is being considered in a number of places around the country and has been achieved in some town such as the River Roch in Rochdale town centre.

For this 'daylighting' of the Rom to be successful, a sufficient length of the Rom needs a dedicated study that examines matters such as the degree of water extraction that has reduced its flow over the last century, flood-management and any authorised and un-authorised sewage connections.

In north London, where there is a similar ambition to daylight part of the Moselle river, un-authorised sewage connections on the upstream stretch have been reduced from around 100 to a handful – and soon to be zero.

The possibility of creating a new riverside route from Bridge Close, under the viaduct and across the brewery site and High Street can be explored. It is unlikely that this could be achieved without demolitions but these should not adversely affect the rare heritage assets that survive in the town centre.



Romford's Star Brewery with railway sidings and the River Rom running though

5.10 Front/Back Confusion and Blank facades

It can be particularly damaging to the public realm (although not always) to have the rear of premises facing the public realm. This is a particular issue with modern service yards to shopping malls that create dead frontages in key locations.

Exchange Street is a significant problem in this respect. Between South Street and the Brewery shopping mall it reads as part of the public realm but is degraded and off-putting to people moving between shopping frontages. The same street sets up blank facades for much of its length – notably where the Sainsbury's service yard faces the railway viaduct creating a dead street for much of its length.

Tackling these front-back clashes should be a priority when discussing future changes to malls. Service yards need to be rationalised and, where, possible, given active frontages to the street. Parts of Exchange Street could be inhabited by new development (this is already happening in at least one location).

Blank facades are also a product of highways decisions – for instance between the town centre and the Mercury Mall where blank facades of all periods (including the relatively recent large residential development at the corner of the roundabout next to the shopping centre) compound the lack of connections between the town centre and the remainder of Romford. This situation is made worse by changes in level such as the east west ramp that runs parallel to the Mercury Gardens section of the ring road.

5.11 Greening the Centre

As has been set out above, Romford town centre is notable for its lack of greenery but this is a very recent condition. The opportunity exists to breach the ring road and bring greenery back to the town centre.

It could be an ambition that each of Romford's centre quarters includes a green space (could one re-provide a lost bowling green?) with street trees linking them where possible. Smaller green spaces and specimen trees can create breathing spaces in the town – for instance on North Street behind the Golden Lion where, historically, the street frontage was broken by the garden planting of the parish church's vicarage.

Other locations have never had a character where greenery has played a strong role – most notably the Market Place where the introduction of any trees or greenspace would need to be limited (if at all) and respect the essential and long-standing urbanity of the space.

North Street with a glimpse of the vicarage garden beyond the flank of the Golden Lion and further trees closing the vista.

5.12 Density, Tall Buildings and Landmarks

There is a prevailing assumption that tall buildings – especially those with a novelty form – are icons of regeneration. This is not the case and there is a danger that tall buildings of the wrong form and in the wrong place can work against regeneration.

Romford, despite its few towers, is essentially a low-rise town with large Essex skies. This is part of its character and, arguably, developments that seek to go above mid-rise are unnecessary and damaging outside carefully chosen locations. High buildings can also concentrate investment and activity rather than activating the centre more widely.

That said, densities in some parts of Romford are far to low at present and mitigate against a proper sense of urbanity. The Brewery surface car park is one example where building at density can much improve the character of the town centre and facilitate new routes between core and periphery.

Taller buildings carefully placed can act as wayfinding landmarks. Historically, Romford had two major landmarks, the Brewery chimney and the parish church spire. The chimney's replacement (at the car parking ramp) does not fulfil the intended purpose.

However, the spire of the church still plays an important role in Romford. Users of the train station, for instance, are guided to the crossroads and market by the spire as a landmark above the general height of the roofs. It is worth exploring a town centre height limit that is no higher than the base of the spire. Additionally, or alternatively, viewing corridors need establishing to guide the location of taller developments. Tall buildings within the immediate context of heritage assets including individual and groups of assets (including the conservation area) can damage the setting and heritage significance of not only individual assets but Romford town centre as a whole and should be resisted.

5.13 Parking

Romford is notable for its many multi-storey and surface car parks. While these may serve a need, their provision needs balancing against Romford's physical environment that, increasingly, will be vital to its economic fortunes as an office and retail location. Parking provision needs to be rationalised – perhaps in fewer locations and less sensitive locations.

Surface car parks can also be damaging to the public realm – providing gaps in the urban fabric where there should be buildings. Examples of this include the parking behind the churchyard the Brewery car park. Conversely, their may be opportunities to increase the provision of parking at other locations such as Dolphin Approach.

And while car use is high, more than a third of people travelling to Romford arrive by bus and others by train. This is likely to shift further with Crossrail. A balance needs to be struck between car users and other transport modes. In the post-war period, catering to the car has damaged the physical environment of the town as much as serving its economic needs.

5.14 Interpretation and Events

Within the context of a heritage restoration drive, the physical environment can be activated and better understood through activation and events. The revival of the Market Place's summer fair, the use of projections to illuminate buildings and a Thirties event on South Street are just initial, outline ideas that need to be fully developed within the context of a cultural strategy for the town.

Such participatory events are often more successful at engaging local people and visitors than plaques or permanent interpretation signage that point to past losses rather than present life. However, they need to take place alongside genuine investment in the historic environment rather than substituting for this – otherwise local people can be put offside rather than engaged.

Driving Sheep over London Bridge by the Worshipful Company of Woolmen

6.0 Addressing Recent Change and Emerging Proposals

With the economy in flux – particularly the retail landscape – changing transport modes and housing needs there is the opportunity for Romford to rebalance its town centre. The potential sale of the Liberty shopping centre and remodelling of the Brewery are chances to implement physical environment changes that would be of great benefit for the future of the town.

However, improved public transport such as Crossrail and factors such as the rise of online shopping are also threats that could drain the town centre of its raison d'etre – fast transport links can take shoppers elsewhere as well as bring them in. A mixed-use town centre with an improved environment helps mitigate threats.

Proposals are still coming forward (such as Swan Walk) that seek to turn more of the street frontage into covered, private space. For all the reasons set out above this endangers Romford's already fragmented identify and specificity and would miss opportunities to undo current problems.

The role played by heritage as a cultural economic driver and in reinforcing local distinctiveness could also be more firmly recognised as the loss of some buildings from the local list attests. Recent proposals threaten further potentially negative change – including the demolition rather than remodelling, frontage restoration and provision of appropriate upper floors at the Page Calnan Building on South Street. Inter-war heritage is still undervalued and design guidance specific to interwar buildings would be a welcome move.

Other proposals are coming forward that threaten potential assets in North Street or which are inappropriate within the setting of vital heritage assets. The proposed Premier Inn on the B&M site is a prime example, a building whose redevelopment is to be otherwise warmly welcomed in principle.

Given the pace of change, there is an urgency to put in place the necessary protective and enhancement measures or what remains of the cohesion of Romford's historic environment and its role in supporting high-quality regeneration will be lost. Romford has a better chance of holding its own in a troubled economy by reinforcing local identity – by becoming more intensively itself.

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YOUR ROMFORD 2024

ROMFORD TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN 2024 UPDATE

Engagement Summary

make:good MACCREANOR LAVINGTON AVISON YOUNG Havering LONDON BOROUGH

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Engagement Update Summary

From 8th April to 3rd May:

we ran **5 pop-ups** and **5 workshops** with children and young people, plus **1 stakeholder workshop** and an **online survey**

We spoke to 724 people

73% said they continue to support the masterplan

Havering will carry out a statutory consultation on the finalised Masterplan in

SUMMER 2024

YOUR ROMFORD 2024

The most supported ideas were:

- **The market**
- **River Rom**
- **Public spaces**

1.0 Executive Summary

Introduction

Following engagement on the Romford Town Centre Masterplan in 2019 there was a pause due to the pandemic, change in administration and economic uncertainty. This pause impacted a number of pieces of work but Havering Council took the decision in early 2024 to take the necessary steps to finalise the Masterplan.

From 8th April to 3rd May 2024 we ran an intensive engagement exercise to talk to the people of Havering about refreshing the Masterplan and adopting it as a piece of formal planning guidance over the coming months.

Keeping people informed

- JC Decaux Posters from 25th March to 10th April. 60 sites across the whole of the borough, 6-sheet advertising
- 3 x Living in Havering newsletters to over 62,000 email addresses
- 2 x Your Romford mailing list reminders to 330 sign-ups
- 1 x mailout to Havering's headteachers
- 1 x mailout to Havering Planning Policy Consultation database to 118 consultees
- Targeted instagram ads reaching >9000 accounts
- Instagram posts x10 across make:good and Havering Council channels
- X (formerly Twitter) posts x10 across make:good and Havering Council channels
- Market traders flyers to 70 stalls
- Article in Havering Daily
- Two articles in the Romford Recorder:
  - https://www.romfordrecorder.co.uk/news/24222482.readers-views-havering-council-town-centre-consultation/
  - https://www.romfordrecorder.co.uk/news/24214202.havering-council-launches-consultation-romfords-future/
- 'Your Romford' website and blog: www.yourromford.co.uk

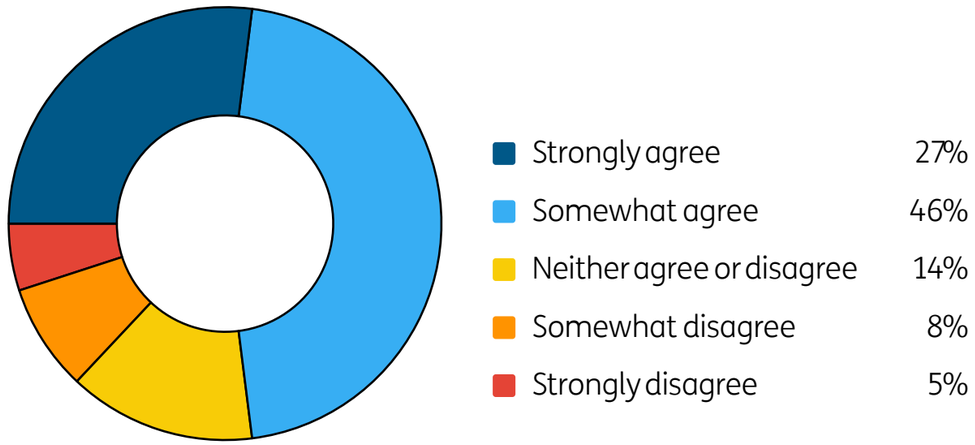
Activities delivered

- 5 pop ups around the town centre
- 1 secondary school workshop
- 2 primary school workshops
- 2 young people workshops
- 1 stakeholder workshop

Reach

Across the programme we reached **724** people and received **665** pieces of feedback

Headline sentiment



Conclusion and next steps

The overall sentiment about the Masterplan was positive with 73% of respondents saying that they either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the ideas in the Masterplan.

People supported the idea of starting with the market as a focus for improvement but wanted heights and number of new houses to be clarified in the final plan.

This aligns with the feedback we received in 2019 where people were very supportive of the Masterplan with particular support for improving the market, the River Rom and overall public spaces.

Maccreanor Lavington and the Council will now finalise the Masterplan. The intention is that statutory consultation on the Masterplan is conducted by Havering in summer 2024 before it is formally adopted as a piece of planning policy in winter 2024.

2.0 Your Romford 2024 aim

Havering Council is committed to protecting and strengthening Romford Town Centre and the surrounding area, to make sure it continues to be a place that people live, visit and enjoy.

The Your Romford engagement programme listened to peoples' priorities, ideas and aspirations for Romford in 2019 to produce a Masterplan for the Town Centre. After a pause, it relaunched from 8th April to 3rd May 2024 to gather feedback on a refreshed Masterplan so that Havering can adopt it as formal planning guidance.

The aim of the engagement programme was to:

- **Remind people about the Masterplan and the Your Romford programme**
- **Revisit the key moves in the Masterplan to understand if they still resonate for people**
- **Identify local priority ideas in the Masterplan**
- **Identify any concerns about ideas in the Masterplan**
- **Set out the process for taking the Masterplan from draft into a piece of planning policy**

To meet these aims we created a programme of:

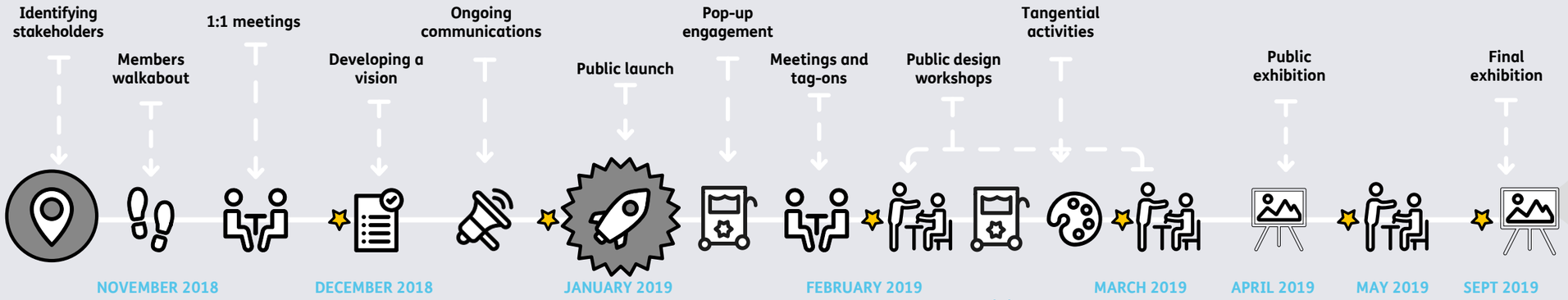
- 5 pop up exhibitions
- 5 tag on activities to reach young people
- 1 stakeholder workshop
- Materials presented in Romford Library
- A bespoke online platform

3.0 Your Romford 2024 timeline

Following an intensive period of engagement in 2019 we carried out further engagement on the refreshed Masterplan from 8th April to 3rd May 2024.

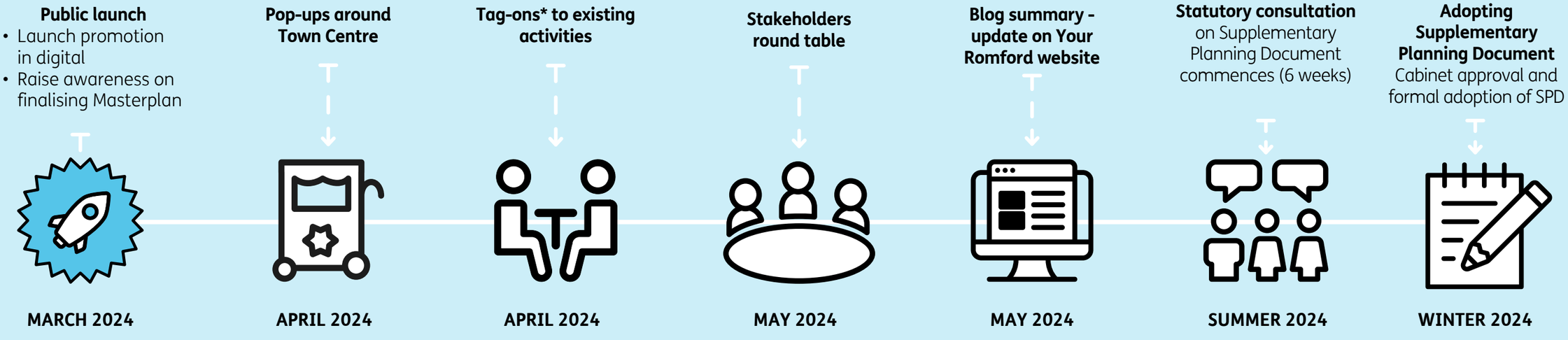
We set this work within the context of a statutory consultation later in the year and hopefully successfully adopting the Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document.

PREVIOUS WORK 2018/19



A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will help guide new development within the Romford Town Centre Masterplan area over the coming years. Once adopted this document will be used in consideration and determination of future planning applications.

CURRENT WORK 2024



*Tag-on activities are where we attend (or 'tag-on' to) an existing event or meeting to share content and invite feedback in order to make it easy for people to participate.

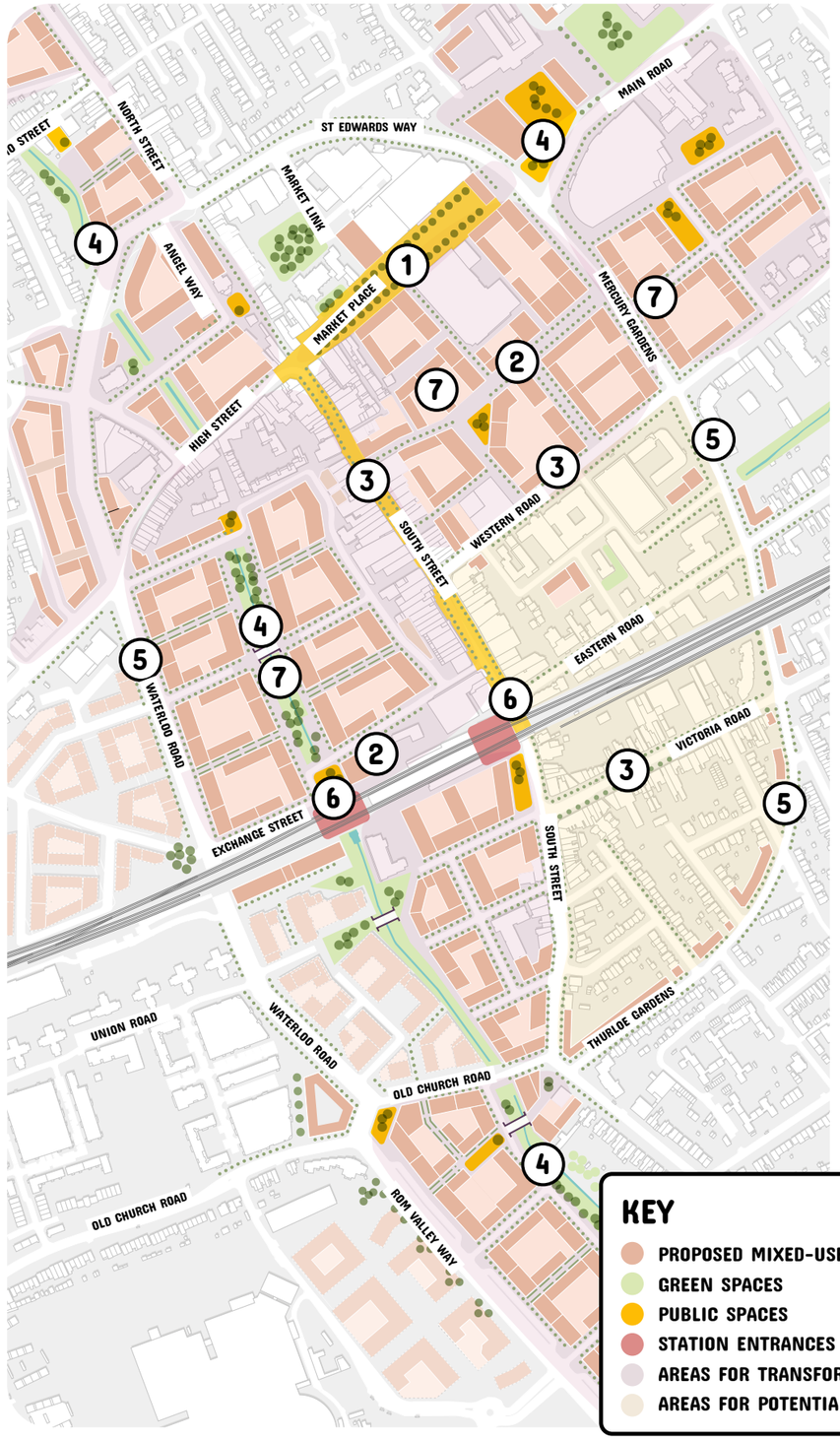
4.0 Key messages

Key messages:

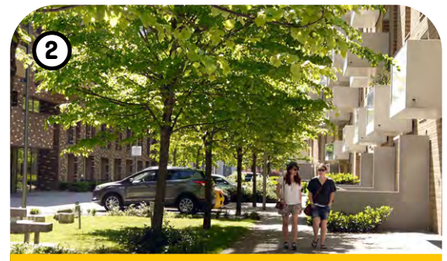
The main principles of the Masterplan remain the same but it has been adapted to accommodate updated projects and proposals.

Through the engagement programme we wanted to ensure people were at a baseline aware of the seven key principles of the Masterplan.

The map and photographic examples on this page were the key ideas we wanted people to understand before they provided feedback on the Masterplan.



Reinforce Market Place with complementary activities, events & uses
– Kingston Market

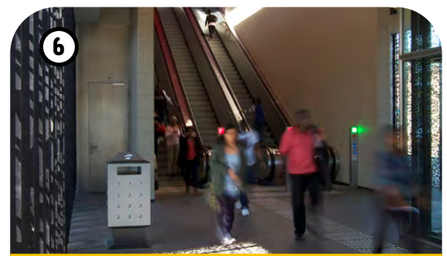


and green links to the Town Centre
– St Andrews, Bromley-by-Bow

Enhance key public realm spaces such as Market Place, South Street, Victoria Road and the Station entrance
- Venn Street, Clapham

Introduce new public spaces across the Town Centre and along the Rom to support vitality and liveability
– Riverside Lünen, Germany

Recharacterise the Ring Road as an urban street, creating a pleasant environment, activity and new crossings
– Kensington High Street



Reinforce the station as a gateway, with an enhanced arrival space and a new entrance on the west side
– Kraaiennest station, Amsterdam

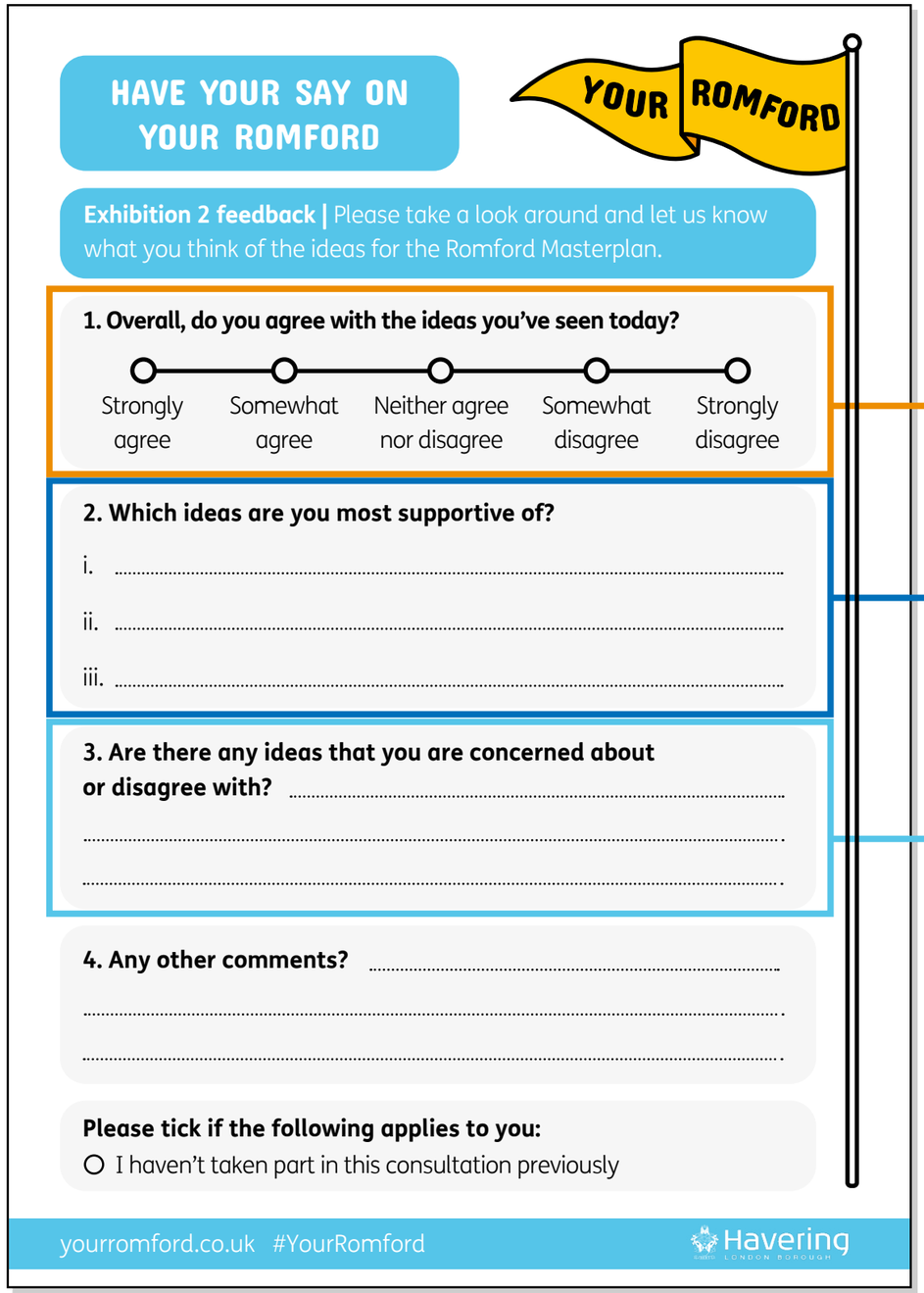
Town centre mix: augmenting and evolving the town centre offer of retail, leisure, cafés and restaurants
- 19th & Mercer, Seattle

5.0 Feedback gathering

A key aim of the engagement programme was to collect feedback on how the public perceived the Masterplan.

We used paper feedback forms at each of our in person events and this was mirrored in the online survey accompanying the Masterplan material presented on the Your Romford website.

We asked participants to provide feedback on:



We wanted to use this question to gauge the degree of support for the ideas in the Masterplan.

We wanted to use this question to understand which idea and features people were more supportive of.

We used this question to understand any ideas that people were less supportive of.

6.0 Promoting the engagement programme

We promoted the programme across the following channels to ensure there was a wide awareness about the opportunity to feedback on the refreshed Masterplan.

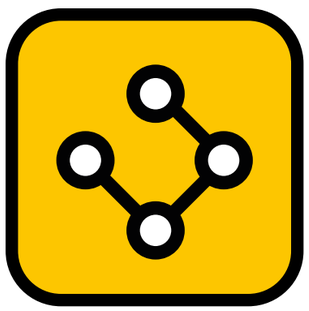
JC Decaux Posters from 25th March to 10th April

3 x Living in Havering newsletters to over 62,000 email addresses

2 x Your Romford mailing list reminders to 330 sign-ups

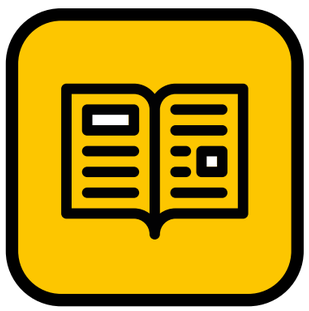
1 x mailout to Havering's head teachers

1 email to Havering Planning Policy Consultation Database to 118 subscribers



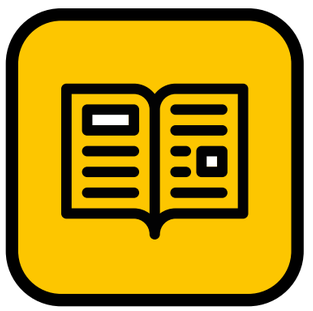
Targeted Instagram ads reaching more then 9000 accounts

10 Instagram and 10 X posts across make:good and Havering Council channels



Article in Havering Daily

Market traders flyers to 70 stalls



2 x articles in the Romford Recorder

7.0 Engagement events

Between 8th April - 3rd May 2024 we delivered the following events.

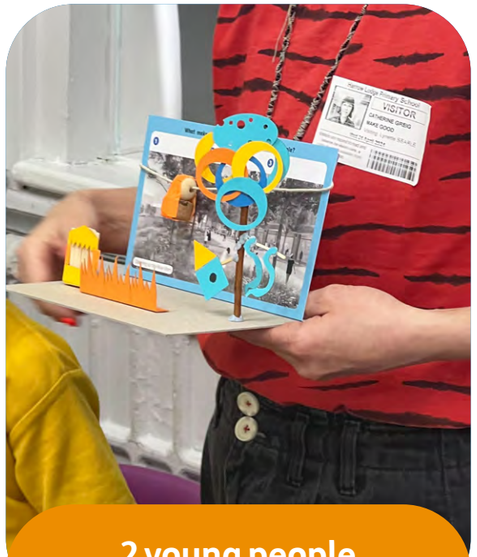
Pop up at Romford Market

Pop up in Liberty Shopping Mall

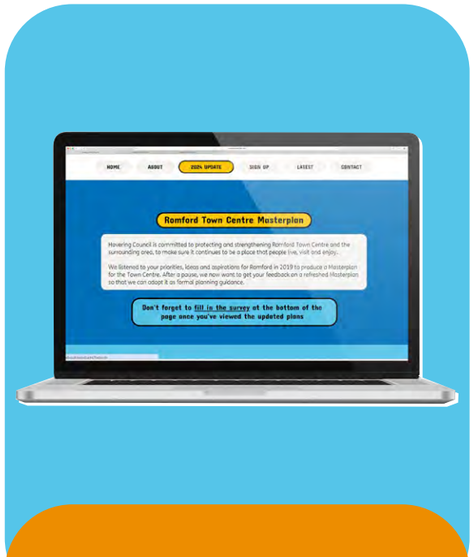
2 pop ups on South Street

Family workshop in The Mercury Mall

2 primary school workshops



2 young people workshops



Online

Stakeholder workshop

Library feedback box

8.0 Activities schedule

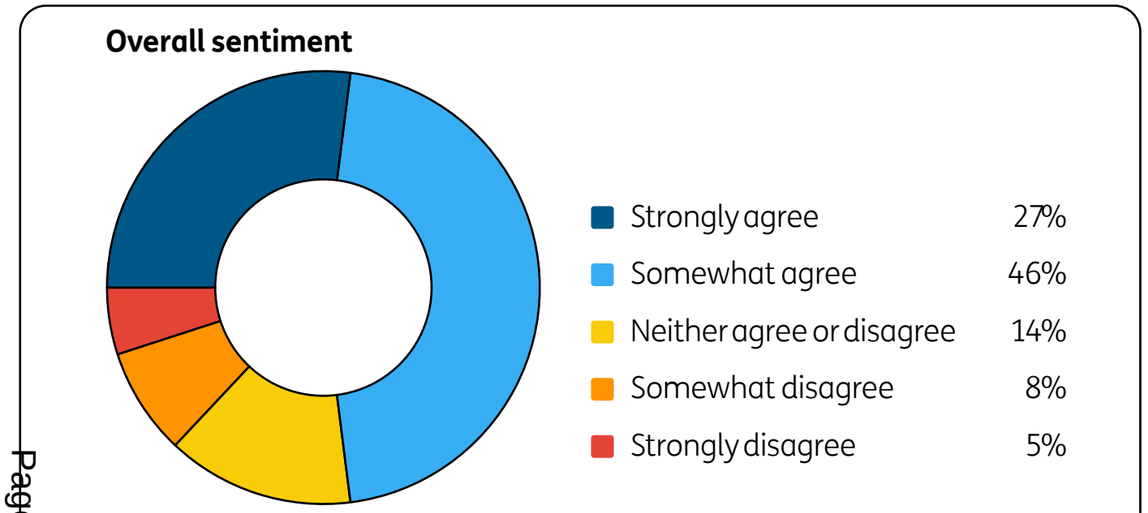
From the 8th April - 3rd May we facilitated the following engagement activities.

Activity	Number of attendees	Number of pieces of feedback
Pop up at Romford Market - 12th April	**78**	**68**
Pop up in Liberty Shopping Mall - 20th April	**186**	**163**
Pop up 1 on South Street - 27th April	**80**	**70**
Pop up 2 on South Street - 1st May	**71**	**57**
Family workshop in The Mercury Mall - 9th April	**45**	**41**
Harrow Lodge Primary School workshop	**22**	**22**
The Cocoon workshop	**7**	**7**
Crowlands Primary School workshop	**28**	**28**
Frances Bardsley Academy workshop	**11**	**11**
Online	**172**	**172**
Library feedback box	**3**	**3**
Stakeholder workshop	**20**	**20**

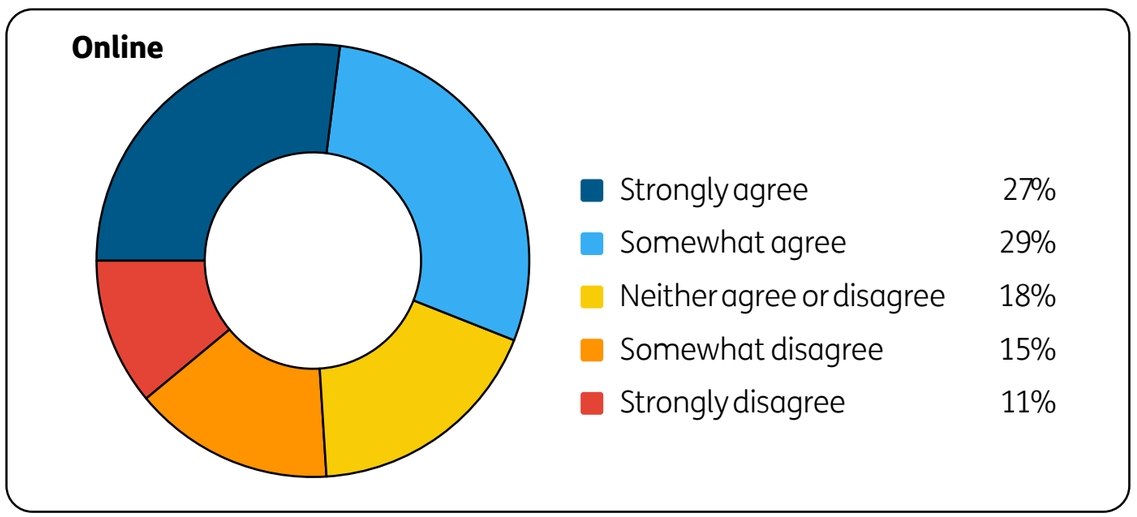
In total we reached 724 people and gathered 665 pieces of feedback.

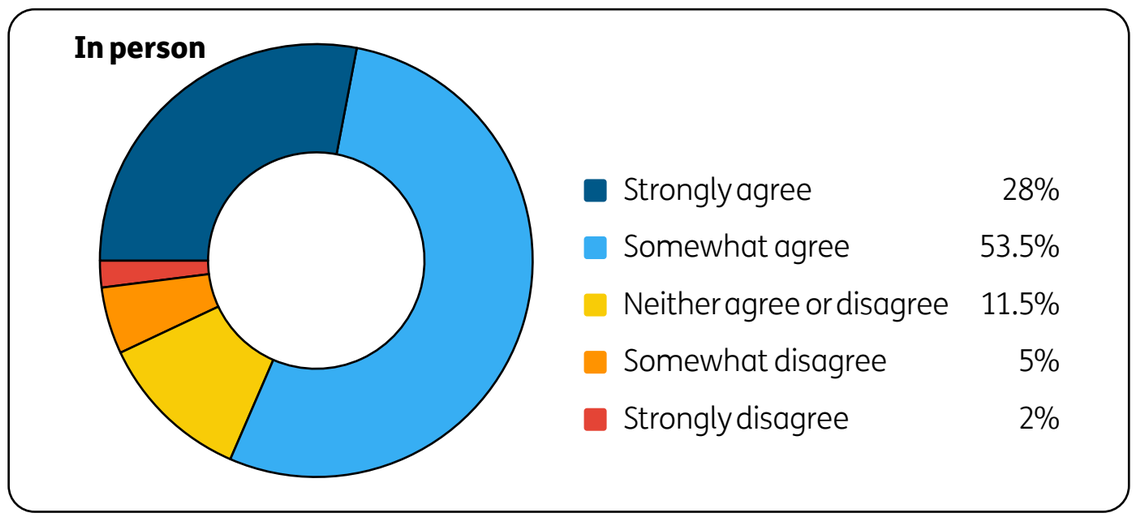
9.1 Overall sentiment

Sentiment was overall supportive of the ideas in the Masterplan, with 73% of people saying they either 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' with the ideas presented.



Online feedback was more negative than that collected in person, showing that when the Masterplan was talked through and explained to people there was increased understanding and support for the work.





9.2 Thematic feedback

The volume and detail in the feedback we have received shows how passionately people feel about Romford town centre and how important it is as a location that provides a range of functions and opportunities for people of a diverse community. In the main people want to see Romford sustain, thrive and provide more for future generations.

When asked what ideas people were most supportive of or which ideas they thought would have the most impact we found:

215 Pieces of feedback

Market 266

The market as a key part of Romford's identity was equal top priority for most respondents. Linking together specialist markets, improvements to landscaping and trees coupled with varied programming that animated this space.

Signposting the market from the station and creating art, signage and reflecting the heritage were all seen as key approaches to supporting the market to thrive.

"We need a vibrant market with activities and culture as the jewel in our crown"

Public realm and green spaces 253

Improving the public realm, bringing in trees and greenery, seating spaces, playable artwork and other incidental play features were also a top priority.

Creating a functional and beautiful public realm that encourages people to spend more time in the town centre was an important way to encourage and increase footfall and provide more positive atmosphere.

"Like the idea of greener public spaces and they need to be more playful for young people"

Opening up the River Rom 176

Highlighting the River Rom as a unique feature for the town centre and creating active green space around it was seen as a key positive. The range of public spaces along the length was well received from park and green space towards the edge of the town centre to spill out space for cafés and restaurants within the more central areas.

"The River Rom spaces look enticing, safer green spaces and restaurant spill out"

Cleanliness & safety(ASB) 169

Whilst not directly referenced or addressed within the Masterplan public feedback showed us that a key concern for people is safety and antisocial behaviour within the town centre. The areas outside the station, McDonald's and the underpasses beneath the Ring Road were identified as spaces that people feel unsafe at the moment.

"Antisocial behaviour is a big issue, it does not feel safe after dark"

9.2 Thematic feedback

The top four most supported ideas within the Masterplan were mentioned by a significantly larger number of people than the numbers of people that mentioned particular concerns or other comments.

We have therefore identified the second tier of ideas that are supported within the Masterplan.

62 Pieces of feedback

Ring Road improvement — 71

Improvements to crossing the Ring Road and changing its character so it feels less like a hard boundary to the town centre was important for people. This included addressing safety concerns with using the underpasses.

There was some concern about the impact of surface crossing and bike lanes on the free movement of traffic around the Ring Road and there is a clear binary response between those who support cycling infrastructure and those whose focus is on ensuring congestion is minimised.

Night time activity (cafés & restaurants) — 69

A desire for an early evening and night time economy that is safe and appealing to a wide range of people including families.

This includes a desire for a broad and inclusive arts and cultural offer in Romford.

Mix of uses — 61

There was an understanding that expanding the uses beyond retail would bring in more footfall, bring in new audiences and create more of a buzz and atmosphere in the town centre that would be good for the existing and new businesses.

Station — 55

Improving access to the station and introducing a new entrance/exit connected to the opening up of the Rom was seen as a good way to reduce the pressure on the already busy station.

More walking & cycling (less car centric, north/south link) — 57

Acknowledging that there is a shift in how people move around a desire to make it easier to walk and cycle into the town centre with improved infrastructure was welcomed but it was also noted that there needed to be accessible parking and provision for those with mobility needs.

"Introducing surface level crossings would make it safer to access the town centre"

"We need a family friendly/ safe evening offer with restaurants and culture"

"The range of uses shown seem like they would create a more exciting place to live"

"It would be lovely to see a developed network of cycle routes, that are properly demarcated from roads"

9.2 Thematic feedback

When asked what ideas people were concerned about they told us:

70 Pieces of feedback

Number of new homes being proposed — 75

The most frequently mentioned concern was the perception of the number of homes being proposed. Whilst the Masterplan does not set housing targets but references the housing targets within the Local Plan feedback showed that the number of new homes that would come forward and a focus on flats rather than family homes was considered a key potential negative impact.

"The Masterplan has no clear numbers on housing figures and that is a concern"

Lack of infrastructure — 54

Linked to concerns about the number of new homes was a concern that there would be an inadequate upgrade to infrastructure to support them. This included reference to schools, health care provision, parks and play.

More work needs to be done to clarify the town centre ingredients within the Masterplan that already seeks to address this concern.

"New homes needs new schools, doctors, parks and more"

Heights — 53

Responses to the current developments being completed at North Street, Angel Way and the proposed Como Street development meant that people expressed concerns about too much height and over-development with the town centre. Fixing heights within the masterplan appropriately and sensitively to the existing townscape was important to people.

"We need to know it won't include more overly tall buildings"

The Council's current Financial Situation — 38

Scepticism over the deliverability of the Masterplan within the context of the Council's financial situation meant that people were concerned the Masterplan would never be realised.

"I can't see that the finance will be in place to make this happen"

9.2 Thematic feedback

When asked for other comments people told us:

61 Pieces of feedback

Immediate use of empty shops — 67

Whilst there was overall positivity about the ideas in the Masterplan the immediate use of large footprint empty shops, such as Debenhams and Littlewoods, was important to people.

Bringing these into use with cultural programming, arts and interesting meanwhile uses were all suggested by people.

"The empty buildings around the market place need bringing back into use sooner rather than later"

Variety of retail — 61

There was some commentary that the retail offer in Romford is on the decline, Romford is a place that people care about and want to remain a regional hub for retail.

Ideas to support a quality and variety of retail would be welcomed within the Masterplan.

"We need better shops, a variety that actually competes with other places"

Parking — 51

The importance of providing adequate parking was raised as an additional requirement for the Masterplan. Feedback that raised parking as an important component was very determined that parking was a need to avoid negatively impacting footfall so while there is less feedback on parking than other topics it was detailed and insistent.

"Some people will continue to need parking and building homes with no parking is not realistic"

Think about young people — 51

Future proofing the Masterplan and ensuring that it provides activity and opportunity for young people in terms of programming, services, jobs and access to culture.

"We need a dedicated, inclusive youth space and programming to engage them"

9.3 Feedback from young people

We ran workshops with 70 local young people aged 7-25 in four different settings: two primary schools, a secondary school and with a local youth group.

We asked them to share what they like, do not like and what is missing in the town centre and explained the key aims and opportunities of the Masterplan project.

This was followed by a model-making activity, using a range of 3D materials and visualisations of key locations. They were briefed to plan and model ideas for making different public spaces more inviting to young people. There were several recurring themes as well as site specific opportunities which we have identified on the following pages.

Key feedback on the town centre:

Young people liked:

All the participants identified the shopping provision, transport links and variety of food options as being positive features of the town centre.

The primary school children we spoke to said they liked how they felt going there as they were excited to go to a leisure activity or shopping.

Young people didn't like:

Primary school children did not like the lack of play and activity provision within the town centre.

Some young adults told us that some places felt unsafe in relation to antisocial behaviour, drunk people and passing through underpasses. This feedback came through most strongly from the young women we spoke to at the secondary school as well as LGBT+ members of the youth group.

Things that were missing:

Primary school children identified activities, parks, play space, drinking water fountains, performance/events space, space for learning as well as more colourful, joyful elements as features that were missing.

Young people and young adults identified a need for different kinds of food and beverage and retail as well as things you can do for free. Making the area more accessible for people with disabilities were also suggested.

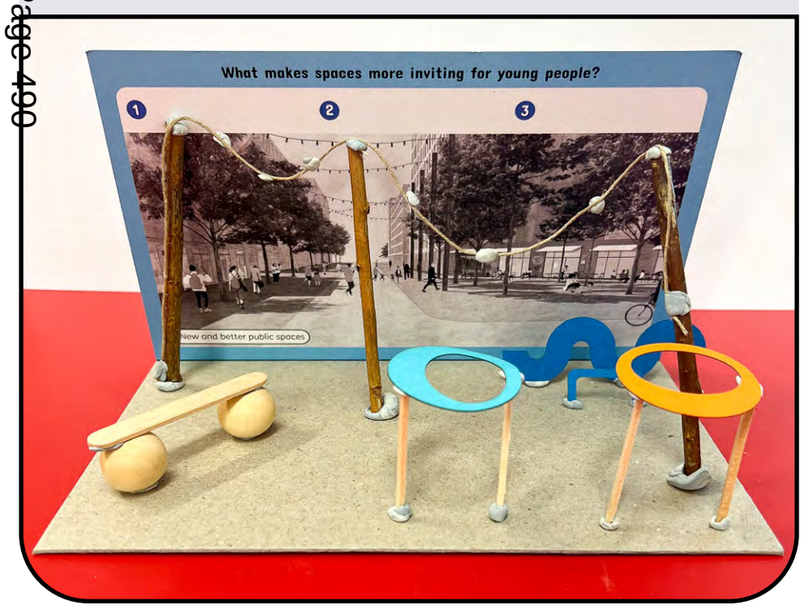
9.3 Feedback from young people

Model making key themes and elements

70 Young people made 34 models. Looking at the elements that they chose to create we can see their priorities and ideas for how to make space more inviting to young people.

New and better public spaces

Common themes:
Play equipment and playful elements such as swings, slides and floor decorations (e.g. hopscotch) social and practical infrastructure like seating, water fountains (drinking and feature) separate recycling/rubbish bins and food vending stalls. Landscape elements such as trees and planting to bring colour and improve air quality.

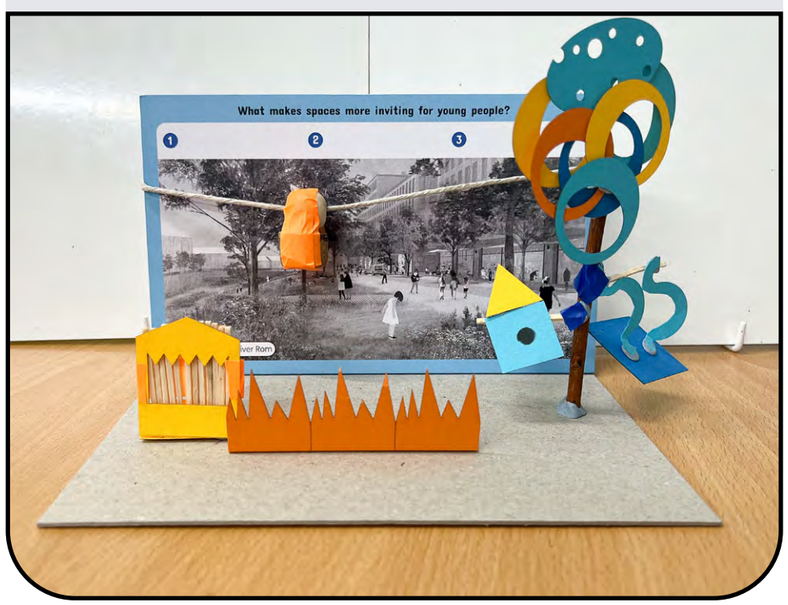


Safely crossing the ring road

Common themes:
Distinct colourful areas away from cars for people, cycling, dog walking, including playful elements such as hopscotch. Traffic management and crossing elements such as colourful crossings, overpasses and planter barriers. Decorative and safety lighting, street vending stalls were also mentioned.

Opening up the River Rom

Here the feedback focused more on trees, planting, natural habitats, and creating seating/ picnic areas and sculptures next to the river. There were also suggestions to create more distinct playful elements integrated with nature (rope swings, climbing walls, play paths) as well as potential for skating infrastructure.



9.3 Feedback from young people

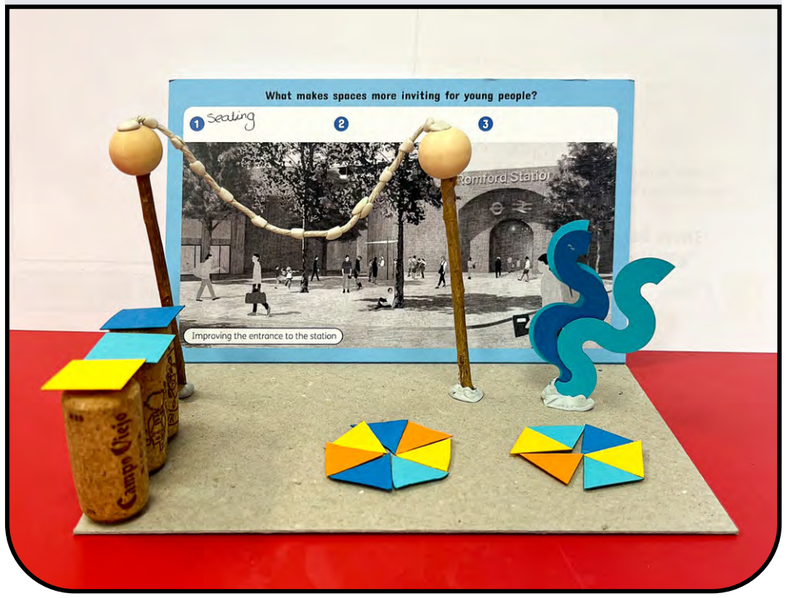
Model making key themes and elements

A vibrant Market Square

When thinking about the market there were suggestions for distinct play areas with elements such as climbing walls/frames, slides, swings etc and the potential to create swing seats. There were also suggestions for high impact landmarks such as colourful gateway signage, pergolas and performance space, and other kinds of decoration and public art such as interactive floor lighting, fountains, festoon lighting, colourful artwork. There were also suggestions for more planting trees and edible that could be sold on stalls.

Station entrance

Elements that made more of an arrival impact were suggested: gateway signage and lighting, information points, seating, water fountain (drinking + feature) play elements (climbing, slide swings). Space for animals/ nature trees and planting were also suggested.



9.4 Feedback from the stakeholder workshop

Format

- Maccreanor Lavington gave a presentation of an overview of the draft Masterplan
- A question and answer session on the Masterplan content
- A workshop session to look at the 7 key moves in the Masterplan (see page x) and identify:
  - What ideas have the most impact
  - What concerns do people have
  - What is missing from the Masterplan

Ideas that have the most impact

The market

Focusing on the market as a starting point for improving the town centre was seen as having a large, and positive impact on Romford, the market is recognised as being the heart of Romford. It was acknowledged that consolidating the stalls and creating a more focused area for the market, hosting events and activities would bring new audiences and customers into the area.

Signage, planting, seating and making more of the marketplace as a destination was seen as important.

It was noted that the market days correlate with the busiest retail days and that the relationship between the market and supporting higher footfall would need to be considered throughout any construction works so that businesses and traders survive any disruption.

Opening up the River Rom

The River Rom was identified as an idea that would create a new and important piece of public realm within Romford with the potential for creating a space that facilitates space for outdoor eating and evening economy as well as new routes for walking, exercising and play.

Attendees raised questions about how delivering this project incrementally would work in reality and how quality would be ensured if it is done piece by piece.

Recharacterising the Ring Road

Breaking down the barrier that the ring road creates around the town centre was acknowledged as a way to improve access to the town but also create more interest and opportunity in the area by creating a green and enticing entry point to Romford.

9.4 Feedback from the stakeholder workshop

Concerns about the Masterplan

Clearer messaging on parking

Parking continues to be an area of concern for some. It was identified that the Masterplan needs to clarify that it is not taking a zero parking approach, but that the intention is to focus parking outside of the town centre and an additional accessible parking approach.

There was a request to identify an approach for pick up and drop off points for those with mobility needs.

A clearer approach to parking is connected to addressing concerns about congestion on the ring road for people who continue to arrive in Romford by car.

Limitations on heights

Recent precedents for taller buildings in the town centre led to requests for the Masterplan to suggest limitations on heights that are significantly lower than the precedent.

Fear of large scale buildings and over-development is a key concern for people including whether these developments would be appropriate for family homes.

The Council needs to rebuild trust that high quality architecture that enhances the existing character can be supported and delivered.

Funding to realise the ideas

There was an overarching concern (whilst the ideas were overall well received) that Havering's current financial position means there will be limited capacity to realise the plans. This was coupled with questions about how the Masterplan will successfully leverage private landowners to deliver on ideas for the public good.

Ideas missing from the Masterplan

Young people focused provision

Specifically setting out how the Masterplan will provide for children and young people; from play provision, leisure activities and educational facilities/ opportunities catering for young people was identified as something that needed a specific section.

Meanwhile opportunities and a clearer arts and culture strategy

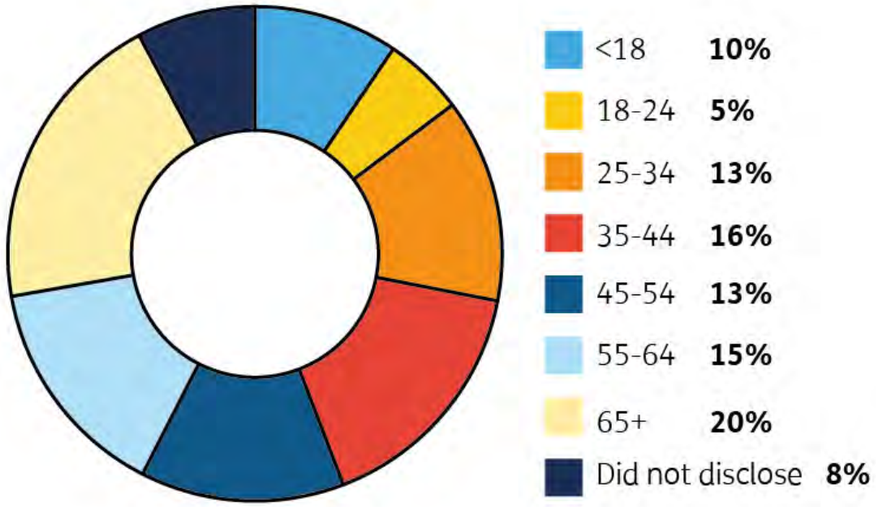
Bringing buildings such as the Debenhams and Littlewoods sites back into use in the short term is an idea supported by many.

It was identified that as the Masterplan does not have a programme for delivery there needs to be a focus on immediate projects or ideas that can be delivered in the short term. This included requests for a meanwhile strategy, bringing forward arts and cultural programming that amplifies creativity in the area including initiatives that are already happening.

Lack of detail

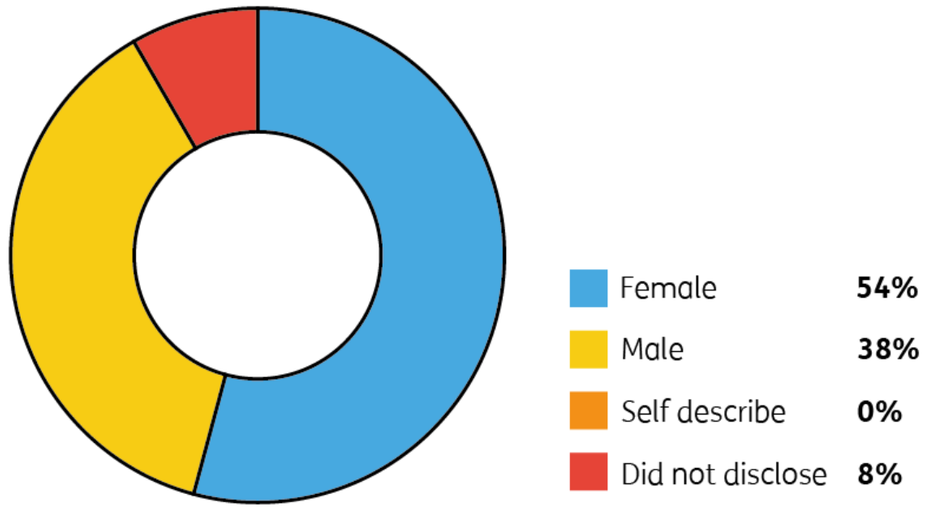
More detail and information was requested on how the Masterplan will leverage high quality architecture, enhance the character of Romford and be respectful of its heritage. This included making specific reference to the conservation context.

10.0 Demographics



Age

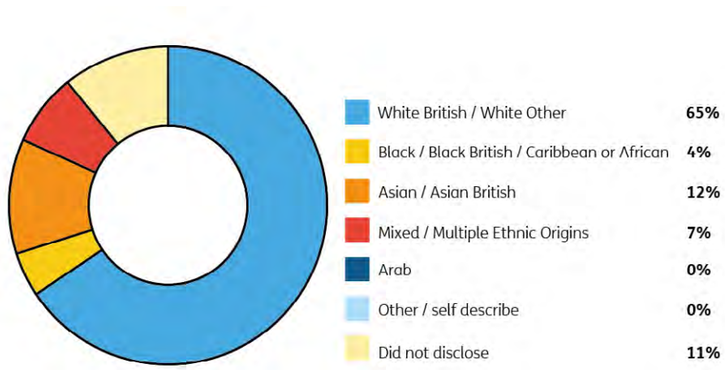
We received the highest number of feedback from people within the age group of 65+ with 20%, which is the 2nd largest age group in the Borough of Havering (17.2%) as per the 2021 census. The no. of feedback within the age brackets of 18 - 64 is representative of the borough's demographics, however the responses received from people under 18 is lower at 10%, compared to the borough's latest census data from 2021 which is 23%. These were mostly gathered from the young people workshops with the local schools which were detailed and facilitated more in depth feedback than our on-street events.



Gender

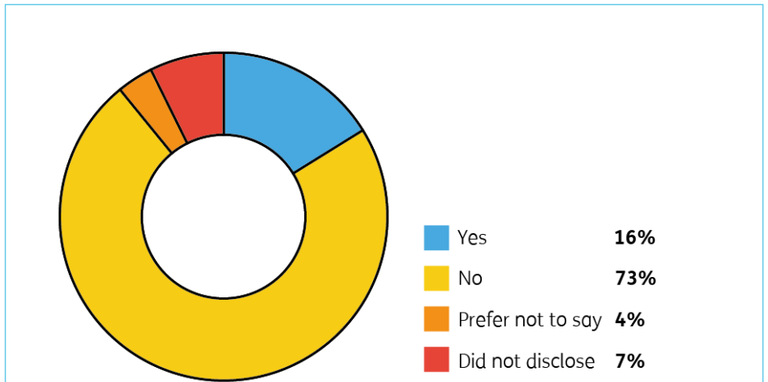
We received the highest number of feedback from Women (54%) which is slightly higher than the Borough of Havering's average which is 51%. Out of the responses collected, 8% of respondents did not share this information.

10.0 Demographics



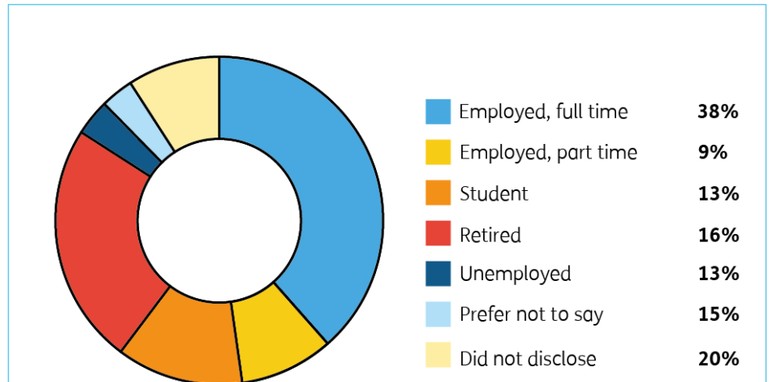
Ethnicity

We received the highest number of feedback from the White British / White Other group (66%), which is the biggest ethnicity group according to the latest census data for Havering at 75%. It is worth noting that Romford Town is one of the more diverse parts of the borough, hence the slightly lower reach for this ethnic group. We received good representation of the Asian / Asian British ethnicity and Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Origins groups, however slightly lower for the Black/Black British / Carribean or African group by 3%. 10% of respondents did not share this information.



Disability

We received slightly higher no. of feedback from people with disability by 2% based on Havering's latest census data 2021. This result is anticipated due to the effect of COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns. The result does not take into account the 7% of respondents who chose not to disclose this information.



Employment status

The two employment groups with the highest number of feedback are those who are employed full time (38%) and retired (24%), which are reflective of the main age groups captured.

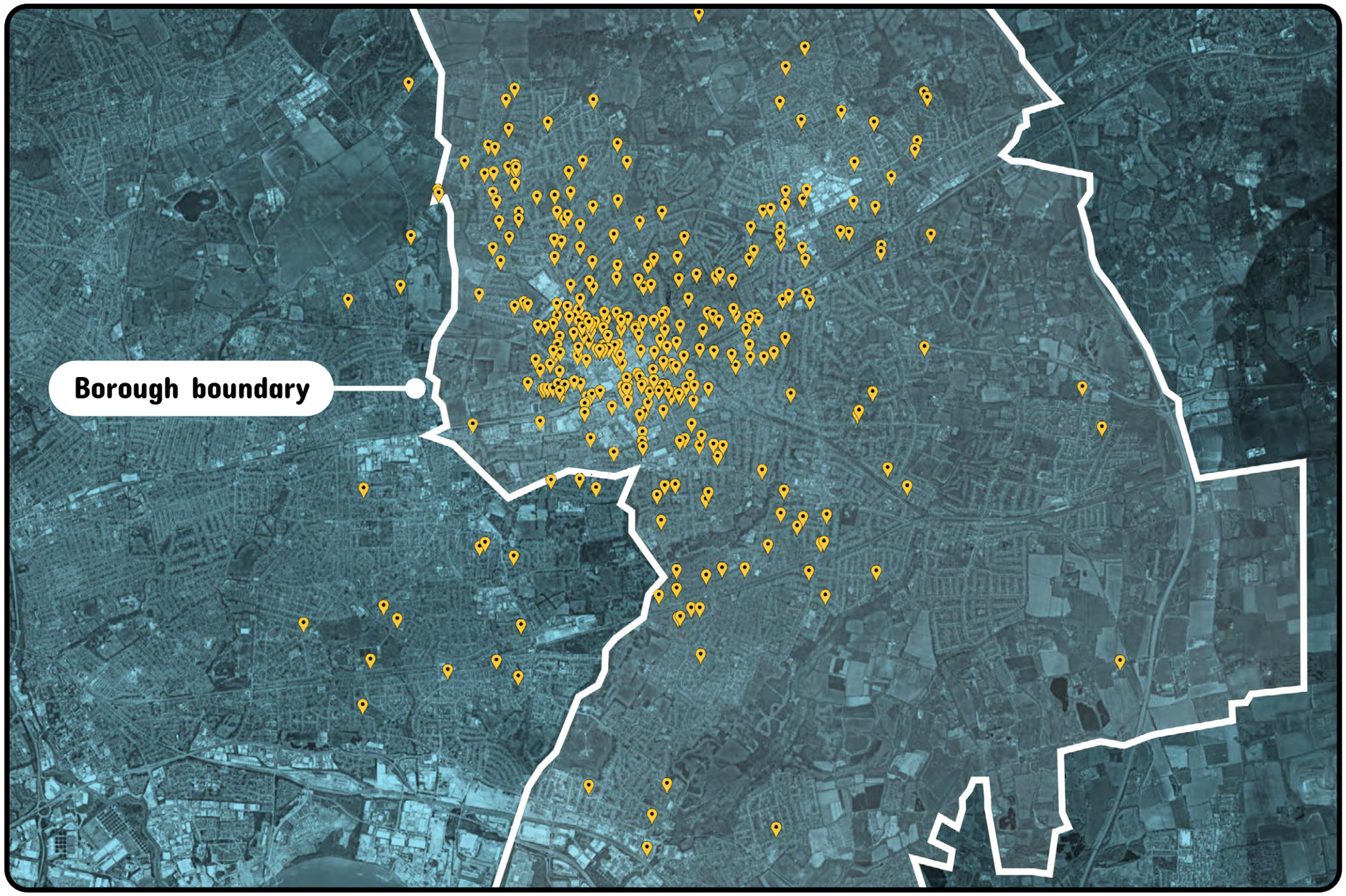
11.0 Geographic reach

Of the 665 people who gave us feedback 558 provided us with a valid postcode. We have mapped this data to understand our reach.

We can see that the majority of responses came from people living within 2 miles of the town centre and 97% of the respondents provided a London Borough of Havering postcode, whilst 3% of respondents live in London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Barking & Dagenham and Essex County.

The top three postcodes that we received responses from were:

1. RM1 - Romford, Hornchurch (143)
2. RM7 - Romford, Dagenham (104)
3. RM2 - Romford, Hornchurch (65)



12.0 Conclusion

The overall sentiment about the Masterplan was positive with 73% of respondents saying that they either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the ideas in the Masterplan.

There was parity between feedback from all the activities:
- Online
- Pop ups
- Young people tag ons
- Stakeholder workshops

From this we can conclude that the Masterplan is well supported but it also shows us the top priorities, concerns and areas where people perceive gaps in the Masterplan.

Ideas within the Masterplan with the most public support included:

Starting and focusing on the Market as a key transformation area for Romford

Opening up the Rom and creating a high quality, exciting piece of public realm

Creating improved public realm across the town centre so people want to spend time there and this will increase footfall for businesses

These were all identified within the context of needing to address existing challenges with antisocial behaviour

Aligning with 2019 Feedback

The key feedback from this engagement process aligns with the ideas that received most public support when the draft Masterplan was presented in 2019:

Improving the market

Opening up the River Rom

Overall public realm improvements

When we asked participants in 2019 if they supported the ideas within the Masterplan 92% said they either strongly or somewhat agreed. This positive sentiment has reduced although the feedback is still overall supportive of the Masterplan.

Through the engagement work we have understood this shift in sentiment as being connected to specific concerns relating to projects that have received planning approval or are currently moving through the planning system that people do not think offer the best impact for Romford.

12.0 Conclusion

Common concerns about the Masterplan included:

- Clarifying the number of new homes proposed in the Masterplan and the associated infrastructure uplift that they would require
- Limiting heights for new buildings and ensuring that they are responsive to the character and heritage context
- The deliverability of the Masterplan in the context of Havering's financial situation

Ideas that were perceived to be missing from the Masterplan included:

- A strong meanwhile strategy that sets out immediate opportunities for improvements
- A clearer message on the approach to parking
- Including approaches to accommodate and benefit young people
- More detail on the balance of high quality and character enhancing architecture that is respectful of Romford's heritage

Next steps

Late spring 2024

Masterplan document is prepared

The Masterplan will be developed as planning guidance, which would help ensure that the ideas and priorities people have given us are followed through.

Summer 2024

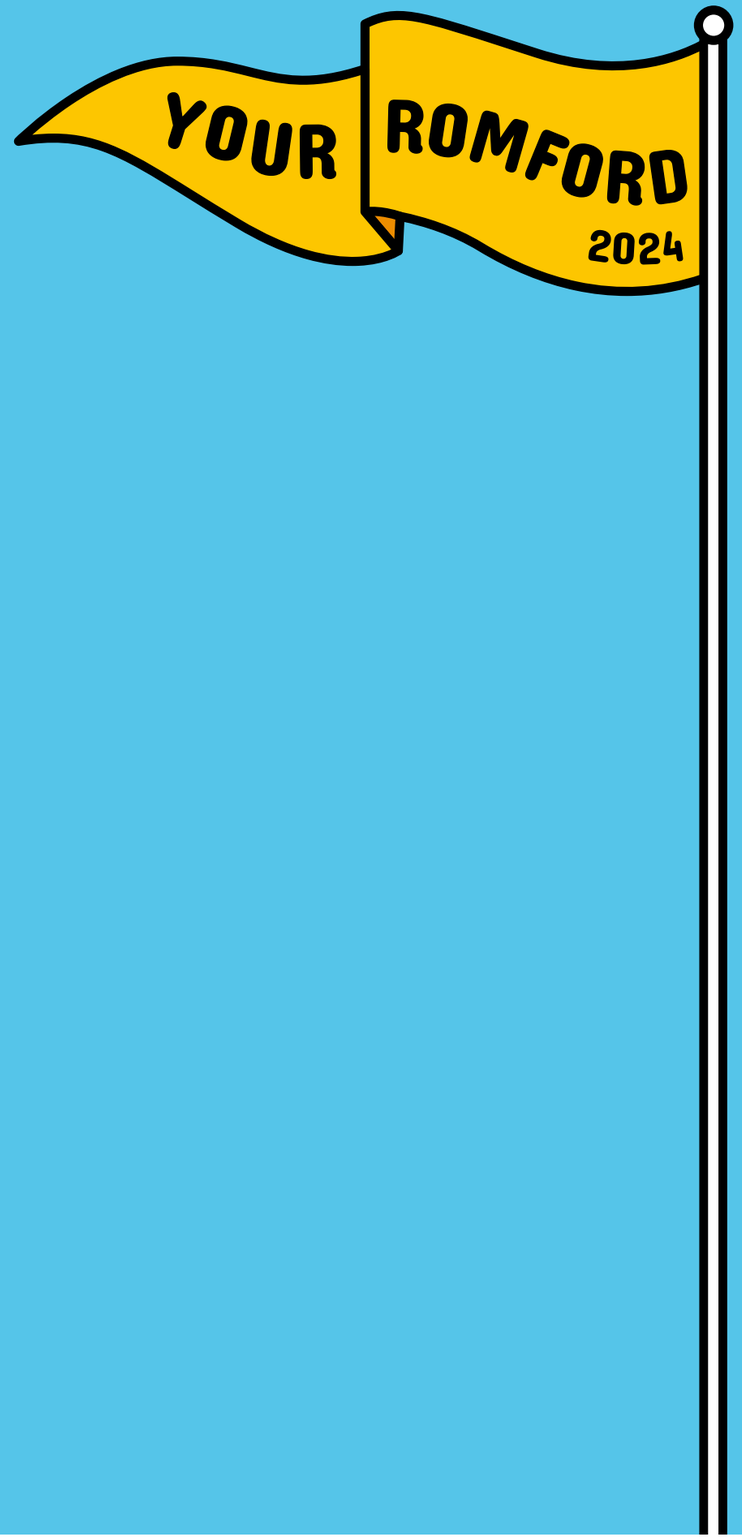
Statutory consultation on Masterplan

Once a Masterplan document has been prepared, there will be a further opportunity for people to feedback. Havering Council will then prepare a summary of these comments, and how they have responded.

Winter 2024

Adoption of planning document

Havering Cabinet will make a decision to adopt the planning document meaning that it will become a piece of formal planning guidance.



This report was produced by make:good on behalf of London Borough of Havering

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make:good MACCREANOR LAVINGTON AVISON YOUNG Havering LONDON BOROUGH

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MASTERPLAN ENGAGEMENT REPORT

make:good MaccreanorLavington AVISON YOUNG Havering LONDON BOROUGH

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1.0

Project overview

1.1

Project Overview

To accompany the development of a new Local Plan (2016-2031) the London Borough of Havering appointed a design team to assist in the preparation of a Masterplan for Romford Town Centre. Central to the project's vision was a focus on strengthening Romford's local character and finding ways for growth and development to meet a variety of local needs.

The Masterplan design team is led by MaccreanorLavington Architects, with make:good appointed to plan and deliver public engagement activities for Key Stage 1-3 of the Masterplan process.

An engagement approach was developed in-line with Havering Council's desire for early involvement, ample local buy-in and participation in the Romford Masterplan, ensuring that:

- The people of Havering feel the future of Romford is something they have a say in
- The potential of the Town Centre and the benefits of a Masterplan are understood
- The vision is developed with the people to the extent they feel a sense of ownership
- The sense of pride for Romford is strengthened and the public are excited by the vision and the future
- The plan is deliverable with a strong, robust plan behind it underpinned by viability and financial assessments
- Commercial opportunity is promoted, investment that benefits local people is encouraged and investors and decision makers are directed about what is wanted in Romford.

Your Romford second exhibition

As such, an approach was developed to prioritise **local insight**, **strong reach** and **meaningful participation**.

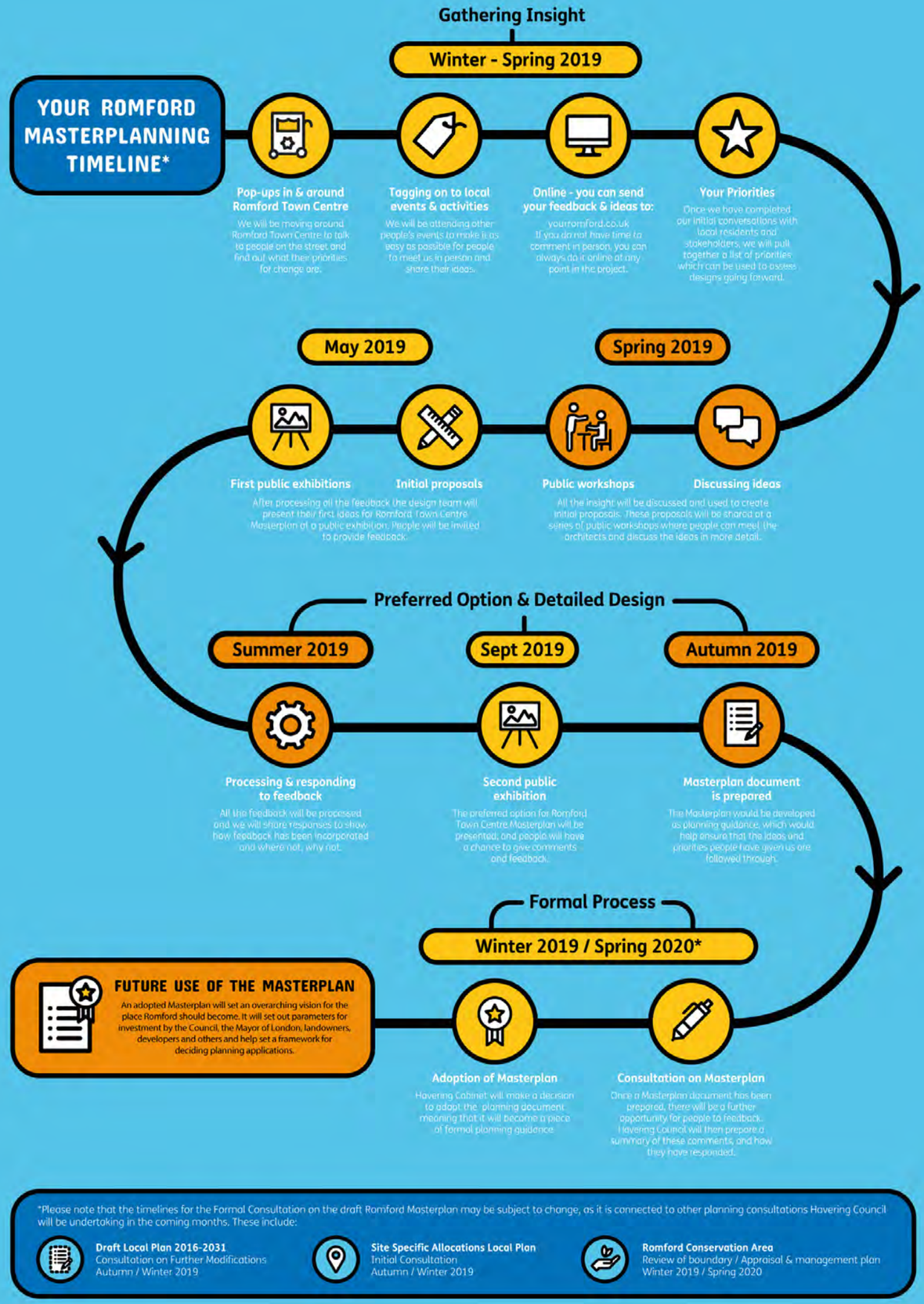
This report provides an overview of the formative stage of engagement delivered by make:good and how findings have helped to inform and shape a draft Masterplan for Romford Town Centre. Following this initial phase of engagement, the Local Planning Authority will:

1. Carry out a formal six-week consultation on a draft Masterplan Statutory Planning Document (SPD)

2. Prepare a Consultation Statement in accordance with its Statement of Community Involvement and legislative requirements.

Your Romford pop-up on South Street

Your Romford pop-up on South Street



2.0

Engagement

2.1

Engagement overview

	INFORM	INVOLVE	INFLUENCE
OBJECTIVE	Make it easy for people to understand and participate	Ensure a broad cross-section of the community and stakeholders provide feedback	Build ownership of the Masterplan's vision
TOOLS	Social media Local media coverage (Romford Recorder, Essex Enquirer) Billboard campaign Havering e-newsletter (general & business bulletin) Email outreach (e.g. local business, community networks)	Councillor walkabout Tag-ons x4 Pop-ups x5 Business drop-ins Online feedback 1:1 meetings x8 Market trader 1:1s x9 Workshops x4 Exhibitions x2	Exhibitions x 2 Formal consultation phase (Winter 2019)
RESULTS	The Your Romford website was visited 6,000+ times 106,000 households informed through Living in Havering magazine Poster campaign on 90 billboards across borough 55,000 e-newsletter reach	85 people gave feedback at tag-ons 53 businesses visited & 24 gave feedback 89 people attended workshops 335 gave their views at 2x exhibitions 404 people completed online feedback forms 310 people gave feedback at pop-ups	1209* PEOPLE have shared their views and helped to shape the emerging Masterplan. Formal six-week consultation on draft Masterplan Statutory Planning Document to follow in Autumn 2019. *Based on number of people, not number of responses (some gave feedback on more than one occasion e.g. online and then at an exhibition).
	Awareness building and ongoing progress updates	Ideas generation, setting priorities and feedback on emerging Masterplan	A new Masterplan for Romford Town Centre

2.2

Engagement timeline

Our approach aimed to engage and reach a broad and diverse audience, keeping people informed of what's going on and providing a range of opportunities for them to get involved, influence and shape the future of the town centre. A comprehensive combination of targeted and wider engagement was devised to achieve breadth as well as depth of reach.

This timeline provides an overview of the sequence of activities planned over the project stages:

DISCOVER

Throughout the design process we are working with you, key stakeholders, landowners, developers, local community groups and a range of construction and design specialists.

The first stage is about gathering as much information, ideas and opinions about Romford Town Centre as possible. This ensures that we are informed about opportunities, priorities and potential limitations through a broad range of themes as we move forward. We have developed a conversation framework of six key questions to guide these discussions.

DEFINE

Once we have gathered this information we will develop a joint Vision in the form of a list of collective priorities for Romford Town Centre. This Vision will be a working document and will be framed according to the project's Scope of influence. Using this key document, we will begin to develop possible delivery and design solutions and scenarios.

DEVELOP

Once we have defined a range of scenarios for improving Romford Town Centre and received feedback, we can develop, refine and test them. This will help us to know which scenario could work best and what people think.

We feel it's important to give people numerous opportunities to provide Feedback as design solutions develop, which helps to instil a sense of transparency, responsiveness and genuine involvement.

DELIVER

Based on the engagement work undertaken with stakeholders, we will present a final draft of priorities and a recommended design scenario at the final exhibition, which will be reflected in the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Following the final exhibition, a public consultation on the draft SPD will take place. The consultation will exceed the statutory minimums and what is required in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Identifying stakeholders
Agree on priority groups and individuals to proactively approach to involve in the conversation.

1:1 meetings
Our first conversations will be a series of 1:1 meetings based on some key themes and questions. These will feed in to the first draft of the Town Centre Priority List.

Ongoing communications
We plan to utilise a combination of custom channels and the council's existing channels to keep people informed and involved throughout the process, promoting events widely and sharing feedback and progress after every public event. This might include inserts for existing newsletters, sharing updates via the Council's online platforms and providing more detailed summary reports for the design team.

Pop-up engagement
We take a proactive and creative approach to engagement and aim to make it as easy and accessible as possible for people to get involved. On-street pop-ups are an opportunity for us to go to where people are and we have found that using curiosity and referencing local heritage is a great way to reach people who otherwise might not join the conversation.

Tangential activities
We have found that devising and hosting more tangential activities can be extremely effective; craft workshops, celebratory events, talks & screenings offer fun and interactive ways for people to get involved in the conversation and we will aim to tailor these to the local area.

Final exhibition
The final exhibition will share the collaborative vision as a set of agreed, common priorities and a recommended design scenario. We will prepare a Consultation Statement setting out what local residents/businesses and organisations have said and how the document responds.

ROMFORD VISION & RECOMMENDED SCENARIO

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will help guide new development within the Romford Town Centre Masterplan area over the coming years. Once adopted this document will be used in consideration and determination of future planning applications.

NOVEMBER 2018 | DECEMBER 2018 | JANUARY 2019 | FEBRUARY 2019 | MARCH 2019 | APRIL 2019 | MAY 2019 | JUNE 2019

Members walkabout
We will begin with a Members' Walkabout around the Town Centre to gain a better understanding of what works, what doesn't work so well and where the opportunities are.

Walkabouts are an excellent way of seeing things from the ground and identifying real examples which might influence improvements and aspirations for the area.

Developing a vision
Feedback from initial conversations will be summarised into a list of key priorities for Romford Town Centre. Structured according to key themes that come up, this Priorities List will act as an important tool and working document throughout the engagement process to ensure that designs reflect the priorities collaboratively identified.

Public launch
This will be our first event to introduce the project to the wider public, sharing our consultation approach and inviting people to get involved/ share feedback. The event would be celebratory in tone and tailored to Romford's identity and character.

Meetings and tag-ons
Following the launch we will tag-along to events hosted by local groups, making it as easy as possible for people to meet us in person.

Public design workshops
Ahead of public exhibitions we will run focused design workshops that offer people the opportunity to meet the architects and engage with design tools and principles in a more participatory way. We have found that these are a great way for people to test and explore different scenarios and share feedback.

Public exhibition
As the project progresses it's important for us to have milestones where people are invited to see the wider context and the Masterplan developments as a whole.

In this exhibition, we will share initial design approaches which respond to identity & character, access & flow, resilience & sustainability. Feedback will be gathered about preferred options in order to identify which scenarios to take forward.

UPDATES & FEEDBACK FOR MEMBERS:
Members will receive a monthly update which will include key project updates, feedback from completed engagement events and information about upcoming activities or events.

KEY STAGE 1: ANALYSIS & ASSESSMENT

KEY STAGE 2: ANALYSIS OPTIONS & DRAFT PROPOSALS

KEY STAGE 3: PREFERRED OPTION & DETAILED DESIGN

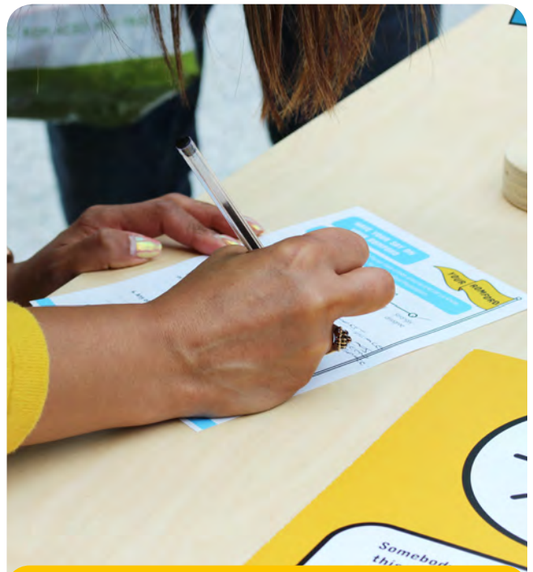
2.3

Project identity

To make the Masterplan engagement process as accessible and inviting as possible, a campaigns-led approach was taken to developing a distinctive visual identity and messaging around the consultation process.

Your Romford was born - it's simple, clear and encapsulates the participatory aspirations for the Masterplan. By inviting as many people as possible in setting the vision for the Masterplan, we hoped to instil a sense of ownership and investment in the final product. Your Romford also aimed to demystify the planning process among the general public, by providing a clear, accessible overview of how the different components of the Masterplan process link together. We also wanted to assure stakeholders and local people that the consultation process 'had teeth' and that opinions shared would ultimately go towards shaping an important piece of planning policy for the area.

Your Romford had its own visual identity and carefully considered messaging developed, which was distinct but complementary to Havering Council's corporate brand. All communications and creative assets intended for public audiences were developed to reflect this identity.



Your Romford feedback assets

Your Romford pop-up on South Street

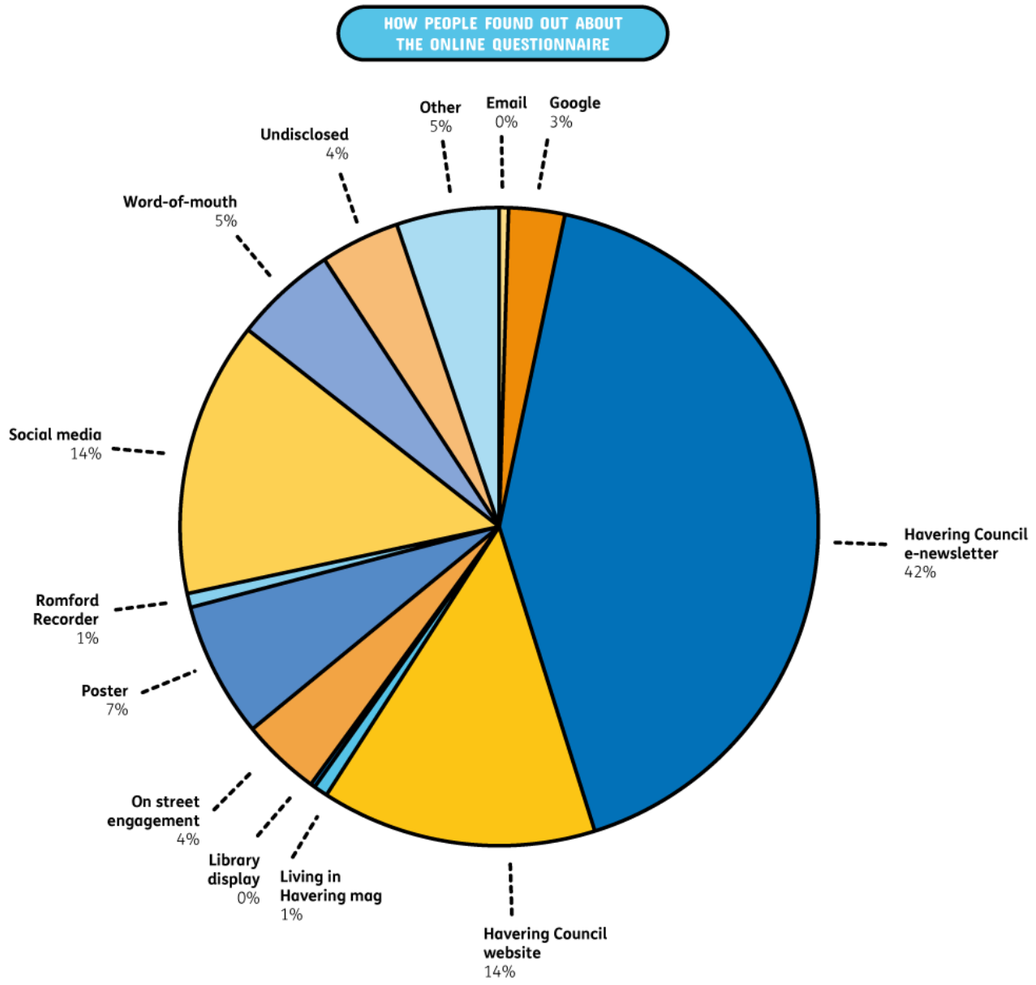
2.4

How we let people know about the project

Communications approach

The engagement team worked closely with Havering Council's communications team to broadcast Your Romford communications to their existing audiences. While a dedicated website was developed (www.yourromford.co.uk) to provide ongoing updates and host the online questionnaire, traffic to the site was largely facilitated through this close collaboration and coordination with the Council's central channels.

This approach was particularly effective for driving responses to the online questionnaire. 33% of all Your Romford responses came via the online questionnaire, of which the Council's e-newsletter was a particularly effective driver of online traffic. 42% of respondents to the online questionnaire came via the e-newsletter.



Havering Council's wider online and offline channels were used to deliver ongoing updates, encourage people to complete the online feedback form and inform the public of upcoming face-to-face events and activities, such as on-street pop-ups and exhibitions.

Offline

- Living in Havering: Havering Council's magazine, delivered to 106k homes in the Borough.
- Havering: Havering Council's dedicated investment and regeneration magazine.
- Billboard campaign (featured on 90 billboards across borough for a two-week period)
- Flyers

Online

- www.yourromford.co.uk - a simple, custom website built to host the online questionnaire and the latest news and updates
- Havering Council website
- E-newsletters
- 55,000 on mailing list for main e-newsletter
- Council's business briefing e-newsletter
- Council's social media channels
- Twitter (12,000 followers)
- Facebook (6,000+ followers)
- Instagram (1,000 followers)
- LinkedIn (2,000+ followers)

Other

- Local press e.g. Romford Recorder, Essex Live, Times 107.5 FM

The close collaboration and coordination between the consultant engagement team (make:good) and Havering's Communications team has been a key driver of the success of this phase of public engagement.

Between January and August 2019, **1,347** people visited the www.yourromford.co.uk website

The Your Romford poster appeared on **90 billboards** across the borough

Your Romford was promoted on Council social media channels, which have a combined following of **21,000+** followers

Your Romford was featured in the *Living in Havering*, which is sent out to **106,000** households across the borough

Your Romford also featured in the Council's Business Briefing e-bulletin and business-focused ***Havering*** magazine (reach numbers TBC)

Your Romford has been publicised in the ***Romford Recorder*** and ***Essex Enquirer***

Your Romford has featured in editions of the ***Living in Havering*** email bulletin, sent out to **55,000** people.

Your Romford has also been disseminated among a number of Council team's mailing lists e.g. Havering Compact (over 1,000 recipients), schools and early years providers

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2.5

What we asked people

Discover (November - January)

During this phase our engagement was centred on local Councillors, to help set the tone for the conversations we would have with the wider public.

The core questions we based our lines of enquiry around were as follows:

- What works about Romford Town Centre at the moment?
- What isn't working so well and could be improved?
- If growth is coming to Romford (housing, population, Crossrail, social infrastructure) what does good growth look like?
- Who should the key beneficiaries of growth be?
- What are the key opportunities for change?
- What are people's main concerns about change?

The information gathered was then used to outline a number of thematic priority areas, which would feed into the next phase.

Discover / define (January - April)

We adapted the initial conversation framework for the wider public. This included the development of the feedback form used at pop-ups/online and engagement tools that formed part of subsequent pop-ups, tag-ons and workshops (such as a mapping, the Ideas Tree etc.)

By this stage we had also identified a number of thematic priority areas, which also helped people to understand the breadth of areas the Masterplan would cover and generate ideas. These were:

- Transport and connectivity
- Economy and growth
- Environment and sustainability
- Heritage and character
- Landscape and public spaces
- Culture and leisure
- Health and wellbeing
- Other ideas

These categories formed the basis of our Ideas Tree activity.

Develop (May - August)

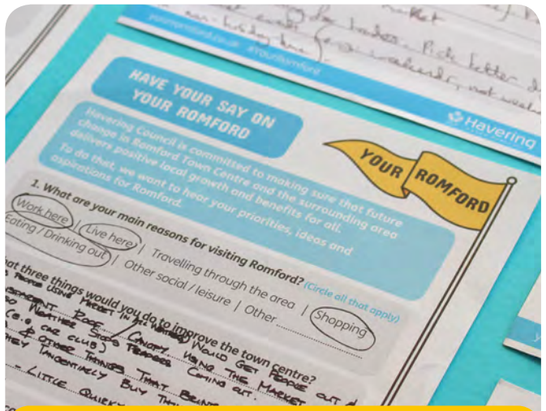
Following the first exhibition in May 2019, we sought feedback on the emerging Masterplan. This was also an opportunity to share the feedback gathered and how it was shaping plans, so the public could tell us whether they felt they accurately captured their priorities.

As well as gathering further feedback at the exhibition, boards were displayed at Romford Library, published online and workshops undertaken to get more in-depth feedback on the proposals. The information collected was then fed back to MaccreanorLavington Architects to feed into their designs.

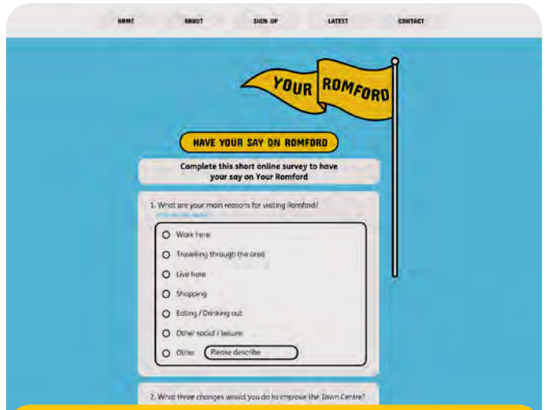
Deliver (September

The second and final public exhibition was held in September 2019 and aimed to show how feedback gathered over the course of public engagement had shaped the draft Masterplan. Core elements of the Masterplan were shared back to the public, painting a more detailed picture of the plans being put forward for the town centre.

Feedback on the plans was collected at the exhibition. The exhibition boards and an online feedback form were also published online. Information gathered will aid final refinements before the formal consultation phase.



Hard copy feedback forms



Online feedback form

Magnetic table map (likes / dislikes / opportunities)

Ideas tree

Workshop activities | evaluating

Workshop activities | voting

2.6

Engagement activities

Our approach was developed to reach the following stakeholders:

- Local political representatives
- Local businesses
- Community stakeholders e.g.
- Faith and worship
- Schools and educations providers
- Community and voluntary
- Culture, leisure and arts
- Local residents and town centre visitors

2.6.1 Activity summary

Date	Activity	Respondees*
25 Jan 2019	Pop-up 1, Market	75
12 Feb 2019	Havering Compact tag-on	23
12 Feb 2019	Inter-faith Forum meeting	5
15 Feb 2019	Pop-up 2, South Street	76
3 March 2019	Visit my mosque tag-on	24
8 March 2019	Pop-up 3, South Street	59
13 March 2019	Youth Council workshop	12
16 March 2019	Pop-up 4, Mercury Shopping Centre	64
19 March 2019	Carers' Forum tag-on	33
April 2019	Emails to local businesses	-
4 April 2019	HUBB workshop	29
4 May 2019	Exhibition #1	135
Jan-May 2019	1:1 Meetings	8
7-15 May 2019	Romford Library feedback box	16
10 May 2019	Workshop, St Edward's School	31
21 May 2019	Pop-up 5, Sapphire Ice & Leisure	36
11 June 2019	Cocoon workshop	17
June 2019	Business drop-ins	24
25 Jan - 31 July 2019	Online (Your Romford)	404
March & July 2019	Market trader chats	9
7 Sept 2019	Exhibition #2	129
	TOTAL	**1,209***

*New participants only – not including people who have participated on more than one occasion

November - December 2018

As part of the project team's more comprehensive conversations with local political representatives, make:good conducted a number of initial engagement activities with Havering Councillors.

2.6.2 Councillor walkabout - Nov 2018

Councillor walkabout

Following a two-hour walkabout and mapping exercise around Romford Town Centre with four councillors, the engagement team captured around 150 comments about what works well, what doesn't work as well and the opportunities in the town centre. On the basis of these initial conversations we started to develop a summary map of the thematic priorities. These priorities were later combined with feedback from subsequent engagement events to identify the key priority areas for the Masterplan.

2.6.3 Councillor 1:1s

Following the walkabout, make:good had 1:1 meetings with five Councillors to gather additional baseline information and feedback from political stakeholders.

January - September 2019

2.6.4 Pop-ups x 5

Pop-ups were held at busy locations around the town centre to capitalise on passing footfall and capture face-to-face feedback. As the audiences that frequent different parts of the town centre vary (e.g. the Market is more popular among older residents), locations were selected to reach as wide a range of people as possible.

Three out of five pop-ups were delivered using an engagement van, which was fitted with custom-designed engagement tools and reflected the overall Your Romford branding. The remaining two pop-ups were conducted using a scaled-back version of the pop-up, but utilising the core engagement tools.

Romford Market
Your Romford was launched with the first public pop-up in Romford Market on 25 January 2019. The engagement team spoke to 90 people on the day, 75 of which completed feedback forms.

South Street x 2
Two pop-ups were held on the town's main artery South Street, again using the engagement van. On 15 February the team received feedback from 76 people, while on 8 February the team completed feedback forms with 59 people.

Mercury Shopping Centre
A scaled-down version of the pop-up was held at the Mercury Shopping Centre on Saturday 16 March. The team received feedback from 64 people.

Sapphire Ice and Leisure Centre
The final pop-up was held outside the Sapphire Ice and Leisure Centre, with the intention of boosting reach among younger audiences. The team received feedback from 36 people.

Pop-up in Romford Market

2.6.5 Tag-ons at community meetings and events

Tagging on to existing community events and meetings is an effective way of informing and involving people who might not otherwise take part in engagement activities – going where people are, rather than expecting

Workshop with Havering Youth Council

them to come to us.

Havering Compact – 12 February 2019
We had a slot at the Havering Compact Forum, a regular meeting between Havering charities and community organisations. We received feedback from 23 representatives from local voluntary and statutory organisations.

Havering Inter-Faith Forum – 12 February 2019
We joined this regular meeting of local faith group representatives to tell them about the Masterplan and generate feedback. Feedback was gathered from the five attendees present.

Carers' Forum – 19 March 2019
The engagement team had a slot at a Carers' Forum meeting, receiving feedback from 33 people on the day. As carers are often a particularly time-poor group and also support people with more complex needs, we were keen to hear from this group.

Havering Islamic Cultural Centre 'Visit my Mosque' Day – 3 March 2019
The engagement team had a stand at the HICC's #VisitMyMosque Day, which is part of a national annual campaign that sees mosques across the UK holding open days to "welcome in their neighbours from all faiths and none". The Your Romford engagement team had a stand at the event, spoke to 53 people on the day and completed feedback forms with 24 people.

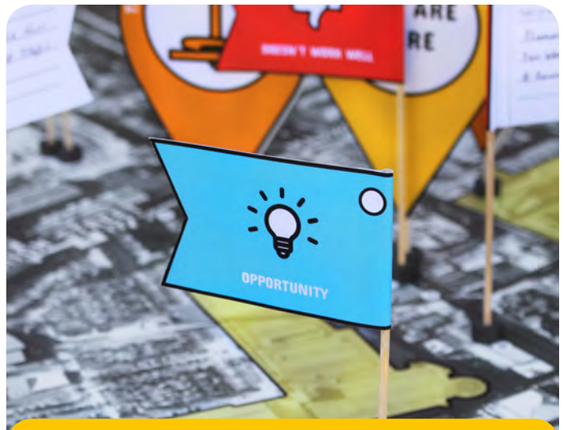
2.6.7 Workshops

Workshops provided an opportunity to conduct more detailed conversations and undertake more participatory activities to get people talking about their ideas and ambitions for Romford. We took a more targeted approach to workshops, using them as an opportunity to engage harder-to-reach groups or those who had so far participated in the consultation the least (such as younger age groups).

Youth Council - 16 March 2019
We joined a Havering Youth Council meeting and conducted a one-hour workshop with 12 attendees, the majority of whom were under-18. Activities were centred on understanding how they experienced the town centre presently and their aspirations for the future of Romford.
Havering Users Bounce Back - 4 April 2019
HUBB is a mental health support group for people living in Havering and Barking and Dagenham. We held a one-hour workshop with 29 attendees, which also aimed to gain insight of how they experienced the town centre and what they wanted to see for the future.

St Edward's Academy – 10 May 2019
We held a one-hour workshop with 31 Year 10s and Year 12 students at St Edward's Academy. As this workshop took place after the first public exhibition, the primary intention was to get students' feedback on emerging Masterplan ideas, using the content shared at the public exhibition as a basis. On the back of this, one of the Year 12 students also joined make:good for a week of work experience during the summer holidays.

The Cocoon – 11 June 2019
The Cocoon is a support hub for children in care and care leavers. We held a workshop with 17 people, the majority of which were social workers but also included four young people supported by The Cocoon. As this workshop took place after the first public exhibition, the primary intention was to get people's feedback on emerging Masterplan ideas.



Workshop mapping materials

2.6.8 Business 1:1s and drop-ins

While Avison Young and MaccreanorLavington led conversations with landowners, developers and larger-scale economic stakeholders, make:good focused efforts on engaging local business stakeholders.

Market traders – March/ July 2019
Being a key focal point of the town centre, it was particularly critical that we spoke to market traders. Market traders were informed about the Masterplan process through flyers and in their regular meetings with the Council's Market team. We conducted 1:1s with 9 market traders.

Business drop-ins – June/July 2019
We dropped into 53 shop-fronted, independent businesses around the town centre, receiving 24 written responses from business owners or store managers.

Local business email outreach – April 2019
To ensure we were also speaking to local businesses that were based in the town centre but didn't necessary have shopfronts, emails were sent out to 72 local businesses in the RM1 area and business owners invited to take part in the online questionnaire or request a phonecall with a member of the Engagement team to share their views. We estimate that around 6-10 responses to the online survey responses may have come from this group, but no phonecalls were requested.

Your Romford second exhibition

2.6.9 Exhibitions

Public exhibitions were held at key points of the timeline to show how feedback was helping to shape the draft Masterplan. Elements of the draft Masterplan were shared back to the public and feedback sought, which fed into the architects' refinements. The team from MaccreanorLavvington also attended the exhibitions, providing an opportunity for the public to speak directly to the Masterplanners.

Exhibition boards were also published on **www.yourromford.co.uk** after each exhibition, so people could view them in their own time.

Exhibition 1 – Liberty Shopping Centre, 4 May 2019
The first Your Romford public exhibition was a chance to show summarise of the main priorities people had highlighted over the course of engagement to date and how it was shaping the emerging Masterplan. A total of **135 people** completed written feedback forms at the first Your Romford exhibition.

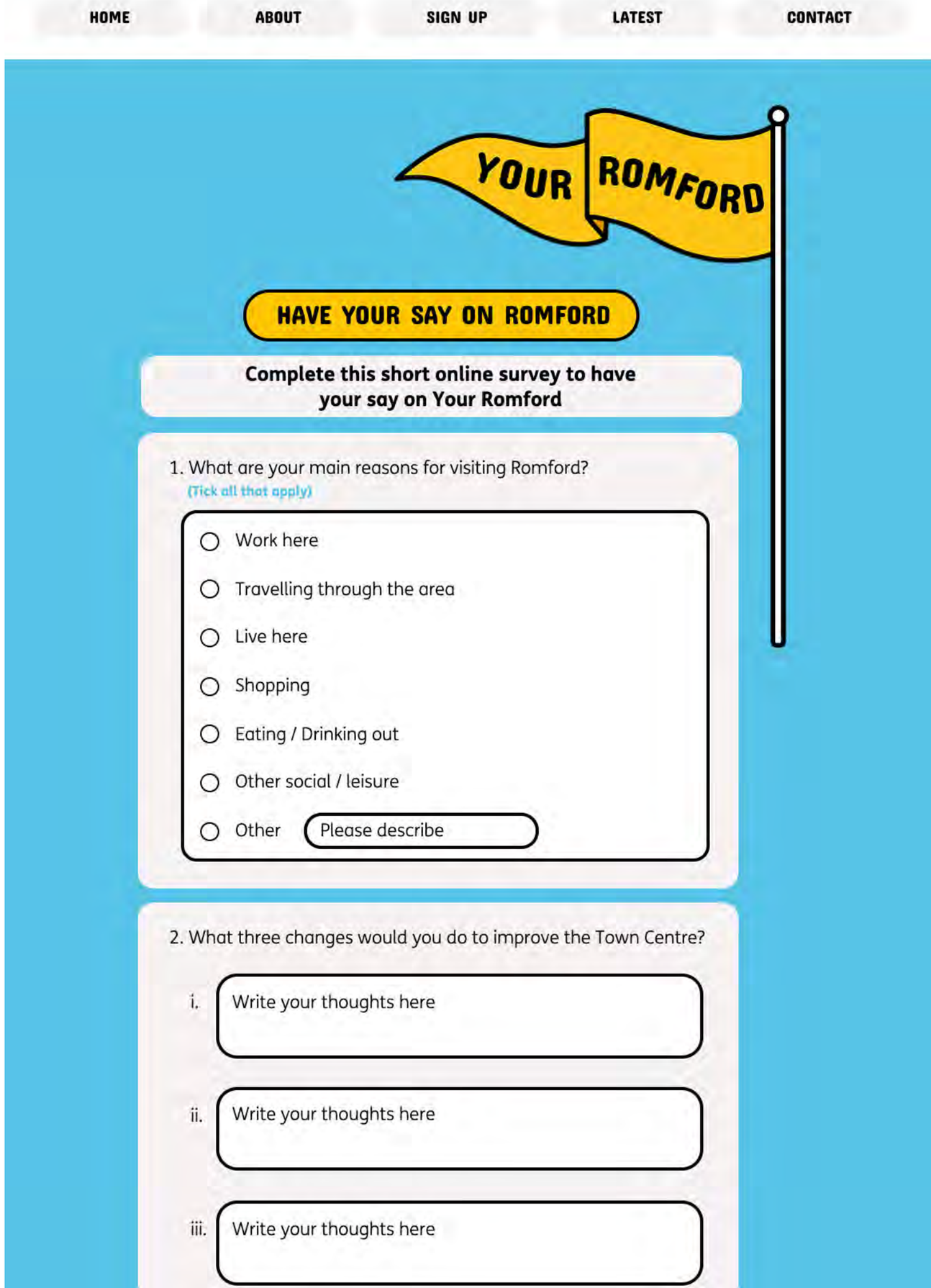
Romford Library display – 7-15 May 2019
Immediately following Exhibition 1, the library's entrance area was used to display some of the content. A feedback box and forms were also made available. While we can't be sure how many people would've perused through the content, we received **16 completed feedback forms**.

Exhibition 2 - Liberty Shopping Centre, 7 Sept 2019
Key components of the draft Masterplan were shared at the second and final public exhibition. A total of **180 people** gave written feedback on the day, **129** of which hadn't previously taken part in any previous consultation activities.

As well as publishing the exhibition boards online, following Exhibition 2 people were also welcomed to complete an exhibition feedback form online.

2.6.10 Online questionnaire Jan-July '19

390 people responded to the online survey in total (Jan-July 2019), while 14 responded to the Exhibition 2 online feedback form (9 Sept-. There were 404 online respondents in total.



3.0

Who we heard from

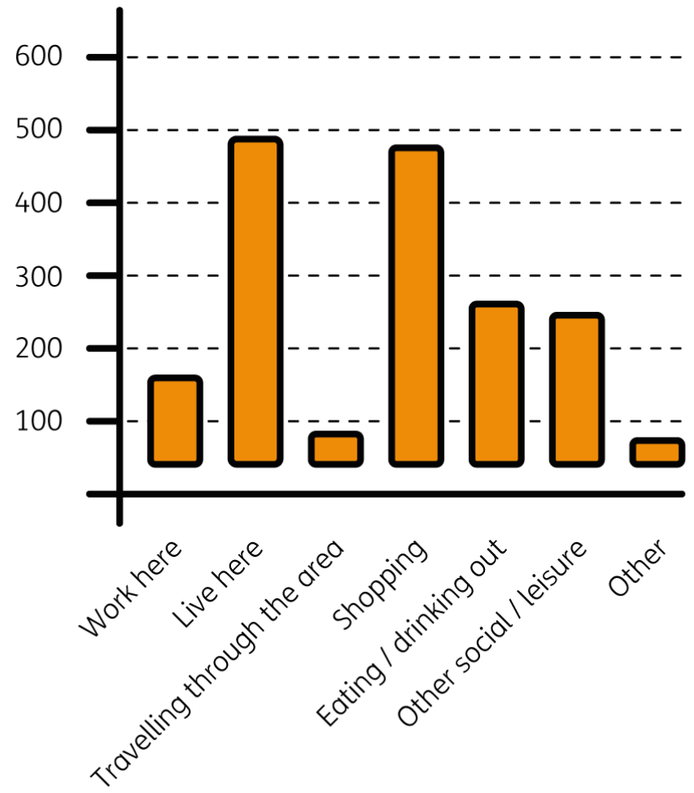
3.1

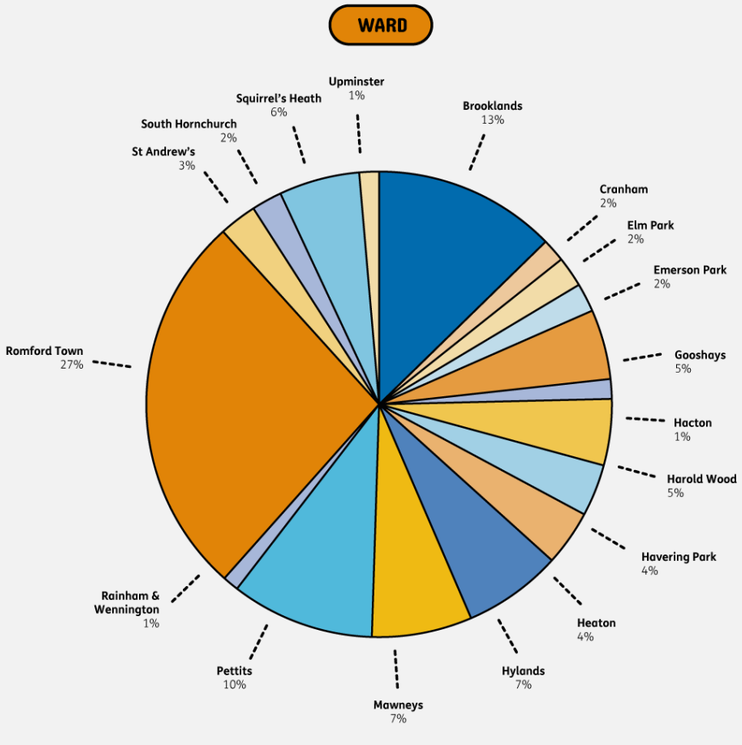
Demographics

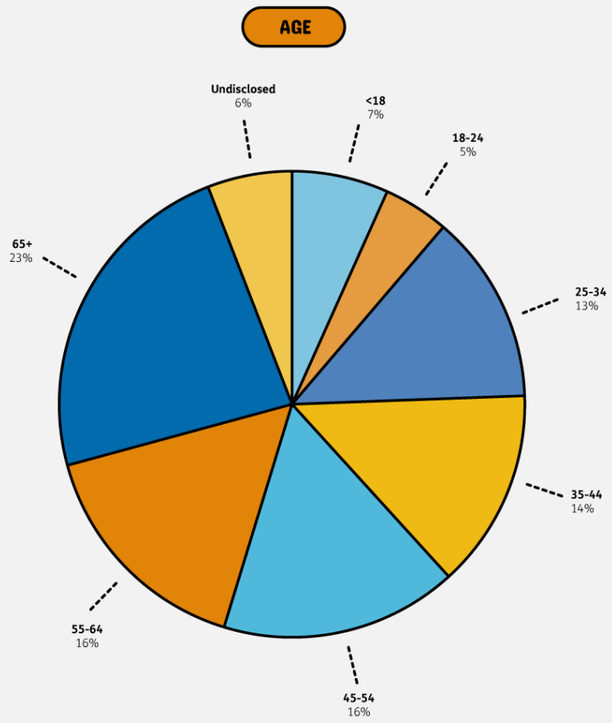
To ensure the information we gathered was representative of the local population, we asked all respondents for demographic information to capture their **location, age, gender, ethnicity, disability and employment status.**

In response to the question 'what are your main reasons for visiting Romford?', the most popular reasons stated were 'live here' and 'shopping', which also reflects Romford's popularity as a local shopping destination when compared with the respondent location information (to follow).

WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN REASONS FOR VISTING ROMFORD







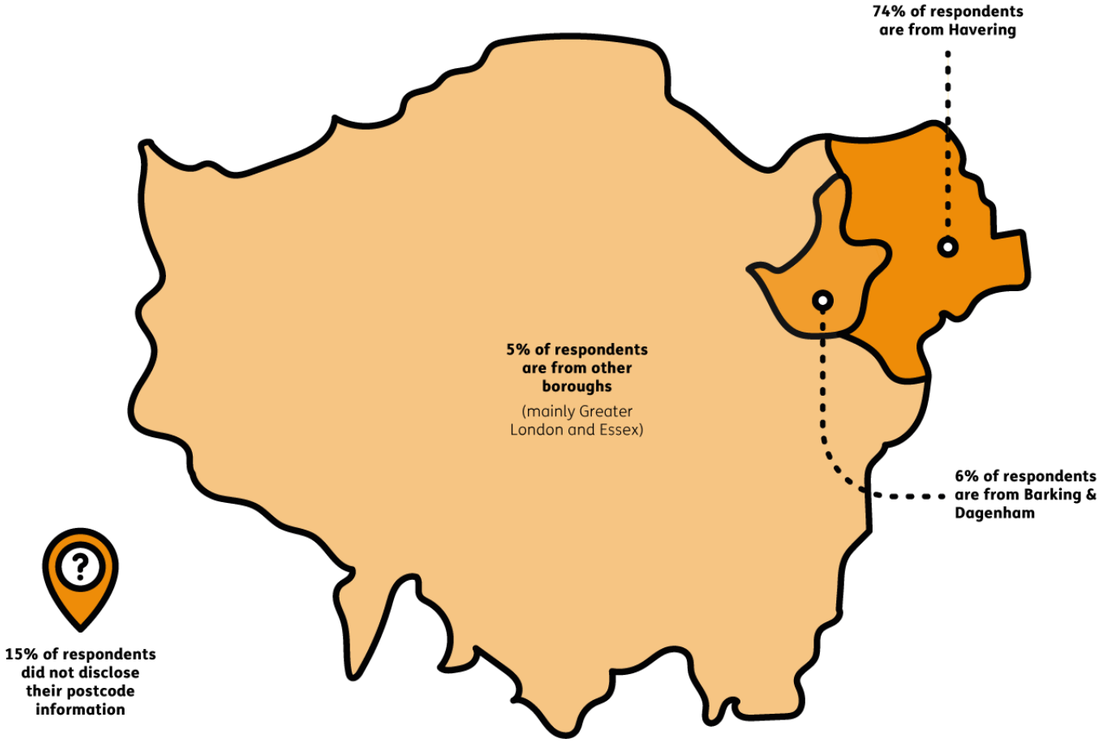
Location
Of those who disclosed their postcode information, the majority of respondents were from Havering (74%). 15% of all respondents chose not to disclose postcode information, 6% were from Barking and Dagenham and 5% from a wide range of boroughs both inside and outside London.

Of those who disclosed their postcode and were based in Havering, the highest number of respondents came from the Romford Town ward (27%). Neighbouring wards (Brooklands, Pettits, Hylands and Squirrel's Heath) also show higher response rates.

Age
Of those who disclosed their age (6% of respondents didn't share this information), here is a summary of how reach figures compare to borough averages:

Age group	Havering av*	Our reach
0-24	30% (11% 15-24)	12%
25-34	14%	14%
35-44	13%	15%
45-64	25%	34%
65+	18%	25%

* Based on latest population data available for Havering from the ONS 2017 Mid Year Estimates
www.haveringdata.net/population-demographics/



Gender
Of those who disclosed their gender, there were a higher number of female respondents than male. Borough averages are **48% male, 52% female**.

Ethnicity
Havering is one of the most ethnically homogenous places in London, although it's worth noting that Romford Town is one of the more diverse parts of the borough. **64%** of respondents were White British, while **5%** were from non-British White backgrounds. **18%** were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. 13% of people chose not to disclose their ethnic background.

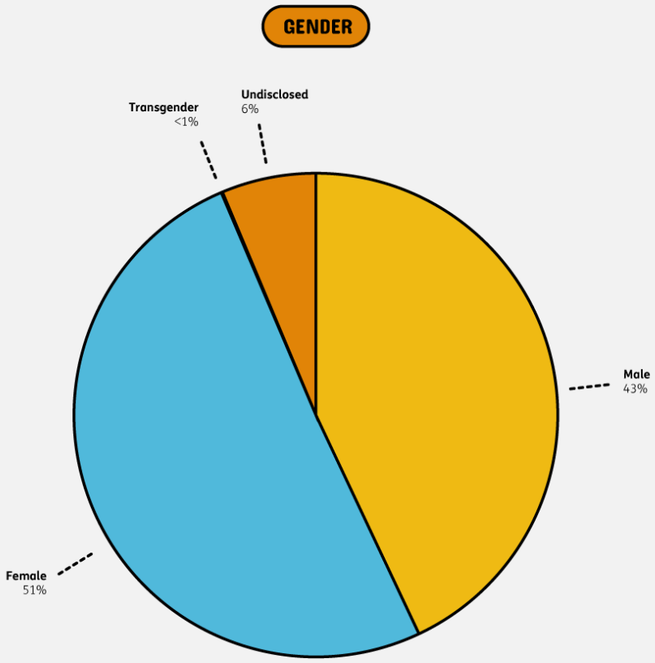
According to **Havering's latest Demographic and Diversity Profile**, the composition of the Havering population is 83% White British and 17% BME, including Non-British White.

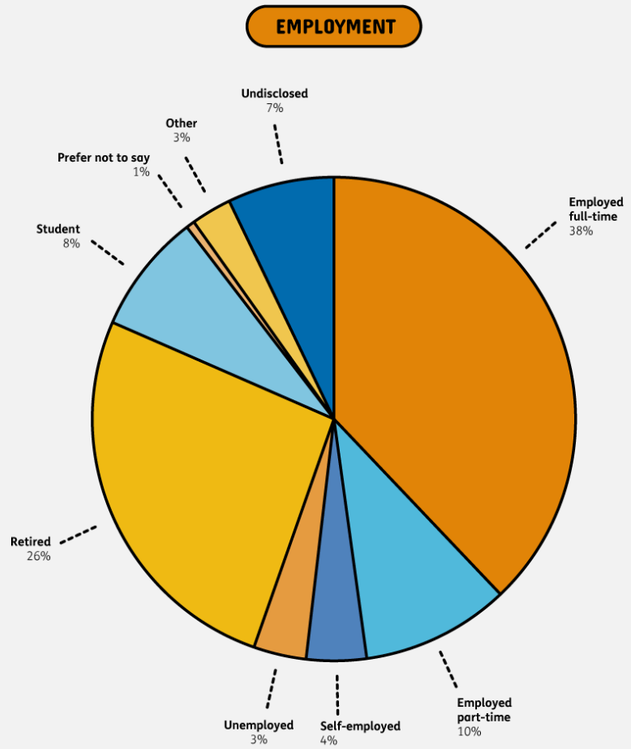
Disability or long-term illness
15% of respondents have a disability or long-term illness. This is slightly short of the borough average of 18%, but does not take into account the 9% of respondents who chose not to disclose this information.

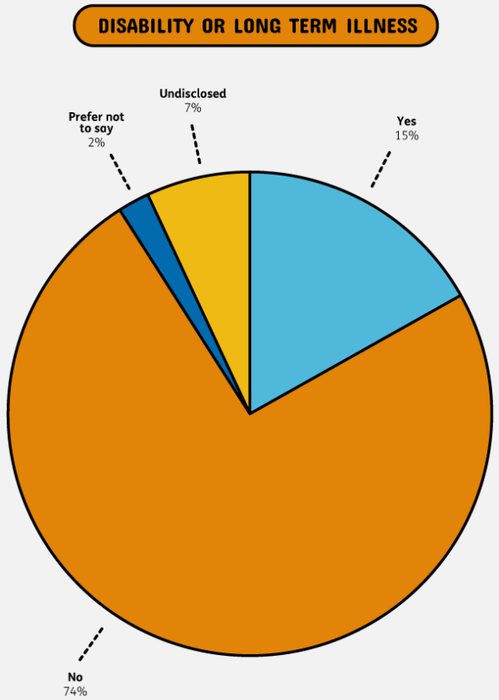
Employment
Borough averages, according to the **latest available data**

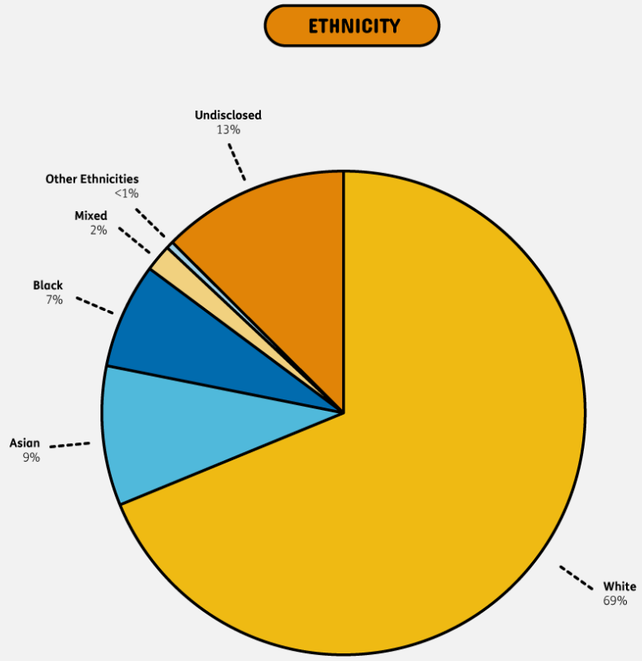
Full-time employee	40%
Part-time employee	14%
Full-time student	3%
Self-employed	11%
Unemployed	5%
Retired	14%

The percentage of retired respondents echoes the slight skew in the age of respondents.









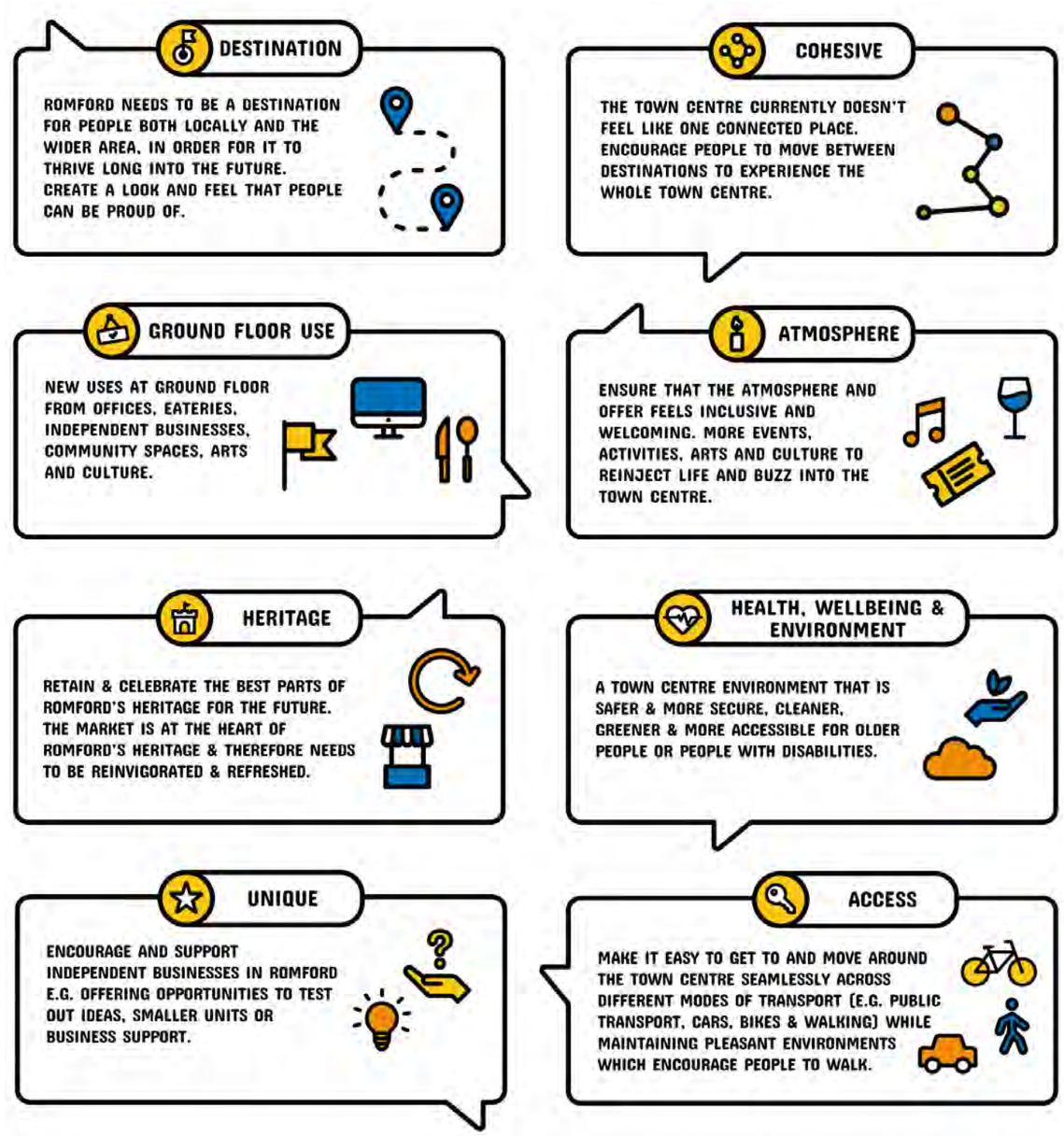
4.0

Feedback

4.1

Feedback summary

Over the course of conversations, a very clear picture emerged of the vision that would guide the Masterplan's direction. The overarching priorities can be summarised as follows:



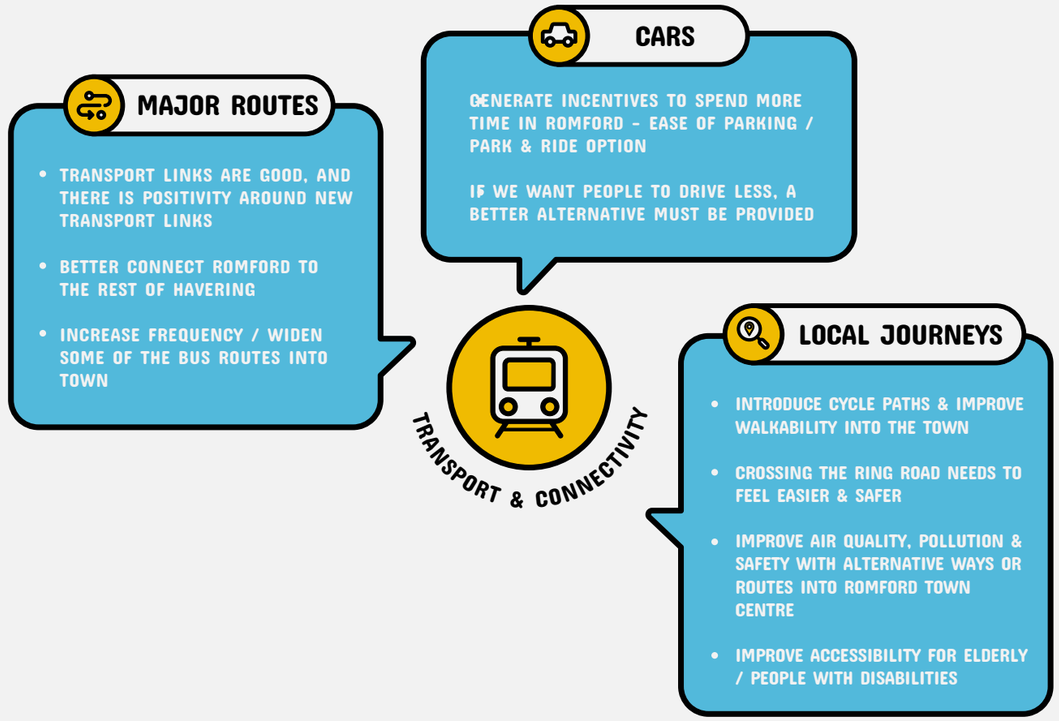
4.1.1 Gathering insight and identifying problems

Given the heavily qualitative nature of the data gathered, the information was summarised and categorised around the thematic priority areas identified in the inception stages of engagement.

The following feedback summaries encapsulates the key priorities highlighted at pop-ups, tag-ons, through the online feedback form and other engagement activities undertaken during the Discover and Define stages of the engagement timeline.

- Transport and connectivity
- Economy and growth
- Environment and sustainability
- Heritage and character
- Landscape and public spaces
- Culture and leisure
- Health and wellbeing
- Other ideas

Your Romford exhibition 2



ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAIABILITY

GREEN

- CREATE A GREENER ENVIRONMENT WITH LANDSCAPING & TREES
- ENCOURAGE GREENER WAYS OF GETTING INTO ROMFORD - CYCLING ROUTES, PARK & RIDE, BETTER WALKABILITY

LOOK & FEEL

- TURN THE TOWN CENTRE INTO A CLEAN & WELL CARED FOR ENVIRONMENT WITH MORE RECYCLING & BINS

AIR QUALITY

IMPROVE AIR QUALITY & POLLUTION LEVELS IN AND AROUND ROMFORD

LANDSCAPE & PUBLIC SPACES

STATION

- THE STATION SETTING NEEDS TO FEEL SAFER
- TURN THE STATION INTO A WELCOMING & FRIENDLY GATEWAY TO ROMFORD

STOPPING POINTS

- SOFTER STOPPING POINTS & POCKET PARKS
- ADD BENCHES TO ENCOURAGE USE OF PUBLIC SPACE AS MORE THAN JUST TRANSITORY
- THE RIVER ROM IS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY GIVEN ITS PROXIMITY TO THE TOWN CENTRE
- CREATE A MORE PROMINENT SETTING FOR CULTURAL BUILDINGS SUCH AS THE LIBRARY, THEATRE & MUSEUM

SIGNAGE

- RECONNECT THE TOWN CENTRE WITH HELPFUL SIGNPOSTING & WAYFINDING
- CREATE ROUTES THAT ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO MOVE FROM ONE DESTINATION TO ANOTHER

MOVEMENT

- IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY FOR OLDER GENERATIONS AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

HERITAGE & CHARACTER

VIBRANCY

- MORE COLOUR AND CREATIVITY IN THE BUILDINGS AND AREA
- USE MEANWHILE USE PROJECTS TO STOP EMPTY AND UNFINISHED SITES DOMINATING THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA

COHESIVE

- MAKE TOWN FEEL LIKE ONE COHESIVE AREA, NOT DISPARATE PARTS
- CREATE AN AREA PEOPLE WANT TO WALK AROUND, RATHER THAN A SERIES OF UNIQUE DESTINATIONS
- AN IDENTITY FOR ROMFORD THAT EMBRACES DIFFERENCE & ENCOURAGES BOTH NEWER AND MORE ESTABLISHED COMMUNITIES TO COME TOGETHER

MARKET

- ROMFORD'S HISTORY IS A POINT OF PRIDE - FIND WAYS TO CELEBRATE ITS HERITAGE AS A MARKET TOWN
- THE MARKET IS INTEGRAL TO ROMFORD'S IDENTITY & HERITAGE - IT IS CRITICAL TO RETAIN & REVIVE THE MARKET

AESTHETICS

- CHARACTER OF TOWN CENTRE CURRENTLY LESS DEFINED BY PHYSICAL BUILDINGS
- CREATE A LOOK & FEEL TO THE TOWN THAT PEOPLE CAN FEEL PROUD OF

CULTURE & LEISURE

DESTINATION

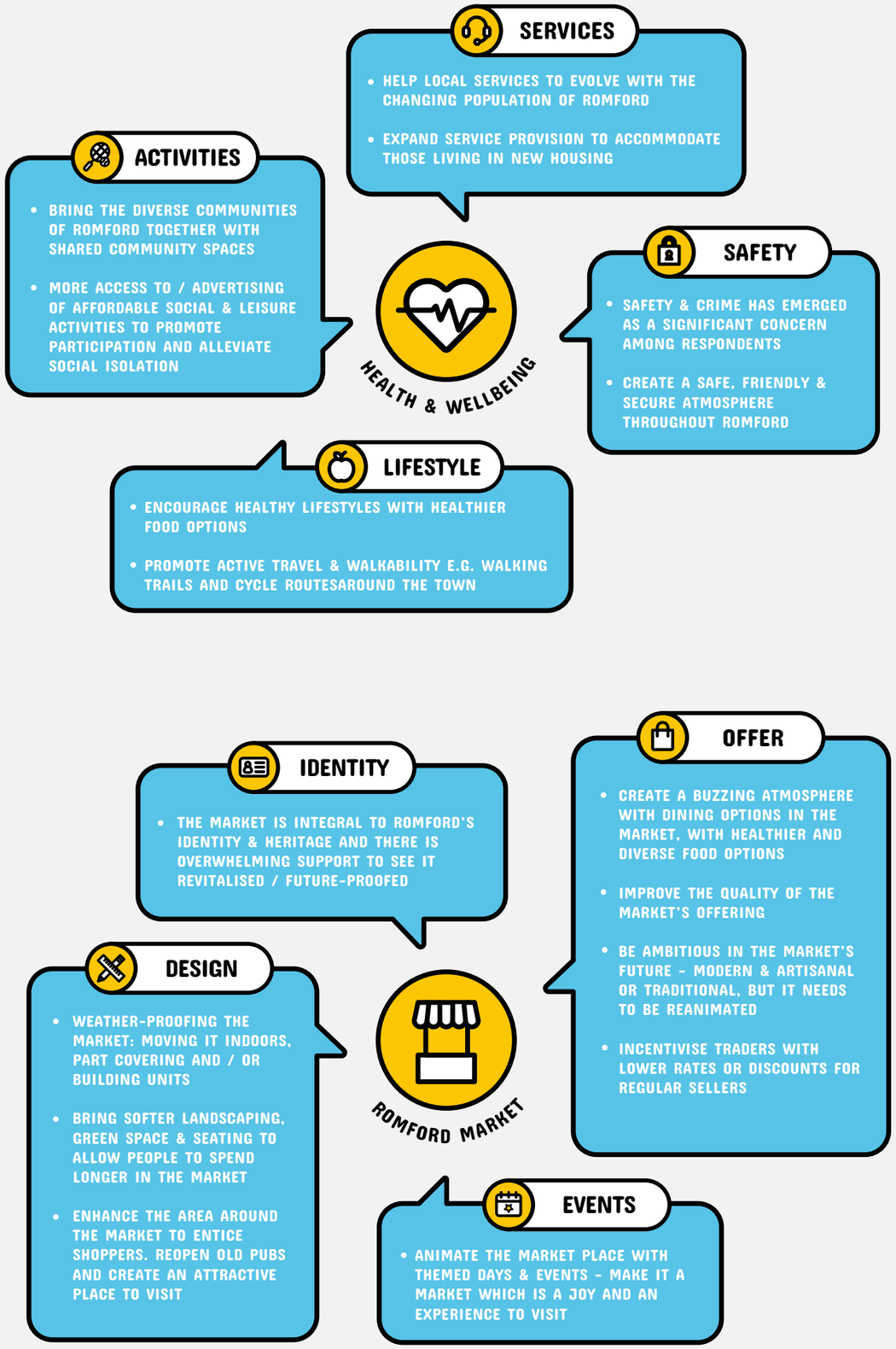
- ADD ENERGY & LIVELINESS TO THE TOWN CENTRE THROUGH ARTS & CULTURE: LIVE MUSIC VENUES, INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT CREATIVES
- FAMILY FRIENDLY LARE NIGHT AND EVENING OPTIONS - FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT. CREATE REASONS TO JOURNEY TO ROMFORD
- BRING A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES TO ROMFORD BEYOND RETAIL - FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, FAMILIES, OLDER OR ISOLATED POPULATIONS

FOOD & DRINK

- A WIDER VARIETY OF HEALTHY DINING OPTIONS
- DIVERSIFY FOOD OPTIONS, E.G. INTRODUCE POP-UP FOOD STALLS

YOUNG PEOPLE

- CREATE HIGH QUALITY, AFFORDABLE & SAFE PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. COULD INCLUDE A DEDICATED CENTRE AS WELL AS ACTIVITIES

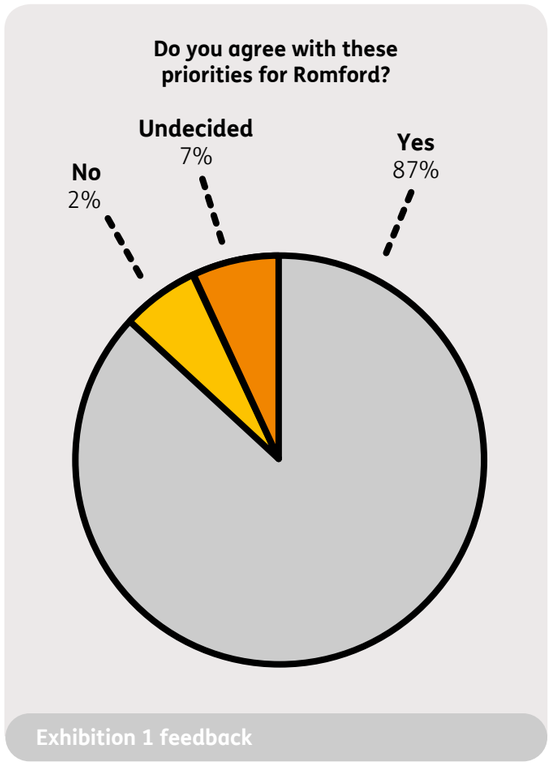


4.2

Exhibition 1 feedback; emerging ideas

Following the first exhibition in May 2019, we sought feedback on the emerging Masterplan. This was also an opportunity to share the feedback gathered and how it was shaping plans, so the public could tell us whether they felt they accurately captured their priorities and let us know what they thought of emerging ideas.

Feedback on the direction of the Masterplan was overwhelmingly positive, with only 2% of respondents saying they disagreed with the priorities highlighted among the emerging ideas.



Exhibition 1 feedback

Your Romford exhibition 1

"BETTER ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS"

"MARKET IMPROVEMENTS - I USED TO LOVE IT, BUT NOW I ONLY WALK THROUGH AND DON'T BUY ANYTHING"

"COMMUNITY RESOURCES ARE SO IMPORTANT - IT'S THE OTHER STUFF THAT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE HOUSING"

"OPENING UP AND RE-NATURALISING THE RIVER ROM"

"MEANWHILE AND INCUBATOR SPACES"

WHICH IDEAS ARE YOU MOST SUPPORTIVE OF?

"DO NOT USE THE MARKET SPACE AS A CAR PARK - WE NEED TO RECLAIM THE TOWN CENTRE FROM THE CAR PARKS"

"WE SHOULD HOLD ON TO THE HISTORY BUT MAKE IT MORE VIBRANT AND WELCOMING FOR ALL CULTURES"

"LANDSCAPE, MORE TREES AND GREEN SPACES - CREATING NICE PLACES TO SIT"

"THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF INDEPENDENT SHOPS AND TRADERS"

"I REALLY LIKE THE SUSTAINABLE STUFF, ROMFORD SHOULD GENERATE ITS OWN ENERGY"

"THE INCREASE IN HOUSING"

"HOW WILL THE BUILDING DESIGN QUALITY BE ENSURED? HAVERING COUNCIL STRUGGLES WITH THIS"

"HOUSING SHOULD BE AFFORDABLE FOR PEOPLE HERE, NOT JUST INVESTMENTS FOR WEALTHY PEOPLE"

"SCHOOLS NEED MORE SUPPORT"

"IS THERE FULL COMMITMENT FROM ALL STAKEHOLDERS?"

ARE THERE ANY IDEAS YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT?*

"WORRIED THAT THESE IDEAS WON'T HAPPEN"

"DON'T OPEN ANY MORE PUBS AS THEY CAN ATTRACT THE WRONG TYPE OF PEOPLE AND TROUBLEMAKERS"

"OVERDEVELOPMENT IS NOT A GOOD THING. THERE IS NOT ENOUGH AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR SINGLE OCCUPANTS"

"DON'T AGREE WITH PUSHING ARTS AND CULTURE AS A PRIORITY"

"ALL FINE ON PAPER, BUT WHERE ARE THE RESOURCES COMING FROM?"

"UNIQUENESS GOING AWAY AS IT IS VERY BUSINESS-ORIENTATED"

* Responses were overwhelmingly positive, so these concerns have been taken from a small data set.

"CAN WE KEEP SOME OF THE ART DECO CHARACTER OF EXISTING TOWN CENTRE ESPECIALLY ON SOUTH STREET?"

"MORE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE E.G. MORE SAFE SPACES FOR SCHOOL-AGE KIDS AND FREE CLUBS/ ACTIVITIES FOR THEM"

"THE STATION IS A DISASTER AND SHOULD BE A PRIORITY FOR IMPROVEMENT"

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS CURRENTLY MISSING AMONG THE IDEAS?

"YOGA FESTIVALS AND FITNESS"

"WHAT ABOUT THE SITE NEXT TO QUEEN'S HOSPITAL - WHAT IS HAPPENING THERE?"

"TRY TO INCLUDE SOME MORE GREEN SPACES IN THE TOWN CENTRE WHERE PEOPLE CAN MEET UP ONCE THEY'VE DONE THEIR SHOPPING"

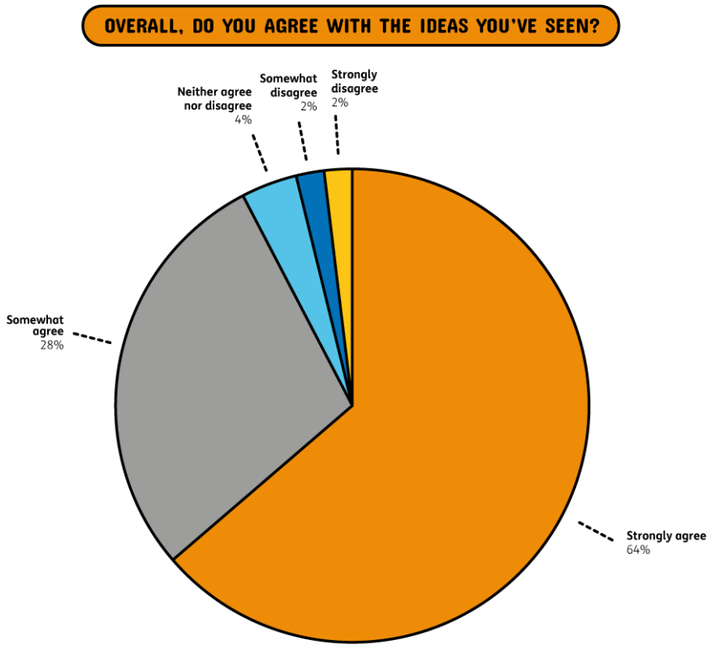
4.3

Exhibition 2 feedback

Draft Masterplan - preferred option & detailed design

At the second and final public exhibition core components of the draft Masterplan were shared with the public alongside feedback summaries, so we could provideclear evidence that what people said had influenced the outcome.

As was the case following Exhibition 1, feedback was overwhelmingly positive and the support for change strong. People seemed reassured that, on the whole, local priorities were reflected in the plans outlined and that the vision was an inclusive one. Of those who answered the question 'Overall, do you agree with the ideas you've seen?' 92% said they either strongly or somewhat agreed.



Respondents were generally very positive towards the plans, but there were some stand-out favourites among them. On the day of the exhibition 51% of people highlighted ideas around the market among their favourites, while 44% of respondents listed the River Rom among their favourite ideas.

Other particularly popular ideas were around public realm improvements and creation of social spaces, increasing and connecting green spaces and improving the general connectivity of the town centre.

In regards to reservations voiced, the main questions were whether the provision of social infrastructure would be adequate, whether the plans would be delivered and the extent to which safety concerns would be addressed through the interventions. These points were fed back to the project team and will help with final refinements.

"I am a strong supporter of the vision and ideas of green areas"

"Market - bringing different cultures and food together to make people closer / less fearful"

"I like the idea of a second station entrance - but need to make it cleaner"

"Rom! But can we open it as well where it goes underground?"

"Community focus - more things for people to interact with"

"Concerned about extra people and impact on schools, health facilities and other amenities"

"Safety is a big issue - can we strengthen the response to safety?"

"Bike lanes, remove cars from the town centre totally. Centre should be all about walking and cycling"

"Need actual actions / funding to make it a reality"

5.0

Next steps

5.1

Next steps

By developing a far-reaching and thorough programme of engagement starting early on, maximising the use of the Council's communication channels and establishing a clear feedback loop throughout the process, we have been able to meet the Council's desire for early involvement, ample local buy-in and participation in the Romford Town Centre Masterplan.

Following the initial phase of engagement to develop the draft Masterplan, the Local Planning Authority will enter the formal consultation phase:

1. **Carry out a formal six-week consultation on a draft Masterplan Statutory Planning Document (SPD)**

2. **Prepare a Consultation Statement in accordance with its Statement of Community Involvement and legislative requirements.**

The timing of these activities are subject to other parallel consultations the Council will be undertaking – most critically the draft Local Plan 2016-2031.

Your Romford ideas tree

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Romford Masterplan
Health Impact Assessment (HIA)
July 2024

Version Control

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1	25/07/24	First draft, based on results of collaborative HIA process held on 16/07/24
2	26/7/24	Addition of appraisal findings and recommendations
3	29/7/24	Final version
4	14/08/24	Appendix 5: Romford Masterplan Actions in Response HIA Recommendations text added.

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1. Introduction

This report presents findings and recommendations of the Romford Masterplan HIA undertaken to assess the potential health impacts of the proposed plan.
Romford is identified as an Opportunity Area and Housing Zone in the London Plan and the Romford Masterplan (RMP) is part of Havering Local Plan which sets out the council's vision and strategy for future growth and development of the borough from 2016 to 2031.

The Local Plan sets out a comprehensive policy (Policy 1) for Romford which is at the centre of a Strategic Development Area (SDA) in Havering's Local Plan. The RMP develops and supplements Policy 1 by creating a framework for the delivery of good growth over the next 20 years, setting out a vision for Romford supported by objectives, strategies and guidance. This RMP aims to deliver growth and opportunities benefiting the entire community drawing on the Romford's unique character, history and qualities.
The health impact of the RMP was undertaken to explore the potential benefits on health and wellbeing, of the proposed developments as well as identify any potential health risks and how they could be mitigated.
The findings presented are based on the appraisal undertaken, available evidence and knowledge of the Romford area.

2. Summary of Romford Masterplan key proposals

The RMP aims to guide the housing and economic growth opportunities in a way that respects Romford's qualities and history, strengthens pride in the town, and makes it a distinct and attractive place to live, work, and visit.
The RMP identifies a vision for Romford, introduces themes of space and landscape, movement and connectivity, sustainability, inclusivity, health and wellbeing, uses and mix with the character and townscape for future mixed development in Romford.

2.1 Romford Masterplan objectives

The RMP has been developed based on the objectives and vision in the Local Plan through a series of key objectives:

Opening up the River Rom

The River Rom will be deculverted and partially renaturalised through the Town Centre to create an ecological linear park.

Recharacterising the ring road

Transforming the ring road along its length into an active travel corridor with at-grade crossings, planting and an urban boulevard character, better integrating the Town Centre with the surrounding neighbourhoods and improving the experience of pedestrians and cyclists.

Celebrating Romford Market

Reinforce the importance of the Market Place as a key civic space by upgrading public realm, removing car parking, improved frontages and introducing spaces that can support a variety of events and formal and informal gatherings.

Reinstating the historic urban grain

Introducing new streets and spaces that reflect the finer historic urban grain of the town centre with smaller, more walkable blocks with varied and engaging building frontages.

Wider green links

Introduce new green links that can act as walking and cycling corridors both through the town centre and connecting to wider key public green spaces and parks.

New and improved station entrances

Creating a new station with an attractive public space that acts as a gateway to the town centre and improving the existing station entrance with public realm enhancements, seating and wayfinding.

Infrastructure

The approach is to bring new and improved infrastructure alongside new development. Supporting the community is a primary concern for the RMP. Enhancing and providing infrastructure over time such as schools and healthcare, public realm enhancements, (in particular those for the Market Place), and public transport and active travel facilities, all play a role in providing such support.
The Havering Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has informed both Havering's Local Plan and the RMP, with the review of the IDP and the RMP informing each other in parallel.

Identified Growth

Importantly, the RMP advocates for growth and change over time, looking at a 20-year trajectory for Romford to ensure the current vibrancy and successes are maintained and enhanced by future development.
A 20-year trajectory takes the RMP beyond the Local Plan period to 2041.

The RMP vision over this period will deliver:

- Potential for c. 10,250 to 11,350 total homes;
- 2,150 to 2,500 additional jobs;
- 10-13 form entry total primary and 8 form entry secondary schools

The selected development sites and interventions have significant potential to enhance and benefit Romford and the health and wellbeing of its residents, but may not all come forward, and development will happen incrementally. Equally, further opportunities, sites and interventions may come forward, and these too can be guided by the RMP's vision, objectives and strategies. Trigger points such as infrastructure improvements to the ring road and measured shifts to active travel can also be used to determine appropriate points to commence development in certain locations.

Figure 1: The relationship between the Romford Masterplan vision, themes, objectives and strategies

2.2 Site Visions

Each site has been considered in terms of the vision and principles, the land use; open space, streetscape and ecology; character and townscape; and implementation. An illustrative layout and massing have been provided for each site.

Market Place

Enhance its historical role as a market place and as the town centre's key civic public space. Focus retail, leisure, services, and food and beverage but some limited office and convenience shopping. Upper floors can provide residential uses with potential to incorporate some office, commercial and hotel uses, with consideration of the Romford Conservation area.

St Edwards Way

A string of sites with a vision for urban mixed-use areas that knit the Town Centre into the existing urban grain, rationalising it, drawing in connections to the town centre from the north-west whilst re-configuring and urbanising part of St. Edward's Way with defined edges and active uses. It transforms the character of the ring road from highway to urban street to create an attractive street-based part of town that is safe and convenient for pedestrians and cyclists. It incorporates a supporting retail and commercial mix of uses, enhanced employment, a range of housing types, sizes and tenures, and supporting social infrastructure.

Brewery
Deliver a predominantly commercial development of retail, leisure/culture and business uses that maintains the Brewery's role as a primary destination in Romford, with potential for civic uses, an expanded employment offer and/or housing at ground and on upper floors, with the River Rom forming the central focus of the area.

Station Gateway
Deliver an employment and residential neighbourhood, that forms a welcoming gateway to the town centre from the south. A naturalised River Rom and associated green opens pace helps to unite a fragmented part of the town. New high-quality development with improved street definition results in an improved setting for the station and for the southern part of South Street and the River Rom.

Rom Valley
Towards a predominantly residential neighbourhood, with an employment focus along Rom Valley Way, supported by appropriate small-scale retail, community and leisure uses fronting the Rom. Development should transform this out-of-town shopping and employment area into an attractive and vibrant place, with improved street definition and active frontages that take advantage of and enhance the River Rom. It should provide a transition into the Town Centre and feather into the residential hinterland, with an opportunity for emphasis on family housing.

Liberty
From the Market Place to Western Road, phased evolution to an enhanced and nuanced commercial focussed area that provides active ground floor commercial and employment uses with residential accommodation on upper floors. Development to be sensitive to and supportive of the special character and setting of the conservation area, positively engaging with a rejuvenated Market Place and market and with listed buildings, breaking up the existing large-scale blocks to deliver a finer urban grain. The finer urban grain can incorporate a network of publicly accessible streets that stay open at all times and allow for street addresses for ground floor uses and for residential above.

Mercury
A residential-led development together with business and other suitable ‘main town centre uses’ on lower floors fronting Mercury Gardens. New streets will improve permeability and, together with the redevelopment of the Liberty opposite, high-quality buildings will transform the character of Mercury Gardens into a tree-lined urban street. A new local open space at its centre will provide opportunity food and beverage units.

North Street
An integrated and cohesive area which will feel like an extension of Romford Town Centre with improvement to movement for pedestrians and cyclists across St. Edwards Way and North Street itself. The urban grain is currently disjointed with isolated blocks punctuated by car parking and open spaces. The existing fabric should be stitched together to create a consistent street frontage. This should be supported with public realm improvements, street planting and a new public space that acts as a spill-out space for ground floor commercial uses and a positive gateway to the town centre.

Civic Campus
The vision for the Civic Campus is to improve the setting of the existing buildings and use new development to fill gaps in the streetscape to create a more unified area and stitching together pockets of built form. New development and enhancements should focus on enhancing the existing pattern of pavilion buildings with complementary green pocket parks and civic open spaces.

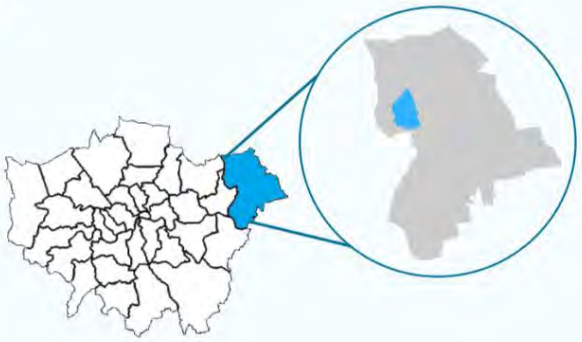
Crow Lane

Towards a cohesive and attractive residential neighbourhood with high-quality public realm and improved walking and cycling connections to the town centre and through the railway embankment. New buildings should complement each other to create a unified character across the neighbourhood, acknowledging the peripheral location.

3. Profile of Romford population and health needs

GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT

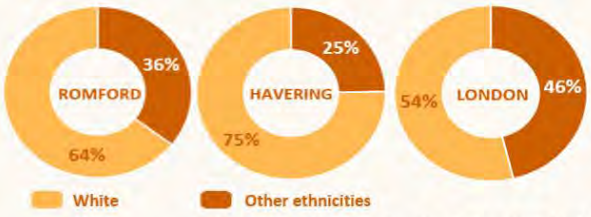
- Romford is the principal town of Havering; a metropolitan area for retail and night-time entertainment.
- The Romford Strategic development area (subsequently described as Romford) covers an area of approximately 3.46km^2. The area is densely populated, with population density estimated at 6,384.10 people per km^2 in 2021, higher than averages for both Havering (2,334.07 per km^2) and London (5,592.75 per km^2).
- Romford currently has little in the way of green space. This is in contrast with the rest of Havering, of which 66% of the surface area is classified as green cover.
- Romford has higher levels of air pollution than the Havering average, and lower levels than London.



Data used to inform this summary is all available via https://havering.localinsight.org/.

POPULATION

Ethnicity



Age profile

Live births

- The population in Romford stood at 23,176 in 2021 – equalling about 9% of the total Havering population.
- There were 331 live births in Romford in 2021, about 11% of all births in Havering.
- The average life expectancy for a girl born in Romford is 83.6 years, and for a boy is 78.1 years (2016-20).
- One in five people in Romford in 2021 were under the age of 16, and around one in ten were over the age of 65 years, making the population slightly younger than that of Havering as a whole.
- In 2021, 64% of Romford residents report being of white ethnicity, three quarters of which identified as white British. Romford is more ethnically diverse than Havering as a whole, but less so than London.
- 66% of Romford residents were born in the UK, compared to 81% in Havering and 59% across London.
- In Romford, the 2021 Census found 12% of households in Romford did not have English as a main language. This was higher than the proportion in Havering (4.8%) and similar to London (12.3%).

HOUSEHOLDS

Owner-occupied properties

Romford

Havering

London

House prices

Households without access to a car/van

Romford: 37%
Havering: 22%
London: 42%

Overcrowding

Romford: 10%
Havering: 6%
London: 11%

- There were 9,481 households in Romford in 2021.
- The average house price in Romford is £367,517, lower than the average across Havering (£452,272) and London (£714,419) in the 12 months from March 2023 to February 2024.
- In the Romford, 50.74% of households are owner-occupied, which is a lower proportion than in Havering (70.46%) and higher than in London (46.76%).
- The 2021 Census found that 37% of households in Romford have no access to a car or van, above Havering average (22%) and lower than London (42%).
- The 2021 Census estimated a total of 9.90% households in Romford were overcrowded (having at least one too few bedrooms than needed), compared to averages for Havering (6.05%) and London (11.09%).

ECONOMY

Employment rate

Romford

Havering

London

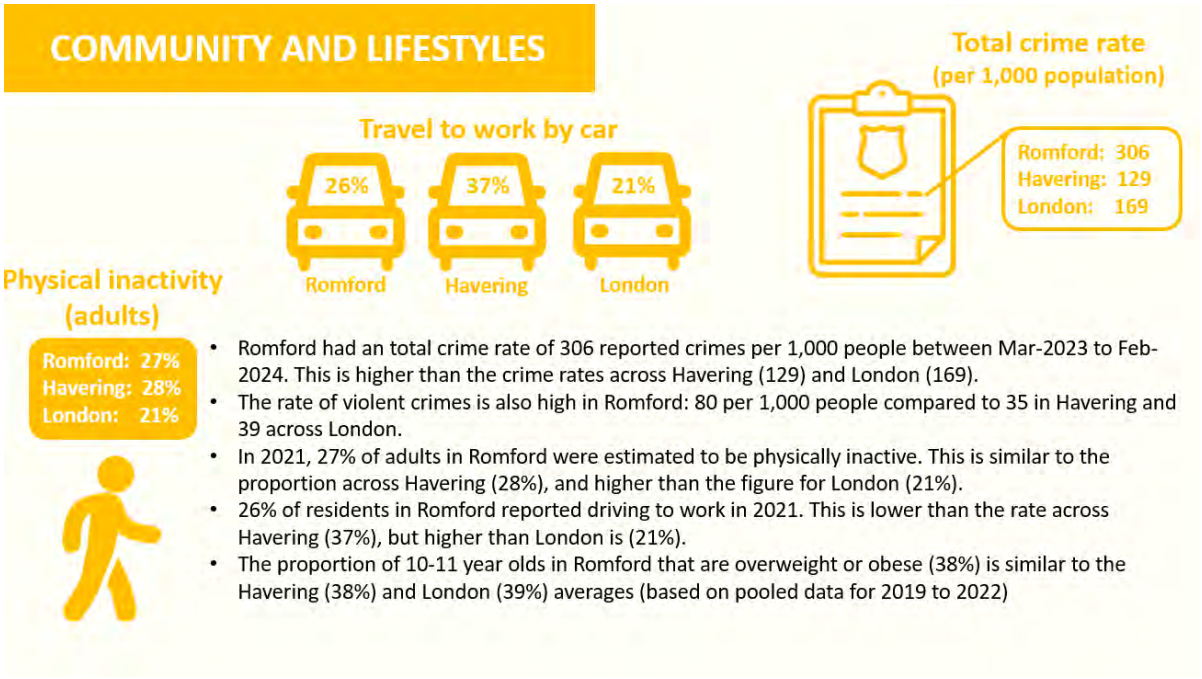
Average income

Romford: £37k
Havering: £37k
London: £42k

Children in income deprived households

About 1 in 6 children in Romford

- The 2019 Index of multiple deprivation found that Romford had higher levels of deprivation than Havering, but lower levels than London.
- Approximately 844 (16.9%) children in Romford were thought to live in income deprived households – this compares to 16.0% of children across Havering and 18.2% across London.
- The average net income in Romford in 2019/20 was £37,194, similar to Havering (£37,658) but lower than London (£42,452).
- Romford is a high employment area, with a job density score (number of jobs per 100 working-age people) of 116.61% in 2022, above averages for Havering (53.52%) and London (93.66%).
- In 2021, Romford had a higher employment rate (62.4%) compared to Havering (58.1%) and London (59.4%).
- As of May 2024, 5.2% of working age Romford residents were claiming unemployment benefits (Jobseekers Allowance, out of work Universal Credit), rising from 2.4% in January 2020 . This is higher than Havering (4.14%) and similar to London (5.09%)
- 17.5% of people in Romford responding to the 2021 Census reported having no formal qualifications, which is below Havering average (20%) and above London average (16.2%).



4. Health Impact Assessment

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a process that identifies the health and wellbeing impacts (benefits and harms) of a plan or development project and recommends measures to maximise positive impacts whilst minimising negative impacts and reducing health inequalities[1].

HIA is defined by WHO[2] as "A combination of procedures, methods and tools by which policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population".

HIA is largely used for plans or projects not primarily concerned with health or the delivery of health services such as transport or new developments. HIA reflects how the wider determinants of health such as – access to services and amenities, traffic and transport, social and economic factors as well as land use factors influence health outcomes. It therefore supports and informs the planning system and development projects to make them more health focused and sustainable.

HIA of development plans is highly recommended by various national and regional policy and local strategies in recognition of the important connections between planning and the health of communities. This includes the National Planning Practice Guidance, The London Plan as well as the Havering Local which requires HIA to accompany major developments under Policy 12.

Additionally, Havering's adoption of health in all policy (HiAP) approach recognises the importance of addressing the wider determinants to improve health and wellbeing and this is echoed in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. For further details on wider determinants of Health See Appendix 2.

4.1 Aim and objectives

The assessment of the Romford Masterplan aimed to ensure that the health consequences or effects of the proposed have been considered with the following objectives

- To identify the key health determinants most likely to impact health
- To identify groups that may be impacted by the plan
- To provide recommendations for enhancing positive health impacts of RM and minimising any negative impacts.

4.2 HIA approach and scope

The HIA was undertaken by a team comprising of Public Health and Planning Policy officers- see Appendix 1. As Havering has a defined policy requiring major developments to undertake an HIA screening was not undertaken and rather a scoping exercise to determine the approach, and data required was affected through a meeting with roles and responsibilities as well as timescale agreed for appraisal.
Due to need for the HIA to support the consultation version of the Romford Masterplan and the limited timeframe a desktop exercise was carried out using The London Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU) tool focusing on 11 key determinants of health. This model was used for the Local Plan HIA hence it made sense to adopt same tool for the RMP HIA.
The assessment was informed by data and characteristics of the Romford area as a market town, the population profile and health needs obtained via strategic documents primarily the JSNA and Local insight.
The HIA focused on key health determinants considered most likely to occur and to have the greatest potential impact on health and inequalities in the Romford area. Factors or policies already covered in both the London Plan and the Local Plan (such as Social Housing Regulation, Building Regulations, Licensing Policy) were not
assessed.

5. Appraisal: Findings on health impacts

The RMP was assessed as largely having positive impact on health due to the recognition of the importance of wider health determinants evidenced in one of the seven strategic objectives undersection 5.5. Inclusivity, Health and Wellbeing. Commitment to promote and factor health and wellbeing into the RMP are also covered under the following sections:

- 4.4.3: Active travel via healthy streets approach
- 5.7.2. 5: Green strategy - establishing a network of primary, secondary and tertiary green corridors and spaces, new street tree planting and necklace of green space connecting cotton spark with lodge farm park.
- 5.2.2.2: Blue Strategy of re-establishing the River Rom, maximise the experience and ecological potential of existing waterways through naturalisation, de-culverting, landscaping, and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) feature.
- 5.2.2.3 Public Realm strategy-ensuring all new major development bring significant public space encouraging cultural events and community activity
- 5.5.2.2 commitment to schools' provision, social amenities to improve air quality including through changes to Ring Road and improved bus service connections.

5.1 Housing

Housing is recognised as one of the key health determinants. The RMP assessment of housing impact focused largely on affordability and the range of housing proposed as given in the Local Plan minima of 6,000 net new homes. The commitment to build additional

homes 10,250-11,035 over next 20 years, optimise housing through inclusion of mixed-use schemes maximising amount of family homes and creating attractive compact places was considered largely beneficial to health. In view of the projected population growth and relatively high deprivation index of the Romford area (IMD score of 19.85 compared to Havering, IMD score of 16.79) the proposed development of a range of housing to rent and buy as part of mixed use developments aim to increase availability of housing across the Romford Strategic Development Area (SDA) and potentially contribute to reducing high overcrowding.

5.2 Healthcare and social infrastructure

The RMP recognised need for additional provision of healthcare services such as health Centre hubs. However, it lacked clarity on assessing demand for these services and the location of the re-provision of ambulance station in Bridge Close Development. The health benefits could be strengthened by working with NHS partners to assess the demand for these services and specify the location for re-provision of the ambulance station.
The assessment indicates that the RMP supports provision of other infrastructure provision including additional primary and secondary schools as part of Bridge Close development and is therefore deemed as having positive impact. However, location for secondary schools remain unidentified posing a potential risk to meeting educational needs of the growing number of children within the SDA. There is opportunity therefore to enhance the health benefits by identifying suitable sites working with educational establishments.
Plans for nursery as part of bridge closed development and multi-purpose youth hub as well as social infrastructure such as shared community space also deliver positive impacts on health and wellbeing.

5.3 Access to open space and nature

Access to open space and nature strongly supports physical and mental wellbeing. The RMP commits to enhancing existing open space and nature, providing new spaces and play spaces for children and young people under its green strategy, public realm strategy and blue strategy. The Green strategy plans to establish a new network of primary, secondary and tertiary green corridors and spaces with streets planting exercise to enhance local area as well as introduce new public spaces across the town. The plan recognises the paucity of play spaces and emphasises this provision under Child Friendly Romford with Local play provision (for years 5-11) and Neighbourhood play (for teenagers) in parks and public space. These are positive determinants of health.

Whilst the importance of inclusivity and ensuring access for all ages is highlighted there is insufficient detail on achieving safety and accessibility. These areas could be enhanced by setting out strategies to ensure high level of safety including for women, those with disabilities in addition to natural surveillance and footfall. In addition, the benefits of open space could be further enhanced through clarification of maintenance and management responsibilities.

5.4 Air quality, noise and neighbourhood amenity

Air pollution and noise, loud and persistent noise over a long period can adversely impact health. Air pollution in particular contributes to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well as lung cancer with disproportionate impact on children young people and those with

underlying health conditions. Environmental noise also poses a risk to physical and mental health and wellbeing.
The master plan encourages vibrant night life which may result in noise to local residents but are mitigated through existing local plan policies. The proposals to minimise air pollution and noise arising from traffic, changes to the ring road and residential streets, infrastructure to support modal shift to active travel via healthy street approach together with increased bus connection will have beneficial effects on health.

5.5 Accessibility and active travel

Accessibility and active travel are both strongly supported in the RMP using the healthy streets approach and prioritises walking and cycling with reduction in private vehicle use. These strategies are highlighted in many of the seven key objective areas including sections:

- 4.4.3 Movement & Connectivity, objectives MC1-8
- 4.4.5 Inclusivity, Health and Wellbeing
- 5.5.2.2 Active travel public

Measures to reduce car usage and road injuries and enhance public transport include improvement to the ring road permeability, new station entrance, park-and-ride scheme as well as maintaining town centre bus route to encourage public transport use for short trips. Romford shop mobility scheme alongside inclusive public realm supports increased access for people with mobility problems or disabilities.
There is opportunity to enhanced accessibility to buildings and places through the reprovision of public toilets, changing places and through provision of cycle parking for accessible cycles.
Overall plans will encourage healthy lifestyles, increase opportunity for physical activity supporting efforts to reduce high obesity level and thus is assessed as achieving positive impact on health.

5.6 Crime reduction and community safety

Feeling safe and secure has an influence on health and well-being. Good design can “design out crime” and encourage people to use communal space.
Data shows that Crime rate in Romford area is higher, at 306.4 per 1,000 population than the average across Havering (129.0 per 1,000 population). Some links have been made between employment and crime.
Opportunities and strategies to improve employment and training for the population are assessed as having a positive impact.
The masterplan promotes community safety ensuring overlooking of public spaces, minimizing opportunity for anti-social behaviour through Active Streets approach. The ambitions for the marketplace, River Rom, South Street and the station were accessed as positive impact to the Romford SDA.

5.7 Access to healthy food

This is an important factor impacting all age groups. Access to healthy food contributes to reducing obesity levels and to wider health and wellbeing. Large networks of streets or developments with limited access to local shops, poor transport connections to supermarkets and poor availability of fresh food in local inconvenience stores can limit

healthy food access as well as high density of hot food takeaway shops.
The ambition to develop Romford as a town with mix use, the provision for a range of retail uses, together with Local Plan policies to limit the over proliferation of takeaway units across Havering towns centres stand to improve healthy food access, positively support reduction of the high obesity levels in the Romford SDA and improve overall health and wellbeing.
There is potential to enhance the positive impact of the plans through the provision of community gardens and food growing space used in urban high-density areas to further enhance access to healthy food.

5.8 Access to work and training

Employment is a key health determinant and is associated with both mental and physical health benefits, and in reducing both inequalities and crime. The Romford area has a high population of young people relative to Havering and a higher number of those of working age. Access to jobs and training are there for important consideration for the health of residents. It worth noting that whilst the area has a low percentage people economically inactive,12.95% of people compared to 20.97% in Havering, the percentage claiming unemployment benefit has risen from 2.37% in January 2020 to 5.20% in May 2024, and is higher than for Havering (4.14%). Crime rate in Romford area is also high, at 306.4 per 1,000 population than the average across Havering (129.0 per 1,000 population). Links have been made between employment and crime[3].
Improving employment and training opportunities through strategies below can have positive impact on health and could support measures to reduce crime:

- Significant change in scale and mix of non-residential uses to provide space for new jobs and improve job opportunities.
- Supporting additional job opportunities for local residents and for businesses to take up supply opportunities through the planning application process.
- Use of creative and innovative strategies to support development and growth rather than reliance on traditional anchors as well as
- Maximizing the unique advantage of Romford location-as a gateway between Essex and London - to increase opportunity for employment through the Thames Estuary corridor.

5.9 Social cohesion and lifetime neighbourhoods

Social cohesion the “glue” that holds a society or community together has no agreed single definition but is described by United Nations as the state of a society’s convergence, or the ‘common bonds’ that unify different people and groups that share space or territory[4]. Social cohesion can be supported by provision of the social infrastructure to enable people of different races, faiths and cultural groups to socialize.
The overall proposals in the plan including strategies set out under sections 4.7.2.1 Retail, Leisure and Culture, aim to nurture existing cultural facilities and provide space for them to expand in the town centre. Green and Public realm strategies as well as proposal to increase access to public places for those with mobility or disability issues positively impact social cohesion, and they reflect the main components of a lifetime neighbourhood[5] and thus positively contribute to population wellbeing.

5.10 Minimising use of resources and climate change

Resources including land, air and water, fossil fuels and how they are utilised constitute important factors in terms of climate change and population well-being. Romford is an area of deprivation with 20% of people claiming universal credit, higher than the proportion in Havering (14.93%). This has an implication for fuel poverty, particularly with prevailing high energy costs. Commitment on use of resources and addressing climate change are set out under various sections of the RMP including 3.4.2 Space and Landscape as shown:
SL4. Urban greening and tree strategy that helps transform the visual qualities and character of the Town Centre and improve the area's resilience to climate changes and mitigate urban heat island effect.
Also, Section 4.4.4 Sustainability set out a number of plans such as

- strategy for an integrated heat and power network linking wind and solar energy generation, battery storage, ambient heat networks and waste heat sources, for future proofing, climate change and greater use of electric vehicles.
- the establishment of a local energy company, such as a Community Interest Company, to supply affordable energy heat and power to Romford residents
- Improving blue and green infrastructure to mitigate and reduce flood risk on River Rom catchment as well as increasing biodiversity for environmental resilience to climate change effects

It is unclear the plans proposed to reduce energy use of buildings such as provision of appropriate ventilation, shading and landscaping and this needs to be clarified (is this more for individual scheme development?

6. Recommendations

Health Impacts of the RMP proposal were determined to be largely positive, and the areas identified as likely posing negative impacts can be addressed and mitigated.
The HIA recommends prioritising below key areas for action to improve the health aspects of the Romford area and enhance the identified positive impacts:

- Assess demand for healthcare services and set out how healthcare infrastructure will be provisioned including the ambulance station location in Bridge Close Development working in partnership with NHS
- Identify potential location for secondary school and ensure educational needs of children within the area are met.
- Enhance open space and access to ensure safety and accessibility for all including women and the disabled
- Ensure the maintenance and management responsibilities of new open space is clarified and factored into development applications to retain the benefits
- Enhanced accessibility to buildings and places through the reprovision of public toilets, changing places and provision of cycle parking for accessible cycles
- Identify childcare facilities to further maximise positive impacts of access to work
- Enhance the positive impact of social cohesion through provision for voluntary and community sectors and additional space for civic functions
- Consider the provision of community gardens and food growing space to enhance access to healthy food

7. Report Use

The HIA will form part of the supporting documents for the consultation version of the RMP going out to consultation under Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Template for desktop HIA of RMP July 2024

Use below 11 topics to indicate health determinants likely to be influenced by RMP development.

1. Prioritise proposed changes most likely to impact on health.
2. Indicate whether impact is likely to be positive (+) or negative (-) and
3. Indicate group(s) likely to be affected in the Romford area. =Yes; N=No: Un= uncertain N/A = not applicable*

* Any topics marked as N/A reflect the fact that the some/all relevant information is covered within the Local Plan or London Plan – the RMP does not repeat content otherwise covered within these development Plan Policies. The RMP will positively comply with London and Local Plan requirements.

Topics this applies to: 1,2,3, 5, 7, 19, 38, 39, 47.

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
1	Does the proposal seek to meet all 16 design criteria of the Lifetime Homes Standard or meet Building Regulation requirement M4 (2)?	N/A		This is covered by the London Plan	
2	Does the proposal address the housing needs of older people, i.e. extra care housing, sheltered housing, lifetime homes and wheelchair accessible homes?	N/A		This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan	
3	Does the proposal include homes that can be adapted to support independent living for older and disabled people?	N/A		This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan	
4	Does the proposal promote good design through layout and orientation, meeting internal space standards?	Y	+	Internal space standards are covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan. The RMP also promotes good design by providing guidance on building height limitations (5.6.2.3) and confirming expectations regarding minimum floor-to-floor height of 4.5m for ground floors of mixed-use buildings (5.7.2.3). Proposed space should also and take account of the checklist in the GLA's Vacant Ground Floors in Mixed-Use Development.	Good design benefits all
5	Does the proposal seek to increase a) affordable housing and b) a range of housing types and sizes, in response to local housing needs?	N/A		This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan. The RMP is set to deliver an increase in housing stock (anticipated 10,250 –11,035 units) and supports optimisation of housing provision through mixed-use schemes (4.4.7). The RMP encourages a dwelling mix that maximise number of family homes to be delivered (Uses & Mix and 5.7.2.5)	
6	Does the proposal contain homes that are highly energy	Un	+	Energy efficiency requirements improvements with CO2 emissions beyond Part L of Building Regulations in line with	Improving energy

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
	efficient (e.g. a high SAP rating)?			the London Plan Considers energy source, improved building efficiency and the longer-term occupation efficiencies.	efficiency for new homes
7	Does the proposal retain or re-provide existing social infrastructure?	Y	+	Retention and reprovision is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan. The RMP recognised the need to reprovide specific social infrastructure provision where it will be redeveloped for other uses, as well as proposing some new social infrastructure (e.g. multi-purpose youth hub (5.7.2.8)) It is vital that in proceeding with individual schemes covered within the RMP, there is early clarity about how existing infrastructure will be sufficiently re-provisioned, to ensure that any health impacts of the approach to re-providing can be fully assessed.	
8	Does the proposal assess the demand for healthcare services and identify requirements and costs using the HUDU model?	Un		Ben Dixon to advise – awaiting meeting with NHS infrastructure group	
9	Does the proposal provide for healthcare services either in the form of a financial contribution or in-kind? Does a health facility provided as part of the development match NHS requirements and plans?	Un	+	The RMP does not fully detail how emerging healthcare needs will be provided for but does recognise the need for further provision of health care facilities, including a 1,600sqm health hub, 1,000-1,500sqm health centre and proposed 13 full time equivalent GPs. Acknowledges the role of local NHS estate strategies in informing and shaping response to emerging local healthcare needs (6.7.2.7).	
10	Does the proposal assess the capacity, location and accessibility of other social infrastructure, e.g. schools, social	Y to some extent	+	The RMP recognises need to make provision for additional social infrastructure and services to keep pace with population growth. Refers to additional schools (primary) proposed as part of bridge close development and local plan policy 1.	

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
	care and community facilities?			Acknowledges the need for additional secondary school provision to cater for the growing local population in the longer term (2026/27 to 2030/31) but potential sites remain unidentified. Refers to a range of scheme-specific plans to support community infrastructure e.g. - planned Increased nursery provision referred to as part of Bridge Close development and proposes multi-purpose youth hub for children and YP. - provide a replacement community/leisure use at ground floor level fronting St. Edward's Way and Mawney Road - retain Trinity Methodist church and integrate with other community uses	
11	Does the proposal explore opportunities for shared community use and co-location of services?	Y	+	As previously described, proposes development of a health hub, multi-purpose youth centre.	
12	Does the proposal contribute to meeting pre-school, primary, secondary and post 19 education needs?	Y	+	The RMP supports the provision of primary and secondary schools. Any potential for post 19 education unclear. Longer term risk identified around finding a suitable site for secondary school provision within or outside Romford area, with a need for consultation with education colleagues on this matter. No sites covered by Site Specific Guidance are considered suitable to accommodate a secondary school. -A new nursery is planned as part of the proposed Bridge Close development. -Expansion opportunities are limited, additional primary schools will need to be provided as part of large mixed-use developments so that additional school places to cater for the expected increase in residents. -3FE to be provided as part of a new school in the proposed Bridge Close development	Children and young people

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
13	Does the proposal retain and enhance existing open and natural spaces?	Y	+	The RMP recognises the paucity of existing green space, and makes provision for increasing this, including plans for a network of primary secondary and tertiary green corridors and spaces (5.7.2.5) and new Street tree planting. The RMP also promotes improvements to other open and civic spaces e.g. enhancements to the marketplace to provide new seating and planting (5.6.2.6)	Those without access to private green space, residents and other users of community space
14	In areas of deficiency, does the proposal provide new open or natural space, or improve access to existing spaces?	Y	+	As above, RMP makes provisions to address paucity of green and blue space, including through green routes, urban greening, linear park, cycle routes re-establishing the River Rom through re-naturalising or de-culverting the rivers, landscaping, and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS). Also makes proposals about activating green and open space by locating cafes and restaurants (5.6.2.6)	
15	Does the proposal provide a range of play spaces for children and young people?	Un		The requirement for play spaces is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan. The RMP recognises the existing paucity of play spaces and emphasises the need for this provision in new developments (see Child Friendly Romford) - notes that Local (for years 5-11) and Neighbourhood play (for teenagers) should be provided in parks and public space.	Children and young people
16	Does the proposal provide links between open and natural spaces and the public realm?	Y	+	The RMP lays out approaches to ensuring that new and existing green space are connected with other community resources via cycling and walking routes to improve accessibility. The RMP emphasises that all new major developments are to bring significant public space and in line with green and blue strategies (5.2.2.3)	
17	Are the open and natural spaces welcoming and safe	Y		The RMP outlines a number of approaches to improving inclusivity, including via healthy streets approach, mixed-use spaces, child friendly spaces and those for all ages	People with mobility issues, CYP, Women

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
	and accessible for all?			(4.4.5). Plus promotes/encourages inclusive design and inclusive environments. The RMP promotes the use of active and passive surveillance to provide a safe, child-friendly environments (5.5.2.1). Identified opportunity to strengthen response to enhancing safety and accessibility and designing out crime, while also acknowledging the natural surveillance often afforded in more densely populated urban settings.	
18	Does the proposal set out how new open space will be managed and maintained?	+		Maintenance of open spaces is likely to be a combination of responsibility between developers and the local authority – it is essential to ensure that there is a clear plan and agreement around maintenance. Evidence suggests that quality of greenspace has a stronger impact on health and wellbeing than quantity, so every effort should be made to maximise the quality of green spaces in scope of the RMP. The Local plan requires all development schemes to demonstrate that arrangements are in place for on-going maintenance and management of green space (policy 27).	
19	Does the proposal minimise construction impacts such as dust, noise, vibration and odours?	N/A		This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan	
20	Does the proposal minimise air pollution caused by traffic and energy facilities?	Y	+	The RMP lays out proposed to changes to the existing ring road and 'residential' streets, including traffic calming measures. The RMP seeks to embed infrastructure to support modal shift to active travel, while retaining bus connectivity to enable public transport use for short trips. The RMP also lays out several sustainability objectives regarding heat and power networking via sustainable sources.	
21	Does the proposal minimise noise pollution caused by	Y	+	As above	

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
	traffic and commercial uses?				
22	Does the proposal prioritise and encourage walking (such as through shared spaces?)	Y	+	The RMP recognises importance of active travel using the healthy streets approach, being set out throughout the documents and within many of the seven key themes (4.4.3, 4.4.5, 5.5.2.2). The RMP acknowledges the role of active travel in encouraging healthy lifestyles and the need for these modes to be considered equitably with other forms of transport to reduce private vehicle use and congestion. Reconfigured streets and public realm will create a more attractive, safe and inclusive Romford with engaging spaces to walk, cycle, improving connectivity via these modes.	
23	Does the proposal prioritise and encourage cycling (e.g. by providing cycle parking, showers, cycle lanes)?	Y	+	As above Cycle parking for accessible bikes should be considered as part of review of Local Plan.	
24	Does the proposal connect public realm and internal routes to local and strategic cycle/walking networks?	Y	+	As above	
25	Does the proposal include traffic management and calming measures to help reduce and minimise road injuries?	Y	+	The RMP proposes changes to ring road and 'residential' streets, including traffic calming measures and changes to road layouts to minimise congestion. This includes plans to improve the permeability of the ring road through re-provisioned routes for walking and cycling which will support efforts to reduce road traffic injuries.	
26	Is proposal well connected to public transport, local services and facilities and does it enhance public transport?	Y	+	The RMP emphasises importance of maintaining town centre bus route provision to encourage public transport use for short trips. Also proposes new station entrance, Park and Ride scheme to improve connectivity.	

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
27	Does the proposal seek to reduce car use by reducing car parking provision, supported by the controlled parking zones, car clubs and travel plans measures?	Y	+	Partly covered by London Plan/ Local Plan in relation to residential car parking standards. The RMP lays out proposals to rationalise commercial car parking, while enhancing active travel plans and opportunities to support modal shift. Unclear about car clubs.	
28	Does the proposal allow people with mobility problems or a disability to access buildings and places?	Y	+	4.4.5 Inclusivity, Health recognises need to create inclusive spaces. Objectives IHW3- 4 refers to creating accessible streets and public spaces for members of the community of all ages and abilities. Includes plans to reprovide public toilets, including a Changing Places' facility and Romford Shopmobility scheme alongside inclusive public realm.	Older adults, children and families, those with mobility or other long-term conditions
29	Does the proposal incorporate elements to help design out crime?	Y	+	Largely covered by the London plan Policy 7.3 Designing out crime. The RMP highlights the importance of opportunities for natural and active surveillance to improve safety, notably within play spaces.	
30	Does the proposal incorporate design techniques to help people feel secure and avoid creating 'gated communities'?	Y	+	Encouraging active streets approach toward maximising shared use of community/public space will support natural surveillance and improved sense of security. Development permeability and increased urban grain minimises risk of sense of 'gated communities'.	
31	Does the proposal include attractive, multi-use public spaces and buildings?	Y	+	The RMP makes reference to a range of scheme-specific improvements that deliver multi-use public spaces for example i. improving flexibility of public space in the marketplace, to continue to offer space for stalls while also being available for community and public events, ii. Offering schemes planned to include mix use (e.g. mix of industrial/commercial/hospitality/office space planned for Rom Valley).	
32	Has engagement and consultation been carried out with the local community?	Y	+	Further consultation will be undertaken on the full draft of the RMP as part of the statutory process of preparing a Supplementary Planning Document.	

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
33	Does the proposal facilitate the supply of local food, i.e. allotments, community farms and farmers' markets?	Y	+	Romford Market to offer dining options with healthier and diverse food options Reference to community growing schemes. Allotments in green spaces not mentioned.	
34	Is there a range of retail uses, including food stores and smaller affordable shops for social enterprises?	Y	+	The RMP lays out aspirations for Romford to be a mixed-use town centre, offering diversity of retail and hospitality options, alongside increased leisure and culture offer and business space.	
35	Does the proposal avoid contributing towards an over-concentration of hot food takeaways in the local area?	Y	+	This is largely covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan which is part of the Development Plan for Havering. Alongside the aspiration to ensure a mixed-use town centre, the RMP will also speak to existing local and regional policies aimed at reducing the concentration of fast-food outlets.	
36	Does the proposal provide access to local employment and training opportunities, including temporary construction and permanent 'end-use' jobs?	Y	+	Delivering on the ambition to improve Romford town centre and maximise mix of uses should support development of employment opportunities across a range of sectors. The RMP will likely support the delivery of scheme-by-scheme employment and training opportunities during construction phase, building on skills and training requirements of local plan.	
37	Does the proposal provide childcare facilities?	Y	+	The Bridge Close development includes specific plans to provide a nursery, and the RMP confirms that the Council will negotiate the inclusion of high-quality childcare facilities (as required) during pre-application discussions on other schemes.	
38	Does the proposal include managed and affordable workspace for local businesses?	N/A		This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan which is part of the Development Plan for Havering.	

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
39	Does the proposal include opportunities for work for local people via local procurement arrangements?	N/A		This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan which is part of the Development Plan for Havering.	
40	Does the proposal connect with existing communities, i.e. layout and movement which avoids physical barriers and severance and land uses and spaces which encourage social interaction?	Y	+	The RMP seeks to deliver a community feel within individual developments, while also reducing urban grain and permeability to support ease of movement between and within different areas of the RMP footprint, as well as surrounding areas. The RMP identifies that value of high quality open spaces and mix use venues, which offer opportunities for organic and structured social interaction.	
41	Does the proposal include a mix of uses and a range of community facilities?	Y	+	The RMP proposes a wide range of community developments across the site-specific proposals, with strong emphasis on importance of mix use spaces.	
42	Does the proposal provide opportunities for the voluntary and community sectors?			Opportunity to strengthen narrative about how new and existing spaces will be made available to support voluntary and community sector organisations	
43	Does the proposal address the principles of Lifetime Neighbourhoods?	Y	+	Plan refers to improving access, services and amenities, social networks/well-being, improved housing which are important component of Lifetime Neighbourhoods.	
44	Does the proposal make best use of existing land?			5.4.4 Sustainability outlines RMP proposals to deliver a town centre that is resilient and sustainable, maximising use of available space to deliver to best effect. Scheme-by-scheme proposals aim to deliver positive changes, which address hyper-local issues and needs while supporting the delivery of the overarching objectives and vision for Romford.	

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
45	Does the proposal encourage recycling (including building materials)?	Y	+	This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan. RMP proposes adopting principles of the circular economy for all development, incentivising building adaptation and reuse. Incorporating strategies to ensure zero waste to landfill through reuse and recycling of building elements.	
46	Does the proposal incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques?	Y	+	This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan. Encourage zero carbon development through energy efficient design that considers both operational and embodied carbon.	
47	Does the proposal incorporate renewable energy?	N/A	+	This is covered by the London Plan/ Local Plan 5.4.4 Sustainability objectives S1 - S7 proposes transitioning Romford to a Zero Carbon Town by 2030 and a strategy for an integrated heat and power network linking wind and solar energy generation, battery storage, ambient heat networks.	
48	Does the proposal ensure that buildings and public spaces are designed to respond to winter and summer temperatures, i.e. ventilation, shading and landscaping?	Y	+	Expectation that developments would adhere to London Plan policy re Overheating and Cooling (5.9), including utilisation of appropriate ventilation, insulation and shading strategies. In the context of adaption to rising temperatures, there is opportunity to strengthen the narrative re provision of well-positioned natural or fabricated shading across the proposed open and green spaces (particularly in and around children's play areas, and in seating areas) across the RMP footprint.	Children and young people, elderly, those with long term conditions less able to regulate temperature
49	Does the proposal maintain or enhance biodiversity?	Y	+	The RMPs approach to the provision and enhancement of green infrastructure supports efforts to improve local biodiversity. The RMP promotes inclusion of a range of interlinked green spaces that can support different habitats, including the use of urban drainage techniques, provision of street trees, green roofs, green walls, rain gardens, hedgerows, shrubs and bushes, flower gardens and grassland (5.4.2.1).	

		Y/N/ Un/NA	Impact Positive (+) Negative (-)	Comments- include actions to enhance + impact or mitigate - impact	Groups likely to be impacted (e.g. children, elderly, disability/ low income /minority
				Also lays out requirement for all new developments to be able to demonstrate a net biodiversity gain of 20%.	
50	Does the proposal incorporate sustainable urban drainage techniques?	Y	+	RMP proposes approaches to implementation of Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS), alongside other improvements to blue and green infrastructure to mitigate and reduce the risk of flooding on River Rom catchment. These improvements also intended to increase biodiversity to provide environmental resilience to the effects of climate change. Note that national and London plan policies to inform local approaches to urban drainage.	

Appendix 2: Wider determinants of health and impact of the built environment

The wider determinants of health cover the social, cultural, political, economic, commercial and environmental factors that shape the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. These show that opportunities for creating good health often occur long before the point at which individuals need to access health care. Many of these factors are highlighted in Dahlgren and Whitehead diagram (Figure 2) which illustrates the many factors that interact to influence health status.

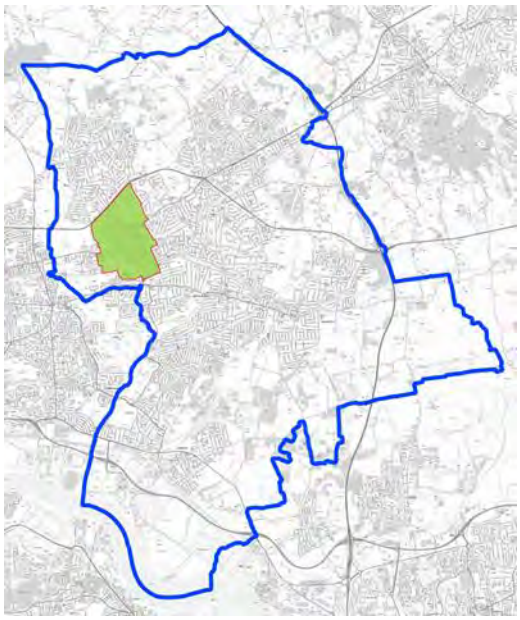
Whilst central factors such as age, sex and genetically inherited propensity to disease, cannot be readily altered, our interaction with the wider environment in which we live, not just our immediate surroundings an, the socio-political and cultural environment, is crucial to determining health.

Figure 2. The Wider Determinants of Health Model

People living in areas of deprivation, with potentially poor housing conditions, overcrowding, high levels of unemployment, on low incomes, and poor education, live significantly shorter lives than their more affluent counterparts.

The environmental aspects of the local place also interplay with the social conditions; large networks of streets or estates can impact on our ability to access green and open spaces, important not just for physical activity, but for our mental health and wellbeing too. Housing design and density, access to shops, supermarkets, leisure facilities and other retailers can affect the quality of our diet and lifestyle, including how we build and maintain our social relationships. Additionally, how we travel through our environments, provision or absence of traffic calming measures, play spaces for children and the impact of traffic pollution on air quality are important factors. For this reason, the HIA has focused on those wider determinants most relevant to the proposed Romford development masterplan

Appendix 3: Map of Romford Masterplan Area



Appendix 4: Contributors to the HIA

Public Health Team	**Planning Policy Team**
Kate Ezeoke-Griffiths - Assistant Director/ Public Health Consultant Emily Grundy - Assistant Director/ Public Health Consultant Parth Pillar - Public Health Practitioner Luke T. Squires - Public Health Practitioner Jack Davise - Public Health Strategist	Jill Warren - Deputy Team Leader (Development Planning), Planning & Public Protection Lauren Miller - Team Leader (Development Planning) Planning & Public Protection

Appendix 5: Romford Masterplan Actions in Response to the July 2024 HIA Recommendations.

Health Impacts of the RMP proposal were determined to be largely positive, and the areas identified as likely posing negative impacts can be addressed and mitigated.

The HIA recommended prioritising the 8 key areas below for action to improve the health aspects of the Romford area and enhance the identified positive impacts.

These recommendations were fed back into the drafting process of the Romford Masterplan and the actions below refer to the amendments or clarifications made in response.

1. Assess demand for healthcare services and set out how healthcare infrastructure will be provisioned including the ambulance station location in the proposed Bridge Close Development working in partnership with NHS

Action: New site identification: 7.4.5 Infrastructure projects. IDP Project Code ES01 (page 218) Romford Ambulance Deployment Centre referenced as a project for delivery as ongoing and under review. Timescales for delivery are not known as of August 2024.

2. Identify potential location for a secondary school and ensure educational needs of children within the area are met.

Action: RMP acknowledges that older children can be expected to travel independently to school, with limited opportunity for expansion of existing schools, from 2031 considering the estimated need, the Council is seeking to identify potential suitable sites in the central planning area. 5.7.2.6 Social Infrastructure, Schools. Page 107

3. Enhance open space and access to ensure safety and accessibility for all including women and the disabled.

Action: Inclusivity, health and wellbeing, Section 5.5. considers the spatial design and quality of shared places with regard to promotion of greater inclusivity, Overview: 5.3.1 Page 60 Liveable neighbourhoods and Underpasses; Social Infrastructure PR03, liveable Neighbourhoods - Community safety infrastructure p221. Text added: 4.3.1– now as Objective SL.3 (page 37) *Design safe, inclusive, clean, usable and engaging public spaces that are actively managed and take account of on-going management and maintenance requirements.*

4. Ensure the maintenance and management responsibilities of new open space is clarified and factored into development applications to retain the benefits

Action: Considered an important part of open space, Objective SL.3 *Design safe, inclusive, clean, usable and engaging public spaces that are actively managed and take account of on-going management and maintenance requirements.* Specific mention of maintenance access to the Rom Corridor is within the Green Strategy, 5.2.2.1, part 3*, in line with Policy 31 of the Havering Local Plan, and provide maintenance access to the river edge and any fluvial flood defences.*

5. Enhanced accessibility to buildings and places through the reprovision of public toilets, changing places and provision of cycle parking for accessible cycles

Action: Under section 5.5.2 Strategies, inclusive design 5.5.2.1 refers to *Inclusive design means designing places that take account of the entire community in order that everyone can participate in urban life equally, easily and confidently.* 4th Bullet point. *Secure provision of "changing places" facilities on public toilets.*

6. Identify childcare facilities to further maximise positive impacts of access to work

Action: Key Themes & Objectives 4.3.6 USES & MIX, Objective US7, page 42:

Ensure that the growth in housing and residential population is matched by additional necessary childcare, school places, health facilities and community space as part of mixed-use developments in locations that are accessible by walking and cycling and ensure that provision keeps pace with growth.
Within the Development Principles for Site Guidance, Rom Valley Way (6.6.3, page 152); Mercury (6.8.3, page 169); and 5.7.2.6 Social Infrastructure, uses and mix (Page 105), where a new nursery is planned as part of the proposed Bridge Close Development.

7. Enhance the positive impact of social cohesion through provision for voluntary and community sectors and additional space for civic functions

Action: Referenced in Site guidance 6.10 Civic Campus 6.10.21 Vision page182

8. Consider the provision of community gardens and food growing space to enhance access to healthy food

Action: Key Themes & Objectives. 4.3.4 Sustainability Objective S8, Page 39: *Promote local, shared food growing opportunities including small allotments, communal gardens and growing spaces within developments*.
Inclusivity, health and wellbeing. Overview. 5.5.2, Page 88: *Strategies Promoting development and projects that improve communities and places: Encouraging food growing opportunities.*
Inclusivity, health and wellbeing. 5.5.2.1, page 90. *Inclusive design Consider the provision of community gardens and food growing space to enhance access to healthy food.*

Next Steps
These amendments, plus any amendments forthcoming as a result of the public consultation, will be taken into account in a light touch review and completion of the Health Impact Assessment later this year, before adoption.

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Romford Town Centre Masterplan SPD

SEA and HRA

Finding of No Significant Effect Report

14/08/2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background

A team from consultants Maccreanor Lavington Architects has been commissioned by the London Borough of Havering (LBH) to prepare a Romford Town Centre Masterplan which will then be brought forward by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The key facts relating to the proposed SPD are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary

Name of Responsible Authority	The London Borough of Havering
Title of Plan	Romford Town Centre Masterplan (to become a Supplementary Planning Document)
Subject	Spatial planning guidance
Purpose	(i) To supplement an adopted Local Plan (2016- 2031) by providing guidance on the implementation of Policy 1 (Romford Strategic Development Area) and other relevant planning policies in the Local Plan. (ii) To inform future site allocations as and when the Local Plan is reviewed.
Timescale	The SPD will cover a longer period than the Local Plan, up to 2041.
Area covered by the Plan	Romford Strategic Development Area (SDA) (as defined in the emerging Local Plan 2016- 2031) although the SPD will focus on a core area of the town centre and surrounding area.
Summary of content	The SPD will set out planning guidance on: • Preferred locations for retail, commercial leisure, arts, housing and other uses; • Built form and character (including appropriate scale, height and form of development) • Greening, landscape and public realm; • Connectivity and movement; • Social infrastructure provision; • Inclusivity, health and well-being; • Economic, environmental and social sustainability; • Site specific guidance for sites, and • Potential delivery structures and arrangements.

This report confirms, after appropriate consultation with statutory consultees, that the Council has determind that the proposed SPD has been found to have no significant effects and therefore does not need to be the subject of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and then considers Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA).

Havering Local Plan 2016- 2031

The Havering Local Plan was adopted in 2021.

Policy 1 (Romford Strategic Development Area) sets out a detailed policy to support the delivery over the plan period of a minimum of 6,000 new high quality homes within the Romford SDA (at least 5,000 in the first 10-years), to strengthen Romford's role as a metropolitan centre, support proposals for further enhanced connectivity, to ensure that there is sufficient social infrastructure to support levels of growth envisaged and secure high-quality development.

Sustainability Appraisal

The Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Report[1] 2017 appraises five spatial options (with different housing numbers) against the SA themes/objectives. It chooses Spatial Option1 as the preferred spatial strategy for the Local Plan and gives reasons for doing so. Spatial Option 1 meets the London Plan target (1,170 dwellings pa to 2025), reflects current densities and includes 4,049 dwellings in the Romford SDA (between 2016 and 2031).

The Sustainability Appraisal Addendum (April 2020) that accompanied the proposed Main Modifications to the draft Local Plan (August 2020) concludes that proposed Main Modification 3, which sets out changes to Policy 1, including increasing the minimum number of homes to be delivered by 2031 from 5,300 to 6,000, is not likely to have a significant effect nor does it significantly affect the findings or conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal Report (August 2017).

An update of the Addendum considers the Further Main Modifications (2021) and concluded that:

The screening identified one Further Main Modification (FMM22, replacing MM22) as needing to be carried forward for further consideration through the SA process. This is given substantive changes to Local Plan Policy 24 (Parking Provision and Design).

The appraisal of this Further Main Modification found that it is unlikely to have a significant effect alone or significantly affect the findings presented in Chapter 8 of the Proposed Submission SA Report (2017) or those presented in the SA Report Addendum accompanying the Main Modifications (August 2020).

Romford Town Centre Masterplan SPD

The Council has prepared a Romford Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document. This identified the potential for between 10,900 and 12,000 additional dwellings over an extended period up to 2041.

[1] The Sustainability Appraisal incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment

2. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Background

European Union Directive 200142/EC requires an SEA to be undertaken for certain types of plans or programmes that could have significant environmental effects. The Directive has been transposed into law for England and Wales in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations). The purpose of SEA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the extent to which the plan will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.

Under Regulation 9 of the Regulations, the responsible authority is required to determine whether a plan or programme is likely to have significant environmental effects, and therefore whether an SEA is required. This process is called 'screening', and is undertaken using a specified set of criteria (set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations).

Before the responsible authority makes a formal determination, there is a requirement to consult three statutory consultation bodies designated in the regulations (Historic England, the Environment Agency & Natural England) on whether an environmental assessment is required. Sufficient information needs to be provided to the consultation bodies, so that they can take a view on the likely significant effects of implementing the plan. Once consulted, a determination can be made.

The Regulations require that the results of this process are set out in an SEA Screening Determination, which must be publicly available within 28 days of a decision. If the determination is 'negative' then a statement of reasons will need to be prepared to sit alongside the submission of the plan or programme. If the determination is 'positive' then an environmental report will need to be prepared to sit alongside the plan or programme.

In summary, the process is as follows:
1. Prepare a screening report;
2. Request a screening opinion from the consultation bodies in light of this report;
3. In light of their responses, determine whether the plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment (and therefore require SEA);
4. Prepare a publicly available SEA Screening Determination; and
5. The Plan or Programme needs to be accompanied by a Statement of Reasons as to why SEA is not needed (if the determination is negative) or an environmental report (if the determination is positive).

SEA and SPD

Regulation 5 of the SEA Regulations requires an environmental assessment of plans which:

> "1. are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use (Regulation 5, para. (2)(a), and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or II to

Council Directive 85/337/EEC (EIA Directive) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (Regulation 5, para. (2)(b)

2. in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) (Regulation 5, para. (3)

3. set the framework for future development consent of projects[2] (Regulation 5, para. (4)(b)

4. are determined to be likely to have significant environmental effects as determined under regulation 9(1) (Regulation 5, para. (4)(c)."

An environmental assessment need not be carried out for:

"a) plans which determine the use of a small area[3] at local level (Regulation 5, para. (6)(a); or

b) plans which are a minor modification11 to a plan or programme (Regulation 5, para. (6)(b) unless it has been determined under regulation 9(1) that the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects."

Planning Practice Guidance states[4] that:

"Supplementary planning documents do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan.

A strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level (see regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004), unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.

Before deciding whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority should take into account the criteria specified in schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and consult the consultation bodies."

[2] European Commission guidance states that plans and programmes which set the framework for future development consent of projects would normally contain 'criteria or conditions which guide the way a consenting authority decides an application for development consent'. Development consent is defined in the EIA Directive as "the decision of the competent authority or authorities which entitled the developer to proceed with the project" (Article 1(2) of the EIA Directive).

[3] European Commission guidance suggested that plans which determine the use of small areas at local level might include "a building plan which, for a particular, limited area, outlines details of how buildings must be constructed, determining, for example, their height, width or design"

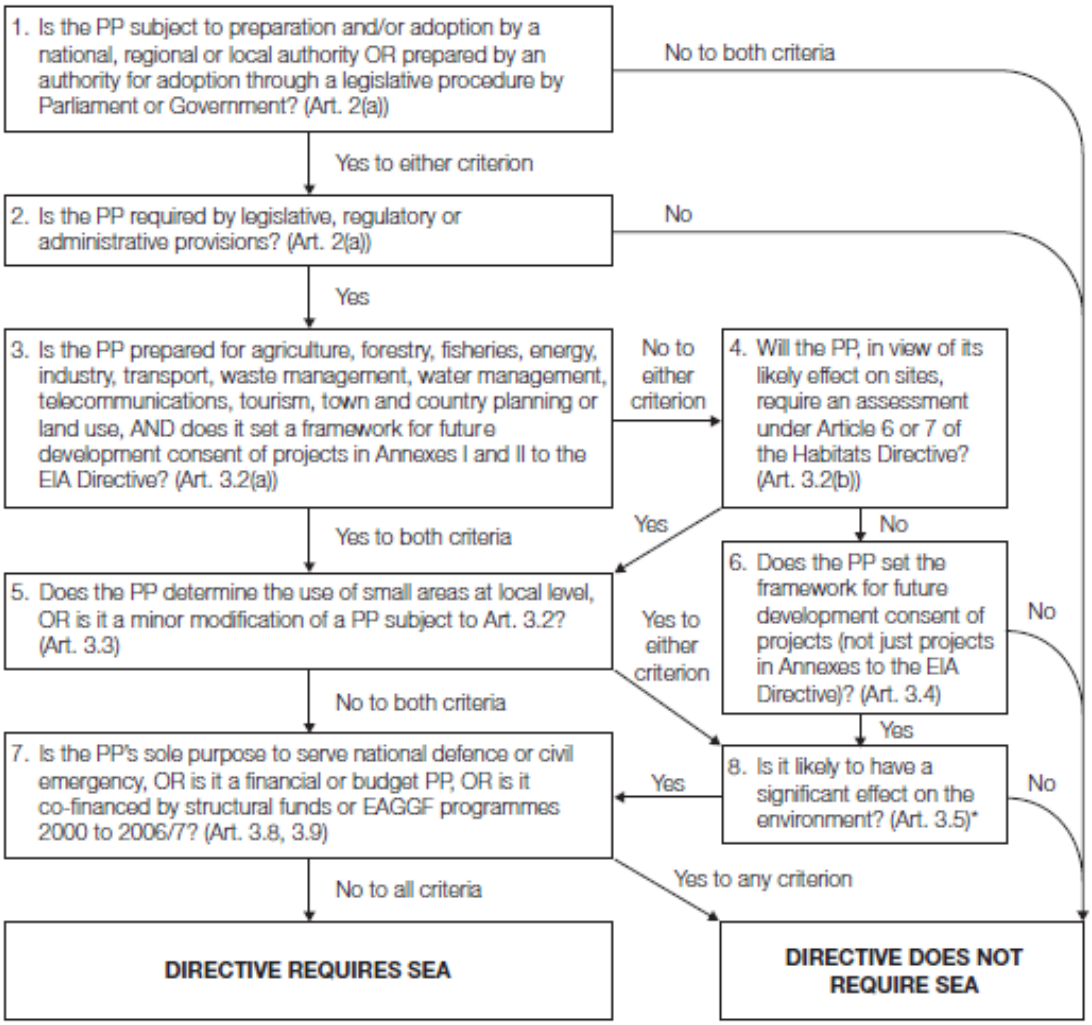
[4] Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 11-008-20140306 (Revision date: 06 03 2014)

The criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 are split into two categories: those relating to the characteristics of the plan and those to the characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected. These are set out in Appendix 1.

The Government's Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005) includes the following diagram illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether SEA is required.

Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

SEA CONCLUSION

The Council's assessment of the need for SEA against the criteria specified in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, providing a Statement of Reasons, is set out in Appendix 1.

The proposed Romford Town Centre Masterplan SPD cannot create new policies and will serve only to expand on existing policy within its 'parent' development plan, the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031), which has already been subject to SA incorporating SEA. The Council's assessment is that proposals in a Romford Town Centre Masterplan SPD are not likely to have significant environmental effects that have not been already assessed through the adopted Local Plan SA/SEA.

3. HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 require that:

> *"A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which—*
> *(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and*
> *(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site, must make an appropriate assessment of the implications for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives."*

This regulatory requirement is met by a process commonly referred to as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), which determines whether a plan or project would have significant adverse effects upon the integrity of internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance, known as European sites or European offshore marine sites.

The original submission version of the Local Plan was supported by an HRA (June 2017). This concluded that proposed development in the Havering Local Plan will not have a likely significant effect on any internationally designated site either alone or in combination and that no amendments to the Local Plan were required. Two addendums to the HRA that consider the Main Modifications (2020) and the further Main Modifications (2021) of the local plan reach the same conclusion.

Regulatory requirement for HRA

The Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) require that:

A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which—
(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and
(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site, must make an appropriate assessment of the implications for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

This regulatory requirement is met by a process commonly referred to as Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). The HRA Regulations do not specify any particular method of approach but its requirements are usually met via the three-stage process shown in the table below.

Stage	Task	Outcome
Stage 1: Screening	• Identification of potentially affected European sites and factors contributing to their integrity. • Review of other plans and projects. • Consideration of development plan and	• Where effects are unlikely, prepare a 'finding of no significant effect report'. • Where effects judged likely, or lack of information to prove otherwise, proceed to Stage 2.

Stage	Task	Outcome
	assessment of likely significant effects alone or in-combination.	
Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment (where Stage 1 does not rule out likely significant effects)	• Information gathering (development plan and European Sites). • Impact prediction. • Evaluation of development plan impacts in view of conservation objectives. • Where impacts are considered to affect qualifying features, identify and assess alternative development plan options. • If no alternatives exist, define and evaluate mitigation measures, where necessary.	• Appropriate assessment report describing the plan, European site baseline conditions, the adverse effects of the plan on the European site, how these effects will be avoided through, firstly, avoidance, and secondly, mitigation including the mechanisms and timescale for these mitigation measures. • If effects remain after all alternatives and mitigation measures have been considered proceed to Stage 3.
Stage 3: Assessment where no alternatives exist and adverse impacts remain taking into account mitigation	• Identify 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI). • Identify potential compensatory measures	• This stage should be avoided if at all possible. The test of IROPI and the requirements for compensation are extremely onerous.

Findings of HRA of Havering Local Plan (2016 – 2031)

The original submission version of the Havering Local Plan was supported by a Habitats Regulations Assessment (June 2017). This notes that there are no European sites that lie within Havering and that outside the borough, the nearest European sites are as follows:

- Epping Forest SAC located 6.5km to the north-west of Havering.
- Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site located 10km south east of Havering

The HRA gave preliminary consideration to the Thames Estuary and Marshes site, but concluded that it was too far from the borough to form part of its core regular recreational catchment and lies outside the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Zone of Influence charging area.

The HRA also considered Epping Forest SAC in relation to the Romford Masterplan area. The two main development pressures on Epping Forest SAC are recreational pressure and atmospheric pollution, both these issues are already considered to be

detrimental to the SAC. However, due to the distance between Epping Forest SAC and the nearest settlement within the borough, the HRA concluded that the increase in population in Havering is unlikely to significantly increase recreational pressure upon the SAC as the borough lies outside the core catchment of that SAC and has ample alternative semi-natural publicly accessible woodlands. In addition, emerging policies in the Havering Local Plan promote the provision of local green infrastructure and open spaces, providing locals with much closer recreational alternatives to Epping Forest SAC.

The HRA went on to conclude that considering the very small proportion of journeys to work that might involve traversing Epping Forest SAC, the initiatives Havering is introducing to either reduce the need to travel outside the borough to work or improve sustainable transport links and the context of expected improvements in background air quality over the Local Plan period, it is considered that the contribution of growth in Havering to vehicle flows (and thus changing air quality) through Epping Forest SAC will be negligible and thus would not contribute materially to any adverse effect in combination.

The Romford SDA is over 8km from the Epping Forest SAC at its nearest point, with multiple numbers of green open spaces in between. This distance is beyond the 6.2km 'Zone of Influence identified in Natural England's interim advice note dated 6 March 2019, which was based on the findings of a visitor survey which identified that 75% of visitors travelled up to 6.2Km to the SAC.

The Council's Habitats Regulations Assessment – Havering Local Plan: Main Modifications (April 2020) found that there are no likely significant effects associated with the proposed Main Modifications as there are no impact pathways connecting growth in Havering with European sites. This includes Main Modification 3 to Policy 1, which increases the minimum number of homes in the Romford SDA by 2031 from 5,300 to 6,000.

The HRA further considered the Main Modifications (June 2020) and the Further Main Modifications (June 2021) and reached the conclusion that:

Following the examination of the Main Modifications and Further Modifications it can be concluded that they will not lead to likely significant effects on European sites and do not undermine the conclusions of the HRA of the submitted in 2017. This is principally because the HRA of the submitted Local Plan was able to confirm that Havering was sufficiently remote from European sites that no realistic impact pathway existed linking development in Havering to effects on European sites.

Findings of HRA of the London Plan 2021

The London Plan and its HRA were consulted upon during winter 2017 and spring 2018. A small number of comments were received from Natural England. In addition, the GLA prepared a series of Minor Suggested Changes to the London Plan. As a result, a HRA Update was published in July 2018. This Update responds to the points raised by Natural England and the proposed modifications.

The London Plan 2021 is supported by a Habitats Regulations Assessment Modifications Update. It concluded that there are sufficient protective mechanisms in place to ensure that the growth objectives of the London Plan 2021 can be delivered without an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects

4. CONCLUSION

Havering Council has carried out a formal consultation of the key statutory stakeholders request a screening a opinion from the consultation bodies in light of the Screening Report. The stakeholders were:

- The Environment Agency;
- Historic England; and
- Natural England.

In light of their responses, which confirmed that the topics covered by this SPD have been addressed by the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Local Plan. In terms of the HRA, they agree with the conclusion of the screening request that a HRA is not required for this SPD.

The Council has therefore determined that the SPD does not require an HRA

This formal determination regarding the SEA and HRA will be published alongside the Romford Masterplan

5. OTHER ASSESSMENTS

Equalities and Health Impact Assessments

The original submission version of the Local Plan was supported by an Equalities Impact Assessment (March 2018) updated in 2019 and Health Impact Assessment (March 2018). Equalities and Health Impact Assessments are not legal requirements for an SPD and the Council does not intend to prepare such assessments for the Romford Town Centre Masterplan SPD.

Health Impact Assessment

A Health Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Romford Masterplan and being a dynamic, iterative document, its recommendations have fed into the draft Romford Masterplan. This will be published alongside the Masterplan during the formal public consultation process and finalised as a record of actions, upon adoption.

6. STATEMENT OF REASONS

AN ASSESSMENT OF LIKELIHOOD OF SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects (Schedule 1 of SEA Regulations	Significant effect?	LB Havering Initial assessment
Characteristics of the Romford Town Centre Masterplan SPD		
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	No	The SPD will supplement policies in an adopted Havering Local Plan (2016-2031), particularly Policy 1, which sets out detailed policy requirements for the Romford SDA. Romford is identified as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan 2021 and the SPD will also help implement London Plan 2021 Policy SD1 (Opportunity Areas) and other relevant London plan policies. The scope of proposed guidance is set out in Table 1 above. It cannot and will not set out additional planning policy.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	The Romford master planning work will influence future site allocations for the Romford SDA which are likely to be taken forward through an immediate update, agreed with the Planning Inspector, of the Local Plan. However, this Plan will be subject to SA/SEA in due course.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	Yes	The SPD will provide guidance on how best to implement relevant Local Plan and London Plan 2021 policies to ensure high-quality, environmentally sensitive and sustainable development.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	No	Environmental issues were taken into account when identifying the Romford SDA as an area for growth within the Local Plan and as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan 2021.
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of [European] Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	No	The SA (as revised) of the Local Plan (2016-2031) has considered the likely environmental impacts of growth over the plan period up to 2031 (informed by Havering Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Havering Local Plan (2016-2031).
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected		

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects (Schedule 1 of SEA Regulations	Significant effect?	LB Havering Initial assessment
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	No	The SPD cannot set new policy and will supplement Policy 1, which calls for 'at least' 6,000 homes. Despite the increases in expected housing growth likely to be identified in the SPD, it is not apparent that significant environmental effects are likely over and above those considered through the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031) Sustainability Appraisal and its Addendum.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	No	It is not apparent that significant environmental effects are likely over and above those considered through the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031) SA and its Addendum.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects	No	It is not apparent that significant environmental effects are likely over and above those considered through the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031) SA and its Addendum.
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	No	It is not apparent that significant risks are likely over and above those considered through the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031) SA and its Addendum.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	No	The existing residential population of the SDA is approx. 29,000[5]. The level of growth expected to be promoted in an SPD could lead to an additional 24,000 to 26,585 people living in Romford by 2041.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to— (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, or (iii) intensive land-use	No	The SDA includes the Romford Conservation Area and a number of statutory and locally listed buildings. The SPD will help manage development so that it preserves and enhances character and appearance. It is not apparent that significant environmental effects are likely over and above those considered through the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031) Sustainability Appraisal and its Addendum and the London Plan and its Integrated Impact Assessment.

[5] ONS small area population estimates 2017 for the 15 Lower Super Output Areas included or partly included in the Romford SDA.

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects (Schedule 1 of SEA Regulations	Significant effect?	LB Havering Initial assessment
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.		Havering includes the following Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): Hornchurch Cutting, Inner Thames Marshes and Ingrebourne Marshes. There is also Hainault Forest SSSI (in LB Redbridge), Purfleet Marshes SSSI (in Thurrock) and the Epping Forest SAC (in Essex). The distances from the SAC and these areas and the intervening urban areas and nearer outdoor recreational space means that development in the SAC is unlikely to cause significant additional recreational pressure and/or atmospheric pollution.

Romford Masterplan Statutory Consultation – Proposed Consultation Questions

Q1. Do you have any comments on the Vision for Romford?

Q2. Do you have any comments on the Masterplan objectives?

The masterplan covers a number of key themes (Chapter 5), the questions below relate to these themes.

Q3. Do you have any comments on the Space and Landscape?

Q4. Do you have any comments on Movement and Connectivity?

Q5. Do you have any comments on Sustainability?

Q6. Do you have any comments on Inclusivity, Health and Wellbeing?

Q7. Do you have any comments on Character and Townscape?

Q8. Do you have any comments on Uses and Mix?

Q9. Do you have any comments on The Economy?

The Masterplan sets out site guidance for a number of key areas (Chapter 6), the questions below relate to the site guidance.

Q10. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for Market Place?

Q11. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for St Edwards Way?

Q12. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for Brewery?

Q13. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for Station Gateway?

Q14. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for Rom Valley?

Q15. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for Liberty?

Q16. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for Mercury?

Q17. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for North Street?

Q18. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for Civic Campus?

Q19. Do you have any comments on the site guidance for Crow Lane?

Q20. Do you have any further comments?

Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

CABINET

Subject Heading:	**Housing Services – Hate Crime Policy (2024)**
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Paul McGeary – Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
ELT Lead:	Neil Stubbings, Strategic Director, Place
Report Author and contact details:	Joe Agius, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer Telephone: 01708 434046 email: Joe.agius@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	This policy sets out the Council's position in relation to the behaviour of its tenants and leaseholders with regard to Hate Crime. It is required by the Housing Regulator as a stand-alone policy, and aligns with other, relevant Council Housing policies, such Domestic Abuse (2024) and Anti-social Behaviour (2024).
Financial summary:	No financial implications.
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes, because it will have a significant effect on two or more Wards.

When should this matter be reviewed?	Annually, to ensure it continues to comply with legislative or regulatory requirements.
Reviewing OSC:	To be reviewed by the O&S Board.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well	[]
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy	**X**
Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council	[]

SUMMARY

This report explains the legal definition of Hate Crime; the numerous forms of Hate Crime and the measures – both legislatively and by Havering Council – currently in place to deal with the perpetrators of hate crime, regardless of whether they are tenants, leaseholders, staff or representatives of the Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The safety of residents and the reputation of the Council would benefit from clearly declaring and communicating our position concerning Hate Crime; defining the consequences for the perpetrators and the support available to victims/witnesses.

Cabinet are recommended to approve this policy.

REPORT DETAIL

Hate Crime is a growing problem both nationally - and in Havering, given its rapidly changing demographics.

This new Housing-specific policy explains:

1. The purpose, aims, scope and legal context of the policy;
2. Defines the term 'Hate Crime';
3. Explains the numerous forms of Hate Crime;
4. Explains how to report Hate Crime;
5. Explains how Housing Services deals with reports of Hate Crime;
6. The consequences for perpetrators of Hate Crime; and
7. The support available to victims.

This policy has been produced in partnership with a range of internal and external expert partners.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision to approve this policy are to:

- Meet the current requirements of the Housing Regulator;
- Meet current legislative and regulatory requirements;
- State Havering Council commitment to combat/reduce hate crime, incorporating recognised good practice elsewhere;
- Assure Havering residents that the Council takes Hate Crime seriously and has robust mechanisms in place to help combat/reduce such behaviour; and
- Inform victims and witnesses about the various support options currently available, including how to contact those specialist agencies.

Other options considered:

- **No action**
  Hate Crime divides communities. Saying nothing and not having a policy in place for this specialist crime is ethically wrong and presents the Council in a poor light. It also makes victims feel that the Council doesn't take such crime seriously.

- **Allow councillors to represent their views in the absence of Council-agreed guidance**
  Not having a policy would expose councillors and the Council to unnecessary and avoidable challenge, such as via resident complaints, FOI requests, press enquiries, etc., and damage the reputation of the Council.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing financial resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

Legal implications and risks:
There are no immediate legal implications arising from this Report.

Human Resources implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing HR resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

IT implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing I.T. resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion implications and risks:
This policy does not differentiate and applies equally across the entire population, as stated in Section 8 (Equal Opportunities statement) of this policy and further detailed in the accompanying Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA).

Health and Wellbeing:
None. This policy will, if anything, help to improve the health and wellbeing of Havering residents.

Environmental and Climate Change
None. There will be no negative impact on climate change. This policy will, if anything, help to improve the environment by helping to make Havering a better, safer place to live, work and visit.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Hate Crime Policy (2024)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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Housing Services
Hate Crime Policy (2024)

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1. Introduction

1.1 - Purpose of this Policy

Housing Services condemns all forms of hate crime.

Housing Services has an important role in both a) reducing incidences of Hate Crime within the borough, and b) providing appropriate support to tenants who fall victim to hate crime.

This policy recognises that hate crime is not restricted to any specific group of people and it is therefore important to ensure that appropriate service support is in place to assist victims of hate crime.

Housing Services will seek to ensure our services are adequately publicised, offered and delivered in line with good practice and relevant legislation.

1.2 - Aims of this Policy

This policy aims to:

- ensure that our service meets the housing needs of those experiencing hate crime;
- ensure that Housing Services support is appropriate to the needs of the individual, and in line with good practice to provide secure and safe accommodation;
- outline our responsibilities and the support that is available to people who are experiencing hate crime;
- raise awareness of the issue across our whole workforce and enable relevant employees to provide appropriate support.

This policy also helps explain how we will hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour in such a way that not only acts as a future deterrent for them, but also a deterrent to potential perpetrators.

1.3 - Scope of this Policy

The changing demographics of the borough means that Havering is becoming increasingly diverse. Consequently, Housing Services will be prepared to deal with a potential increase in Hate Crime.

The scope of this policy defines how Havering's Housing Services will manage any reported incidents of hate crime reported to us. This includes incidents reported by staff, the public or victims themselves.

Our approach to associated issues such as Anti-social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and the terms and conditions relating to our Tenancy Agreements is detailed within separate, but relevant, policies. Please visit our website - Havering.gov.uk - for further information.

The Council will use all available powers and resources to deal effectively with any reported hate motivated incident; whether the victim/group suffering harassment or if the perpetrator is a tenant of Housing Services.

We will treat leaseholders in exactly the same way as tenants in the application of this policy.

For homeowners or those in privately rented accommodation, we will refer them to the Safer Neighbourhood Police Team. We may also refer cases to a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) if the victim lives within their management area.

1.4 - Legal context of this policy

The policy takes into account the following legal and regulatory requirements:

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Housing Act 1985 and 1996
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)2010
- Protection of Freedom Act 2012
- Mayor of London ‘s Hate Crime Reduction Strategy 2014
- The Care Act 2014
- Anti-social Behaviour crime and policing Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- Public sector equality duty (PSED)
- The European Convention on Human Rights
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Criminal Justice Act (2003)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities(2008)
- The Autism Act 2009
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014

2. What is Hate Crime?

The law recognises five types of hate crime[1] on the basis of:

- Race
- Religion
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Transgender identity

Any crime can be prosecuted as a hate crime if the offender has:

- demonstrated hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity, or
- been motivated by hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity

Someone can be a victim of **more than one** type of hate crime.

The police and the CPS have agreed the following definition for identifying and flagging hate crimes:

"Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity."

There is no legal definition of the word ‘hostility’, so the everyday understanding of the word is used, which includes ill will, spite, contempt, prejudice, unfriendliness, antagonism, resentment and dislike.

[1] Crown Prosecution Service

3. Categories of Hate Crime

3.1 - Race

The most recorded form of hate crime in Havering is racially based.

These groups comprise people of colour and include refugees, asylum seekers and Gypsy/Travellers.

There is specific legislation around racially aggravated offences that provide capacity for enhanced sentencing at prosecution stage.

3.2 - Religion

A religious or faith related incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be based prejudice towards or hatred of the faith of the victim (or perceived as such by the victim or any other person).

This policy refers to all religions and recognises that some people have no religious belief. Equality of religious belief relates to stopping discrimination on the grounds of religious belief. This includes, but is not limited to, anti-Semitism (discrimination against Jews), Islamophobia (discrimination against Muslims) and sectarianism (discrimination within faiths, usually referring to Christian faiths) and discrimination against Hindus.

We recognise that as well as racism there is a level of religious prejudice and intolerance in society. There is general lack of knowledge about different religions and ignorance feeds fears and prejudice.

It is sometimes argued that religious discrimination is different from other types of discrimination in that religion is a matter of choice. However, religious identity is often not chosen and even where individuals choose to leave their tradition they may still be seen as belonging to their original roots.

The Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006) created the new offence of 'stirring up hatred against persons on religious grounds'. Offences apply to the use of words, behaviour, or display of written material, publishing or distributing written material, public performance or broadcasting.

3.3 - Disability

The Equality Act 2010 generally defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Equality Act includes special rules that ensure people with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people effectively from the point of diagnosis, rather than from the point when the condition has some adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The definition of disability hate crime would include anyone who was targeted because of his/her disability or impairment, as defined by the Act. This includes hidden disabilities such as epilepsy, diabetes and those with HIV status.

In addition, the Equality and Human Rights commission has made recommendations specifically for housing providers to address disability-related harassment and abuse.

Housing Services will investigate reports of anti-social behaviour to establish if vulnerable people have been targeted because of their disability. We will support the victim to sustain their tenancy and deal with abusers. This may include serving an injunction, re-housing, securing the property to prevent entry, Police intervention or arrest.

People are often targeted because they are disabled. This is hate crime and should be reported as such. So-called 'mate crime' is when people are befriended or groomed for exploitation and abuse.

If a perpetrator of hate crime is suffering from a mental health condition or a learning difficulty, we will establish capacity before making an application to court and will ensure they receive access to an advocate to act on their behalf.

We will work with our colleagues in Adult Social Care and from the voluntary sector to signpost residents to the appropriate advocacy services.

3.4 - Sexual Orientation

Homophobia is an irrational fear and dislike of people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB).

Homophobic attitudes can impact upon anyone who is perceived to be lesbian, or gay. It could impact on someone who has association with the gay community or it can impact on a person who does not conform to stereotypical expectations of masculine or feminine behaviour.

A seemingly low-level homophobic incident can have a devastating effect on an individual. LGB harassment and incidents occur regardless of age, and can affect both young and older people.

3.5 - Transgender Identity

Transphobia is an irrational fear and dislike of people who identify themselves as Transgender. It is often linked to homophobic hate as it is partially motivated by an assumption that transgender people are always lesbians or gay but this is not necessarily the case.

Many people from the LGBT communities avoid disclosing their sexuality to family, neighbours, colleagues etc. because they fear negative consequences. This sometimes means that they are reluctant to report homophobic/transphobic abuse to the police/others. We will support victims by contacting them and relating to them in a way that builds their confidence in the process and is in accordance with their wish.

If a victim is unable to cope and may become homeless or driven away by relentless abuse, we will make a referral for support and practical advice to an appropriate agency.

We recognise that each time a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person has to inform someone of their sexuality it can be the same as them 'coming out' for the first time. This process may leave the person feeling vulnerable while they are awaiting the response from us. Housing Services will remain mindful and careful not to 'out' the person experiencing the harassment; maintaining and upholding the principals of confidentiality.

3.6 - Multiple Oppression

We recognise that there are differences within all equalities communities and nobody should be defined by a single part of their identity. Individuals who are members of two or more communities may face 'layers' of oppression. For example, people with a disability can also be women, black, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. The effect of this oppression will vary depending on the social, cultural, economic and political situation.

For example, black gay men experience a complicated combination of racism, homophobia within wider society but can also be discriminated against in different ways within their own black and minority ethnic and lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender communities.

Prejudice within communities often denies individuals cultural and emotional support and may lead to an increased sense of isolation. While recognising layers of oppression, we reject the concept of a 'hierarchy' of oppression. An individual's experience of inequality is no more significant if he or she is a member of many communities.

4. Dealing with Hate Crime

4.1 - Victim of Hate Crime

If you've experienced something that you think it was a single action motivated by prejudice based on any of the characteristics mentioned above, it is considered and classified to be a 'hate crime'.

4.2 - Multiple/Sustained Hate Crime

This is considered and classified as being persistent hate behaviour undertaken by the perpetrator.

4.3 - How to report a Hate Crime

a) If the Hate Crime is perpetrated by **a Council tenant**, please use the following contact details to inform the Council:

- Telephone (9am-5pm, Mondays to Fridays): 01708 432824

- Telephone (after office hours/other times): 01708 433999
- Email: housing.solutions@havering.gov.uk

In the 'Subject' box of the email, please write 'Hate Crime Report' so that it is received by the correct team.

Housing Services recognises that confidentiality needs to be kept for the safety of anyone experiencing hate crime. We will only ever involve other agencies or share information in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and where:

- We are required by law to share the information; or
- The information is necessary for the protection of children

b) - If the Hate Crime is perpetrated by a **non-Council tenant**, the matter should be reported to the police on:

- 999 (if it is happening in real time and anyone is in danger), or
- 101 (if it is after the event and everyone is safe)

Find out how to call the police when you lack sufficient privacy and can't speak.

5. How Housing Services deals with reports of Hate Crime

5.1 – Report receipt

- Where the victim has experienced a physically violent hate crime attack, we will contact them within one working day and arrange to see them at a location where they feel safe to discuss/agree an action plan to resolve the issue.
- For other incidents of hate crime, we will acknowledge their report in writing within five working days, setting out a timetable for investigating and responding to the report;

- If the victim requests a discussion with an officer, we will make an arrangement to meet with them and notify them within ten working days of their request.

  This might take place at the victim's home (in which case, care must be taken to protect the anonymity of the victim), at the Council's office or by telephone.

5.2 – The Investigation Process

Before any contact is made with the alleged perpetrator, preliminary investigations must be carried out to ensure that there is truth behind the allegations.
Where preliminary investigations indicate that a report of a hate crime may be justified, a Housing officer will write to the identified perpetrator to notify them of the allegation; remind them of the terms and conditions of their

tenancy/leasehold and, where appropriate, invite them to a meeting to discuss the allegation.

Any counter allegation by the perpetrator will be investigated and taken into account.

The Housing officer will consider all available, relevant information before making a final assessment.

If further investigation is needed, the Housing officer will ensure that both the victim and the perpetrator are informed and given an indication of the likely time for the investigation to be completed. This will exclude circumstances where further action at the time of notification may prejudice another investigation.

When all of the necessary information has been gathered and considered, the Housing officer will make a decision on whether the report is justified and will notify the victim and perpetrators, in writing, accordingly.

If either party is unhappy with the outcome of the investigation, or about the action taken as a result, they will be invited to meet the relevant Housing officer.

6. The consequences for perpetrators of Hate Crime

In some circumstances when the hate crime attack has been violent, persistent in nature or followed by continued threats of violence, it may not always be appropriate to contact the alleged perpetrator directly; and the matter will be referred to Court.

However, whenever possible, we will offer to refer the perpetrator to appropriate support agencies such as Social Services, their GP, floating support services or a Drug and Alcohol support group.

If the perpetrator refuses our support and does not modify their behaviour/engage with us, we will take further action by reviewing the continued sustainability of their tenancy agreement. This could result in the perpetrator being re-housed in a similarly sized accommodation outside the borough.

In all cases, we will take firm, prompt and appropriate action against the perpetrators of hate crime which may result in their eviction from our properties.

7. Additional support for victims of Hate Crime

There are a number of support groups that can offer support for victims:

- Stop Hate UK (Opens in new tab) is available 24 hours a day and can offer confidential support and information for victims of any hate crime. Call 0800 138

1625. Information about reporting hate crime is available in English and 32 community languages upon request to Stop Hate UK.

- CATCH (Opens in new tab) is an advocacy service for people facing hate crime in London. It focuses on working with people in the highest levels of risk, impact and need. CATCH is a service for people over 18 years old.
  Victim Support supports all victims of crime. Call 0808 168 9111.

- GALOP (LGBT Helpline) The GALOP Helpline can offer you emotional support, provide information and can help you to explore your options, depending on your needs. Call 0800 999 5428 or email help@galop.org.uk.
  Support Line can offer emotional support to any individual on any issue.

  Call 01708 765200 or email info@supportline.org.uk.

8. Staff Training

Well-trained staff are key to delivering the aims set out in this policy. Recognising hate crime and the Council's principles and procedures for responding to it will be covered in inductions for new officers, and regular "refreshers" will be scheduled.

Regular, ongoing training will also ensure that staff are up-to-date on new legislation and best practice. We will ensure that staff have access to trauma-informed training and bystander training whenever appropriate, with staff wellbeing being a key consideration.

Unconscious bias training will also be made available to ensure that the important intersections with other inequalities and disproportionalities are well-understood by officers.

9. Equal opportunities statement

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

(i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
(ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
(iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.
Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the

Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) has been carried out and accompanies this policy.

The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

The Council will seek to ensure that this policy is, at all times, implemented in a manner that is fair to all sections of the local community.

All applicants for housing or re-housing will be invited to indicate if they wish to make use of the Council's translation and interpretation services, or if they require additional services to enable them to access and understand the policy to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in any way.

They also will be invited to provide details of ethnic origin, sexuality, disability and other equalities information. Provision of this information is not obligatory or a requirement for acceptance of an application.

However, such information will help monitor the number and types of protected characteristics requiring hostel support, and will help ensure that service improvement evolves in line with any changing local needs.

Equalities records will be kept and monitored to ensure hostel accommodations are offered and allocated fairly. This policy will be regularly reviewed ensure it is not operated in any way that could discriminate or disadvantage against any particular group of people.

All information provided will be kept confidential and treated with respect at all times.

10. Data Protection statement

Havering Council takes personal privacy matters very seriously and will never share the individual's personal data without their prior knowledge, unless required to do so by law.

For full details about how the Council protects personal data, please visit Havering Council Data Protection policy.

11. Dissemination and communication of this policy

Housing Services will consult with all affected stakeholders, directly or indirectly, to ensure this policy fulfils its purpose to be clear and transparent.

This policy will be made available internally and externally in hard copy and electronic versions, as well as various formats – such as easy read, multi-lingual, braille and audio - upon request.

12. Implementation of this policy

This policy will take effect from September 2024.

Responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy will be with Havering Council's Assistant Director of Housing Operations.

13. Monitoring and review of this policy

In the interests of continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant, up-to-date and fit-for-purpose for the Council and the residents of Havering.

14. Delegated authority to make minor changes to this policy

The Assistant Director of Housing Operations, in consultation with the Director of Property and Housing, will be able to approve minor amendments; i.e. amendments that do not significantly change this policy or associated procedures.

Housing Services
Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	Hate Crime Policy (2024)
Author	Joe Agius, Policy and Strategy Officer
Lead officer:	Katri Wilson - Assistant Director, Housing Operations
Approved by:	Paul Walker, Director of Housing and Property
Date completed:	15/08/24

Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy & Diversity team?	No
Does the EqHIA contain Did you seek advice from the any confidential or exempt information that would Public Health team? prevent you publishing it on the Council's website? (Yes/No)	No

About your activity

1	**Title of activity**	Hate Crime Policy (2024)		
2	**Type of activity**	Policy		
3	**Scope of activity**	Applies to all internal and external customers		
4a	**Does the activity constitute a new document, or does it change an existing one?**	New	If the answer to **ANY** of these questions is YES: Please continue to **5** below.	If the answer to **ALL** of these questions is NO: Please continue to **6** below.
4b	**Does this activity have the potential to impact upon people with any of the following 9 protected characteristics listed in the EqHIA form?**	Yes		
4c	**Does the activity have the potential to impact upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?**	Yes		

If answered YES to any of the questions in 4 (b) or (c) above, please continue to Section 2 and complete the EqHIA form.

Completed by:	Joe Agius, Policy and Strategy Officer - Housing Services
Date:	15/08/24

PART 1 – Overview

Background
This new, Housing policy explains: a) the legal definition of Hate Crime; b) the numerous forms of Hate Crime and c) the measures (both legislatively and locally by Havering Council) in place to deal with perpetrators, regardless of whether they are tenants, leaseholders, staff or representatives of the Council.

PART 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

Protected Characteristic: AGE

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all age groups.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:

Age 0-14: 49,400 (18.9%)
Age 15-64: 166,700 (63.6%)
Age 65+: 46,200 (17.6%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: DISABILITY

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all levels of ability.

Supporting evidence:

- 15.3% of Havering residents have disabilities, similar to London (15.6%) but lower than England (17.7%)

There were disparities in disability prevalence within Havering. There were nearly three times more households with a disabled person in Harold Hill East (1,605 households) compared to Emerson Park (596 households).

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: SEX/GENDER

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all forms of sex/gender.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Identifying as male: 126,384 (48.2%)
Identifying as female: 135,688 (51.8%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: ETHNICITY/RACE

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of ethnicity/race.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: 28,150 (10.7%)
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: 21,567 (8.2%)
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: 9.747 (3.7%)
White: 197,314 (75.3%)
Other: 5,274 (2.0%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: RELIGION/FAITH

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of religion/faith.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of faith/faith appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

Christian: 136,765 (52.2%)
Buddhist: 1,092 (0.4%)
Hindu: 6,454 (2.5%)
Jewish: 1,305 (0.5%)
Muslim: 16.135 (6.2%)
Sikh: 4,498 (1.7%)
Other: 1.056 (0.4%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: SEXUAL ORIENTATION

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all forms of sexual orientation.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of sexual orientation/appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

Protected Characteristic: GENDER REASSIGNMENT

OVERALL IMPACT

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of gender reassignment.

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

Protected Characteristic: MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of marriage/civil partnerships.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of their co-habitual arrangement. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Married/in a registered civil partnership: 98,547 (47.0%)
Never married/been in a registered or civil partnership: 77,340 (36.9%)
Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership: 4,081 (1.9%)
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved: 16,411 (7.8%)
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner: 13,414 (6.4%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: **PREGNANCY, MATERNITY & PATERNITY**

OVERALL IMPACT		**ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY**
Positive		This policy applies across all pregnancy, maternity and paternity status.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

PART 3 – Health & Wellbeing Impact Assessment

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

OVERALL IMPACT *A***SSESSEMENT** **SUMMARY**		
Positive		This policy applies to all socio-economic levels and, through its implementation, is likely to further protect individuals regardless of their socio-economic status.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

As part of the 2021 Census, households were classified in terms of dimensions of deprivation based on selected household characteristics. Specifically, households were considered to be deprived if they met one or more of the following four dimensions of deprivation:

- Employment: where any member of a household, who is not a full-time student, is either unemployed or long-term sick;
- Education: where no person in the household has 5+ GCSE passes or equivalent, and nobody aged 16-18 years is a full-time student;
- Health and disability: where any person in the household has general health that is "bad" or "very bad" or is identified as disabled, and
- Housing: where the household's accommodation is either overcrowded, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating

From 2011 to 2021, the proportion of households in Havering experiencing at least one dimension of deprivation has increased by 4% (1250 households).

However the proportion of households experiencing multiple dimensions of deprivation has decreased (source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2011 & 2021).

According to the Census, compared to the London (51.9%) and England (51.6%) average Havering has a marginally higher proportion of households living in deprivation (52.7%).

Households deprived in one dimension are located in Harold Hill East, Hornchurch, South Hornchurch, Rainham West and Rainham East & Wennington.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

OVERALL IMPACT		**ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY**
Positive		This policy applies universally and through its implementation, is likely to protect/improve the health and wellbeing of the community.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

83.0% of residents (219,777) reported having ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health, which is higher than 81.9% in London and 81.7% in England.

There were disparities in self-reported health status across neighbourhoods in Havering.

Communities located towards the North of the borough (Harold Hill East, Dagnam Park & Noak Hill and Havering-atte-Bower & Chase Cross) reported poorer health, with Ardleigh Green and Upminster areas reporting better health.

Source: ONS/Census 2021

4. Review

This EqHIA will be reviewed in line with this policy’s review date, unless significant changes to this policy which affect the validity of this EqHIA take place in the meantime.

AUTHOR’S NAME AND JOB TITLE: Joe Agius, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer

DATE: 15/08/24

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Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

CABINET

Subject Heading:	**Housing Services – Domestic Abuse policy (2024)**
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Paul McGeary – Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
ELT Lead:	Neil Stubbings, Strategic Director, Place
Report Author and contact details:	Joe Agius, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer Telephone:01708 434046 email: Joe.agius@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	This policy sets out the Council's position in relation to Domestic Abuse conducted or suffered by its tenants and leaseholders. It is required by the Social Housing Regulator as a stand-alone policy, and aligns with other, relevant Council Housing policies, such Hate Crime (2024) and Anti-Social Behaviour (2024).
Financial summary:	No financial implications.
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes, because it will have a significant effect on two or more Wards.

When should this matter be reviewed?	Annually, to ensure it continues to comply with legislative or regulatory requirements.
Reviewing OSC:	To be reviewed by the O&S Board.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well	[]
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy	**X**
Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council	[]

SUMMARY

This report explains the legal definition of the terms used in this policy; what constitutes Domestic Abuse and the measures – both legislatively and by Havering Council – currently in place to deal with the perpetrators of Domestic Abuse, regardless of whether they are tenants, leaseholders, staff or representatives of the Council.

It also sets out the rehabilitative support for perpetrators and support for victims of Domestic Abuse.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The safety of residents and the reputation of the Council would benefit from clearly declaring and communicating our position concerning Domestic Abuse.

Cabinet are requested to approve this policy.

REPORT DETAIL

Domestic Abuse is a persistent problem both nationally - and in Havering.

This new Housing-specific policy explains:

1. The purpose, aims, scope and legal context of the policy;
2. Defines the Domestic Abuse associated terms used in this policy;
3. Explains how to report Domestic Abuse;
4. Explains how Housing Services deals with reports of Domestic Abuse;
5. The consequences for perpetrators of Domestic Abuse; and
6. The support available to victims.

The proposed policy has been produced in partnership with a range of internal and external expert partners.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision to approve this policy are to:

- Meet the current requirements of the Social Housing Regulator;
- Meet current legislative and regulatory requirements;
- State Havering Council commitment to combat/reduce domestic abuse, incorporating recognised good practice elsewhere;
- Assure Havering residents that the Council takes domestic abuse seriously and has robust mechanisms in place to help combat/reduce such behaviour; and
- Inform victims and witnesses about the various support options currently available; including how to contact those specialist agencies.

Other options considered:

- **No action**
  Saying nothing and not having a policy in place for this specialist crime would be ethically wrong and present the Council in a poor light. It would also make victims feel that the Council does not take such crime seriously.

- **Allow councillors to represent their views in the absence of Council-agreed guidance**
  Not having a policy would expose councillors and the Council to unnecessary and avoidable challenge, such as via resident complaints, FOI requests, press enquiries, etc., and damage the reputation of the Council.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing financial resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

Legal implications and risks:
The Housing Service's activities to support survivors and victims of domestic abuse are supported primarily by the following legislation:

> ***The Housing Act 1996***, which established it is not reasonable for a person to continue to occupy accommodation if it is probable that this will lead to violence or domestic abuse against them or someone with whom they usually reside or might reasonably be expected to reside.
>
> ***The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017***, which sets out the Council's new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness.
>
> ***The Domestic Abuse Act 2021***, which sets out the new definition of domestic abuse and established that people made homeless due to being a victim of domestic abuse have an automatic priority need for homelessness assistance.
>
> There are no immediate legal implications arising from this Report and approving the policy would contribute towards the discharge of the Council's statutory duties.

Human Resources implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing HR resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

IT implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing I.T. resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion implications and risks:
This policy does not differentiate and applies equally across the entire population, as stated in Section 8 (Equal Opportunities statement) of this policy and further detailed in the accompanying Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA).

Health and Wellbeing implications and risks:
None. This policy will, if anything, help to improve the health and wellbeing of Havering residents.

Environmental and Climate Change implications and risks:
None. There will be no negative impact on climate change. This policy will, if anything, help to improve the environment by helping to make Havering a better, safer place to live, work and visit.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Domestic Abuse Policy (2024)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Housing Services
Domestic Abuse policy (2024)

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14. **Delegated authority to make minor changes to this policy**

1. Introduction

1.1 - Purpose of this policy

Housing Services has an important role to play in helping to reduce the instances of domestic abuse in Havering.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Housing Service has appropriate measures in place to combat domestic abuse in Council homes and support victims who approach us for help and assistance.

Housing Services will seek to ensure that it is able to assist, support and, insofar as possible, meet victims' needs fairly, appropriately and consistently, in line with best practice and in full compliance with relevant regulatory guidelines and legislative requirements.

1.2 - Aims of this policy

This policy aims to:

- ensure that the service meets the housing needs of those experiencing domestic abuse;
- ensure that Housing Services response is appropriate to the needs of the individual and in line with good practice to provide secure and safe accommodation;
- outline our responsibilities and the support that is available to people who are experiencing domestic abuse;
- ensure that those who have experienced domestic abuse are treated with respect and sensitivity by well-trained council officers

- raise awareness of the issue across our whole workforce, and within other Council services that engage directly with our customers, and enable relevant employees to provide appropriate support, and
- secure DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) accreditation.

This policy sets out how Housing Services will hold to account existing abusers, and provides a clear deterrent to potential future abusers.

1.3 - Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all Council residents and Housing Services staff.

Whilst the delivery of this policy may vary across various service areas within Housing Services and Council residents, the spirit and objectives remain the same.

1.4 - Legal context of this policy
Housing Services recognises and acknowledges its legal duties and obligations under legislation relating to domestic abuse:

This policy takes into account the following legal and regulatory requirements:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance framework
- Housing Act 1996 (parts v1 and v11) and Homelessness Act 2002
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Localism Act 2011
- Family Law Act 1996
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Children's Act 1989
- Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- GDPR Act 2018
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006
- Tackling Violence against Women's and Girls strategy 2021
- Havering MARAC protocol
- Housing Allocations Policy
- Temporary Accommodation Allocations Policy
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Forced Marriage Act 2007
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022

2. Background

2.1- Definitions

- **Domestic Abuse**

  The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (the 'Act') defines domestic abuse (DA) as the behaviour of a person ("A" – the perpetrator of domestic abuse) towards another person ("B" – the victim/recipient of domestic abuse) where:

  a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
  b) The behaviour is abusive.

- **Abusive Behaviour**

  Under the Act Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following:

  a) Physical or sexual abuse;
  b) Violent or threatening behaviour;
  c) Controlling or coercive behaviour;
  d) Economic abuse
  e) Psychological, emotional or other abuse and it does not matter whether the abusive behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

- **Economic abuse**

  Economic abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to:

  - acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
  - obtain goods or services.

- **Personally connected**

  Two people are "personally connected" to each other if any of the following applies. They -

  - are, or have been, married to each other;
  - are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
  - have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated;- They have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
  - are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;
  - each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child;-
  - are relatives.

- **Parental relationship**

  A person has a parental relationship in relation to a child if the person:

  - is a parent of the child, or
  - has parental responsibility for the child.

  Children are also considered to be victims where the actions of the perpetrator of domestic abuse negatively impacts on their physical or mental well-being.

  Any reference in the Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who:

  - sees, hears or experiences the effects of the abuse, and
  - is related to persons A or B.

- **Child**

For the purposes of the Act, "child" means a person under the age of 18 years.

A child is related to a person if:

- The person is a parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child, or
- The child and the person are relatives.

- **Relative**

  The term 'relative' has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.

- **Parental Responsibility**

The term 'Parental Responsibility' has the same meaning as given in Section 3 of the Children Act 1989.

2.2 - Recognising DA

The term 'domestic abuse' is not confined to physical acts of violence. It includes a wide range of other abusive behaviours, such as;

- Sexual abuse
- Controlling and coercive behaviour
- Emotional and psychological abuse (including 'gas lighting')[1]

[1] Gas Lighting is a form of emotional abuse that causes the victim to question themselves, giving the abuser partner even more power. Examples include; **Countering** (where the abuser questions the victim's memories/recollections); **Withholding** (where the abuser refuses to engage in conversation with the victim, and **Trivializing** (where the abuser belittles or disregards the victim's feelings.

- Spiritual abuse
- Economic abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Technological abuse
- Stalking and Harassment

These forms are described in more detail in the Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance Framework.

2.3 - Types of DA

There are many types of domestic abuse that adversely impact on both the victim and other members of the household.

The Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance Framework identifies the following:

- Intimate partner abuse
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Abuse by family members
- Child-to-parent abuse
- Forced Marriage
- Honour-based abuse

2.4 - Violence against Women and Girls

The term 'Violence against Women and Girls' (VAWG) is also a form of domestic abuse.

VAWG describes a range of serious crime - predominantly, but not exclusively - experienced by women and girls, such as:

- Stalking and Harassment
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM);
- Honour-based abuse
- Prostitution;
- Trafficking;
- Sexual and/or criminal exploitation, and
- Modern-day slavery

Acts of VAWG are included within the context of this policy.

3. DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance)

The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) was established in 2014 by three leading specialist agencies;

- Standing Together; A national charity bringing communities together to end Domestic Abuse.
- Peabody; A national housing charity offering advice and support to victims of Domestic Abuse and
- Gentoo; A national Housing Association offering advice and support to victims of Domestic Abuse

The DAHA's mission is to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the establishment of a set of standards and an accreditation process for housing providers.

The alliance is endorsed by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Havering Council is committed to providing the best possible levels of service and support to the victims of domestic violence in its housing provision and is, therefore, equally committed to securing full DAHA accreditation.

4. How to report a DA incident to Housing Services

If you are a Council resident suffering from, or are aware of another Council resident experiencing, domestic abuse, please use the following contact details to inform the Council:

- Telephone (9am-5pm, Mondays to Fridays): 01708 432824
- Telephone (after office hours/other times): 01708 433999
- Email: housing.solutions@havering.gov.uk
- Website: www.havering.gov.uk/homelessness
- Website: www.havering.gov.uk/dutytorefer (Partner agencies)
- Customer Portal: www.havering.gov.uk/Jigsaw

If you, or someone you know, is in immediate danger, please call 999.

For non-emergencies, please call 101.

Can't talk to the Police in privacy?
Find out how to call the police when you lack sufficient privacy and can't speak.

4.1 Domestic Violence Disclosure scheme ('Clare's Law')
The Domestic Violence Disclosure scheme (DVDS) is also known as 'Clare's Law' and came into effect following the death of Clare Wood in 2009 due to domestic abuse.

The scheme enables the Police to disclose information to a victim or potential victim of domestic abuse about their partner's or ex-partner's previous abusive or violent offending.

The scheme comprises two key elements:

1. The "Right to Ask"
   Right to Ask allows the victim, potential victim or a relevant third party (for example, a friend or family member) to ask the Police to check whether a current or ex-partner has a violent or abusive past. It is possible to make a request online, in person at a police station or by calling 101.

   The public can also make enquiries into the partner of a close friend or family member.

   If records show that the individual may be at risk of domestic abuse from a partner or ex-partner, the Police will consider disclosing the information.

2. The "Right to Know"
   Right to Know empowers the Police to make a disclosure at their discretion, if they receive information about the past violent or abusive behaviour of an individual that may impact on the safety of that person's current or ex-partner.

   This could be information arising from a criminal investigation, through statutory or third sector agency involvement, or from another source of police intelligence.

   Under 'Right to Know', a disclosure can be lawfully made by the Police if the disclosure is based on the Police's common law powers to disclose information where it is necessary to prevent crime, providing the disclosure also complies with established case law, as well as fulfils current data protection and human rights legislation.

   The decision must be reasonable and proportionate for the Police to make the disclosure, based on a credible risk of violence or harm.

Applications for a disclosure can be made by attending a Police station, or, alternatively, applying online.

4.2 - How reports are investigated and progressed
If a victim becomes homeless as a result of domestic abuse, the Council will do all it can to source an alternative, safe place to stay.

Council Housing officers will check the tenancy status of the victim and abuser, and may need to seek legal advice to determine whether the tenancy is in sole or joint names.

The victim may choose to remain in their own home if they believe it would be safe to do so, or to return at a later date.

Legal action to assist a return to the victim's home can be taken in the form of Occupation orders and Non-molestation orders.

These help to establish who has a right to stay in the home and, therefore, will legally require the abuser to move out of the home/keep a certain distance.

Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA's) can assist victims to obtain these orders, or refer them to specialist solicitors. Unemployed victims on benefits or those on low income may be able to secure legal aid to help finance any associated costs.

4.3 - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)
The MARAC is a multi-agency partnership comprising a wide range of specialist experts who meet on a weekly basis to consider, assess and review cases of major crimes where the victim/s has/have been identified as being at high risk of serious harm.

The purpose of the MARAC is to:

- Determine whether the perpetrators of serious crime, such as domestic abuse, pose a significant risk to other members of the household of the general community
- Jointly construct and implement a risk management plan that provides professional support to all those at risk in order to minimise exposure to further harm
- Reduce repeated victimisation
- Improve agency accountability
- Improve support for and the safety of staff involved in high risk domestic abuse cases.

Housing Services is able to complete a domestic abuse risk assessment, based on the victims perception of the risks posed to them. When a case is deemed high-risk the officer can then refer the victim's cases to the MARAC.

5. How Housing Services deals with DA incidents

Returning to the family home may not always be immediately possible, and various emergency temporary accommodation options will be explored.

Options would include:

5.1 - Emergency temporary accommodation

If the victim is in immediate danger, the Council will contact a refuge that may be able to provide emergency temporary accommodation until a more permanent and settled solution is found.

5.2 - Family and friends

Family and friends can be a great source of support and safety where there is an immediate danger, and may be able to keep you safe for an interim/limited period of time. It is advisable to secure appropriate specialist support from the various agencies available (please see below).

5.3 - Out-of-borough, emergency temporary accommodation

Whilst the Council does as much as possible to provide safe and secure accommodation for homeless people, accommodation of all types within Havering is extremely limited.

Sometimes, the victim may prefer to re-locate to another borough to help ensure their safety, and the Council will always attempt its best to provide a suitable and safe out-of-borough home.

However, a safe in-borough place of temporary stay may not be immediately available and out-of-borough relocation may be the only available solution.

5.4 - Reciprocal arrangements

In some cases where the victim would be unsafe to remain permanently in the borough, the Council (with the advice of relevant professionals) will attempt to seek a reciprocal (property exchange) arrangement with another local authority/social landlord.

However, reciprocal arrangements can be difficult to arrange for many reasons such as lack of suitable housing supply, inbound demand, etc.

Consequently, victims will be encouraged to be flexible about their areas of choice in order to maximise their chances of relocation.

5.5 - Management transfers

Management transfers are offered to applicants (or someone in their household) whose circumstances (or a combination of circumstances) are considered to be life-threatening and where the need to move is supported by:

- Health professionals;

- Havering Council's Housing and Social Services;
- A senior Police Officer, and/or
- As a result of a MARAC assessment.

The victim will be given Band 1 (highest) priority, and eligible to bid for a 'like for like' home via Havering Council's Choice Homes scheme[2].

In extreme cases, the Council will make ONE direct offer of a 'like for like' home in alternative housing stock.

6. The consequences for perpetrators of DA

Housing Services will take firm action against any person perpetrating domestic abuse in a Council home setting.

Our multi-agency approach is intended to make sure that the full range of civil and criminal remedies can be pursued and, where appropriate, encourage victims of Domestic Abuse to seek restraining orders or injunctions to a) prevent further domestic abuse, or b) remove the abusive person from the home.

Possible injunctions include a **non-molestation order** or an **occupation order** which can protect victims from abuse committed by, or threatened by, a person associated with the victim ("the respondent").

6.1 - Non-Molestation Order

A non-molestation order commonly states that a respondent must not:

- Use or threaten violence towards the applicant or any relevant children.
- Intimidate, harass or pester the applicant or any relevant children.
- Contact the applicant or any relevant children directly or indirectly.
- Damage, attempt to damage or threaten to damage the family home or any property belonging to the applicant.
- Instruct or encourage another person to take any of the above actions.

A non-molestation order can also prohibit a respondent from attending or coming within a specified distance of the family home, the children's schools or other property.

If contact with the children has not been prohibited, non-molestation orders often include a clause allowing the respondent to contact the applicant directly or through solicitors to make arrangements for contact.

Domestic violence protection notices and orders are the equivalent of non-molestation

[2] The 'Choice-Based Lettings' (CBL) scheme offers housing applicants the opportunity to bid for a Council or housing association property of their choice, without involving any financial outlay to the applicant.

orders in the criminal courts and can prevent harassment or exclude a perpetrator of domestic abuse from the home. Both provide temporary protection to a client while other options are considered.

6.2 - Occupation Order

An occupation order can exclude one party from the home or from a defined area within the home. That party may also be excluded from a defined area surrounding the property.

An order may also require one party to permit another party to enter the property or part of the property.

The appropriate action will be decided on a case-by-case basis, and would include re-possession of the property when other members of the household have been forced to leave the home due to domestic abuse.

Depending upon the circumstances, this would provide an opportunity for the victim and children to:

i) remain in the home,
ii) return to the home at a later date, or
iii) provide them with an alternative permanent home, allowing the home to be re-let to another family.

If the victim does ***not*** wish to remain in the family home, Housing Services will seek to offer safe and secure, alternate accommodation.

In most circumstances this will mean issuing an Emergency Referral notice and would include eligibility for the victim to apply for the Council's 'Choice Based Lettings' scheme[3].

6.3 - Rehabilitative support ('Project Restart')

Project Restart is a multi-agency programme offering early intervention and support to families experiencing domestic abuse.

This is a pilot scheme that aims to stop domestic abuse at the earliest stage and hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour.

Victims of domestic abuse will have one-on-one meetings over at least four weeks with a trained professional (a 'case manager') who will work with the victim to help identify their key priorities (e.g. housing, education, health etc).

The perpetrator of the domestic abuse will also be supported independently by a different case worker.

At the end of the four weeks, the victim, perpetrator, and their respectively case manager will agree the best way forward and offered the necessary support.

6.4 - Eviction

In some circumstances, the victim of domestic abuse will leave the family home and seek protection elsewhere, which allows the perpetrator to remain at the property.

Where if the perpetrator is the sole tenant and there is substantial evidence to prove they conducted the abuse, court action may be taken to evict them.

Where the victim and perpetrator hold joint tenancy rights and the victim wishes to remain in the property, Housing Services may decide to allow the victim to end the tenancy on behalf of both tenants and issue a new, sole tenancy to the victim.

If the perpetrator refuses to leave the property at the end of the statutory notice period, Housing Services will take the appropriate legal steps to ensure their eviction.

7. Additional support for victims of DA

- **Havering Women's Aid**
  Havering Women's Aid is an organisation that offers floating support to both men and women in Havering affected by domestic abuse and violence.

  Support is available to people aged 16 plus who are resident of Havering. It includes safety planning with agreed outcomes, specialist information and advice, access to their one-to-one counselling, and group courses such as the Freedom Programme.

  For further details, please telephone 01708 728759 or visit the Women's Aid website.

- **MENDAS**
  Men's Domestic Abuse Service (MENDAS) is based in Havering and offers support to male victims of domestic abuse and violence.

  MENDAS assists victims by providing emotional and practical help; advice and information; advocacy support; help to access specialist support, and one-to-one counselling.

  For further details, please visit their website or telephone 01708 397 974.

- **Havering IDVA team**
  The role of an IDVA is to address the safety of the victim who is at high risk of abuse from partners, ex-partners and family members.

An IDVA will become involved with an identified high risk victim at the point of crisis and will work to ensure the safety of the victim and any children involved. This is achieved through safety planning, risk assessments, identifying suitable options and then supporting the victim to achieve these outcomes.

An IDVA is the voice of the victim and so will advocate for the victim during court processes to obtain injunctions, requesting housing moves and securing a place at refuge.

For further details email: havering.IDVA@havering.gov.uk

- **Victim Support/IDVA service**
  IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates) is a specialist, pan-London service operated by Victim Support that offers a range of support to DA victims coming through the Criminal Justice system.

  For further details, please visit their website or telephone 0808 168 9291.

- **Refuge**
  Women and child victims of DA can speak to a member of the National Domestic Abuse Helpline team, operated by the charity **Refuge**, at any time, day or night.

  A team of specialist advisers will offer confidential, non-judgmental information and expert support.

  For further details, please visit their website or telephone for free on 0808 2000 247.

- **Ashiana Network**
  Ashiana Network specialises in supporting Black and Minority Ethnic women (BME) specifically from South Asian, Turkish and Iranian communities aged 16-30 at risk of domestic and sexual violence.

  For further details, please visit their website or telephone 0208 539 0427.

- **Solace Women's Aid**
  Solace Women's Aid provides a range of services aimed primarily at women at risk, or who are victims, of domestic violence.

  Services include counselling, location of refuges, advice and advocacy support services.

  For further details, please visit their website or telephone 0808 802 5565.
- **Men's Advice Line**

Men's Advice Line is a team of friendly Advisors who will listen and believe you.

Their aim is to offer male DA victims and their children non-judgmental support, practical advice and information to improve their safety.

For further details, please visit their website or telephone for free on 0808 8010327.

- **GALOP**
  Galop is an independent advocacy group that provides support for LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence, hate crime, so-called conversion therapies, honour-based abuse, forced marriage, and other forms of abuse.

  Services range from specialist support and advice on matters such as the law for those in a same-sex relationship.

  For further details, please visit their website or telephone for free on 0800 999 5428.

- **Samaritans**
  The Samaritans is a free, 24/7 service for those feeling in despair and in need of someone to listen and provide emotional support.

  For further details, please visit their website or telephone 116 123 for free on any phones.

- **Citizens Advice Bureau**
  Citizens Advice Bureau provides advice and lists a range of organisations offering specialist advice and support to victims of domestic abuse.

  For further details, please visit their website or telephone 03003 302179.

8. Staff Training

Well-trained staff are key to delivering the aims set out in this policy. Recognising domestic abuse and the Council's principles and procedures for responding to it will be covered in inductions for new officers, and regular "refreshers" will be scheduled.

Regular, ongoing training will also ensure that staff are up-to-date on new legislation and best practice. We will ensure that staff have access to trauma-informed training and bystander training whenever appropriate, with staff wellbeing being a key consideration.

Unconscious bias training will also be made available to ensure that the important intersections with other inequalities and disproportionalities are well-understood by officers.

9. Equal opportunities statement

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

(i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
(ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
(iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.
The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) has been carried out and accompanies this policy.

The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

The Council will seek to ensure that this policy is, at all times, implemented in a manner that is fair to all sections of the local community.

All applicants for housing or re-housing will be invited to indicate if they wish to make use of the Council's translation and interpretation services, or if they require additional services to enable them to access and understand the policy to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in any way.

They also will be invited to provide details of ethnic origin, sexuality, disability and other equalities information. Provision of this information is not obligatory or a requirement for acceptance of an application.

However, such information will help monitor the number and types of protected characteristics requiring hostel support, and will help ensure that service improvement evolves in line with any changing local needs.

Equalities records will be kept and monitored to ensure hostel accommodations are offered and allocated fairly. This policy will be regularly reviewed ensure it is not operated in any way that could discriminate or disadvantage against any particular group of people.

All information provided will be kept confidential and treated with respect at all times.

10. Data Protection statement

Havering Council takes personal privacy matters very seriously and will never share the individual's personal data without their prior knowledge, unless required to do so by law.

For full details about how the Council protects personal data, please visit Havering Council Data Protection policy.

11. Dissemination and communication of this policy

Housing Services will consult with all affected stakeholders to ensure this policy clear and transparent.

This policy will be made available to all affected stakeholders and in any required formats (e.g. hard copy and electronic versions, easy read, multi-lingual, braille and audio, etc) upon request.

12. Implementation of this policy

This policy will take effect from September 2024 and will operate for three years.

Responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy will be with Havering Council's Assistant Director of Housing Demand.

13. Monitoring and review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose.

However, it will be subject to alteration to accommodate any relevant, new or adjusted legislative or regulatory requirements that may be introduced.

For any advice or assistance concerning this policy, please email:
housing.solutions@havering.gov.uk

14. Delegated authority to make minor changes to this policy

The Assistant Director of Housing Demand, in consultation with the Director of Housing, will be able to approve minor amendments; i.e. amendments that do not significantly change this policy or associated procedures.

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Housing Services
Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	Domestic Abuse Policy (2024)
Author	Joe Agius, Policy and Strategy Officer
Lead officer:	Katri Wilson - Assistant Director, Housing Operations
Approved by:	Paul Walker, Director of Housing and Property
Date completed:	15/08/24

Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy & Diversity team?	No
Does the EqHIA contain Did you seek advice from the any confidential or exempt information that would Public Health team? prevent you publishing it on the Council's website? (Yes/No)	No

About your activity

1	**Title of activity**	Domestic Abuse Policy (2024)		
2	**Type of activity**	Policy		
3	**Scope of activity**	Applies to all internal and external customers		
4a	**Does the activity constitute a new document, or does it change an existing one?**	New	If the answer to **ANY** of these questions is YES: Please continue to **5** below.	If the answer to **ALL** of these questions is NO: Please continue to **6** below.
4b	**Does this activity have the potential to impact upon people with any of the following 9 protected characteristics listed in the EqHIA form?**	Yes		
4c	**Does the activity have the potential to impact upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?**	Yes		

If answered YES to any of the questions in 4 (b) or (c) above, please continue to Section 2 and complete the EqHIA form.

Completed by:	Joe Agius, Policy and Strategy Officer - Housing Services
Date:	15/08/24

PART 1 – Overview

Background
Domestic Abuse is unacceptable to Havering Council. This new, Housing policy explains: a) the legal definitions related to Domestic Abuse; b) the measures (both legislatively and locally by Havering Council) in place to deal with perpetrators; c) the consequences for perpetrators and d) the support available for victims and witnesses.

PART 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

Protected Characteristic: AGE

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all age groups.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:

Age 0-14: 49,400 (18.9%)
Age 15-64: 166,700 (63.6%)
Age 65+: 46,200 (17.6%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: DISABILITY

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all levels of ability.

Supporting evidence:

- 15.3% of Havering residents have disabilities, similar to London (15.6%) but lower than England (17.7%)

There were disparities in disability prevalence within Havering. There were nearly three times more households with a disabled person in Harold Hill East (1,605 households) compared to Emerson Park (596 households).

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: SEX/GENDER

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all forms of sex/gender.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Identifying as male: 126,384 (48.2%)
Identifying as female: 135,688 (51.8%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: ETHNICITY/RACE

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of ethnicity/race.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: 28,150 (10.7%)
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: 21,567 (8.2%)
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: 9.747 (3.7%)
White: 197,314 (75.3%)
Other: 5,274 (2.0%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: RELIGION/FAITH

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of religion/faith.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of faith/faith appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

Christian: 136,765 (52.2%)
Buddhist: 1,092 (0.4%)
Hindu: 6,454 (2.5%)
Jewish: 1,305 (0.5%)
Muslim: 16.135 (6.2%)
Sikh: 4,498 (1.7%)
Other: 1.056 (0.4%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: SEXUAL ORIENTATION

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all forms of sexual orientation.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of sexual orientation/appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

Protected Characteristic: GENDER REASSIGNMENT

OVERALL IMPACT **ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY**

This policy applies across all categories of gender reassignment.

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

Protected Characteristic: MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of marriage/civil partnerships.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of their co-habitual arrangement. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Married/in a registered civil partnership: 98,547 (47.0%)
Never married/been in a registered or civil partnership: 77,340 (36.9%)
Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership: 4,081 (1.9%)
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved: 16,411 (7.8%)
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner: 13,414 (6.4%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: **PREGNANCY, MATERNITY & PATERNITY**

OVERALL IMPACT **ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY**

Positive		This policy applies across all pregnancy, maternity and paternity status.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

PART 3 – Health & Wellbeing Impact Assessment

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

OVERALL IMPACT
***A*SSESSEMENT SUMMARY**

Positive		This policy applies to all socio-economic levels and, through its implementation, is likely to further protect individuals regardless of their socio-economic status.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

As part of the 2021 Census, households were classified in terms of dimensions of deprivation based on selected household characteristics. Specifically, households were considered to be deprived if they met one or more of the following four dimensions of deprivation:

- Employment: where any member of a household, who is not a full-time student, is either unemployed or long-term sick;
- Education: where no person in the household has 5+ GCSE passes or equivalent, and nobody aged 16-18 years is a full-time student;
- Health and disability: where any person in the household has general health that is "bad" or "very bad" or is identified as disabled, and
- Housing: where the household's accommodation is either overcrowded, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating

From 2011 to 2021, the proportion of households in Havering experiencing at least one dimension of deprivation has increased by 4% (1250 households).

However the proportion of households experiencing multiple dimensions of deprivation has decreased (source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2011 & 2021).

According to the Census, compared to the London (51.9%) and England (51.6%) average Havering has a marginally higher proportion of households living in deprivation (52.7%).

Households deprived in one dimension are located in Harold Hill East, Hornchurch, South Hornchurch, Rainham West and Rainham East & Wennington.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

OVERALL IMPACT		**ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY**
Positive		This policy applies universally and through its implementation, is likely to protect/improve the health and wellbeing of the community.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

83.0% of residents (219,777) reported having ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health, which is higher than 81.9% in London and 81.7% in England.

There were disparities in self-reported health status across neighbourhoods in Havering.

Communities located towards the North of the borough (Harold Hill East, Dagnam Park & Noak Hill and Havering-atte-Bower & Chase Cross) reported poorer health, with Ardleigh Green and Upminster areas reporting better health.

Source: ONS/Census 2021

4. Review

This EqHIA will be reviewed in line with this policy’s review date, unless significant changes to this policy which affect the validity of this EqHIA take place in the meantime.

AUTHOR’S NAME AND JOB TITLE: Joe Agius, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer

DATE: 15/08/24

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Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

CABINET

Subject Heading:	**Housing Services – Anti-Social Behaviour Policy (2024)**
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Paul McGeary – Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
ELT Lead:	Neil Stubbings, Strategic Director, Place
Report Author and contact details:	Joe Agius, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer Telephone: 01708 434046 Email: joe.agius@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	This report sets out the Council's policy in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour in relation to Council tenants and leaseholders. It aligns with other Council policies, such as Domestic Abuse (2024) and Hate Crime (2024). It is required to be a stand-alone policy by the Social Housing Regulator.
Financial summary:	No financial implications.
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes, because it will have a significant effect on two or more Wards.

When should this matter be reviewed?	Annually, to ensure it continues to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements.
Reviewing OSC:	To be reviewed by the O&S Board.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well	[]
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy	**X**
Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council	[]

SUMMARY

Section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 requires local housing authorities, as social landlords, to prepare and publish policies and procedures in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).

Anti-Social Behaviour is defined in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 as:

(a) conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person;

(b) conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises; or

(c) conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Most people care deeply about the neighbourhood and community in which they live. Many play an active part in making their neighbourhood a more pleasant place to live.

This policy fulfils a legal requirement for the Council to publish an ASB policy.

This policy is designed to give a clear statement on the Council's approach to ASB, and the way it works with residents and expert, partner organisations, to address it within the Council's housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The reputation of the Council would benefit from clearly stating and communicating its position concerning ASB; defining the consequences for perpetrators and the support available to victims and witnesses.

Cabinet are asked to approve the policy.

REPORT DETAIL

This new Housing-specific policy explains:

1. The purpose, aims, scope and legal context of the policy;
2. Defines the term 'Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)';
3. Our approach to tackling ASB;
4. The obligations of tenants and leaseholders;
5. How we protect our staff and appointed representatives (e.g. external contractors);
6. Sets out the remedial actions currently available to the Council and the consequences for perpetrators;
7. Sets out the support currently available to victims and witnesses;
8. The support available to our staff and appointed representatives.

The proposed policy - produced in partnership with a range of internal and external expert partners - is set out in full in Appendix 1.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision:

- We have a public service obligation to Havering residents who expect and deserve to live in a better, safer borough;
- This policy is a requirement by the Social Housing Regulator;
- Having a robust policy in place is recognised as good practice;
- It assures the public that we take ASB seriously; people should not feel reluctant or afraid to report it to us and that we have robust mechanisms in place to help combat ASB in Havering;

- It informs victims and witnesses about the various support measures currently available.

Other options considered:

- **No action**
  The continuing presence of ASB in Havering cannot be ignored. Saying nothing and not having a robust policy in place does not help combat the problem and presents the Council in a poor/weak light. It also makes victims and witnesses feel that we do not take such crime seriously.

- **Allow councillors to represent their views in the absence of Council-agreed guidance**
  The lack of an up-to-date policy would expose councillors and the Council to unnecessary and avoidable challenge, such as via resident complaints, FOI requests, press enquiries, etc., and could impact adversely on the reputation of the Council.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing financial resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population.

Legal implications and risks:
Section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) requires local housing authorities, as social landlords, to prepare and publish policies and procedures in relation to ASB in the following documents:

- A Statement of Policies and Procedures on ASB
- A summary of current policies and procedures on ASB.

Human Resources implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing HR resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population.

IT implications and risks:
None. This policy will be delivered using existing I.T. resources and will pose no risk to the Council or the population.

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion implications and risks:
This policy does not differentiate and applies equally across the entire population, as stated in Section 8 (Equal Opportunities statement) of this policy and further detailed in the accompanying Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA).

Health and Wellbeing implications and risks:
None. This policy could, if anything, help to improve the health and wellbeing of Havering residents by helping to create a better, safer environment.

Environmental and Climate Change implications and risks:
None. There will not be an impact on climate change. This policy could, if anything, help to improve the living environment of residents.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Housing Services
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy (2024)

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
1.1 - Purpose of this policy
1.2 - Aims of this policy
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3. What is ASB?

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9. Support for victims and witnesses

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9.2 - Translation and Interpreting Service
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10. Staff Training

11. Equal opportunities statement

12. Data Protection statement

13. Dissemination and communication of this policy

14. Implementation of this policy

15. Monitoring and review of this policy

16. Delegated authority to make minor changes to this policy

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Our Partners
Appendix 2 - Teams working together on ASB
Appendix 3 - Our Performance Measures

1. Introduction

1.1 - Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to fulfil a legal requirement for the Council to publish an Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) policy - pursuant to Section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 which requires local housing authorities, as landlords, to prepare and publish policies and procedures in relation to ASB.

Consequently, it is designed to give a clear statement of the Council's approach to ASB and the way it intends to work with residents and relevant, partner organisations to combat this social, behavioural problem.

1.2 - Aims of this policy

Havering Council ('the Council') aims to ensure that Havering residents, businesses and visitors to the borough are informed about what action is being taken to address Anti-social Behaviour (ASB); make them feel it is worthwhile for them to report instances of ASB and that action will be taken against perpetrators.

Havering Council's Housing Services ('Housing Services') works towards improving the quality of life for all Havering residents. We want to create communities where people can enjoy their homes in safety without living in fear of crime.

This policy aims to give a clear account of our on-going commitment to deal with all aspects of ASB.

To this end, we will adopt a victim-centred approach, at the same time recognising that perpetrators may be subject to particular vulnerabilities. Therefore, we will follow a preventative model; identifying and addressing potential risks at the earliest possible stage.

1.3 - Scope of this policy

This Housing policy highlights the following key principles in the way it deals with ASB:

- Defining ASB
- Setting clear service standards
- Placing victims and witnesses first, including providing witness support
- Taking appropriate and proportionate remedial action swiftly
- Work in partnership with local neighbourhoods throughout
- Value equality, inclusion and diversity, treating everyone with fairness and respect

The scope of this policy extends to all Council tenants and leaseholders, Council staff and Council-appointed contractors.

1.4 - Legal context of this policy
This policy complies with all current legislative and regulatory requirements.

Accordingly, it should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Housing Services - Domestic Abuse Policy
- Housing Services - Hate Crime Policy
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Statutory Nuisance
- Housing Act 1985 and 1996
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Children Act 1989 (amended 2005)
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Sex Offenders Act 1997
- Civil Evidence Act 1995
- Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Young Persons Act 1997
- Local Government Act 2000
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Police Reform Act 2002
- Children Act 2004 and Every Child Matters Steps 2004
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Regulatory Reform Fire Safety order 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- 2014 and the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014: Anti-social behaviour statutory guidance for frontline professionals
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Local Government Act 1972
- Localism Act 2011
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Possession Claims by Social Landlords

2. Background
Most people care deeply about the neighbourhood and community in which they live. Many play an active part in making their neighbourhood a more pleasant, safer place to live.

Anti-social behaviour takes many forms, from aggressive, noisy or abusive behaviour to neighbourhood disturbances involving drugs, abandoned cars or animals.

Our ASB management service applies throughout our housing provision, recognising that detailed processes may vary depending on the type of housing concerned.

3. What is ASB?

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 defines ASB as being:

"Acting in a manner that is unreasonable, persistent, disturbing or harassing to one or more persons not of the same household as themselves"

The Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 has added extra context to this definition:

- Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to any person.
- Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of a residential premises, or
- Conduct capable of causing housing related nuisance or annoyance to any person

ASB may or may not involve criminal activity. The main consideration that decides whether a specific behaviour is anti-social is if it adversely impacts on others.

4. Our approach to ASB

Our approach to ASB is based on four key principles:

4.1 - Prevention

We will act reasonably and proportionately in line with the severity and persistence of the ASB. Our intention is to deter such behaviour in the first place, and to encourage victims to come forward as witnesses.

We will also:

• Identify the causes of ASB, using information collected to identify and target local hot spots

• Encourage tenants and residents to report incidents of ASB

• Consider introducing changes to the physical environment of estates that will 'design out' crime, including redesigning open spaces in a manner that reduces crime/the fear of crime.

Housing Services is committed to tackling ASB by taking a collaborative, multi-agency approach to dealing with casework handling, including appropriate information sharing protocols.

Appendix 1 provides examples of some of the partners we work with in respect of ASB.

4.2 - Enforcement
A key aspect of our approach to enforcement is to ensure that perpetrators are offered appropriate support to assist them in modifying their behaviour.

However, we will act against those who persist in causing ASB, by use of:

• Legal powers available under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
• Additional remedies to manage anti-social behaviour, such as mediation.

4.3 - Rehabilitation
The rehabilitation of perpetrators is a key aspect of our approach to dealing with ASB.

We will work closely with our expert partners to help correct/improve the behaviour of perpetrators via recognised best practice.

4.4 - Service Standards
• We will contact victims within one working day of receipt of Priority One incidents (i.e. involving physical violence).

• We will visit or contact victims of other ASB within five working days of receiving their report. During the visit/contact, an Action Plan will be agreed and progressed.

• We will keep victims informed of progress for a minimum of at least every 15 working days.

• We will make safe any damage to a tenant's home as a result of ASB within 24 hours, provided the necessary repairs falls within our normal repair duty.

Additionally, we will ensure that:

• All reports of ASB are acknowledged and investigated fairly, thoroughly and within the given timescales.

• Ensure complainants are treated professionally and that the complaint is treated in total confidentiality throughout unless:

a) there is a legal requirement for disclosure, or
b) the complainant gives us permission to disclose.

Within one month from the date the ASB case has been closed, we will contact the victim/s to assess their thoughts on the service we provided.

4.5 - How to report ASB

- In person by visiting, or by writing to:
  Town Hall, Main Road, Romford RM1 3BB

- By telephone:
  9am-5pm, Mondays to Fridays on 01708 432824
  After office hours/other times: 01708 433999

- By email:
  asbhavering.gov.uk

- By visiting our website and completing the online form:
  Report anti-social behaviour in our community | Anti-social behaviour in our community | London Borough of Havering

If you are a council tenant and are reporting anti-social behaviour on one of our estates please go to our anti-social behaviour on council estates page.

5. Tenancy obligations

All new tenants will be visited within three weeks to ensure they have settled in to their new home and monitor the conduct of their tenancy, which includes ASB.

Where a tenant has been identified as vulnerable, a support plan will be completed during this visit. Where ASB or domestic abuse concerns have been highlighted, referrals will be made to relevant services for additional support.

Further reviews, if required, will take place at quarterly intervals.

Havering Council's tenants and leaseholders are reminded that they must comply with their terms and conditions of their tenancy agreement, which includes those relating to ASB.

5.1 - Introductory Tenancies

All new Council tenants are given a one-year Introductory Tenancy, with the exception of secure tenants transferring.

When the one-year probation period has been completed satisfactorily, tenants will automatically be granted a secure or fixed term tenancy.

Should the tenant fail to complete the probation period satisfactorily, for example not paying rent or causing ASB, Housing Services have the authority to either extend the probation period for a further 6 months or take legal action, which may result in the tenant losing their home.

5.2 - Fixed-Term Tenancies
Due to changes in legislation that came into effect in April 2012, the Council has introduced Fixed-Term tenancies, as permitted by the Localism Act 2011.

All new tenants under this scheme (except those living in accommodation designated for people aged 60 or over) are offered a secure tenancy for a two, three or five year period, instead of for a 'lifetime'.

These tenancies will be reviewed and the granting of a further tenancy considered towards the end of the tenancy. We believe this type of tenancy will help deter ASB.

All tenants are provided with a copy of a Welcome Pack that contains the Tenancy Agreement terms and conditions they have accepted to adhere to, including those relating to ASB.

The Tenancy Agreement details the rights and responsibilities of the Council and its tenants. Tenants are responsible for:

- The behaviour of anyone, including children, family, relatives and friends, who resides at or visits the premises;

- Ensuring that they do not act in breach of any relevant clauses, nor are allowed or permitted to act in such a way. This applies in the premises and anywhere within the local area.

Council tenants and leaseholders will be in breach of their Tenancy Agreement/Lease Agreement if they, any member of their household or friends/visitors engage in any form of ASB.

They risk losing their home and future social housing applications if they cause ASB. They may also be ordered to pay any or all costs associated with any necessary legal proceedings.

Action against leasehold perpetrators can involve Injunctions (set out in the 2014 ASB legislation) and the most appropriate tools and powers. In extremely serious cases of ASB, leaseholders risk losing their home through the forfeiture of the lease.

6. Vulnerable groups
Our aim in dealing with vulnerable people who have caused ASB is to secure support at the earliest possible stage, which will have a positive impact and be effective.

We will ensure staff are clear about how they should deal with perpetrators of ASB that would be considered vulnerable like residents with mental health problems, a physical disability, and drug or alcohol dependency. We include procedures to ensure that:

• Vulnerable tenants or leaseholders are identified when their tenancy starts, using a risk assessment process

• Our staff are robust in dealing with these types of cases and the perpetrator's vulnerability does not deter them from resolving ASB.

• Support services are requested of the relevant agency at the outset of the case. They can provide appropriate housing related support. This will be to provide support to challenge and change unacceptable behaviour and to support tenancy sustainment.

If either the victim or perpetrator or both are addicted to drug or alcohol, a referral will be made to substance misuse services.

• Intended legal action against a vulnerable person is discussed and agreed with the Council's Vulnerable Persons Panel.

We will comply with legislation when taking any action against a perpetrator or when dealing with a victim of ASB.

We will not treat any disabled person less favourably than we would treat others and will always aim to ensure that any action is justified and necessary.

People with severe mental illness will be supported to seek optimal medical treatment and LBH will support de-stigmatisation.

Every case will be dealt with fairly and take into consideration the health and safety of both the victim and perpetrator.

7. Housing staff and contractors safety

We are committed to ensuring that our staff, contractors and representatives are able to carry out their duties in a safe environment, free from any harassment and intimidation.

8. Remedial actions

8.1 - Informal interventions

Verbal and written warnings are an initial step, used to stop ASB before escalation into a more serious activity.

All warnings should be based on clear evidence and be explained to the perpetrator; the details of the ASB; the impact on the victim/wider community and the likely consequences if their behaviour does not stop.

Accurate records of any verbal or written warning given must be kept so that, if required, it can be presented in court. The Council will notify relevant partner agencies if a written warning is issued.

Informal support and counselling may also be effective in tackling the underlying causes of ASB, such as working alongside Children's and Adults Social Services to identify any issues that might have triggered the offending behaviour/s.

Housing Services will work with a range of specialist, external agencies to deter and reduce ASB whilst supporting victims and witnesses.

8.2 - Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC)
An ABC is a non-binding agreement between a perpetrator of ASB and either the Local Authority/the Police. The agreement usually contains a list of prohibitive and/or positive measures in relation to.

ABCs are aimed at those aged 10 years and over and last up to 12 months. The persistent breach of an ABC could lead to more robust ASB tools being implemented.

8.3 - Parenting Contract
A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between parents and relevant agencies.

They set out what parent/s are expected to do to address the behaviour of their children and the role of the relevant agencies.

8.4 - Parenting Order
A Parenting Order is an ancillary Court order available to a criminal court to impose on parents and guardians of a child who is convicted of an offence.

The order is used to encourage parents or guardians of the child to take responsibility for (and help improve) their child's behaviour. It may be imposed where a child is made subject to a Criminal Behaviour Order or convicted of an offence.

8.5 - Injunctions
An injunction is a Court order prohibiting persons from behaving in a certain way or an order imposing positive steps for persons subject to the order to take in order to address the underlying causes of their anti-social behaviour

Injunctions pursuant to The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014) is a civil power to tackle housing-related ASB and non-housing related ASB.

Injunctions are civil orders which are granted if the court is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities that;

• The respondent has engaged in or threatens to engage in;

• Conduct that has or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress (non-housing related anti-social behaviour); or

• Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance (housing-related anti-social behaviour); and

• It is just and convenient to grant the injunction to prevent anti-social behaviour.

Injunctions are commonly obtained to;

- Protect residents and businesses
- Protect staff
- Curtail behaviour
- Stop someone entering premises
- Remove obstructions or building work that have not received landlord's permission
- Exclude perpetrators from specified areas.
- Impose positive requirement

Breach of an injunction by adult is treated as 'Contempt of Court', with unlimited fines of up to two years in prison and for children, supervision order or, as a very last resort, a civil detention order of up to three months for 14-17 year olds.

In some cases, injunctions regarding council tenants may be issued without notice to the tenant and can lead to the tenant to being excluded from their home in the most serious cases.

8.6 - Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO)
A CBO is an order of a court issued by any criminal court on conviction against anyone convicted of a criminal offence, providing the Court is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that:

1. The offender has engaged in behaviour that has caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to any person; and

2. The court considers that making the order will help prevent the offender from engaging in such behaviour.

The order will include prohibitions to stop the anti-social behaviour but can also include positive requirements to get the offender to address the underlying causes of their behaviour.

Breach of a CBO is a criminal offence and carries the following penalties;

• For over 18s on summary conviction: up to six months imprisonment or a fine or both.

• For over 18s on conviction on indictment: up to five years imprisonment or a fine or both.

For under 18s: the sentencing powers in the youth court apply.

In respect of children, as with Injunctions, the Council must consult with the Youth Offending Team before making an application for a CBO.

8.7 - Demotion of Tenancy

The Council, as a social landlord, can apply for a demotion order where a tenant has engaged in anti-social behaviour or used the premises for unlawful purposes

A Demotion Order is used to reduce the rights of a tenant who causes ASB. Measures may include disqualification for the 'Right to Buy' or a 'Mutual Exchange' arrangement.

It also places the tenant's security of the property tenure on a probation period of 12 months, extendable to 18 months if their ASB persists.

If within the allocated time, possession is sought, it will be on mandatory grounds.

8.8 - Eviction

Eviction is the last resort that applies to cases where there has been severe or persistent ASB by the perpetrator/s, and support has been refused or ignored.

In addition, the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014) introduced a new and mandatory ground for 'Possession', where the Court is satisfied that one of the following triggers applies, namely where the perpetrator of ASB has:

- The tenant, a member of the tenant's household, or a person visiting the property has been convicted of a serious offence;

- The tenant, a member of the tenant's household, or a person visiting the property has been found by a court to have breached a Civil Injunction;

- the tenant, a member of the tenant's household, or a person visiting the property has been convicted for breaching a Criminal Behaviour Order;

- the tenant's property has been closed for more than 48 hours under a closure order for anti-social behaviour; or

- the tenant, a member of the tenant's household, or a person visiting the property has been convicted for breaching a noise abatement notice or order.

The intention of the Act is to expedite the eviction of the most anti-social residents and bring faster relief to victims and communities. However, Council tenants have a statutory right under the 2014 Act to request a review of the decision to seek possession.

They may also invoke the Human Rights Act during a possession hearing, to test whether our action is proportionate. It is therefore important that,

according to the Guidance to the 2014 Act, this ground is used “selectively, for the most serious cases of ASB. The discretionary grounds for possession in the Housing Acts of 1985 and 1988 can still be used where the above triggers are not met.

Provided the triggers are met and the evidence meets the criminal standards, the Court has to grant possession, provided we can demonstrate the correct Notice has been served on the tenant. This new ground has implications not only for dealing with ASB in Council housing.

8.9 - Community Protection Notice (CPN)

This notice can be used by the police and the local authority to deal with ongoing problems or nuisances which are having a detrimental effect on the community’s quality of life by targeting those responsible. The notice can only be issued to a person aged 16 and over.

It can be served when a formal Community Protection Warning letter is ignored by the individual engaged in ASB and requires the recipient to stop, do or take steps to achieve a defined result.

Community Protection Notice can be issued by one of the bodies mentioned above if they are satisfied, on reasonable grounds, that the conduct of an individual, business or organisation:

• is having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality;

• is persistent or continuing in nature; and

• is unreasonable

It is a very versatile tool in that it can also be used against residential issues, such as loitering and environmental issues such as fly tipping and noise nuisances.

8.10 - Closure Power

Closure Notices and Closure Orders allow the Police or the Council to close premises quickly which are being used, or likely to be used, to commit nuisance or disorder. These orders are often used by the council where council tenants are causing ASB to neighbours or are victim of cuckooing[1].

A Closure Notice can be issued for 24 hours if the council or police officer is satisfied on reasonable grounds:

• that the use of particular premises has resulted, or (if the notice is not issued) is likely soon to result, in nuisance to members of the public; or

[1] Cuckooing is a practice where people take over a vulnerable person's home and use the property to facilitate exploitation (e.g. financial, drugs, sex work).

• that there has been, or (if the notice is not issued) is likely soon to be, disorder near those premises associated with the use of those premises, and that the notice is necessary to prevent the nuisance or disorder from continuing, recurring or occurring.

A Closure Order can subsequently be issued if the court is satisfied:

• that a person has engaged, or (if the order is not made) is likely to engage, in disorderly, offensive or criminal behaviour on the premises; or

• that the use of the premises has resulted, or (if the order is not made) is likely to result, in serious nuisance to members of the public; or

• that there has been, or (if the order is not made) is likely to be, disorder near those premises associated with the use of those premises, and that the order is necessary to prevent the behaviour, nuisance or disorder from continuing, recurring or occurring.

Before issuing a Closure Notice, the Act requires that the individual/s responsible, has/have been consulted. Such orders can also restrict those habitually resident in the subject property such as council tenants in residential blocks who engage in ASB as well ban all access.

A breach of such order is a criminal offence.

For breaches of closure notices, the court can impose a sentence of up to three months and for breaches of a closure order, the court can impose a prison sentence for up to 51 weeks in prison. For both orders, the court can also impose an unlimited fine.

8.11 - Court Undertaking
This is a promise to the Court, after proceedings have commenced, signed by an individual, promising the court he/she will cease the ASB act.

This is not an admission of guilt, but a promise about future conduct and the consequences of breaching the undertaking is Contempt of Court.

8.12 - Extension of Introductory Tenancies
Where a tenant has an introductory tenancy and there is concern about the tenant's (or household member/visitor's) conduct during the 12-month probationary tenancy period, serving a notice of extension can extend the probationary period of the tenancy for a further six months without the need for a court order.

Should the ASB persist at the end of the six-month period, possession action can then be taken.

8.13 - Withdrawing an Offer of Accommodation
The Council's Housing Allocation scheme makes clear that an offer of accommodation may be withdrawn if the applicant/household

members/visitors has/have been responsible for committing serious and persistent ASB.

This would have to be of a type or severity that would have entitled the Council to obtain a possession order, had we been the landlord.

8.14 - Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)
FPNs are one-off fines and an invitation for the recipient to discharge his/her liability to prosecution.

FPN are issued for various offences including environmental offences like litter, graffiti or dog fouling.

Failing to pay the FPN often results in criminal proceedings being commenced.

They can be issued by the Council or the police to any person over 10 years old.

8.15 - Statutory Nuisance Abatement Notices
These require whoever is responsible for the statutory nuisance to stop the activity or limit it to certain times to avoid causing a nuisance and can include specific actions to reduce the problem

The Council's Enforcement Team can detect statutory noise nuisance by installing a noise monitor into a neighbouring property.

If the nuisance persists, the Council can:

- give a fixed penalty notice (FPN) giving them the chance to pay a fine (up to £110 for dwellings and £500 for licensed premises) within 14 days, instead of being prosecuted;

- prosecute them if they don't issue an FPN or if the person responsible doesn't pay the fine on time (if convicted they can get a fine of up to £1,000 for dwellings and an unlimited amount for licensed premises);

- remove noise-making equipment like loudspeakers.

8.16 - Mediation
To resolve neighbour disputes, mediation services by a specialist external agency is offered on a case-by-case basis.

The aim of mediation is for one or more neighbours to come to a mutually acceptable agreement by working out differences identified as being at the root of ASB/nuisance behaviour.

8.17 - Community Remedy
The Community Remedy is a list of actions and punishments administered by the police.

The Community Remedy gives victims a say in out-of-court punishments for perpetrators of low-level crime and ASB and can be used on condition that the perpetrator has admitted their actions; seeks to make amends and such a course of action is agreeable to the victim.

The victim/s will be presented with the Borough's list of remedial punishments, whereupon they may choose their preferred remedy that the perpetrator will be required to undertake.

8.18 - Community Trigger/ASB Case Review
Where victims of ASB are dissatisfied with our response in handling their report, they may be able to invoke the "Community Trigger", depending on the frequency of the incidents.

This means an inter-agency ASB Case Review is held, giving victims/affected community the right to prompt a re-examination of their case.

9. Support for victims and witnesses

Our trained staff will respond in a timely and sensitive way to all victims and witnesses of ASB.

We will, in conjunction with internal and external partners consider the provision of Victim Support. This may include target hardening such as the provision of additional locks and chains.

We work closely with the Police to assist with their investigations of ASB, domestic violence and hate crime. We provide them with information under the Sharing of Information Protocol to pursue arrest and prosecute people who commit such crimes.

We also take a multi-agency approach of sharing information to protect and support the victim and their family.

9.1 - Use of professional witnesses
Where appropriate, we will consider the use of professional witnesses to help residents who are afraid or unable to provide us with evidence, such as when there have been several incidents affecting members of the community where we are unable to obtain enough eye-witness evidence or to obtain an independent assessment of conflicting reports.

9.2 - Translation and Interpreting Service
Translation services and interpreting are available in line with the corporate Translation and Interpreting Policy.

Translating witness statements, complainants' incident diary sheets and letters to complainants, as well as interpreting during interviews and at court, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Translation into Braille, large print and sign interpreters can also be arranged where necessary.

9.3 - Repairs & security of premises
Where a tenant has had their home damaged through harassment we will carry out repairs as a matter of emergency.

We will also consider carrying out any additional security works where there is serious risk of harm to the victim or others living in the property.

9.4 - Witness Support
We recognise that giving evidence in court can be an emotional and stressful time; it is also a very important role in the success of court cases. Building witness confidence and trust is an essential part of our role.

Our Team will support witnesses in a variety of ways, depending on the circumstances and their needs. This could include providing a direct point of contact for the witness, supporting them in completing witness statements or explaining how the court process works.

9.5 - Rehousing (Special Management Transfer)
The main objective of this ASB Policy is to provide adequate support to the victim so they may continue to live in their home in safety and without the fear of further harassment and intimidation.

In some cases, the harassment may be life threatening or so severe or persistent that the complainant and their household are no longer safe in their home and need to be re-housed either temporarily or permanently away from the area in which they are living. This will be offered if the tenant has no other options, such as temporarily staying with relatives or friends.

Re-housing through the process of a special management transfer will be offered after considering comments made by the Police, other relevant agencies like Social Services, the Domestic Violence Forum, Community Mental Health Team and/or other informed sources. Recommendations will be considered, but the decision will be made by the appropriate Housing Services panel.

If agreed by the Special Management Panel, the applicant will receive one direct offer of alternative accommodation on a like-for-like basis under the Council's choice-based lettings scheme.

We aim to re-house tenants in a different part of the Borough. In extreme cases, we will seek to secure an out of the Borough move with other landlords.

Re-housing under the special transfer process is not for the purpose of moving to a larger property or different area.

9.6 - Malicious Reporting
We investigate all reports of ASB sensitively and fairly. It is not unusual to receive counter allegations; both reports are investigated equally and impartially. We will use appropriate action against residents if reports have been made falsely to cause someone distress and waste officers time.

10. Staff Training
Well-trained staff are key to delivering the aims set out in this policy.

We are committed to training our staff and will ensure that all staff dealing with ASB are aware of this policy and procedures.

We will provide refresher training and updates, particularly where legislation changes.

Where our response to any incident shows the need for further staff training, this will be provided.

We will ensure Resident Groups and Tenant Management Organisations are offered an appropriate level of training on policy, procedures and on any legislative changes.

11. Equal opportunities statement
The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

(i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
(ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
(iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) has been carried out and accompanies this policy.

The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

The Council will seek to ensure that this policy is, at all times, implemented in a manner that is fair to all sections of the local community.

All applicants for housing or re-housing will be invited to indicate if they wish to make use of the Council's translation and interpretation services, or if they require additional services to enable them to access and understand the policy to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in any way.

They also will be invited to provide details of ethnic origin, sexuality, disability and other equalities information. Provision of this information is not obligatory or a requirement for acceptance of an application.

However, such information will help monitor the number and types of protected characteristics requiring hostel support, and will help ensure that service improvement evolves in line with any changing local needs.

Equalities records will be kept and monitored to ensure hostel accommodations are offered and allocated fairly. This policy will be regularly reviewed ensure it is not operated in any way that could discriminate or disadvantage against any particular group of people.

All information provided will be kept confidential and treated with respect at all times.

12. Data Protection statement

Havering Council takes personal privacy matters very seriously and will never share the individual's personal data without their prior knowledge, unless required to do so by law.

For full details about how the Council protects personal data, please visit Havering Council Data Protection policy.

13. Dissemination and communication of this policy

Housing Services will consult with all affected stakeholders, directly or indirectly, to ensure this policy fulfils its purpose to be clear and transparent.

This policy will be made available internally and externally in hard copy and electronic versions, as well as various formats – such as easy read, multi-lingual, braille and audio - upon request.

We recognise that publicity is fundamental to build confidence in the ASB management service we provide.

We aim to enhance our reputation by publishing good news stories, successful legal cases, ASB advice and partnership working in our tenant and leaseholder news magazine “At The Heart”, in local newspapers (and national where appropriate) and on our website.

14. Implementation of this policy

This policy will take effect from September 2024 and made accessible to residents on the council’s website.

Responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy will be with Havering Council’s Assistant Director of Housing Operations.

15. Monitoring and review of this policy

In the interests of continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant, up-to-date and fit-for-purpose for the Council and the residents of Havering.

We will monitor our performance in tackling ASB through a range of performance indicators (see Appendix 3)

We carry out regular quality checks on ASB cases managed by our staff. We will also analyse management information such as highlighting hotspots of ASB.

It is important that reporters of ASB incidents are allowed the opportunity to comment on the ASB process and the service they experienced. Victims will be either telephoned or visited and asked to complete a customer satisfaction survey.

We review the results on a monthly basis. All replies expressing dissatisfaction can be actioned via the Council’s complaints process.

16. Delegated authority to make minor changes to this policy

The Assistant Director of Housing Operations, in consultation with the Director of Property and Housing, will be able to approve minor amendments; i.e. amendments that do not significantly change this policy or associated procedures.

Appendix 1: Our Partners

Listed below are some examples of our partners:

• Community Housing Groups

• Council's Community Safety Team

• Council's letting and homelessness teams

• Community Mental Health Team

• Women's Aid

• East Area Borough Command Unit (Metropolitan Police)

• Victim Support

• Drug and Alcohol Agencies

• Children and Young People Team

• Learning Disability Team

• Adult Social Care

• Area Coordinators

• Youth Justice Team

• Education (including welfare officers and (head) teachers)

• TMOs

We also recognise the specialist skills of the voluntary sector and will continue to work with organisations such as Havering Association for Disabilities, Havering MIND, Havering Compact, and Peabody.

- **Havering Community Safety Partnership**

Housing Services is a key member of the of the Havering Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) - a collective of local crime prevention agencies, including Havering police, Havering Magistrates, Probation Services and the Drug & Alcohol team.

The HCSP provides strategic direction to Council departments and other agencies in working together to address ASB issues throughout Havering.

- **Tenant Management Organisations**

Our Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) will also follow this ASB policy.

- **Private Sector Housing**

This policy applies to all properties managed by our Private Housing Solutions team, including leased properties, those managed through Assured Shorthold Tenancies and Houses of Multiple Occupation.

- **Leaseholders**

The lease agreements prohibit leaseholders or their tenants causing nuisance.

Where a tenant or Leaseholder is involved in a dispute with a leaseholder, Housing Services will work with the Home Ownership Team and the Leaseholders.

- **Home Owners**

Where both parties are freeholders, the case will be referred to the Community Safety Team and parties will be advised to contact other external agencies i.e. Police, Environmental Health.

Where the victim(s) are council tenants and the alleged perpetrator(s) are freeholders, the case will be will be referred to the Community Safety Team or parties will be advised to contact other external agencies i.e. Police, Environmental Health. Support for the victim will offered by Housing Services.

Appendix 2: Teams working together on ASB

Housing Services has adopted an organisational structure with departments and processes dedicated to preventing and tackling ASB.

Enforcement Officers
The Enforcement Service was introduced to:
• Be a highly visible mobile team across the borough (Housing Services properties)
• Report ASB including fly tipping, graffiti, criminal damage and abandoned vehicles
• Identify those responsible for ASB and work closely with Housing Officers, Estates Officers, and Caretakers, CCTV staff, Street care, Environmental Health and other appropriate agencies such as Youth Services, Resident Groups and Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams
• Build relationships and respect within neighbourhoods
• Use mobile CCTV to collect information and evidence and share wit, h the ASB Team and Police
• Give evidence in court, as professional witnesses for ASB
• Patrol known “hotspot” areas of ASB
• Assist with dealing with abandoned vehicles
• Visit victims of serious ASB to re-ensure safety
• Attend community events

CCTV Team
The CCTV service is a specialist team, which maintains and monitors over 500 cameras on our estates and sheltered units.

The team collects information and evidence about perpetrators of ASB and share this with the relevant agency so that enforcement action or criminal proceedings can be taken against the perpetrators

The CCTV team acts as the eyes and ears of the Housing Officers.

Resident Services Team
All reports of ASB are managed by the Residents Services Team.

Housing Officers manage a patch of properties, which includes dealing with ASB reports. The purpose of this team is to:

• Take all possible enforcement action against identified perpetrators within the quickest possible time

• Work with the Council’s Community Safety Team, CCTV officers, Caretakers, Enforcement Officers, Housing Services Resident Engagement Officers, Police, Youth Justice Service and voluntary groups to tackle ASB

• Provide staff and TMOs with training on all aspects of ASB

• Provide support to victims and witnesses of ASB.

• Ensure that victims are treated sympathetically and in total confidence.

• Keep victims informed of the progress of their complaint and monitor satisfaction levels

• Take all possible enforcement action to protect staff and contractors against perpetrators who cause intimidation and harassment

• Attend community meetings, and community events to encourage reporting of ASB and publicise access to the service and successes and encourage resident involvement

Community Engagement Team
Our officers provide help to community housing groups to access grants to implement a wide range of activities for young people, families and older people in our neighbourhoods.

The main purpose of this team is to:

• Establish diversionary activities on estates which includes taking advantage of community development grants to fund appropriate activities

• Build community cohesion

Appendix 3: Our Performance Measures

- Number of P1 cases contacted within 24 hours
- Percentage of racial harassment, hate crime we respond to within one working day
- Total number of P1's
- Number of ASB cases open per 1000 homes
- Number of ASB case with hate per 1000 homes
- Number of ASB reports received and closed per month
- How satisfied residents were with the way we handled their ASB complaint.

Housing Services
Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy (2024)
Author	Joe Agius, Policy and Strategy Officer
Lead officer:	Katri Wilson - Assistant Director, Housing Operations
Approved by:	Paul Walker, Director of Housing and Property
Date completed:	15/08/24

Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy & Diversity team?	No
Does the EqHIA contain Did you seek advice from the any confidential or exempt information that would Public Health team? prevent you publishing it on the Council's website? (Yes/No)	No

About your activity

1	**Title of activity**	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy (2024)		
2	**Type of activity**	Policy		
3	**Scope of activity**	Applies to all internal and external customers		
4a	**Does the activity constitute a new document, or does it change an existing one?**	New	If the answer to **ANY** of these questions is YES: Please continue to **5** below.	If the answer to **ALL** of these questions is NO: Please continue to **6** below.
4b	**Does this activity have the potential to impact upon people with any of the following 9 protected characteristics listed in the EqHIA form?**	Yes		
4c	**Does the activity have the potential to impact upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?**	Yes		

If answered YES to any of the questions in 4 (b) or (c) above, please continue to Section 2 and complete the EqHIA form.

Completed by:	Joe Agius, Policy and Strategy Officer - Housing Services
Date:	15/08/24

PART 1 – Overview

Background
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is unacceptable to Havering Council. This new, Housing policy explains: a) the legal definitions related to ASB; b) the measures (both legislatively and locally by Havering Council) in place to deal with perpetrators; c) the consequences for perpetrators and d) the support available for victims and witnesses.

PART 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

Protected Characteristic: AGE

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all age groups.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:

Age 0-14: 49,400 (18.9%)
Age 15-64: 166,700 (63.6%)
Age 65+: 46,200 (17.6%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: DISABILITY

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all levels of ability.

Supporting evidence:

- 15.3% of Havering residents have disabilities, similar to London (15.6%) but lower than England (17.7%)

There were disparities in disability prevalence within Havering. There were nearly three times more households with a disabled person in Harold Hill East (1,605 households) compared to Emerson Park (596 households).

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: SEX/GENDER

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all forms of sex/gender.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Identifying as male: 126,384 (48.2%)
Identifying as female: 135,688 (51.8%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: ETHNICITY/RACE

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of ethnicity/race.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: 28,150 (10.7%)
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: 21,567 (8.2%)
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: 9.747 (3.7%)
White: 197,314 (75.3%)
Other: 5,274 (2.0%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: RELIGION/FAITH

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of religion/faith.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of faith/faith appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

Christian: 136,765 (52.2%)
Buddhist: 1,092 (0.4%)
Hindu: 6,454 (2.5%)
Jewish: 1,305 (0.5%)
Muslim: 16.135 (6.2%)
Sikh: 4,498 (1.7%)
Other: 1.056 (0.4%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: SEXUAL ORIENTATION

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all forms of sexual orientation.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of sexual orientation/appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

Protected Characteristic: GENDER REASSIGNMENT

OVERALL IMPACT **ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY**

This policy applies across all categories of gender reassignment.

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of appearance. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

Protected Characteristic: MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

OVERALL IMPACT

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY

This policy applies across all categories of marriage/civil partnerships.

However, there is always the possibility that an individual may be discriminated on the basis of their co-habitual arrangement. This policy aims to help minimise such possibilities.

Supporting evidence:

Havering:
Married/in a registered civil partnership: 98,547 (47.0%)
Never married/been in a registered or civil partnership: 77,340 (36.9%)
Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership: 4,081 (1.9%)
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved: 16,411 (7.8%)
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner: 13,414 (6.4%)

Source: Havering Data Hub/ONS/Census 2021

Protected Characteristic: **PREGNANCY, MATERNITY & PATERNITY**

OVERALL IMPACT **ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY**

Positive		This policy applies across all pregnancy, maternity and paternity status.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

No supporting evidence currently available.

PART 3 – Health & Wellbeing Impact Assessment

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

OVERALL IMPACT
***A*SSESSEMENT SUMMARY**

Positive		This policy applies to all socio-economic levels and, through its implementation, is likely to further protect individuals regardless of their socio-economic status.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

As part of the 2021 Census, households were classified in terms of dimensions of deprivation based on selected household characteristics. Specifically, households were considered to be deprived if they met one or more of the following four dimensions of deprivation:

- Employment: where any member of a household, who is not a full-time student, is either unemployed or long-term sick;
- Education: where no person in the household has 5+ GCSE passes or equivalent, and nobody aged 16-18 years is a full-time student;
- Health and disability: where any person in the household has general health that is "bad" or "very bad" or is identified as disabled, and
- Housing: where the household's accommodation is either overcrowded, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating

From 2011 to 2021, the proportion of households in Havering experiencing at least one dimension of deprivation has increased by 4% (1250 households).

However the proportion of households experiencing multiple dimensions of deprivation has decreased (source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2011 & 2021).

According to the Census, compared to the London (51.9%) and England (51.6%) average Havering has a marginally higher proportion of households living in deprivation (52.7%).

Households deprived in one dimension are located in Harold Hill East, Hornchurch, South Hornchurch, Rainham West and Rainham East & Wennington.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

OVERALL IMPACT		**ASSESSEMENT SUMMARY**
Positive		This policy applies universally and through its implementation, is likely to protect/improve the health and wellbeing of the community.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Supporting evidence:

83.0% of residents (219,777) reported having ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health, which is higher than 81.9% in London and 81.7% in England.

There were disparities in self-reported health status across neighbourhoods in Havering.

Communities located towards the North of the borough (Harold Hill East, Dagnam Park & Noak Hill and Havering-atte-Bower & Chase Cross) reported poorer health, with Ardleigh Green and Upminster areas reporting better health.

Source: ONS/Census 2021

4. Review

This EqHIA will be reviewed in line with this policy’s review date, unless significant changes to this policy which affect the validity of this EqHIA take place in the meantime.

AUTHOR’S NAME AND JOB TITLE: Joe Agius, Housing Policy and Strategy Officer

DATE: 15/08/24

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Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

CABINET

Subject Heading:	**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Alternative Provision (SEND & AP) Strategy**
Cabinet Member:	**Cllr Oscar Ford**
SLT Lead:	**Tara Geere**
Report Author and contact details:	**Trevor Cook, 01708 431250, trevor.cook@havering.gov.uk**
Policy context:	**The Local Area Partnership, comprising education, health and social care services, working with families, educational settings, and voluntary / third sector, has a range of responsibilities in regard to the delivery of services to children and young people with SEND and in AP, and is evaluated by Ofsted in regard to outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND.**
Financial summary:	**This is a wide ranging strategy outlining a wide and varied range of services across education, health and social care. Some of the proposed actions, while not yet specified, will require additional investment, without which they will not be fulfilled and consequently there will be no improvement in outcomes / performance. This would include failure to comply with statutory obligations.**
Is this a Key Decision?	**Indicate grounds for decision being Key:** **(b) Significant effect on two or more Wards**

When should this matter be reviewed?	**September 2025**
Reviewing OSC:	**People OSC**

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Things that matter for residents X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy X

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place. X

SUMMARY

The Local Area Partnership, comprising education, health and social care services, working with families, educational settings, and voluntary / third sector, has a range of responsibilities in regard to the delivery of services to children and young people with SEND and in AP, and is evaluated by Ofsted in regard to outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND.

In reference to the framework used to evaluate the local area, this strategy sets out the partnership's programme for the next five years to improve the lives of Havering families with SEND, organised around six priorities which together represent the vision for Havering's SEND and AP system.

Please note that the strategy will be made available publicly, and so the primary audience for the document is Havering families. This is reflected in the language, tone, and level of detail included.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to agree the attached SEND & AP Strategy.

REPORT DETAIL

The Local Area Partnership, comprising education, health and social care services, working with families, educational settings, and voluntary / third sector, has a range of responsibilities in regard to the delivery of services to children and young people with SEND and in AP, and is evaluated by Ofsted in regard to outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND.

Informed by the framework used to evaluate the local area, this strategy sets out the partnership's programme for the next five years to improve the lives of Havering families with SEND, organised around six priorities which together represent the vision for Havering's SEND and AP system.

The document is written with its primary audience being Havering families of children and young people with SEND and accessing AP, while also setting out an ambitious programme for change to which professionals across the partnership are committed. This desire to be accessible and meaningful to as much of the community as possible, is reflected in the language, tone and level of detail in the document.

The commitments listed vary in terms of the extent to which they are clear actions, or more broadly identify areas in which action will be taken to improve outcomes. This reflects the scope of the document, which covering a period of five years, would not be expected to set out clearly, in full detail, all actions that will be taken by a wide range of stakeholders.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision:

This is a wide ranging strategy outlining a wide and varied range of services across education, health and social care. Some of the proposed actions, while not yet specified, will require additional investment, without which they will not be fulfilled and consequently there will be no improvement in outcomes / performance. This would include failure to comply with statutory obligations.

Other options considered:

The current strategy ended in 2022, and so it was timely to refresh the content of the strategy to inform future actions and priorities, building on the diagnostic work completed as part of the Councils involvement in the DfE Delivering Better Value in SEND programme.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Funding for Special Education Needs and Disabilities comes from two distinct sources. Direct Education funding including funding for Special Schools and Alternative Provision and additional learning support comes from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant while other services including home to school transport, EHCP assessment and planning and social care support are funded from the Council's General fund budget. Capital funding for educational provision is funded by the DfE.

Education funding is provided largely based on a funding formula and so has increased in recent years. However at both a local and a national level the rate of increase in funding has not kept pace with the increased demand, complexity and cost of services. Havering, along with the overwhelming majority of Education authorities has a deficit on its High Needs Block. At the end of 2023-24 this was £16m and is forecast to rise every year.

The Council's general fund budget is also under extreme financial pressure and although growth funding has been put into Home to School transport and Starting Well staffing budgets there are also forecast overspends in these areas.

Many of the actions set out in the strategy have the potential over time to improve value for money by achieving better outcomes for children at similar or even lower cost while others may be deliverable within existing resources or through additional funding being made available by central government. However it is likely that there will be very limited resources for the next few years and new investment will need to be strictly prioritised. This financial situation will be a significant constraint that unfortunately is likely to limit the scope and pace of delivery of the strategy.

Legal implications and risks:

The Authority has various duties under education legislation to provide suitable education and services for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

The proposed Strategy in general terms sets out how the Authority, with the assistance of partners in some cases, will seek to provide a comprehensive and well functioning SEND service, however, it is aspirational and will require significant investment if it is to be successful.

Many of the specific plans set out within this Strategy will need to be subject to separate decision making procedures whether that be by way of officer decision or through Members/Cabinet. Legal advice will be provided as and when appropriate in terms of individual decisions.

It should also be noted that some of the actions within the Strategy are outside the Council's control as they require action by partners.

The risk in terms of setting out challenging objectives as this Strategy does is that it can create a legitimate expectation on the part of stakeholders and the general public that certain actions will be taken, when the reality is that they will still need to be the

subject of separate executive decision making arrangements and will have to be considered in the context of a very challenging financial landscape. Sometimes such legitimate expectations can be utilised in support of legal challenges in relation to specific cases.

Whilst there is no statutory obligation to produce this Strategy it is good practice. It should not be confused with the legal requirement to produce a Local Offer which is a separate document covering the specific services that will be provided by the Council for pupils with SEND.

There is no requirement with the proposed governance arrangements to devolve any decision making powers to third parties and these will be retained by Council officers who attend the various Panels.

Human Resources implications and risks:

Apart from the establishment of new roles and strengthening of existing roles (both of which will be managed in accordance with the Council's HR policies and procedures), the recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

Equalities implications and risks:

The strategy aims to improve the outcomes and experiences of all children and young people with SEND and in AP and their families, including those with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and those identified with SEN but without an EHCP known as receiving 'SEN Support'. The strategy includes children and young with SEND and in AP aged 0 to 25 in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks

The strategy aims to improve the outcomes and experiences of all children and young people with SEND and in AP and their families, including those with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and those identified with SEN but without an EHCP known as receiving 'SEN Support'. The strategy includes children and young with SEND and in AP aged 0 to 25 in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

Environmental and Climate Change Implications and risks

None arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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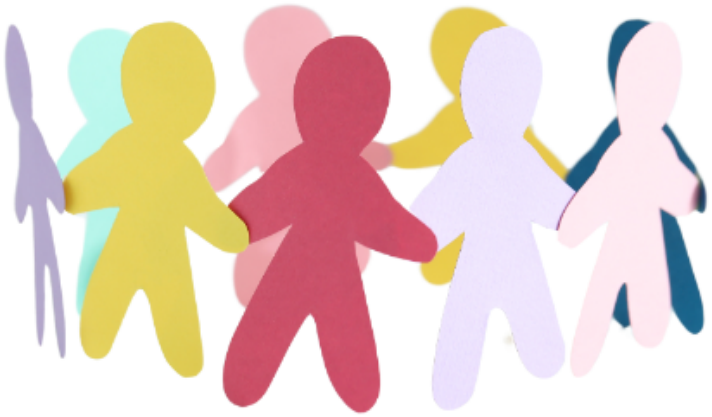
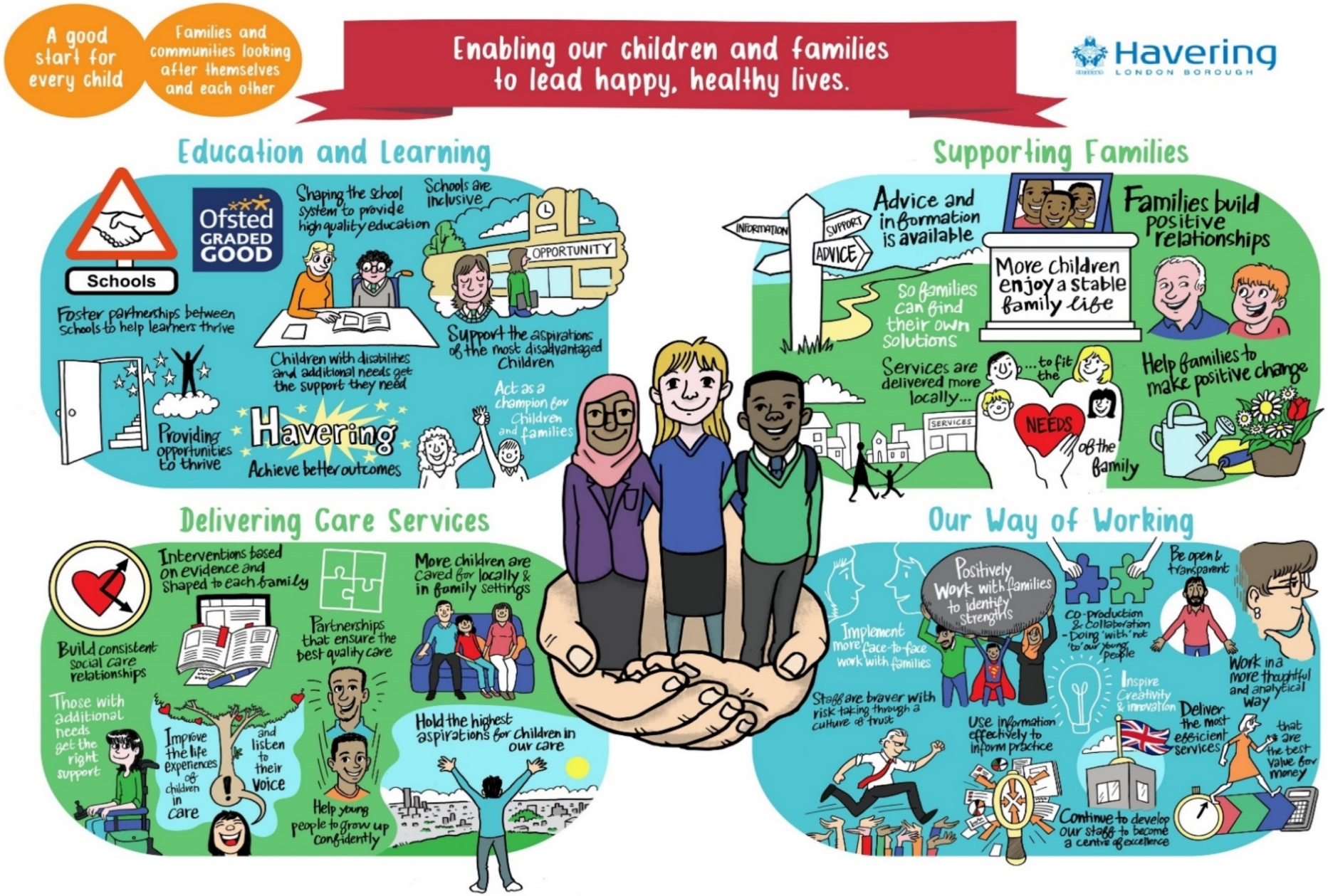
Special Educational Needs, Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy

2024 – 2028

Working together for better SEND and AP outcomes in the London Borough of Havering



Created in 2023 and refreshed in early 2024, Havering Council developed its vision and plan for the borough: '[The Havering you want to be part of]'. This vision sat alongside a new way of delivering services to meet ever changing need based on a structure of 'People, Places and Resources'. Our new SEND and AP Strategy sits within this wider vision for Havering's residents, and its vision for children and families.



Foreword

Havering Council, the North East London Integrated Care Board (ICB), and Havering SEND Family Voice are pleased to present this SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy.

Tara Geere
Director of Starting Well (Director for Children's Services), London Borough of Havering

Luke Burton
Joint Director of Partnerships, Impact and Delivery, North East London Integrated Care Board

Councillor Oscar Ford
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, London Borough of Havering

Havering SEND Family Voice
The Steering Committee of Havering's SEND Parent Carer Forum

Trevor Cook
Assistant Director of Education Services, London Borough of Havering

Havering is committed to its partnership with families to improve outcomes for all children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), along with those accessing Alternative Provision (AP).

We know there are things that we are doing well, there are also many areas that need improving.

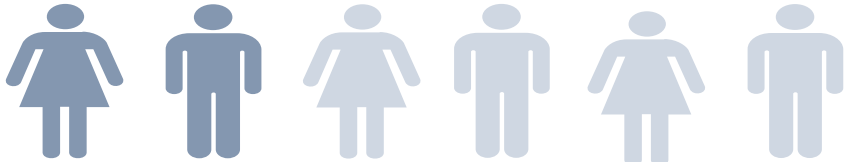
As such we are pleased to share with you our renewed SEND and AP Strategy, developed with our elected members, parents and carers, the Council's education and social care services, the Integrated Care Board and local NHS partners, and others.

This strategy sets out an ambitious programme for the next five years to improve the lives of Havering families with SEND, organised around six priorities which together represent our vision for Havering's SEND and AP system.

Our six priorities were generated through feedback from Havering families, as well as those working in Havering's schools, colleges, and nurseries, the voluntary sector, and in local education, health, and social care teams. We are committed to ensuring we continue to listen and work with, as well as for, our Havering SEND community. In doing so we will realise one of our six priorities: a SEND and AP system which places children and young people with SEND and their families at its heart.

Context – Children, Young People, and Education in Havering (2024)

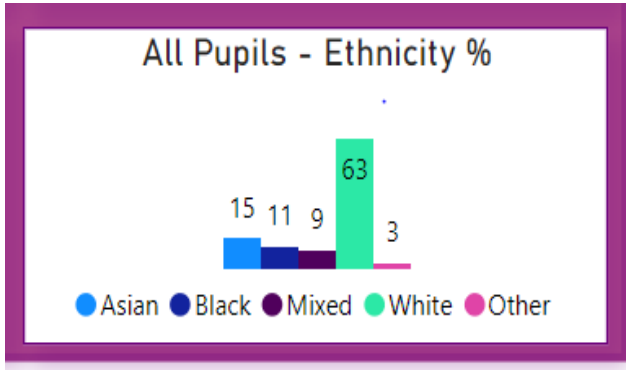
1 in 4 people living in Havering are aged between 0 and 19



Between 2011 and 2021, Havering saw a **15.2% growth in population of 0-17 year olds**, this compares to increases of 4.8% in London and 3.9% in England. During this period It has seen some of the highest growth in the number of children aged 0-9 in the country (24.3%).

0-9 24.3%

The majority of our children are White British/White Other however the proportion of children from Global Majority Ethnicities has increased in the last decade.



Source: 2024, LIIA Dashboard

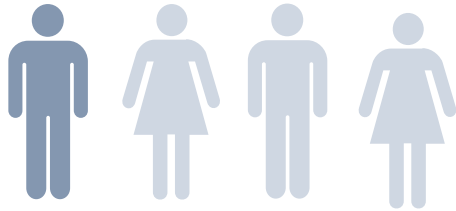
The number of households with dependent children (i.e., families) in Havering has increased in the last decade by 28%.

98% of our schools are Ofsted rated Good or Outstanding.

In 2023/24 **8,505 (19.8%)** children are eligible for Free School Meals on the basis of household income.

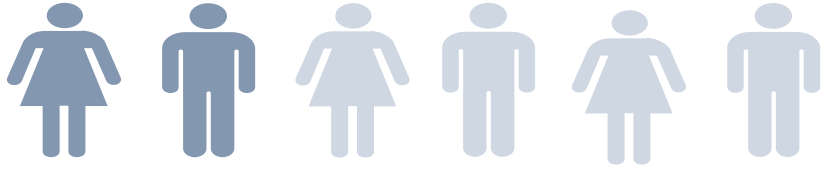
Havering is the 3rd largest London borough

25.6% of children under 16 live in absolute low income or relative low income families

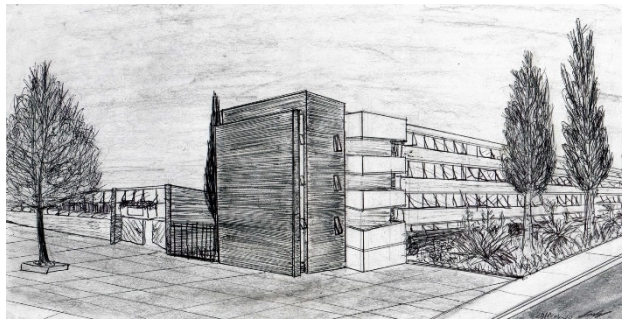


In 2023/24 **25.6%** of our children have a first language other than English.

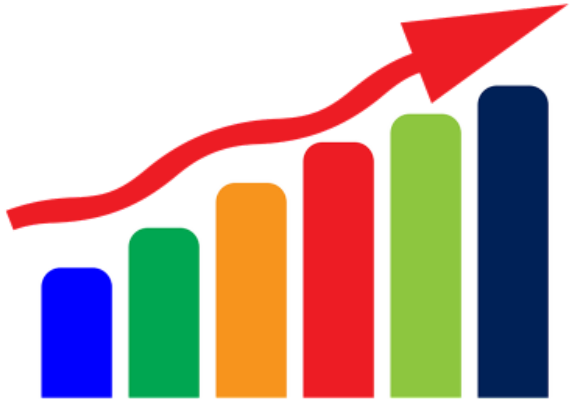
Context – Children and Young People with SEND and/or accessing Alternative Provision in Havering (2024)



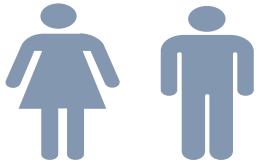
In 2023/ 24, **4.4%** of Havering's children and young people had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) compared to the national average of 4.8%. A further **9.9%** of Havering's children and young people receive SEN Support, lower than the 13.6% national average.



Compared to elsewhere in the country, the attainment of Havering children and young people with SEND is strong at the end of secondary school (KS4), and less strong in the early years and in primary school.



The number of Havering children and young people with **EHCPs has risen by 53%** between 2020 and 2024. The biggest growth has been seen among those whose main area of need is communication and interaction, including autism, and social, emotional and mental health needs.



More children with EHCPs are **boys (70.4%) than girls (29.6%)**, although this gender gap is smaller in Havering than the national average.

Havering performs well in terms of the number young people aged 16 or over who have SEND in Education, Employment or Training.

AP

2022-23 saw **731** referrals for Alternative Provision, up from 650 in 2021-22. Around **40%** of these referrals were for pupils with SEND.

Our vision

By working with children and young people with SEND, their families, and those whose role is to support them, we have established a share vision for a SEND and AP system…

How was this strategy developed?

This strategy is our 'roadmap' to a SEND and Alternative Provision system that realises the vision set out on the previous page. This vision, and the improvements listed on the next six pages, were developed through a wide range of listening and engagement activities completed over the last two years. They include surveys, workshops, and focus groups. The vision and improvements were also informed by regular discussions with our SEND Parent Carer Forum, *Havering SEND Family Voice*, and others from across education, health, and social care services, as well as third sector / voluntary organisations, who collectively make up the local area SEND partnership.

Before creating this strategy, what we learned through our listening and engagement activities was used to create the *London Borough of Havering's Local Area Partnership Special Educational Needs, Disability and Alternative Provision Self Evaluation*, which can be read **here**. The Self Evaluation is intended to provide an overview of what the partnership is doing well and what it needs to do better, in terms of delivering in all areas that matter for positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND and accessing Alternative Provision.

Priority 1: Participation & Communication

A SEND and AP system which makes sense, which families can navigate, and which places families at its heart

We will…

- ❑ Embed a culture of participation, communication, and engagement at every level of the SEND and AP system, ensuring children and young people with SEND and their families are equal partners in the design, delivery, and implementation of improvements to the support and services available in Havering, as well as discussions about their own support.
- ❑ Co-produce with children and families a 'SEND Working Together Charter', or equivalent. All those working with children and young people with SEND and their families will understand how the charter principles will help ensure families' experiences of the SEND system are respectful and supportive.
- ❑ Work with children and young people with SEND, their families, and professionals, to agree what it is we want to ensure all our children and young people with SEND have and achieve so they have the best quality of life they can. This will be captured in the area's SEND Outcomes Framework produced in collaboration with the Council for Disabled Children. This framework will be used to guide decision making on SEND and evaluate how well the local SEND system is delivering these outcomes for Havering children and young people.
- ❑ Redesign and vastly improve the quality of our SEND Local Offer as part of a wider range of initiatives to strengthen listening and engagement in Havering's SEND and AP system. The SEND Local Offer will provide an up-to-date, accessible online directory of information, guidance, and services to support children and young people with SEND and their families. Similar work will be undertaken to increase awareness of our Early Help offer, particularly services offered by the voluntary and community sector that are often used by families of children with SEND.
- ❑ Regularly provide information and feedback for families of children and young people with SEND through a regular SEND newsletter, more opportunities for Havering residents to 'have their say' on SEND, while continuing to build families' trust in the SEND and AP system through transparency and a 'you said, we did' approach.
- ❑ Make better use of social media as a means of engaging with our community on issues relating to SEND and AP.
- ❑ Explore use of the 'Joy' directory of services to improve access to services for Havering children and young people with SEND and their families, building on existing work to map and provide a directory of existing mental health support and services for children and young people in Havering.
- ❑ Establish a new SEND Young Advisors' Participation Coordinator role within Early Help. The purpose of this role is to strengthen channels through which children and young people with SEND inform the design and delivery of support and services in the area.
- ❑ Learn from effective initiatives within our health teams, notably CAMHS, to involve children and young people at all levels of service improvement activity, as well as align SEND-focused work on participation with Havering Council's Engagement Strategy and cutting-edge practice in the area of participation and engagement led by the North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT).
- ❑ Sustain the already strong completion rates for Havering's Youth Wellbeing Census, an annual survey to explore what Havering children tell us matters most for their wellbeing and how well the local area promotes their wellbeing and happiness. A clear link between the census findings for children with SEND and improvement action will be established.
- ❑ Health professionals, including those in CAMHS and providing therapies such as a Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy, will review the accessibility of reports and care plans, working towards more 'aspiration-led' and 'person-centred' reports that children and young people understand and feel focus on what matters most to them. Similarly, Children's Services including social care and education services will refresh and relaunch standards relating to care plans, focusing in particular on the involvement of children and young people in their own plans.
- ❑ Co-produce an 'easy-read' version of the SEND and AP Strategy that will be accessible to a wider audience including children and young people with SEND.

Priority 2: Inclusion — *Every school and setting is confident, skilled, and enabled to effectively support our children with SEND*

We will…

- ❑ Deliver enhanced support to preschools, nurseries, childminders, and to families where children are not attending a preschool setting through a stronger SEND Early Years Support Service. We will improve partnership working between education, health, and social care teams providing support in the early years, including through strengthening ties between social care's Early Help Service and local Health Visitors to ensure that families, as well as settings, are supported to help children with SEND with school readiness.
- ❑ Undertake a root and branch review to better understand the factors that explain the under-identification of children and young people needing SEN support and develop an action plan to improve this. This will include addressing higher absenteeism among children and young people with identified SEND, but without EHCPs.
- ❑ Complete a thematic review of SEND practice in Havering schools to identify what helps and hinders highly inclusive practice. This will guide how we refine and further develop our comprehensive package of SEND training, coaching, and support for schools.
- ❑ Develop a model of peer support for schools focused on SEND. This will enable school leaders to support and challenge one another, 'raising the bar' for inclusion in all schools.
- ❑ Embed new guidance, assessment, and intervention approaches to support children and young people with literacy difficulties.
- ❑ Offer every school and setting in Havering training, guidance, and support on developmental trauma and emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), raising awareness that school attendance difficulties and exclusion disproportionately affects children and young people with SEND, including in Havering where exclusions of pupils with EHCPs are above the national average. Develop a shared understanding and common language across the Havering community on how we promote emotional wellbeing and notice, discuss, and support those needing emotional support.
- ❑ Further strengthen the offer for schools on supporting neurodivergent pupils through the launch of the Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project and the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies for Children and Young People with Neurodivergent Conditions project.
- ❑ Expand training, workshops, and guidance for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND, based on what they tell us they need, aligning this support with approaches used in Havering's schools, settings, and services.
- ❑ Review SEND funding for schools and settings to find ways of making sure that where resources are needed for SEN support they are available in a timely way, free from unnecessary bureaucracy.
- ❑ Enhance training for school governors about SEND. This will help ensure inclusion is a priority for schools and that head teachers are supported and challenged on outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- ❑ Bring SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) processes and services into closer alignment, informed by the Department for Education's (DfE's) SEND and AP Improvement Plan. We will increase AP available in the area, particularly for primary pupils, and support schools to be confident commissioners and developers of AP.
- ❑ Reinvigorate our SEND Education Support Service by establishing new Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), Physical and Sensory (P&S), and Communication and Interaction (C&I) Advisory Teacher Teams who provide support in schools and colleges to develop staff knowledge and skills on SEND.
- ❑ Improve support for SEND among vulnerable groups, such as Children in Care, Children in Need, and those known to the Youth Justice Service, as well as those from global majority ethnic groups or those living in poverty. This will be achieved through strengthening collaboration between education, health, and social care teams, which includes the repositioning of Havering's Virtual School within the Council's Education Directorate.
- ❑ Identify key training needs among our school's Senior Mental Health Leads and support them with training and advice through our Havering Education Mental Health Leads Network.

Priority 3: Support, Services & Sufficiency

A wide range of SEND and AP settings and services providing community members the help and support they need

We will…

- ❑ Build a new 300-place all-through special school for pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties and associated communication, emotional, and sensory needs, opening September 2027.
- ❑ Continue to grow the number of specialist units attached to mainstream schools and colleges, with the aim of three new units being in development each year. We will also support schools and colleges to develop new types of specialist provision or alternative learning pathways.
- ❑ Maintain close collaboration between health and education services so that new specialist education provisions have the support they need from specialists, e.g., therapists, nurses.
- ❑ Develop SEND-specific programmes as part of an improved Early Help parenting offer, such as *Triple P* and *Time Out for Parents*.
- ❑ Undertake a system-wide review of support and services that promote positive mental wellbeing from early years through to adolescence, aligning this with the London-wide Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) transformation plan, but also looking beyond CAMHS at the role all services play in child and adolescent mental health.
- ❑ Have a dedicated workstream involving parents and carers, health professionals, and those working in education which co-produces an enhanced support offer for children and young people with sensory differences, whether sensory sensitivities or sensory-seeking behaviours.
- ❑ Act on the recommendations of a comprehensive review to strengthen complex nursing in education services that support children and young people with health needs in mainstream and special schools.
- ❑ Undertake a mapping exercise looking at existing therapy services and reprioritise these to better meet needs within the local area.
- ❑ Improve support for families whose children are awaiting a neurodevelopmental assessment, such as those exploring autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- ❑ Strengthen networks between third sector organisations (i.e., charities, community groups) and partners in health, education, and social care, in recognition of the vital and important work the third sector plays in support and information for families of children and young people with SEND.
- ❑ Continue to work with families to change and grow the Short Breaks offer within social care. We will increase the range of providers in the borough and simplify the process for families of children with SEND, including targeted improvements to remove financial or geographical barriers to families accessing Short Breaks.
- ❑ Deliver on commitments in the borough's Autism Strategy to expand locally available residential care and supported accommodation for children and young people with complex learning disabilities.
- ❑ Ensure that the strengthened induction processes and new mandatory rolling programme of bite-size training for social care staff includes a strong focus on SEND.
- ❑ Continue to develop our understanding of the mental health needs of our care experienced young people and develop a strong response to deliver what they tell us they need.

Priority 4: Community & Preparing for Adulthood

Children and young people with SEND and accessing AP are valued, visible, and prepared for adulthood

We will…

- ❑ Work with the National Development Team for Inclusion to launch a new Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Strategy bringing together the improvements outlined below. It will set out all aspects of how the local area partnership will support young people with SEND to achieve the best possible outcomes in adulthood focusing on employment, independence, good health, and friendships, relationships and community inclusion.
- ❑ Improve awareness and the quality of practice around the PfA agenda as part of annual review processes for children and young people with EHCPs, ensuring all children and young people with SEND, with and without an EHCP, are supported to plan for next steps and transitions in a timely way.
- ❑ Improve pathways for children and young people with SEND and accessing AP into employment, including through an increase in the number of supported internships available in the local area.
- ❑ Strengthen the Children With Disabilities Team in Social Care and its processes, including support and information for families of children at the point of transferring working with Children's Services to Adult Social Care.
- ❑ Create a dedicated working party whose focus is on improving community access for children and young people with SEND. This will act on feedback from children and young people with SEND, and their parents and carers, telling us that there is a need for a wider range of more accessible community activities open to children with SEND. This work also serves as a response to findings of Havering's Youth Wellbeing Census, where children with SEND told us they experience a weaker sense of belonging within their local area than their peers without SEND.
- ❑ Establish and increase access for young people to support as part of the Healthy Weight Management pathway, focusing in particular on access for children and young people with SEND.
- ❑ Make sure that the safeguarding of children and young people with SEND is everyone's business. This includes raising awareness of their additional vulnerability to abuse as part of wider initiatives including promoting the NSPCC's Talk PANTS campaign, safeguarding training and advice for those working in the partnership, volunteers, and parents and carers, as well as a focus on safety and independent living as part of the PfA agenda.

Priority 5: Leadership & Governance

Leaders work together effectively to deliver what is needed for our children with SEND and those accessing Alternative Provision

We will…

- ❑ Revitalise our SEND governance arrangements as part of a wider review of governance prompted by the newly formed Integrated Care Board, Place-Based Partnership, and Starting Well Directorate. The new clarity this will bring in terms of decision-making, oversight, and operational responsibility will ensure delivery of the SEND and AP Strategy.
- ❑ Broaden formal representation of Havering's Parent Carer Forum (Havering SEND Family Voice) and of children and young people with SEND across all levels of the new governance arrangements.
- ❑ Embed a process for routinely gathering information to evaluate how well the partnership is delivering positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families using the partnership's new SEND Outcomes Framework. What we learn from this evaluation will inform commissioning, priorities, and other improvement activities.
- ❑ Improve how we analyse complaints and compliments about services within the SEND and AP partnership, as part of wider initiatives to increase opportunities for Havering families to have their say in the design and delivery of local SEND services and to see this feedback heard and acted upon (*you said, we did*).
- ❑ Increase the capacity for leadership on SEND within health and social care services by establishing the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) role and strengthening the role of the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO). These roles will improve strategic oversight and delivery of improvements for children and young people with SEND within health and social care.
- ❑ Improve joint commissioning arrangements for SEND between the Integrated Care Board (NHS) and Council services and ensure we work in partnership with families when making commissioning decisions. These new processes will be established as part of wider work that embeds the new Starting Well structure that brings together health services and the Council's Children's Services.
- ❑ Make improvements to processes, systems, and information sharing agreements in place to ensure they enable effective collaboration and information sharing across Council education and social care teams and local health services.
- ❑ Ensure leaders across the partnership have a secure understanding of what the partnership needs to do better and how it will improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND through its Havering SEND Needs Analysis. This will align with and inform the partnership's wider Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

Priority 6: Performance *Education, health, and social care teams do what matters well and in a timely way*

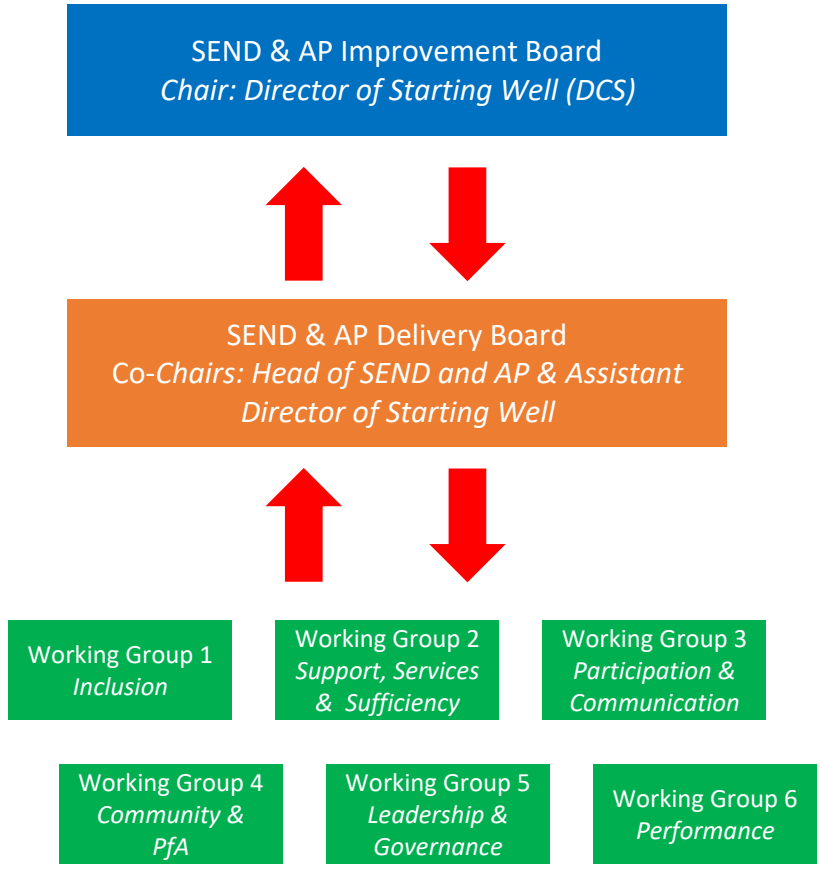
We will…

- ❑ Maintain strong outcomes for Havering children and young people with SEND, most notably older pupils with EHCPs, while targeting underperforming groups. Children with SEND but without an EHCP as well as preschool children with SEND are those most clearly achieving less well in terms of their attainment compared to similar children in other areas of the country.
- ❑ Improve outcomes for children and young people through investment in the Council's SEND Assessment & Placement Service who oversee statutory SEND processes (i.e., EHCPs) to improve the timeliness and quality of Education, Health, and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs), Annual Reviews, as well as ensure stronger communication with families, schools and settings, and the timely resolution of appeals.
- ❑ Continue to grow our Educational Psychology Service (EPS) so that psychological advice informing EHCPs remains high quality and meets statutory deadlines in terms of timeliness, without compromising the highly-valued services the EPS provides to schools, settings, and the community, alongside its statutory responsibilities.
- ❑ Finalise a comprehensive piece of work to create and embed a embed a Quality Assurance Framework for EHCPs and other SEND processes. Quality assurance will be a high priority with robust oversight from the partnership's leaders and a process that involves children and young people, families, and other stakeholders from across the partnership (i.e., schools, health, social care).
- ❑ Improve processes for assessing the quality of commissioned Alternative Provision and the impact it has on outcomes for children and young people, including successful reintegration into a long term educational setting. We will also review processes for the oversight of provision for particularly vulnerable children and young people with EHCPs. This includes Havering children and young people with SEND who are attending independent or non-Maintained special schools including residential schools outside of the borough, those who have a social worker, and those known to Youth Justice Services.
- ❑ Publish monthly reports on the Council's website of SEND performance captured on the partnership's SEND and AP Dashboard. This will include the timeliness of education, health and care needs assessments but will be expanded to capture a wider range of performance indicators relevant to the lives of children and young people with SEND, as well as providing performance measures organised by different groups (e.g., ethnicity, gender, children with social workers) to help identify potentially disadvantaged groups.
- ❑ Improve and maintain better performance data on wait times for neurodevelopmental assessments and other health assessments and treatments. This will be achieved through initiatives and investment including a new diagnostic pathway for autism assessments, as well as a Royal College of Psychiatrists-supported Quality Improvement Project for CAMHS.
- ❑ Maintain strong performance in terms of the take up of Annual Health Checks for children and young people with learning disabilities, as well as establish new Child Health Hubs, each with a Child Health Hub Coordinator working closely with GPs to ensure that care and treatment feels seamless for children and young people with SEND and their families.
- ❑ Improve the quality and consistency of recording on case management systems and review processes for ensuring timely, necessary, and proportionate information sharing across education, health, and social care in the best interests of children and young people with SEND and their families.
- ❑ Improve understanding and use of data within the SEND and AP system to enable intelligence-driven actions that support improved quality and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- ❑ Maintain strong overall performance in terms of developmental checks for two to three year olds, while exploring ways to target areas of the borough where take up is lower.
- ❑ Undertake a review of wait times and associated processes for Early Help services including those regularly accessed by families with SEND, identifying improvements where necessary.
- ❑ Ensure better and more consistent recording of autism within adult and children's social care, a required improvement identified in the Council's Autism Strategy.
- ❑ Improve the timeliness of Short Breaks assessments and families' satisfaction with the ease and value of these processes through investment to grow our Children With Disabilities Teams within Social Care.

How will we ensure we deliver these improvements?

The area partnership is revitalising what's known as its governance arrangements. Put simply, governance is the way an organisation makes decisions and makes sure it is doing what it should be doing.

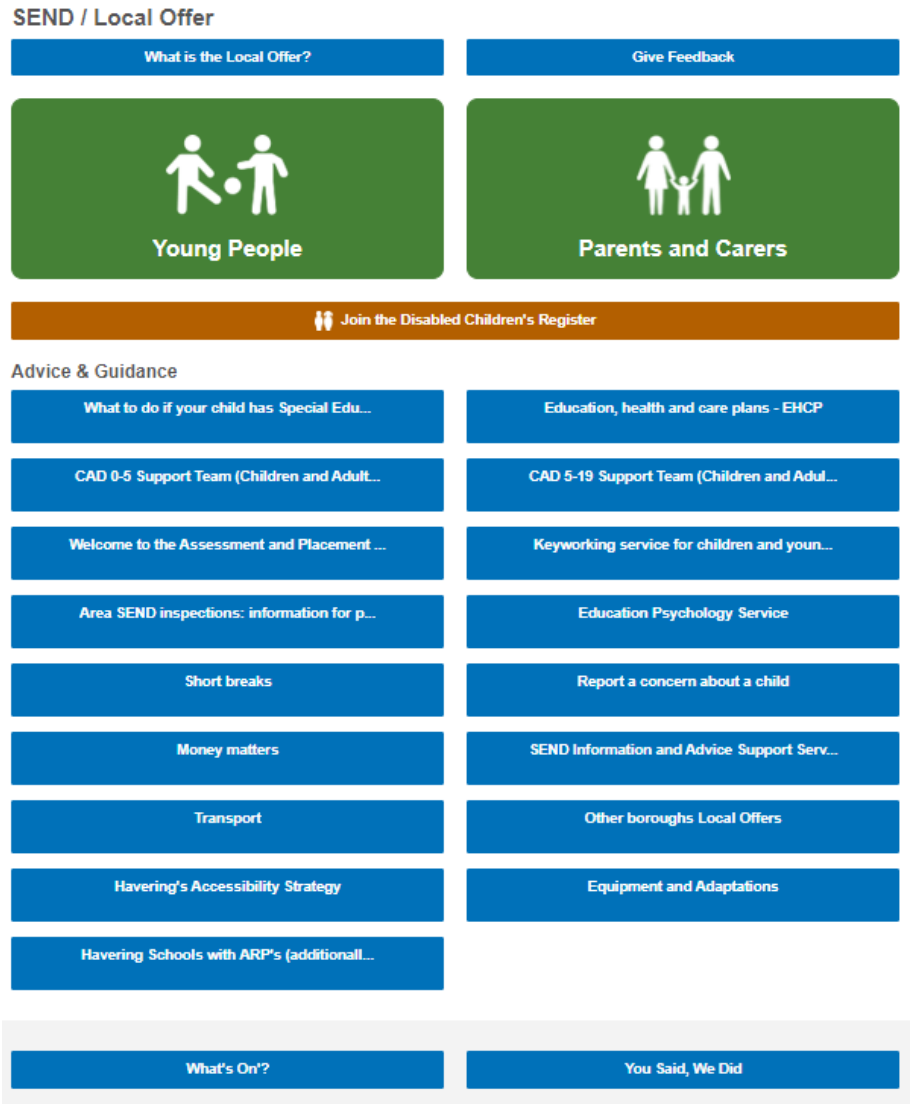
Our proposed new governance arrangements are presented here. The **SEND and AP Improvement Board** will made up of local leaders within the SEND and AP System. It will be chaired by the Director for Starting Well, or a suitably experienced independent chair, and its role is to make decisions, remove barriers to change, hold people to account, and in turn, be held to account, for overall performance. Below that, the **SEND and AP Delivery Board**, co-chaired by the Council's Head of SEND and AP Services and the Assistant Director for Starting Well (ICB), has oversight of the operational delivery of SEND and AP services and the actions taken to improve the local SEND and AP system, as set out in this strategy. Finally, all of the actions taken to improve local SEND and AP services are designed and implemented through various **working groups**, each reflecting the six priorities taken from the strategy. These working groups can focus on more than one improvement at a time (e.g., improvements to the SEND Local Offer, or work to enhance the Early Help offer to families with children with SEND).



These SEND and AP governance arrangements sit within a wider governance structure, including a number of boards that have a primary focus on health outcomes and services but with a strong focus on SEND, and which sits at the top, Havering Council's Cabinet. For example, before reaching the Cabinet, this Strategy was considered by the Local Area's Health and Wellbeing Board and its Place-Based Partnership Board.

A healthy SEND and AP system ensures that the community it serves knows what it is doing, through regular updates on its improvement activity and information about the impact of this on outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND and accessing AP, and their families. One way this is achieved by ensuring that Havering families are represented at all levels of the governance structure, and so this is what we will do. We will also ensure that updates are published on our SEND Local Offer twice a year, showing what progress has been made and where there are challenges. It will also be achieved by the community being able to track the progress of actions included as part of this strategy by visiting the regularly updated SEND and AP 12 Month Action Plan, available **here**.

How to get more information and get involved…



To find out more more about special educational needs and disabilities service available in Havering please visit the [Local Offer | Havering Directory]

HAVERING SEND Family Voice
Informing • Involving • Influencing

If you are a parent or carer who wants to support efforts to improve the lives of Havering children and young people with SEND, or keen to find out how you can join a Facebook Support Group, please visit haveringsendfamilyvoice.org

If you have feedback on this document you would like to share click here or scan the QR Code [need to create this, so need a space to add this QR code]

Other plans relating to improving the lives of children and young people in Havering

PAGE TO BE UPDATED WITH HYPERLINKS TO OTHER RELEVANT HAVERING STRATEGIES…

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	Special Educational Needs, Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy, 2024 – 2028
Lead officer:	Mike Plummer, Project Manager, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Services, Starting Well Directorate
Approved by:	Trevor Cook, Assistant Director, Education Services, Starting Well Directorate
Version Number	V0.1
Date and Key Changes Made	20/8/2024
Scheduled date for next review:	8/ 2026

Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy & Diversity team?	No
Did you seek advice from the Public Health team?	No
Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website? See Publishing Checklist.	No

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

About your activity

<table>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Title of activity</td><td colspan="3">Special Educational Needs, Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy, 2024 – 2028</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Type of activity</td><td colspan="3">Strategy</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Scope of activity</td><td colspan="3">Havering is introducing a new SEND and AP Strategy 2024-28. The Local Area SEND Partnership, comprising education, health and social care services, working with families, educational settings, and voluntary / third sector, has a range of responsibilities in regard to the delivery of services to children and young people with SEND and in AP and is evaluated by Ofsted in regard to outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND.

The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4a</td><td>Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?</td><td>Yes</td><td rowspan="2">If the answer to <u>either</u> of these questions is ‘YES’, please continue to question 5.</td><td rowspan="3">If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is ‘NO’, please go to question 6.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4b</td><td>Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people from different backgrounds?</td><td>Yes</td></tr>
<tr><td>4c</td><td>Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people’s health and wellbeing?</td><td>Yes</td><td>Please use the Screening tool before you answer this question.</td><td>If you answer ‘YES’, please continue to question 5.</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>If you answered YES:</td><td colspan="3">Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>If you answered NO:</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
</table>

Completed by:	Mike Plummer, Project Manager, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Services, Starting Well Directorate
Date:	20/08/2024

2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:
Havering is introducing a new SEND and AP Strategy 2024-28. The Local Area SEND Partnership comprising education, health and social care services, working with families, educational settings, and voluntary / third sector, has a range of responsibilities in regard to the delivery of services to children and young people with SEND and in AP and is evaluated by Ofsted in regard to outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND. This Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities as we work together to support every child and young person with SEND and in AP from 0 - 25. The Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Partnership has high aspirations for every child and young person with SEND and in AP in Havering. We want them to achieve their best in the early years and throughout their education, in their health and wellbeing and as they take their next step towards independence and adulthood. This strategy is our 'roadmap' to a SEND and Alternative Provision system that realises our vision for children and young with SEND and in AP. • A SEND and AP system which makes sense, which families can navigate and which places families at its heart. • Every school and setting is confident, skilled, and enabled to effectively support our children with SEND. • A wide range of SEND and AP settings and services providing community members the help and support they need. • Children and young people with SEND and accessing AP are valued, visible, and prepared for adulthood. • Leaders work together effectively to deliver what is needed for our children with SEND and those accessing Alternative Provision. • Education, health and social care teams do what matters well and in a timely way. This vision and the improvements within the strategy were developed through a wide range of listening and engagement activities completed over the last two years. They include surveys, workshops, and focus groups. The vision and improvements were also informed by regular discussions with our SEND Parent Carer Forum, '*Havering SEND Family Voice'*, and others from across education, health, and social care services, as

well as third sector / voluntary organisations, who collectively make up the local area SEND partnership.

**Expand box as required*

Who will be affected by the activity?
The strategy aims to improve the outcomes and experiences of all children and young people with SEND and in AP and their families, including those with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and those identified with SEN but without an EHCP known as receiving 'SEN Support'. The strategy includes children and young with SEND and in AP aged 0 to 25 in accordance with the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.* **Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes across ages 0-25 and in Preparing for Adulthood (PfA). All priorities will result in a positive impact across age ranges including: • co-producing with children and families a 'SEND Working Together Charter' • addressing the under-identification of children and young people needing SEN support The data below shows comparative disproportionality in EHCP age group data in Havering. We will investigate the reasons for comparative disproportionality in this area and take appropriate actions through the Performance and Inclusion Workstreams within the SEND and AP Strategy and 12 Month Action Plan. **Expand box as required*
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:

Key insights for Havering: EHCP age group data

- The highest comparative proportion of children under 5 with Education Health and Care Plans in London.
- A high comparative proportion of children 5 to 10 with Education Health and Care Plans.
- A low comparative proportion of young people 11 to 15 with Education Health and Care Plans.
- The second lowest proportion of young people 16 to 19 with Education Health and Care Plans in London.

- The third lowest proportion of young people 20 to 25 with Education Health and Care Plans in London.

Sources used:
LIIA Data 2024

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical, mental, sensory, progressive conditions and learning difficulties. Also consider neurodivergent conditions e.g. dyslexia and autism.

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	

Overall impact:
The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes.

All priorities will result in a positive impact across disabilities and neuro-divergent conditions including:

- producing a SEND Outcomes Framework in collaboration with the Council for Disabled Children
- launching the Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project

The data below shows comparative disproportionality of primary needs of pupils in schools and settings. We will investigate the reasons for the comparative disproportionality in this area and take appropriate actions through the Performance and Inclusion Workstreams within the SEND and AP Strategy and 12 Month Action Plan.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

Key insights for Havering: Primary Needs Data 2023/24

- A comparatively very low proportion of children and young people with speech, language and communication needs, severe learning difficulty and specific learning difficulty.
- A comparatively low proportion of children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder, other difficulty/ disability, physical disability and profound and multiple learning difficulty.
- Comparatively in the mid-range for children and young people with SEN Support but no specialist assessment and visual impairment.
- A comparatively high proportion of children and young people with moderate learning difficulty, multi-sensory impairment and social, emotional and mental health.

Sources used:
Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2023/24

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic – Sex / gender: Consider both men and women		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes. All priorities will result in a positive impact on disparity between sexes including: • implementing the SEND Needs Analysis and Joint Strategic Needs Analysis • maintaining strong performance in terms of the take up of Annual Health Checks for children and young people with learning disabilities The data below shows comparative disproportionality of gender by type of need. We will investigate the reasons for the comparative disproportionality in this area and take appropriate actions through the Performance and Inclusion Workstreams within the SEND and AP Strategy and 12 Month Action Plan. **Expand box as required*
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:
Nationally there is a disparity between the sexes, with boys more likely to receive SEN support and have an EHC plan compared with girls.

Key insights for Havering: Gender by type of need data 2023/24

A comparatively low proportion of children and young people in the following areas:

- Female children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans with Multi- Sensory Impairment
- Male children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans with Other Difficulty/Disability and Specific Learning Difficulty
- Female children and young people with SEN Support with: ASD, Physical Disability, SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need and Specific Learning Difficulty
- Male children and young people with SEN Support with: Multi- Sensory Impairment, Severe Learning Difficulty and Visual Impairment

A comparatively high proportion of children and young people in the following areas:

- Female children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans with Other Difficulty/Disability and Specific Learning Difficulty

- Male children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans with Multi-Sensory Impairment
- Female children and young people with SEN Support with Multi- Sensory Impairment, Severe Learning Difficulty and Visual Impairment
- Male children and young people with SEN Support with ASD, Physical Disability, SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need and Specific Learning Difficulty

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2023/24

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic – Ethnicity / race / nationalities: Consider the impact on different minority ethnic groups and nationalities

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	

Overall impact:
The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes, regardless of their ethnicity.

All priorities will result in a positive impact on ethnic disproportionality including:

- addressing the under-identification of children and young people needing SEN support
- broadening formal representation of parents/ carers and children/young people across all levels of the new governance arrangements

The data below shows that ethnicity data for SEND in Havering is broadly comparable to the data for all pupils in Havering. Data in this area will be kept under regular review and appropriate actions will be carried out through the Performance and Inclusion Workstreams within the SEND and AP Strategy and 12 Month Action Plan.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:
Nationally there is an ethnic disproportionality in the identification of SEN and certain ethnic groups are more likely to have an education health and care (EHC) plan than others. Travellers of Irish heritage have the highest percentage of pupils with an EHC plan at 5.6% and Indian pupils have the lowest percentage of pupils with an EHC plan at 2.3% (DfE 2021).

Key insights for Havering: Ethnicity Breakdown Data 2023/24

- A comparatively high proportion of white children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans and SEN Support, in keeping with the proportion of all pupils.

- A comparatively low proportion of Asian, black, mixed and other children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans and SEN Support, in keeping with the proportion of all pupils.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
LIIA Data 2024

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic – Religion / faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs, including those with no religion or belief

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	

Overall impact:
The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes. It is therefore anticipated that this strategy should have a positive impact on all children and young people with SEND.

Evidence:
In 2021, 30.6% of Havering residents reported having 'No religion', up from 22.6% in 2011. The rise of 8.0 percentage points was the largest increase of all broad religious groups in Havering. Because the census question about religious affiliation is voluntary and has varying response rates, caution is needed when comparing figures between different areas or between censuses. In 2021, 52.2% of people in Havering described themselves as Christian (down from 65.6%), while 6.2% described themselves as Muslim (up from 2.0% the decade before).

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
Office for National Statistic (ONS), Census 2021

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	

Overall impact:
The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes. It is therefore anticipated that this strategy should have a positive impact on all children and young people with SEND, regardless of their sexual

Negative		orientation.

Evidence:

In total, 91.07% (191,007) Havering residents identified as straight or heterosexual.

In total, 1.95% (4,092) Havering residents identified as one of the LGB+ orientations ("Gay or Lesbian", "Bisexual" or "Other sexual orientation").

In total, 6.98% (14,631) Havering residents did not answer the question.

Figure 1: Detailed breakdown of sexual orientation in Havering for residents aged 16 and over

Sexual Orientation	Number	Percentage
Straight or Heterosexual	191,007	91.07%
Gay or Lesbian	1,993	0.95%
Bisexual	1,540	0.73%
Pansexual	436	0.21%
Asexual	56	0.03%
Queer	21	0.01%
All other sexual orientations	46	0.02%
Not answered	14,631	6.98%
Total	**209,730**	**100.00%**

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021; Produced by: Havering PHI

Havering has the lowest proportion of residents aged 16 and over in London who identify as LGB+ orientation (Gay or lesbian, Bisexual or Other).

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Office for National Statistic (ONS), Census 2021

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:**
Positive	✓	The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes. It is therefore anticipated that this strategy should have a positive impact on all children and young people with SEND, regardless of whether our children and young people or their parent/carer are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth.
Neutral		
Negative		

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

Figure 3: Detailed breakdown of gender identity in Havering for residents aged 16 and over

Gender Identity	Number	Percentage
Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth	196,462	93.67%
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given	528	0.25%
Trans woman	228	0.11%
Trans man	212	0.10%
Non-binary	60	0.03%
All other gender identities	39	0.02%
Not answered	12,201	5.82%
Total	209,730	100.00%

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021; Produced by: Havering PHI

Within London, Havering has the 5th lowest proportion of residents aged 16 and over reporting that the gender they identify with is now different to their sex registered at birth.

Gender Research and Identity Society (GIRES) estimates that in the UK, around 650,000 people, 1% of the population, are estimated to experience some degree of gender diversity. These statistics are for adults but can be reflected in children and young people as they become older.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
Gender Identify and Research Society
Office for National Statistic (ONS), Census 2021

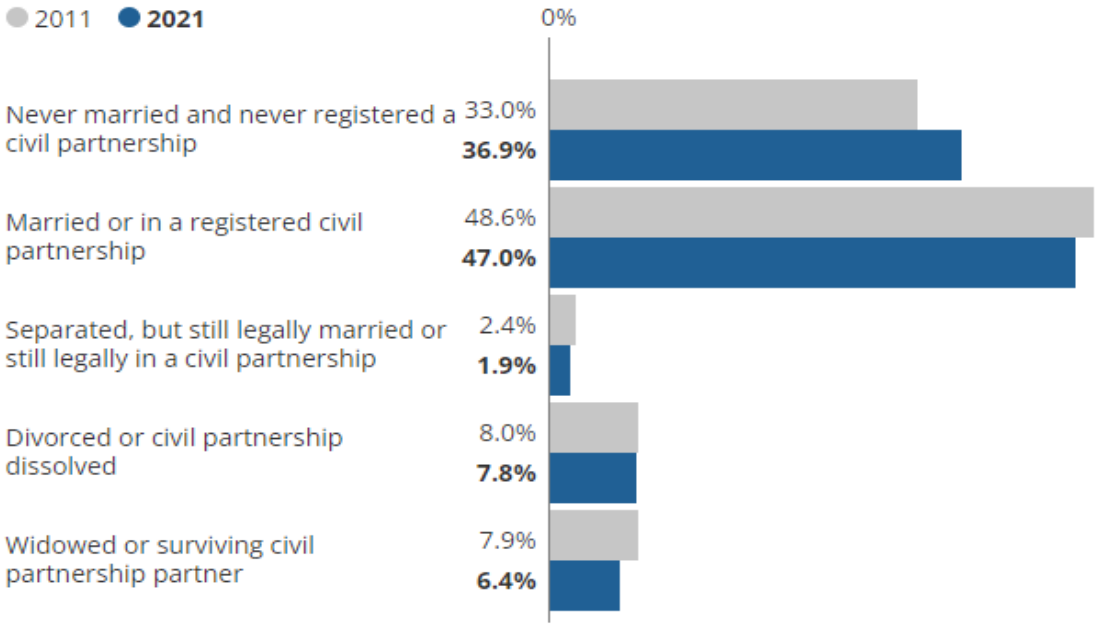
**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic – Marriage / civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes. It is therefore anticipated that this strategy should have a positive impact on all children and young people with SEND up to the age of 25. This strategy will have a positive impact on all our children and young people with SEND and their families, regardless of whether they themselves or their parents/ carers are in a marriage or civil partnership. The SEND and AP Strategy includes a commitment to support young people to Prepare for Adulthood (PfA) including supporting friendships, relationships and community inclusion. PfA outcomes are based on supporting each child or young person's aspirations and are intended to enable them to make choices about their lives and futures. This includes choices relating to friendships and relationships.
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:

The percentage of adults who had never married or registered a civil partnership in Havering increased by 3.9 percentage points

Percentage of usual residents aged 16 years and over by legal partnership status, Havering



Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 Census and Census 2021

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
Office for National Statistic (ONS), Census 2021

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are taking maternity or paternity leave		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The SEND and AP Strategy is jointly delivered by education, health, social care and the community and voluntary sector. The strategy embeds the partnerships' commitment to working together to support the delivery of early help services that wrap around our families to make sure they can access the right information, advice and support for their child's individual needs and their family circumstances, in a timely way. This includes supporting our families to give their child the best start in life, through services such as early years support service, midwifery, health visiting and parenting support and enabling families to access early help including housing, debt and income advice.
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:
According to the 2021 census, there are now more people of ages likely to have children in Havering; 15% more aged 25 to 29 years; 33% more aged 30-34 years and 30% more aged 35 to 39 years old.
However, younger women having children are also more likely to live in areas of higher deprivation. Highest rates of live births were clustered in Harold Hill, Romford and South Hornchurch.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
Office for National Statistic (ONS), Census 2021
Havering Starting Well, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2023-2024

**Expand box as required*

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	

Overall impact:
The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes. It is therefore anticipated that this strategy should have a positive impact on all children and young people with SEND, including our children, young people and families that are socio-economically disadvantaged.

All priorities will result in a positive impact for children and young people with SEND from low-income families including:

- bringing SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) processes and services into closer alignment, informed by the Department for Education's (DfE's) SEND and AP Improvement Plan
- improve support for SEND among vulnerable groups, such as Children in Care, Children in Need, and those known to the Youth Justice Service, as well as those from global majority ethnic groups or those living in poverty

The data below shows that free school meals data for SEND in Havering is comparatively in the mid-range for London. Data in this area will be kept under regular review and appropriate actions will be carried out through the Performance and Inclusion Workstreams within the SEND and AP Strategy and 12 Month Action Plan.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:
In a report published in 2016, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation highlighted, *'… the strong link between poverty and SEND. Children from low-income families are more likely than their peers to be born with inherited SEND, are more likely to develop some forms of SEND in childhood and are less likely to move out of their SEND categories. At the same time, children with SEND are more likely than their peers to be born into poverty, and also more likely to experience poverty as they grow up.'*

25.6% of children in Havering under 16 live in absolute low income or relative low income families.

Key insights for Havering: Free School Meals data

- Comparatively in the mid-range for London for children and young people with SEND receiving free school meals
- Children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans make up 35% of those receiving free school meals in Havering
- Children and young people with SEN Support make up 35% of those receiving free school meals in Havering

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Special educational needs and their links to poverty, 2016
LIIA Data 2024
Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2023/24

**Expand box as required*

Health & Wellbeing Impact:
Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity?

Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	

Overall impact:
The SEND and AP Strategy sets out our shared vision and priorities to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve ambitious educational, health and care outcomes.

Each priority in the strategy focuses on a wide range improvements to health and wellbeing by ensuring:

- Improved participation, communication and engagement, including the use of the 'Joy' directory of services services to improve access to services for Havering children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Every school and setting will be confident, skilled, and enabled to effectively support our children with SEND including identifying key training needs among our schools' Senior Mental Health Leads and supporting them with training and advice through our Havering Education Mental Health Leads Network.
- The provision of a wide range of SEND and AP settings and services providing community members the help and support they need including maintaining close collaboration between health and education services so that new specialist education provisions have the support they need from specialists, e.g. therapists and nurses.
- Children and young people with SEND and accessing AP are valued, visible, and prepared for adulthood including ensuring that wider efforts to establish and increase access for young

		people as part of the Healthy Weight Management pathway, focus in particular on access for children and young people with SEND. • Leaders work together effectively to deliver what is needed for our children with SEND and those accessing Alternative Provision including increasing the capacity for leadership on SEND within health and social care services by establishing the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) role and strengthening the role of the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO). These roles will improve strategic oversight and delivery of improvements for children and young people with SEND within health and social care. • Education, health, and social care teams do what matters well and in a timely way including improving and maintaining better performance data on wait times for neurodevelopmental assessments and other health assessments and treatments. This will be achieved through initiatives and investment including a new diagnostic pathway for autism assessments, as well as a Royal College of Psychiatrists-supported Quality Improvement Project for CAMHS. **Expand box as required* **Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment?** Please tick (✓) the relevant box **Yes** ☐ **No** X
Evidence: As above **Expand box as required*		
Sources used: Special Educational Needs, Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy 2024 – 2029 **Expand box as required*		

3. Health & Wellbeing Screening Tool

3. Will the activity / service / policy / procedure affect any of the following characteristics? Please tick/check the boxes below
4. The following are a range of considerations that might help you to complete the assessment.

Lifestyle YES ☒ NO ☐	**Personal circumstances YES ☒ NO ☐**	**Access to services/facilities/amenities YES ☒ NO ☐**
☒ Diet	☒ Structure and cohesion of family unit	☒ to Employment opportunities
☒ Exercise and physical activity	☒ Parenting	☒ to Workplaces
☒ Smoking	☒ Childhood development	☒ to Housing
☒ Exposure to passive smoking	☒ Life skills	☒ to Shops (to supply basic needs)
☒ Alcohol intake	☒ Personal safety	☒ to Community facilities
☒ Dependency on prescription drugs	☒ Employment status	☒ to Public transport
☒ Illicit drug and substance use	☒ Working conditions	☒ to Education
☒ Risky Sexual behaviour	☒ Level of income, including benefits	☒ to Training and skills development
☒ Other health-related behaviours, such as tooth-brushing, bathing, and wound care	☒ Level of disposable income	☒ to Healthcare
	☒ Housing tenure	☒ to Social services
	☒ Housing conditions	☒ to Childcare
	☒ Educational attainment	☒ to Respite care
	☒ Skills levels including literacy and numeracy	☒ to Leisure and recreation services and facilities
Social Factors YES ☒ NO ☐	**Economic Factors YES ☐ NO ☐**	**Environmental Factors YES ☐ NO ☒**
☒ Social contact	☒ Creation of wealth	☐ Air quality
☒ Social support	☒ Distribution of wealth	☐ Water quality
☒ Neighbourliness	☒ Retention of wealth in local area/economy	☐ Soil quality/Level of contamination/Odour
☒ Participation in the community	☒ Distribution of income	☐ Noise levels
☒ Membership of community groups	☒ Business activity	☐ Vibration
☒ Reputation of community/area	☒ Job creation	☐ Hazards
☒ Participation in public affairs	☒ Availability of employment opportunities	☐ Land use
☒ Level of crime and disorder	☒ Quality of employment opportunities	☐ Natural habitats
☒ Fear of crime and disorder	☒ Availability of education opportunities	☐ Biodiversity
☒ Level of antisocial behaviour	☒ Quality of education opportunities	☐ Landscape, including green and open spaces
☒ Fear of antisocial behaviour	☒ Availability of training and skills development opportunities	☐ Townscape, including civic areas and public realm
☒ Discrimination	☒ Quality of training and skills development opportunities	☐ Use/consumption of natural resources
☒ Fear of discrimination	☒ Technological development	☐ Energy use: CO2/other greenhouse gas emissions
☒ Public safety measures	☒ Amount of traffic congestion	☐ Solid waste management

☒ Road safety measures		☐ Public transport infrastructure

4. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

✓	1. The initial screening exercise showed a strong indication that there will be no impacts on people and need to carry out an EqHIA. 2. The EqHIA identified no significant concerns OR the identified negative concerns have already been addressed	→	**Proceed with implementation** of your activity
	3. The EqHIA identified some negative impact which still needs to be addressed	→	**COMPLETE SECTION 5:** **Complete action plan** with measures to mitigate the and finalise the EqHIA
	4. The EqHIA identified some major concerns and showed that it is impossible to diminish negative impacts from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level	→	**Stop and remove** the activity or **revise** the activity **thoroughly.** **Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.**

5. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise **negative** impacts and enhance/optimise positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will mitigate or reduce any **negative** equality and/or health & wellbeing impacts, identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; if required, will amend the scope and direction of the change; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer

Add further rows as necessary

***** You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts.

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

6. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review: 2 years

Scheduled date of review: 8/2026

Lead Officer conducting the review: Head of SEND

**Expand box as required*

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Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

Appendix 1 to this report is exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Constitution pursuant to Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, as amended in that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

CABINET	**18th September 2024**
Subject Heading:	Award of Energy Contracts 2024-28
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Paul McGeary
ELT Lead:	Kathy Freeman – Chief Operating Officer
Report Author and contact details:	Ian Saxby Assistant Director of Housing Property & Assets ian.saxby@havering.gov.uk Shahbaz Khan Energy Strategy Manager Shahbaz.khan@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	• Havering's Medium Term Financial Strategy • Havering's Climate Change Action Plan • Havering's Corporate Plan 2024-2027 • Havering's HRA Business Plan and Capital Programme update
Financial summary:	The energy contracts are worth around £5.3m per annum (£21.3m over the next 4 years, with a 1-year extension option providing a sum total of £26.7m); the cost of which is met from existing budgets across a range of services. Consumption and consequent expenditure is mitigated where possible by a number of energy efficiency measures
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes - expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more
Is this a Strategic Decision?	Yes
When should this matter be reviewed?	We need to take a decision and award the contract by the end of September 2024 so that the selected public sector procurement body is able to purchase energy in advance for the period starting in April 2025.
Reviewing OSC:	Places

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Things that matter for residents [X]
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy [X]
Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place [X]

SUMMARY

This report seeks approval to use the LASER (Kent County Council) flexible Procurement Framework 2024-28 and award contracts for the supply of electricity and gas upon expiry of the existing arrangements on 31st March 2025. This approach will save the Council a substantial amount of money over the term of the contracts. Further details of this are contained within exempt **Appendix A**.

It is recommended that Cabinet award the Council's electricity supply contract to Npower, and gas contract to Corona energy utilising LASER's 2024-2028 framework agreement. The term of the Framework Agreement will be from 2022 - 2028. The supply period is 1st October 2024 through to 30th September 2028, unless terminated in accordance with the Conditions of the Framework Agreement. The combined value of the proposed call-off contracts is expected to be around £21.2m in total over the next 4 years, for the 2025-2029 contractual period with the option to extend for a further 1 year estimating the total cost to be around £26.7m.

The contracts will include the supply of electricity and gas to the Council's corporate buildings; street lighting; housing, and schools that choose to opt-in.

This report recommends the use of the following two framework agreements:

Flexible Procurement and Supply of Half Hourly (HH), Non-Half Hourly (NHH), Metered and Unmetered Electricity with Meter Operations and Additional Services — Y22009; and Supply of Natural Gas Daily Metered and Non-Daily Metered — Y22008.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approve entering into an access agreement with Kent County Council, trading as LASER, so the Council can access framework agreements for Electricity (Flex 2024-2028, Framework Number: Y22009) and Gas (Flex 2024-2028 Framework Number: Y22008).

2. Approve the award of an electricity supply contract under LASER framework agreement Y22009, to Npower Commercial Gas Limited (Company number 03768856) (Npower), for the period of four years commencing on 1 April 2025 and expiring on 31 March 2029, with an estimated value of £14m) and with one year's extension option with an estimated value of £17.5m.

3. Approve the award of a gas supply contract under LASER framework agreement Y22008 to Corona Energy Retail 4 Ltd (Company number 02798334) (Corona) for the period of four years commencing on 1 April 2025 and expiring on 31 March 2029, with an estimated value of £7.2m, with an option to extend for one year with an estimated value of £9m.

4. Approve the use of LASER's 'Price Certainty' energy buying strategy for both electricity and gas.

5. Approve the use of LASER's 'Procurement Only Service Option' (POSO)

REPORT DETAIL

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Havering Council has historically procured its energy requirements (gas and electricity) on behalf of internal departments: Street Lighting, Housing (Communal areas and equipment (e.g. lifts), Schools, and FM (Corporate Buildings). The council spends an average of £5.3m a year on electricity and gas. Gas and electricity prices can fluctuate and be unpredictable, and to mitigate the risk of buying energy at times of high market prices, the majority of the public sector utilise a 'Flexible Procurement' approach which provides a cost saving initiative and security of price maintenance during times when energy prices are high.

1.2 The forecasted energy values for the corporate sites are given below. This is based on the 2024/25 KWH prices:

Contract Estimated Consumption and Value Current Usage	Annual Consumption kWh	Per Unit Price kWh (£)	Annual Contract Value (£m)	Two Year Contract Value (£m)	Four Year Contract Value (£m)	Five Year Contract Value (£m)
Electricity	11,057,512	0.26	2.87	5.75	11.50	14.37
Street Lighting	2,792,835	0.26	0.73	1.45	2.90	3.63
Gas	29,016,142	0.06	1.74	3.48	6.96	8.70
Total	**42,866,489**		**5.34**	**10.68**	**21.36**	**26.70**

Table 1 – Forecast Energy Values

1.2 Havering Council has been a customer with LASER since 2020 and uses the LASER framework for energy. Havering Council last carried out its energy procurement in 2020. The existing LASER call-of contract (2020-2024) was for 4 years (extended for a further 1 year until March 2025).

1.3 LASER is a public sector energy buying group and is part of Kent County Council's commercial services division. It provides energy procurement and contract management on behalf of its public sector members. LASER currently procures energy on behalf of over 200 public organisations, including London Boroughs, County Councils, NHS Trusts, Universities and Police foundations, managing contracts over £1.5 billion in total value, it is a significant player in the wholesale energy market, and offers competitive energy rates. The approach is compliant with procurement regulations (PCR15). LASER provides the aggregated, flexible, and risk managed approach recommended by Government, and has expertise in energy buying for local authorities.

2 PROPOSAL

2.1 This report recommends that the Council utilises the direct award procedure available within the LASER framework agreement as the method for awarding the new contract.

2.2 Laser/ Kent County Council have conducted a mini competition/ analysis based on Havering's requirements for supply of gas and electricity. As a result, Laser have

obtained the best prices that Havering could obtain on the market to show that the proposals in this report represent value for money for the Council overall.

2.3 The proposed Direct Award is to the Council's existing provider.

2.4 A small number of alternative PBOs (Public Buying Organisations) provide a similar framework to LASER, adhering to Government guidance for public bodies. As part of this review process, other PBOs were considered.

2.5 Several PBO's are smaller than LASER, buying significantly lower aggregated volumes, and therefore not going to market as frequently and are not as well-resourced in energy buying. Smaller PBOs do not necessarily buy sufficient volume for the employment of independent buying advisors to be viable, and as a result tend to be supplier led. PBOs have less separation of the buying and audit functions.

2.6 LASER's Flexible Procurement approach aggregates customer energy requirements. LASER then monitors market price drivers and buys the aggregate energy requirements in multiple 'blocks' of energy prior to the point of use. This report proposes using the Purchase in Advance option within each Framework Agreement. The Purchase in Advance option facilitates the purchase of all site volume prior to delivery for a 12-month supply period. Pass through charges will be added to arrive at the delivered price in pence per kilowatt hour. The delivered price is fixed for the 12-month period.

2.7 Analysis of other PBOs shows a high degree of variability in customer service – with LASER scoring well. Taking into account the large number of individual energy supply accounts that the Council manages, this is of significant importance. In terms of pricing, forward purchasing strategies can only be assessed through benchmarking of past performance.

2.8 Benchmarking energy service providers is a complex process. From 2007–2020, this was undertaken by the London Energy Project, a collaborative, authority-led, authority-owned Category Management resource, led by London Borough of Haringey. The LEP's principal purpose was to use authorities' combined spending power to minimise risk, reduce procurement, contract operation and back-office costs to achieve better commercial outcomes.

2.9 The London Energy Procurement Partnership (LEPP) was a collaboration after the discontinuation of the London Energy Partnership. The LEPP commissioned a benchmarking review which supported the views of the Council including cost of change for benefit appraisals.

2.10 LEPP hired Cornwall Insight to assess and deliver brokerage options. Havering was not involved in the consortium.

2.11 Cornwall Insight's research indicates that LASER's procurement is effective and achieves prices significantly better than the market average.

2.12 Many alternative providers offer similar products; however, none of them possess features that would be expected to outweigh the disruption and cost of resourcing change. Cornwall Insight further ascertained that Local Authorities currently utilising the PBO LASER are unlikely to derive substantial advantages from switching to another provider. Consequently, it is recommended that the Council continue its utilisation of LASER for the 2025-2029 contractual period.

2.13 The main alternatives to LASER, such as Crown Commercial Services (CCS) and private sector brokers, have been thoroughly researched. They all offer a compliant procurement route in line with Government Guidance. The CCS option provides fewer purchasing baskets, placing a greater administrative burden on member organisations, potentially increasing the overall cost.

2.14 Private sector brokers can also provide the procurement service as public sector procurement bodies like CCS and LASER but their procurement and purchasing options are limited. Further, such a brokerage would be procured as an added expense and their fees upwards, which may be levied on the whole bill, rather than just on the energy spend. The benefits of aggregation are lost with this route, as contracts are typically stand alone or based on smaller groups of public sector bodies

2.15 The existing framework option has been more widely adopted by London boroughs to maximise financial benefits and service quality.

2.16 LASER reports that the current frameworks have delivered cost avoidance measures by identifying and correcting overcharges, preventing erroneous bills and the procurement price achieved for energy. Further detail on LASER cost avoidance is shown in **Appendix 1**.

2.17 The below table provides an overview of the comparison between the available framework agreements:

	CCS	LASER
Public Contract Regulations (PCR) compliant framework	Yes	Yes
Fully managed service	No	Yes
Unmanaged service	Yes	No
Number of purchasing options	3	8
Delegated authority to purchase	Yes	Yes
Service level Agreement	Yes	Yes

Table 2 – Comparison Table

2.18 The recommended option is to utilise LASER's new frameworks with a contractual period from April 2025 until March 2029. These frameworks for energy supplies provide a reasonable route to the market at an affordable price for service, and LASER staff resources provide an efficient procurement route for its members.

2.19 The Council declared a climate emergency in 2023, and the revised Havering Climate Action Plan 2024-27, aimed at promoting sustainability and achieving net-zero operations by 2040, was approved at Cabinet in April 2024. A key focus is the reduction of energy consumption in buildings and street lighting to minimise fuel usage, lower energy costs, and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions associated with the built environment. The implementation of low-carbon energy sources will complement existing initiatives to enhance operational efficiency, upgrade systems, and generate on-site renewable electricity through photovoltaic panels (PVs).

2.20 The frameworks enable the future integration of Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) for renewable energy. This encompasses the addition of renewable energy generation capacity to the grid and/or the procurement of an energy supply or tariff with a high percentage of renewable energy. Additionally, it allows for flexibility in making future energy management decisions by the Council, facilitating their progress towards achieving a 100% renewable electricity supply by 2040.

2.21 There are various benefits and many risks associated with Power Purchase Agreements. Any decision to enter into a Power Purchase agreement must involve a thorough investigation to evaluate the market position, assess the market through horizon scanning to enable a full benefits appraisal to be developed. This will need to involve a wide variety of contributors both internally and externally and will not be able to be considered as part of this decision.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the Decision

The Council is required to procure its energy in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Alternative Options Considered

There are a number of options as set out below with the advantages and disadvantages of each listed:

Options Energy	Advantages	Dis-Advantages
1.Buy Direct i.e. Procure from market and manage our own partner brokerage	• Savings (Not determined as outside recommended practice) • Control of own strategy • Flexible in market • Concurrent to market • Flexible in demand	• Does not conform to the Pan-London Energy Project recommendation that all Public Sector organisations adopt aggregated, flexible and risk-managed energy procurement. • Procuring the supply will require a full tender process (timing) • Increased staff resources required • In-House technical broker expertise becomes a single point of failure and high risk factor • Best price limited to current market

		• We would have to provide all service management • Volume tolerance is applied by providers limiting the in-contract changes allowed and they may apply penalties • Would not represent best practice as not forming part of an aggregated, flexible and risk-managed, energy procurement strategy • Low procurement volume would not drive best price model.
2.Public Sector Framework e.g. current CCS or LASER (Kent County Council)	• LEPP aggregated risk-managed flex contracts continues to be the most appropriate price risk-managed strategy • No lengthy procurement • Budget Stability (Purchase In Advance (PIA – please see paragraph 2.5)) • Bigger basket £350m) • Supports public sector • Tried & Tested • Auditable • Rebate mechanisms • Longer Buying Window (Up to two years)	• Control is limited as it subject to the framework Governance & Risk Management Strategy • Pricing strategy doesn't allow all line items to be fully negotiated and maximise saving opportunities • Suppliers are pre-selected and set for 4 -5 year term • Flexible – timing for baskets of combined authorities' needs to access the markets
3. Full out-source i.e. 3rd party procurement; private broker & bureau; e.g. Capita /Buy Energy Online; or alternative E-Auction /Broker	• We retain strategic control • Flexibility • Access to wholesale market (aggregated) • Variety of procurement tools available • Cost & hidden fees	• Need to compliantly procure the broker (timing), • Need clarity over procurement requirements • Needs local client sign-off as new options are agreed • Missing opportunities i.e. buying during market lows, due to local sign off /availability of relevant decision-maker in line with scheme of delegation • Cost & Fees transparency • Supply tolerance

It is recommended to proceed with the second option; using a compliantly-procured, public sector framework with providers that buy on the wholesale energy market and in particular the LASER framework. In addition to the benefits outlined below, we can also get the opportunity to manage the major corporate sites under LASER's fully-managed category where LASER will validate all invoices within the contract. This option was not available within the CCS framework and required a team of staff to carry out this work. We will get the following additional benefits using a LASER framework:

- **Additional protections against supplier failure** – the option to switch between suppliers on the framework in the event of a supplier going out of business or materially breaching the terms of the contract.

- **Cost Avoidance through Additional Services** - A large range of energy efficiency hardware and support, renewable generation and Demand Side Response services to help achieve Havering's goals

- **Robust Framework terms and Conditions** - Written with public sector bodies in mind and contain all key terms that should be included as a standard.

- **Power and Gas purchase agreements** – additional options to generate revenue or reduce costs through customer-owned or third-party owned generators.

- **Additional green energy options** – reduced costs and more options around purchasing green energy from suppliers. Historically green energy has attracted price premiums, and recently, there has been a further increase in the price of REGO-based green energy. This element focuses mainly on the electricity market, which currently would not show best value, however the Council could consider if a proportion could be procured to assist with the carbon reduction commitments, however this would need to be carefully considered.

- **Additional trading strategies** – the ability for LASER to amend and introduce new trading strategies to meet bespoke customer requirements.

- **Additional management information requirements** – increased requirements on suppliers to provide meaningful management information to customers.

- **Additional supplier Service Level Agreement** requirements and enhanced KPIs

- **Social Value** The annual global value guaranteed through the contract (laser's framework commitment across its total spend) is £130,000 per annum, with Laser customers having the ability to apply for an element(s) of the pot to be made available for specific SV projects. Discussions are ongoing with Laser to secure a guaranteed proportion of the pot for LB Havering.

Other options considered:

'Do nothing' - is not viable, as a public authority Havering is obliged to procure services of a certain value through a compliant approach and requires the renewal of the existing contract with LASER to join new framework.

Due to the value of the Council's annual electricity and gas spend, it is required to have a contract in place. If a contract is not put in place, the Council may default onto more expensive out of contract rates that would not provide value for money, so doing nothing is not an option.

An authority-led individual tender or mini-competition - not recommended due to the cost of the tender process and not commensurate with potential benefits of retailer service efficiencies and savings. Local authorities have very few bespoke or unique business/service requirements and retailers are unlikely to offer an attractive price, service or enhancements for individuals as they may for the group.

The wholesale energy market is extremely volatile and competitive. Given the scale of expenditure over the next 5 years it is essential for the Council to exploit economies within the broader energy supply market via a public sector framework that is actively managed responding to opportunities to forward buy energy when prices are lower as utilised by most of the local authorities within London.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Based on 2024/25 KW/H prices and the energy usage from 2023/24. The General Fund annual cost is forecast to be £1.8m, with available budget of £2.3m. The purchase in advance price achieved by Laser, and the energy consumption used are likely to change each year, this will continue to be monitored as there is a risk that movements in either or both, will result in additional budgetary support being required.

The remaining £3.54m of forecasted cost is attributable to Housing and Schools, these elements are funded separately, from the Housing Revenue Account and the Dedicated Schools Grant respectively.

Legal implications and risks:

The Council has a general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that an individual generally may do subject to other statutory provisions limiting or restricting its use. The recommendations to award the aforementioned contracts are compatible with this statutory power.

The total value of each contract exceeds the threshold for services under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 ("2015 Regulations"). Therefore, the 2015 Regulations apply in full.

This report seeks authority to utilise two Framework Agreements for the award of its electricity and gas contracts as follows:

- Electricity Framework (Contract Award Notice: 2022/S 000-027135); and
- Gas Framework (Contract Award Notice: 2022/S 000-027136)

Both Framework Agreements appear to be compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The Framework Agreements were executed on 27 September 2022. Participating authorities have until September 2028 to call-off suppliers from either Framework.

The Council's Contract Procedure Rule 20.4 state that where a framework agreement is operational, all subsequent purchases under the framework shall either not require further competition (if a single supplier) or, if there are two or more suppliers for those goods or services on the framework, follow the express framework provisions for choosing a supplier.

The two Framework Agreements permit direct awards to any supplier based on either, coming first overall, being the Council's incumbent provider or to the successful supplier for a particular evaluation section which is of most importance to the Council. The body of the report already sets out the reasons for the direct awards.

Human Resources implications and risks

There will be increased human resource requirements in the case of using other options, as mentioned in the report, due to the handling of high volumes of data.

Equalities implications and risks:

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising its functions to have “due regard” to:

- the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not; and
- the need to foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Then you can set out how the framework meets this duty.

The members of the energy frameworks are required to answer questions regarding their equalities policy and any adverse findings as part of their procurement of a public sector framework.

Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks

Making sure that buildings and street lights have lower costs and a secure supply of energy helps communities. It also helps reduce the problem of not being able to afford fuel, and makes things safer. Council buildings and other important structures help the people who live in the area. They provide safe and comfortable places for everyone to hang out, do sports, do business, and meet new people. This helps make life better for everyone and keeps people healthy and happy.

Environmental and Climate Change Implications and Risks

The chosen framework will provide the necessary tools to reduce our carbon emissions related to our property assets. This includes the ability to "sleeve" a PPA with additional services. Additionally, access to the LASER framework will enable us to purchase green tariffs, Renewable Electricity Guarantees of Origin certificates (REGOs), and switch electricity providers. These opportunities will be available at multiple points over the 4-year framework period, supporting the council in achieving its strategic aims, such as becoming carbon neutral by 2040, which is ahead of the national commitment to 2050. As the Council improves the energy efficiency of its building portfolio and increases renewable energy generation by installing solar panels energy requirements are anticipated to reduce over time.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Exempt - Appendix 1 - Cost Avoidance Report for LB Havering using LASER.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

CABINET

Subject Heading:	**Commercial Strategy**
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Ray Morgon, Leader of the Council.
ELT Lead:	Trevor Cook, Assistant Director, Education Services.
Report Author and contact details:	Azeezat Periola, 01708432672 Azeezat.Periola@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	The Commercial Strategy will support the delivery of a range of commercial activities in the Council. It will be managed within Havering's Governance framework to enhance financial sustainability and service efficiency, optimising resource allocation to improve services.
Financial summary:	There are no immediate direct financial implications for the Council. The Strategy will be delivered using existing resources, with costs absorbed by relevant teams. If specific commercial initiatives are identified which require investment, then this will be the subject of future reports.
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes. (a) Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more. (c) Significant effect on two or more Wards.
When should this matter be reviewed?	Bi-annually
Reviewing OSC:	Overview and Scrutiny Board

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well	X
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy	X
Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council	X

SUMMARY

This report presents Havering Council's Commercial Strategy for 2024-2029 detailed in Appendix 1. It seeks to consolidate the organisation's approach to commercial activities, fostering enhanced synergy among teams delivering commercial activity to ensure swift identification and actions taken on commercial opportunities.

The Strategy is underpinned by 4 strategic priorities and outcomes:

1. Governance.
2. Commercial Capability.
3. Communication & Marketing.
4. Data & Technology.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

- Approve the Commercial Strategy and the Action Plan.
- Agree to the resourcing of the Strategic and Operational Boards.

REPORT DETAIL

1.1. Havering Council is a well-run, efficient, and productive organisation, continuously striving to provide better services and outcomes for residents. However, the Council continues to face significant financial challenges due to demographic changes that drive up demand for statutory services such as social care and housing. The emerging cost of living crisis has further strained the budget, compounded by cuts from central government grant funding. We have had to rely on local funding through council tax and business rates, but this is insufficient to offset the reduction in central government support.

1.2. In this era of prolonged austerity, there is a pressing need for a new, more agile, innovative, and commercially aware organisation to ensure that our limited resources are maximised for value and to create a financially sustainable organisation that meets the evolving needs and expectations of residents. Embracing innovative and commercial strategies is critical for the council's financial sustainability.

1.3. The Target Operating Model (TOM) created an opportunity for Havering Council to explore new ways of working, ensuring that the Council is fit for the future and able to manage the challenges ahead. As part of TOM a review of the council's commercial activities was conducted to identify growth opportunities and determine how these services should be organised.

1.4. The review revealed that several teams engaged in commercial activities have the potential to increase their income through expanded external trading. However, some barriers hinder the progress of delivering commercial activities. Overcoming these barriers requires a cultural shift to integrate commercial thinking into the Council and embed it within the decision-making process.

1.5. Proposals for a commercial governance structure, including a newly formed Strategic Commercial Board were presented to the TOM Programme Board for a decision by the Chief Executive.

1.6. The Commercial Strategy has been co-produced by different teams across the Council with the interest of delivering the Council's commercial ambitions. Three workshops were conducted to discuss and agree the strategic priorities of the Strategy and action plan needed to deliver the

Strategy and integrate a commercial culture across the organisation. The four strategic priorities and outcomes are:

1. **Governance:** A shared vision we are all working towards, with a clear, framework for ensuring that services support greater commercial activities and opportunities.
2. **Commercial Capability:** Investing in people's expertise to create a commercial culture and approach to knowledge sharing, going above and beyond to build our reputation for providing a high quality service.
3. **Communication & Marketing:** Understanding our customer's needs, before they do, to develop existing high performing and high demand services to grow and increase their customer base.
4. **Data & Technology:** Leverage data and digital tools to innovate and enhance operational efficiency. Utilising data and digital intelligence, building our digital offer through the use of virtual technologies.

1.7 The Strategy has due regard to risk management and performance monitoring to ensure the actions are monitored, evaluated, and reported to guarantee transparency and accountability.

1.8 The attached Commercial Strategy sets out our approach to delivering Havering's commercial ambitions. It is also accompanied by a detailed internal action plan which will be reviewed internally by the Strategic and Operational Commercial Boards.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

2.0 Reasons for the decision:

2.1 Adopting this Commercial Strategy ensures a strategic, coordinated approach to enhance the Council's commercial activities. By establishing a Strategic and Operational Commercial Board, it ensures a robust governance framework that swiftly identifies and responds to commercial opportunities, fostering collaboration across teams while maintaining effective oversight. This Strategy will integrate a commercial mind-set and culture within the workforce, driving service efficiency, optimising resource allocation, and better addressing residents' and local business's needs. This proactive, business-oriented approach ensures the Council operates with maximum effectiveness and financial sustainability, fostering a dynamic environment geared toward continuous improvement and innovation.

3.0 Other options considered:

3.1 **Option 1 – Do nothing, continue as we are.** This option has been rejected as it will not help address the future funding gap and the Council would not maximise or deliver its commercial opportunities.

3.2 **Option 2 – Centralise teams/services that engage in commercial activities within a separate pillar.** This option has been rejected as the success of the existing teams is due to them being embedded within teams that really know their customers, understand their needs, and can identify any developing market opportunities. Besides, centralising the teams may potentially hinder the prospects of developing a commercial culture across the organisation.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

4.0 Financial implications and risks:

4.1 This report sets out a proposed new Commercial Strategy for the London Borough of Havering and an action plan for achieving cultural change and greater awareness of commercial principles.

4.2 The Council already undertakes a range of trading and commercial activities and raises significant amounts (over £30m) of fees and charges income from the public, schools and other bodies from activities including schools catering, car parks, bereavement services and others. This income enables the continued provision of good quality services. Adoption of the Strategy and the principles laid out should support this activity and the Strategy sets out how commercial thinking and awareness could support the Council achieve greater value for money across all its services.

4.3 Adoption of the Strategy in itself does not require additional resources but may require some reprioritisation of time and efforts from existing staff and management.

4.4 As a result, it is likely that improvements and new initiatives will be identified that may require future investment. Business cases will need to be developed, and any resources required identified.

5.0 Legal implications and risks:

5.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the approval of the Commercial Strategy. There will be legal considerations arising from individual commercial activities and these will be evaluated as part of the business case and associated formal governance processes.

5.2 The Council has a range of powers that may be relied upon when delivering projects which form part of the Strategy, including the general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, subject to any other statutory constraints.

5.3 Key risks associated with commercial activity should be identified on the strategic and project risk registers as appropriate.

6.0 Human Resources implications and risks:

6.1 Other than the actions set out in the Action Plan (at Appendix 2 of the Strategy) (e.g. the need to invest in people's expertise to create a commercial culture), the recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

7.0 Equalities implications and risks:

7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

(i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

(ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;

(iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

7.2 Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy, and maternity and gender reassignment.

7.3 The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

7.4 An EHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) is usually carried out and on this occasion, this is attached.

7.5 The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

7.6 There are not equalities and social inclusion implications and risks associated with this decision.

8.0 Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks:

8.1 There are no Health and Wellbeing implications arising from adopting the Commercial Strategy.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has agreed for the organisation and the borough to be carbon neutral by 2040 or sooner. A key strategic action centres around data and technology. Through this, sustainable practices and technologies will be integrated to reduce carbon emission associated with operation and services.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

HAVERING COUNCIL

Commercial Strategy 2024-2029

Making a Difference

Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

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Executive Summary
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Implementation Action Plan

Foreword

I am pleased to present Havering Council's Commercial Strategy. This Strategy aligns closely with the Council's vision – "*The Havering you want to be part of",* Havering's Corporate Plan and other key strategies contributing towards our ambition to enable a resident-focused and resilient Council where people are happy to live, work and enjoy.

The primary purpose of this Strategy is to provide a clear roadmap for the Council's commercial activities over the coming years. Our Strategy is built on the principles of commercialisation and social value, fostering economic development while ensuring that our commercial activities deliver social value for residents.

This comprehensive Strategy outlines our vision for acting commercially to making a difference, embedded in social value and financial sustainability. We are committed to delivering the objectives of fostering a commercially focused organisational culture, optimising commercial performance and financial management and enhance commercial outputs and service delivery. Our leadership is dedicated to implementing this Strategy with diligence and transparency, ensuring that our efforts yield long-term positive outcomes.

Like most local authorities, Havering Council faces the challenge of making significant savings against its annual spend to ensure a balanced budget and secure financial resilience. In the midst of economic uncertainty, it is crucial to make the best use of our resources. This Strategy aims to address these challenges head-on by leveraging our strengths and adopting a more commercial approach grounded in public service values to enhance service delivery.

This document is the culmination of extensive research, stakeholder consultations, and collaborative efforts. It reflects our commitment to adopting an inclusive approach and evidence-based decision making.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this Strategy. Your insights, feedback, and hard work have been invaluable in shaping this Strategy.

I encourage all readers to engage with this Strategy and contribute to its success. Let us work together to bring this Strategy to life and create a prosperous future for our community.

Councillor Ray Morgon,
Leader of Havering Council.

Executive Summary

This document outlines Havering Council's Commercial Strategy 2024-2029. This Strategy focuses on providing a corporate direction for the delivery of commercial activities in the organisation aiming to enhance financial sustainability through a commercially minded workforce.

Havering Council generates substantial revenue by engaging in various commercial activities. Surpluses from commercial activities have been reinvested in frontline services to address shortfall in funding gaps. In 2022, a realignment of the organisational structure saw the implementation of the Target Operating Model (TOM). TOM led to a review of the Council's commercial activities and with proposals for a commercial governance structure, which this Strategy builds upon.

This Strategy seeks to deliver four key priorities:

1. Governance: A shared vision we are all working towards, with a clear framework, ensuring that services support greater commercial activities and opportunities.

2. Commercial Capability: Investing in people's expertise to create a commercial culture and approach to knowledge sharing, going above and beyond to build our reputation for providing a high quality service.

3. Communication & Marketing: Understanding our customer's needs, before they do, to develop existing high performing and high demand services to grow and increase their customer base.

4. Data & Technology: Leverage data and digital tools to innovate and enhance operational efficiency. Utilising data and digital intelligence, building our digital offer through the use of virtual technologies.

Background

Havering Council is a well-run, efficient and productive organisation, continuously striving to provide better services and outcomes for residents. However, the Council continues to face significant financial challenges due to demographic changes that drive up demand for statutory services such as social care and housing. The emerging cost of living crisis has further strained the budget, compounded by cuts from central government grant funding. We have had to rely on local funding through council tax and business rates, but this is insufficient to offset the reduction in central government support.

In this era of prolonged austerity, there is a pressing need for a new, more agile, innovative, and commercially aware organisation to ensure that our limited resources are maximised for value and to create a financially sustainable organisation that meets the evolving needs and expectations of residents. Embracing innovative and commercial strategies is critical for the council's financial sustainability.

The Target Operating Model (TOM) created an opportunity for Havering Council to explore new ways of working, ensuring that the Council is fit for the future and able to manage the challenges ahead. As part of TOM a review of the council's commercial activities was conducted to identify growth opportunities and determine how these services should be organised.

The review revealed that several teams engaged in commercial activities have the potential to increase their income through expanded external trading. However, some barriers hinder the progress of delivering commercial activities. Overcoming these barriers requires a cultural shift to integrate commercial thinking into the Council and embed it within the decision-making process.

Proposals for a commercial governance structure, including a newly formed Strategic Commercial Board were presented to the TOM Programme Board for a decision by the Chief Executive.

This Strategy sets out our approach to maximising value through more commercial approaches.

What 'commercial' means to us

Commercialisation for us is not restricted to income generation.

Commercialisation for Havering Council means:

Applying commercial principles to manage public services, generate income and deliver greater social value.

Utilising commercial skills to strategically use council assets, services, and capabilities to attract investment, generate revenue, improve efficiency, and provide better value for money.

Adopting a commercial mind-set with a focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money.

Collaborative working across different service areas to apply sound commercial judgment and data to inform business cases and decision-making.

Effective management of contracts and procurement activities.

Understanding our market and customers to deliver excellent customer services.

Developing positive relationships with public and private sectors.

We recognise that not all services will have the scope for commercialisation, nonetheless, efficiencies will be optimised by adopting a commercial approach to service delivery, such as seeking out grants and other funding opportunities that support innovation and efficiency in services and engaging in joint working and collaborative practices.

Our Commercial Vision & Objectives

Vision

Our vision is to be a commercially focused Council which utilises innovation and technology, delivers excellent services that prioritise social value, financial management, ensuring excellence and market leadership in service delivery to make a difference.

Objectives

Foster a Commercially Focused Organisational Culture

We will implement training programs that enhance commercial awareness, develop necessary skill sets, and ensure adequate capability and capacity across the organisation. We will encourage staff to think and act commercially in decision-making, promote cross-cutting work between directorates, and actively involve Council Members in commercial activities and decision-making processes to leverage their insights and support.

Optimise Commercial Performance and Financial Management

We will review and enhance existing commercial activities to improve performance and financial outcomes. We will centralise contracts and procurement management to streamline processes and control debt effectively, foster innovation to drive commercial success and establish robust data sets to monitor and analyse commercial activities for informed decision-making.

Enhance Commercial Outputs and Service Delivery

We will improve operational efficiencies and service delivery through strategic partnerships, including collaborating with other Local Authorities to increase purchasing power. We will improve service offering, focus on customer satisfaction by consulting and listening to customers, exploring the market for inspiring ideas, and staying informed about market and product knowledge.

Guiding Principles

We have agreed the following principles to drive delivery of this Strategy. These principles set the context and the scope for the Commercial Strategy as well as providing a high level evaluation test for commercial opportunities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Social Value

Our commercial efforts aim to enhance service delivery for our communities, focusing on a customer-centric approach.

Strategic Alignment

Commercial projects must align with the Council's Vision, values, and priorities in the Corporate Plan, ensuring improved outcomes for our community.

Financial Discipline and Sustainability

We will prioritise strategies that drive profitability and sustainable growth, ensuring efficient cost management and long-term value creation. Investment opportunities will be prudent and sustainable, safeguarding public funds and the Council's reputation.

Applicability to All Services

Our broad definition of commercial applies to all services. While financial impacts may vary, every service can contribute by adopting a commercial mind-set in their thinking, planning and actions.

Building a Business-Like Culture

We aim to foster a culture of commercial thinking and innovation across all services. Through training, we will develop commercial understanding, skills, and behaviours, making commercial thinking the norm.

Data-Driven Decision Making

We will use evidence-based practices and data to guide decision-making and identify growth opportunities.

Learning and Risk Management

We will measure success factors, learn from mistakes, and manage risks. A balanced approach will be taken to manage performance, assess risks, and capture learnings from commercial projects.

Creating a Commercial Culture

Creating a commercial culture requires a shift in mind-set across the organisation. Adopting this Strategy is a vital step in instilling a commercial culture within the council.

Our organisational values of Creativity and Ambition reflect our commitment to commercialisation. By finding ways to solve problems and make improvements, seeking new ideas and opportunities to innovate, being flexible and open to change, we aim to make Havering the best place to live, work, and do business. We take pride in our work and the efforts of our teams, and we are committed to continuous improvement. These values underpin the development of a commercial mind-set within Havering.

The Executive Leadership Team recognise their significant role and motivational contribution in driving the culture of commercialism throughout the entire organisation. To cultivate a positive commercial culture, Members and Officers will be equipped with the necessary skills and expertise needed for successful commercialisation. Training programmes will be sourced and developed to support this cultural change.

Creating a supportive environment within the organisation is crucial for nurturing innovative ideas and developing them into robust project proposals. By establishing avenues such as a forum for sharing ideas related to commercial activities and implementing training on commercial awareness we will encourage and support staff to propose commercial ideas and embed commercial principles in our daily operations. By embedding a commercial culture and ethos, we ensure that all services operate effectively and efficiently.

Broadening the commercial culture within the council involves empowering staff to be innovative and adopting business-like practices to deliver services more efficiently and effectively. The four strategic priorities will drive this cultural change, ensuring a successful transition to a more commercially minded organisation.

Strategic Links

This Commercial Strategy aligns closely with other key strategies and plans that contribute towards the overall success of Havering Council.

COUNCIL'S VISION & CORPORATE PLAN

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING

PRODUCTIVITY PLAN

HAVERING LOCAL PLAN

CORPORATE CHARGING POLICY

COMMERCIAL STRATEGY

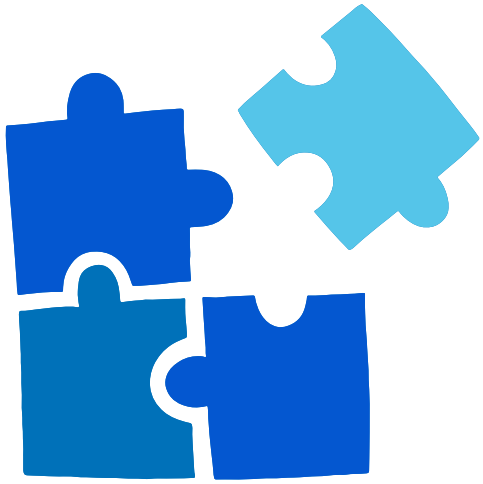
WORKFORCE STRATEGY

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

IMPROVEMENT & TRANSFORMATION PLAN

JOINT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY



Current Commercial Activities

Engaging in commercial activities is not new to Havering. We currently generate revenue through income generating services and traded services.

Our current commercial activities operate across different service areas including property & land holdings, bereavement & registration, highways, services to schools, garden waste and many more.

This Strategy seeks to integrate these efforts rather than replicate them, providing direction and a framework that fosters synergy among our existing commercial services.

It also aims to identify and successfully implement new opportunities.

Strategic Priorities and Outcomes

Governance

A shared vision we are all working towards, with a clear framework, ensuring that services support greater commercial activities and opportunities.

Commercial Capability

Investing in people's expertise to create a commercial culture and approach to knowledge sharing, going above and beyond to build our reputation for providing a high quality service.

Communication & Marketing

Understanding our customer's needs, before they do, to develop existing high performing and high demand services to grow and increase their customer base.

Data & Technology

Leverage data and digital tools to innovate and enhance operational efficiency. Utilising data and digital intelligence, building our digital offer through the use of virtual technologies.

Performance Monitoring

With a robust governance process, performance monitoring of the Commercial Strategy is integrated in the activities of the Strategic and Operational Commercial Board.

The successful delivery of the Commercial Strategy will be measured through monitoring outcomes of the four strategic priorities supporting the delivery of the Strategy. This will allow for appropriate oversight and monitoring, enabling Board members to assess progress being made and initiate improvement planning if needed.

To ensure continuous improvement an evaluation framework will be devised and adopted by the Commercial Boards that can demonstrate delivery of the strategic priorities. These evaluation principles will provide the basis for organisational learning and future improvement planning.

Regular evaluations will ensure we stay on track to meet our objectives and adapt to changing circumstances.

Risk Management

R

I

S

K

Recognising that commercial activities inherently involve risk, we will adhere to the Council's Risk Management Strategy & Toolkit, while giving due regard to the Strategic Risk Register. Our commitment to governance processes ensures transparent decision-making and reporting. Our approach will balance innovation with prudence to mitigate risks while pursuing opportunities.

Risk management is integral to our Commercial Strategy. While recognising the inherent risks in commercial activities, we are committed to robust risk management practices.

We will establish strong governance arrangements to effectively manage commercial activity risks, involving appropriate oversight from Commercial Boards and Members oversight and scrutiny.

Prior to embarking on commercial activities appropriate due diligence review will be undertaken to assess associated operational and strategic risk including mitigation measures that can be implemented.

Legal advice will be an early aspect of any development of commercial activities to ensure the Council will be acting within the legislative framework in undertaking the activity and to inform good decision making. Specialist external advice will be sought as appropriate.

We will undertake frequent review of all risks relating to commercial activity in the context of the Council's overall risk management approach, with appropriate escalation and reporting.

Commercialisation projects will be closely monitored by the Commercial Boards, ensuring risk associated with project delivery is mitigated.

Implementation Action Plan

Governance

A shared vision we are all working towards, with a clear framework, ensuring that services support greater commercial activities and opportunities.

SHORT - MEDIUM TERM (2024/26)	MEDIUM - LONG TERM (2026-2029)
Establish a Strategic Commercial Board for a strategic alignment and high-level oversight for the development and execution of the Commercial Strategy.	Embed commercial contract management approach within each service that incorporates social value, particularly in procurement and commissioning process.
Establish an Operational Commercial Board to facilitate idea generation and oversee the practical implementation of the Commercial Strategy.	Develop a robust Commercial Framework to evaluate commercial opportunities with thorough business case assessments reviewed by the Commercial Boards, including comprehensive risk management considerations.
Identify Lead Member and ELT Lead for 'Commercial Opportunities'.	Commercial activities subject to internal audit & scrutiny.
Develop streamlined process in Governance for decision making to ensure opportunities are not lost.	Develop single views of 'customers' to identify opportunities.
Embed 'Commercial Opportunities' within existing decision-making processes.	Establish a differentiated approach to fees and charges.
Implement Risk escalation and management process with oversight from Commercial Boards.	Develop a resource for identifying grants, bidding and sponsorship opportunities.

Implementation Action Plan

Commercial Capability

Investing in people's expertise to create a commercial culture and approach to knowledge sharing, going above and beyond to build our reputation for providing a high quality service.

SHORT - MEDIUM TERM (2024/26)	MEDIUM - LONG TERM (2026-2029)
Develop a commercial culture and mind-set across the Council.	Incorporate manager and staff commercial competencies into PDR objectives.
Identify Commercial Learning Sponsors from service areas to create and commission a programme of staff training in commercial awareness and relationship building.	Embed commercial approach to service delivery.
Identify and promote commercial 'leads' across services.	Include 'commercial skills/knowledge' in job profiles.
Create a forum for sharing ideas relating to commercial activities.	Embed recognition of commercial activities as part of the STAR award category.
Identify (mandatory) training and development opportunities for staff on commercial awareness and customer service.	

Implementation Action Plan

Communication & Marketing

Understanding our customer's needs, before they do, to develop existing high performing and high demand services to grow and increase their customer base.

SHORT - MEDIUM TERM (2024/26)	MEDIUM - LONG TERM (2026-2029)
Introduce a Commercial section to the Intranet, with information on teams and services to enable signposting.	Develop existing & high demand services to grow & improve their trading positions by deepening & broadening their customer base.
Introduce a Commercial section to the Internet, with information on teams and services to enable signposting and customers to get in touch.	Use our website, SEO, and brand value to promote our trading and commercial activities and those which we can partner with others to receive a financial return.
Establish single points of contact for services that share customers.	Identify targeted marketing approach to understand our audience, including use of advocates, social media etc.
Increase awareness across the borough about the range of services offered by the Council.	Utilise various communication channels available to the Council to engage with and communicate with the public, leveraging customer information and contacts to identify and develop new commercial opportunities.
Develop a 'prospectus' of services for potential new customers.	

Implementation Action Plan

Data & Technology

Leverage data and digital tools to innovate and enhance operational efficiency. Utilising data and digital intelligence, building our digital offer through the use of virtual technologies.

SHORT - MEDIUM TERM (2024/26)	MEDIUM - LONG TERM (2026-2029)
Understand how our customers want to be communicated with.	Maximise the use of technology to drive simpler and more cost-effective processes for commissioners, procurement, buyers, and suppliers.
Identify opportunities to cross sell/upsell.	Using our vast amount of business and service data more intelligently to create new/ enhance existing commercial opportunities and better service delivery models which will generate new income for the Council.
Target new businesses in Havering to offer services.	Integrating artificial intelligence for service delivery and efficiency.
Develop a Power BI Commercial Dashboard to support decision making and forecasting.	Develop differentiated offer in the market place, expanding the market reach by adopting digital delivery.
Develop a single/process for a Customer CRM tool.	Digital self-service tools and processes will be introduced to provide central intelligence of our contract expenditure and a self-service experience to managing our commercial relationships.
Improve and simplify processes for payments to suppliers and income collection.	

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London Borough Of Havering

Commercial Strategy Action Plan

Making a Difference.

London Borough Of Havering
9/18/2024

Document Control

Include document details, version history, approval history, and equality analysis record.

Document details

Name	Commercial Strategy
Version number	
Status	In Review
Author	Azeezat Periola – National Management Trainee
Lead Officer	Azeezat Periola – National Management Trainee
Approved by	Trevor Cook, Assistant Director, Education Services
Scheduled review date	September 2026

Version history

Version	Change	Date	Dissemination
V0.1	Draft	30/07/2024	Trevor Cook
V0.2	Draft	02/08/2024	Business Partners, Commercial Board Working Party
V0.3	Draft	02/09/2024	Cabinet Briefing

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Governance

A shared vision we are all working towards, with a clear framework, ensuring that services support greater commercial activities and opportunities.

	Action	Outcomes Sought	Timescale Short term = 2025 Medium term = 2026/27 Long term = 2028/29	Responsible Officer(s)
1.1	Establish a Strategic Commercial Board.	Ensure strategic alignment and high-level oversight for the development and execution of the Commercial Strategy.	Short term	Trevor Cook Exec Support Resources
1.2	Establish an Operational Commercial Board.	Facilitate idea generation and oversee the practical implementation of the Commercial Strategy.	Short term	Trevor Cook Exec Support Resources
1.3	Identify Lead Member and ELT Lead for 'Commercial Opportunities'.	Designate clear accountability and leadership for driving commercial opportunities.	Short term	Andrew Blake-Herbert Trevor Cook
1.4	Develop streamlined process in Governance for decision making to ensure opportunities are not lost.	Ensure efficient and timely decision-making to capitalise on commercial opportunities. Streamline administrative process and eliminate redundant steps in decision-making.	Medium term	Trevor Cook Jacqui Barr
1.5	Embed 'Commercial Opportunities' within existing decision-making processes.	Integrate commercial considerations into all relevant decision-making frameworks.	Medium term	Trevor Cook Jacqui Barr
1.6	Implement Risk escalation and management process with oversight from Commercial Boards.	Ensure timely identification and management of risks.	Medium term	Maria Denton
1.7	Commercial activities subject to internal audit & scrutiny.	Ensure internal checks and balances on commercial activities. Report progress of the Boards bi-annually to the Overview & Scrutiny Board to deliver internal checks and balances.	Medium term	Trevor Cook Maria Denton Anthony Clements
1.8	Develop a robust Commercial Framework to evaluate commercial opportunities with thorough business case assessments reviewed by the Commercial Boards, including comprehensive risk management considerations.	Ensure thorough evaluation and risk management of commercial opportunities.	Medium term	Trevor Cook Shola Omogbehin
1.9	Embed commercial contract management approach within each service that incorporates social value, particularly in procurement and commissioning processes.	Ensure effective management of commercial contracts with a focus on social value. Contract managers maximising social value from contracts to ensure the Council benefits.	Long term	Euan Beales Zak Durrani Lorna Waters

1.10	Develop single views of ‘customers’ to identify opportunities.	Create a unified customer perspective to better identify and serve commercial opportunities.	Long term	Operational Commercial Board
1.11	Establish a differentiated approach to fees and charges.	Implement a tailored approach to pricing that maximises revenue and competitiveness.	Long term	Trevor Cook Shola Omogbehin Vanya Alexander
1.12	Develop a resource for identifying grants, bidding and sponsorship opportunities.	Create a centralised database or platform that aggregates available grants, bidding and sponsorship opportunities.	Long term	Euan Beales Zak Durrani Lorna Waters

Commercial Capability

Investing in people's expertise to create a commercial culture and approach to knowledge sharing, going above and beyond to build our reputation for providing a high quality service.

	Action	Outcomes Sought	Timescale Short term = 2025 Medium term = 2026/27 Long term = 2028/29	Responsible Officer(s)
2.1	Develop a commercial culture and mind-set across the Council.	Increased awareness and adoption of commercial practices across all council departments.	Short-Long term	Operational Board
2.2	Identify Commercial Learning Sponsors from service areas to create and commission a programme of staff training in commercial awareness and relationship building.	Creation of a structured commercial training program with staff participating in commercial awareness and relationship-building training sessions.	Short term	Operational Commercial Board
2.3	Identify and promote commercial 'leads' across services.	Designation of commercial leads in each service area.	Short term	ELT TBC
2.4	Create a forum for sharing ideas relating to commercial activities.	Create a process for commercial and money saving ideas to be considered, working with the relevant service areas. Increased staff engagement in idea generation leading to the implementation of new innovative projects. Encourage and support staff to propose and develop commercial ideas for consideration and implementation.	Short term	Darren Bindloss
2.5	Identify (mandatory) training and development opportunities for staff on commercial awareness and customer service.	Implementation of (mandatory) commercial awareness and customer service training and development for all staff. Build a Community of Practice on commercialisation.	Medium term	Joanne Budden Alison Callan-Day Trevor Cook Shola Omogbehin Kevin Engstrom
2.6	Incorporate manager and staff commercial competencies into PDR objectives.	Integration of commercial competencies into Personal Development Review (PDR) objectives for managers and staff resulting in an increase in commercial initiative success rates. Improvement in commercial capability scores in staff assessments.	Medium term	Operational Board
2.7	Embed commercial approach to service delivery.	Adoption of a commercial approach in all service delivery strategies leading to an increase in service efficiency and revenue.	Medium term	TBC
2.8	Include 'commercial skills/knowledge' in job profiles.	Updating all relevant job profiles to include commercial skills/knowledge requirements, resulting in improvement in hiring for commercial competencies.	Medium term	Joanne Budden Dan Debuc

2.9	Embed recognition of commercial activities as part of the STAR award category.	Inclusion of commercial activity in the STAR awards with at least three teams or individuals recognised for their commercial contributions within the first award cycle.	Long term	Joanne Budden Alison Callan-Day

Communication & Marketing

Understanding our customer's needs, before they do, to develop existing high performing and high demand services to grow and increase their customer base.

	Action	Outcomes Sought	Timescale Short term = 2025 Medium term = 2026/27 Long term = 2028/29	Responsible Officer(s)
3.1	Introduce a Commercial section to the Intranet, with information on teams and services to enable signposting.	Clear contact details on the Intranet leading to an increase in cross-departmental collaborations.	Short term	Azeezat Periola
3.2	Introduce a Commercial section to the Internet, with information on teams and services to enable signposting and customers to get in touch.	Clear contact details on the public facing website for customer enquiries.	Short term	Azeezat Periola Web team
3.3	Establish single points of contact for services that share customers.	Enhanced customer experience and satisfaction by providing dedicated support, leading to an improvement in service efficiency and customer feedback scores.	Short term	TBC
3.4	Increase awareness across the borough about the range of services offered by the Council.	Achieved an increase in public awareness and utilisation of council services through targeted awareness campaigns.	Medium term	Benjamin Vaughan
3.5	Develop a 'prospectus' of services for potential new customers.	Creation and distribution of a comprehensive service prospectus, resulting in an increase in inquiries and new customer acquisitions.	Medium term	Operational Commercial Board
3.6	Develop existing & high demand services to grow & improve their trading positions by deepening & broadening their customer base.	Increased revenue from high-demand services within the next fiscal year. Enhanced customer satisfaction and retention rates.	Medium term	Operational Commercial Board
3.7	Use our website, SEO, and brand value to promote our trading and commercial activities and those which we can partner with others to receive a financial return.	Improved website traffic through SEO and digital marketing efforts, leading to an increase in commercial partnerships and financial returns.	Long term	Web team
3.8	Identify targeted marketing approach to understand our audience, including use of advocates, social media etc.	Improved audience engagement metrics. Improve commercial use of social media and website content including promotion of prospectus/ credentials	Long term	Lorna Waters
3.9	Utilise various communication channels available to the Council to engage with and communicate with the public, leveraging customer information and contacts to identify and develop new commercial opportunities.	Enhanced public engagement through multiple channels, resulting in an increase in identified and developed commercial opportunities.	Long term	Lorna Waters Benjamin Vaughan

Data & Technology

Leverage data and digital tools to innovate and enhance operational efficiency. Utilising data and digital intelligence, building our digital offer through the use of virtual technologies.

	Action	Outcomes Sought	Timescale Short term = 2025 Medium term = 2026/27 Long term = 2028/29	Responsible Officer
4.1	Understand how our customers want to be communicated with.	Improved customer satisfaction and engagement.	Short term	Operational Commercial Board
4.2	Identify opportunities to cross sell/upsell.	Increase revenue growth from cross-selling/upselling, number of cross-sell/upsell transactions, and customer lifetime value.	Short term	TBC
4.3	Target new businesses in Havering to offer services.	Expanded customer base and market presence.	Short term	TBC
4.4	Develop a Power BI Commercial Dashboard to support decision making and forecasting.	Enhanced decision-making capabilities and accurate forecasting. Data-driven insights leading to better strategic planning and resource allocation.	Medium term	Hannah Smith
4.5	Develop a single/process for a Customer CRM tool.	Streamlined customer relationship management and contract management. Improved customer service, reduced administrative burden, and increased contract flexibility.	Medium term	Operational Commercial Board
4.6	Improve and simplify processes for payments to suppliers and income collection.	More efficient financial processes and improved cash flow management. Faster payment processing. Introduce user-friendly payment platforms that facilitate easy and quick (manual) transactions.	Long term	Operational Commercial Board
4.7	Develop differentiated offer in the market place, expanding the market reach by adopting digital delivery.	Increased competitiveness and market reach. Enhanced brand reputation and access to new customer segments.	Long term	Operational Commercial Board
4.8	Digital self-service tools and processes will be introduced to provide central intelligence of our contract expenditure and a self-service experience to managing our commercial relationships.	Increased efficiency and transparency in contract management. Cost savings, improved user experience, and better contract oversight.	Long term	Operational Commercial Board
4.9	Maximise the use of technology to drive simpler and more cost-effective processes for commissioners, procurement, buyers, and suppliers.	Streamlined procurement and commissioning processes.	Long term	Mark Duff

4.10	Using our vast amount of business and service data more intelligently to create new/ enhance existing commercial opportunities and better service delivery models which will generate new income for the Council.	Enhanced data utilisation for innovation and revenue generation. Identify/enhance commercial opportunities with data intelligence.	Long term	Mark Duff Hannah Smith
4.11	Integrating artificial intelligence for service delivery and efficiency.	Improved service efficiency, reduce operational costs and innovation.	Long term	Mark Duff

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	Commercial Strategy
Lead officer:	Azeezat Periola, National Management Trainee, Education Services
Approved by:	Trevor Cook – Assistant Director, Education Services
Version Number	**V0.1**
Date and Key Changes Made	
Scheduled date for next review:	September 2027

Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy & Diversity team (READI Team)?	Yes
Did you seek advice from the Public Health team?	No
Does the EHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website? See Publishing Checklist.	No

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact READI@havering.gov.uk for advice from either the Corporate Diversity or Public Health teams. Please refer to **this Guidance** on how to complete this form.

About your activity

<table>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Title of activity</td><td colspan="3">Commercial Strategy</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Type of activity</td><td colspan="3">Strategy</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Scope of activity</td><td colspan="3">The Commercial Strategy will support the delivery of Commercial activities in the Council. It will be conducted within Havering's Governance process to enhance financial sustainability and service efficiency, optimising resource allocation to improve services.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4a</td><td>Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?</td><td>Yes</td><td rowspan="2">If the answer to <u>either</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.</td><td rowspan="3">If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4b</td><td>Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people from different backgrounds?</td><td>Yes</td></tr>
<tr><td>4c</td><td>Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?</td><td>Yes</td><td>Please use the Screening tool before you answer this question.</td><td>If you answer 'YES', please continue to question 5.</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>If you answered YES:</td><td colspan="3">Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>If you answered NO:</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
</table>

Completed by:	Azeezat Periola, National Management Trainee, Education Services
Date:	04/07/2024

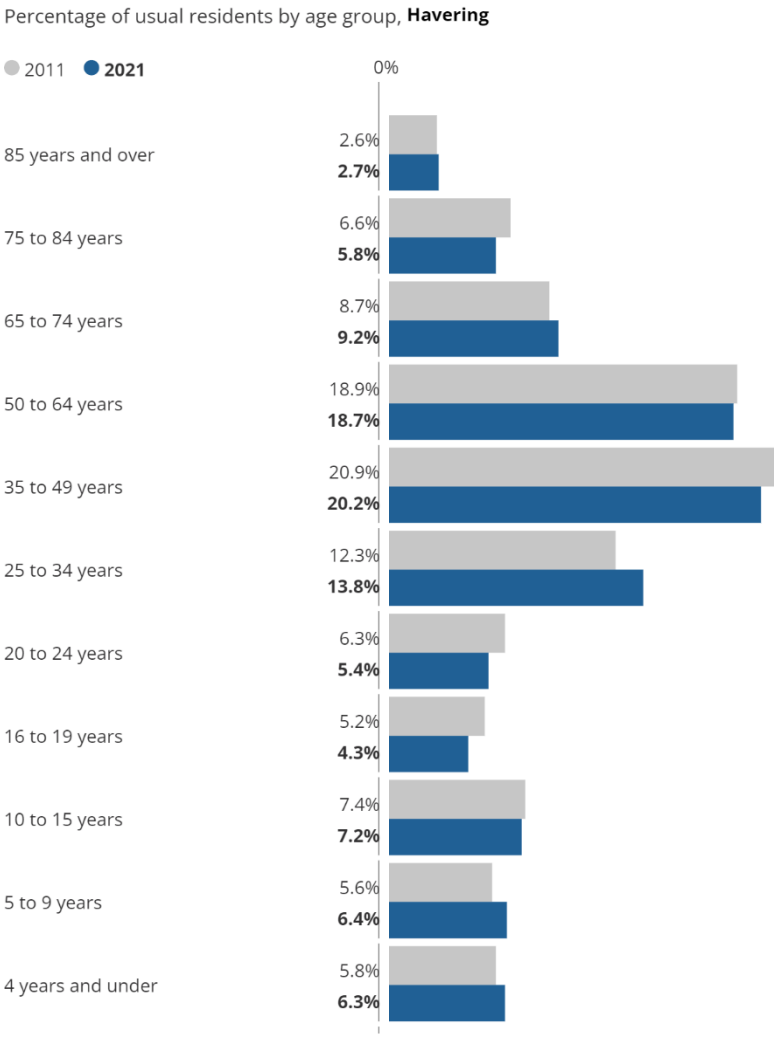
2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:
The Commercial Strategy 2024 – 2029 outlines the Council's commitment to support the delivery of commercial activities in the Council to enhance financial sustainability and service efficiency, optimising resource allocation to improve public services. This Strategy is underpinned by four strategic priorities 1. **Governance:** A shared vision we are all working towards, with a clear framework, ensuring that services support greater commercial activity and opportunities. 2. **Commercial Capability:** Investing in people's expertise to create a commercial culture and approach to knowledge sharing, going above and beyond to build our reputation for providing a high quality service. 3. **Communication & Marketing:** Understanding our customer's needs, before they do, to develop existing high performing and high demand services to grow and increase their customer base. 4. **Data & Technology:** Leverage data and digital tools to innovate and enhance operational efficiency. Utilising data and digital intelligence, building our digital offer through the use of virtual technologies.

Who will be affected by the activity?
All Havering staff will embrace the Strategy and work to implement a commercial culture in service delivery. Elected Members, residents, internal and external partners will be affected and consulted where appropriate.

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** Havering has a diverse population across different age groups. By improving financial sustainability, the Council can continue to provide and potentially enhance services for both young and older residents. Innovative approaches to service delivery may lead to tailored services that better meet the specific needs of different age groups.
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:
Evidence from Havering's demographic data from the 2021 ONS Census indicates an increase in demographic population across all age groups. Population growth was higher in Havering (10.5%) than across London (7.7%).



Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 Census and Census 2021

Sources used:

1. How life has changed in Havering: Census 2021 (ons.gov.uk)
2. Census-2021-Phase-1-results-first-release.pdf (haveringdata.net)

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical, mental, sensory, progressive conditions and learning difficulties. Also consider

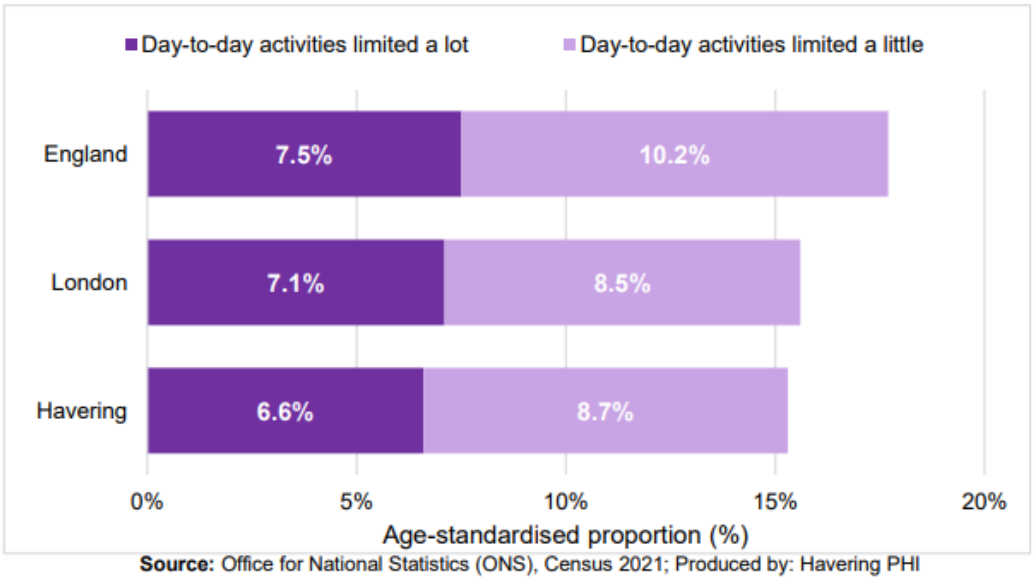
neurodivergent conditions e.g. dyslexia and autism.

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** Havering Council has a small number of residents recognised as having a disability under the Equality Act. The strategy will be published electronically, ensuring full accessibility for people who are partially sighted or blind. For the workforce, a Reasonable Adjustment policy and flexible working arrangements are in place to support staff who require accommodations. Income from commercial activities have been re-invested to support frontline services, including those that meet the needs of residents with disabilities.
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:

In Havering an estimated 38,449 residents reported having a disability in 2021. This is an age-standardised proportion (ASP) of 15.3%, which is slightly lower than London (15.6%) and lower than England (17.7%). In Havering, an ASP of 6.6% reported that their day-to-day activities were limited a lot and 8.7% reported their day-to-day activities were limited a little, due to a disability.

Figure 4: ASP (%) of population with a disability



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021; Produced by: Havering PHI

Sources used:

1. Census-2021-Topic-Summary-Health-Disability-and-Unpaid-Care.pdf (haveringdata.net)
2. LBH Workforce working arrangements
3. LBH Reasonable and General Adjustments Guidance

4. LBH Reasonable Adjustment Fact Sheet

Protected Characteristic – Sex / gender: Consider both men and women		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:**
Positive		Commercial activities will support people irrespective of their sex/gender. The Commercial strategy is non-discriminatory hence, a person's sex/gender is unlikely to be affected.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence:

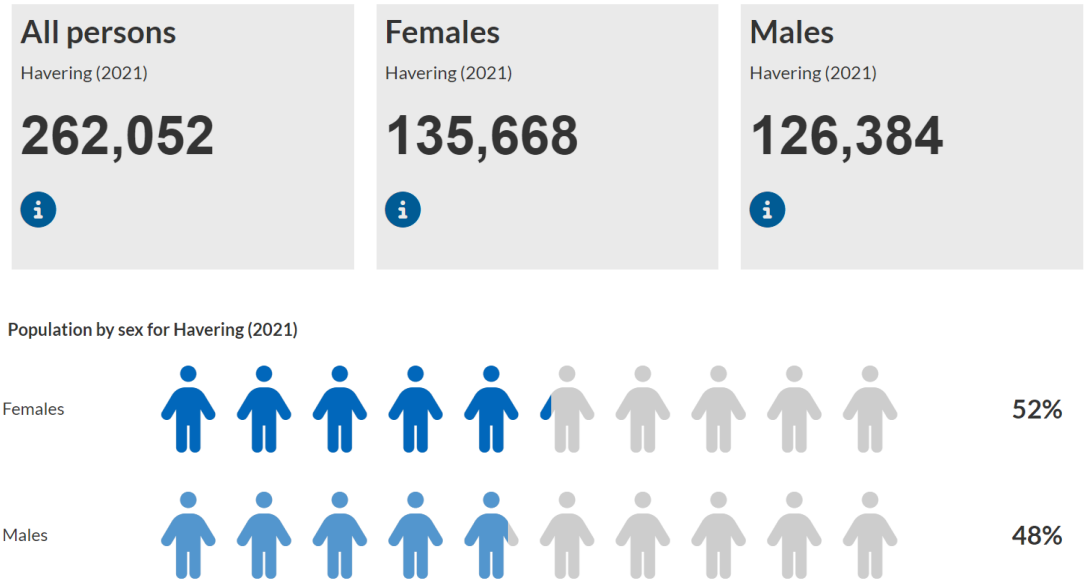


Figure 3: Detailed breakdown of gender identity in Havering for residents aged 16 and over

Gender Identity	Number	Percentage
Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth	196,462	93.67%
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given	528	0.25%
Trans woman	228	0.11%
Trans man	212	0.10%
Non-binary	60	0.03%
All other gender identities	39	0.02%
Not answered	12,201	5.82%
Total	209,730	100.00%

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021; Produced by: Havering PHI

Sources used:

1. Topic-Summary-Sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity.pdf (haveringdata.net)
2. Havering – Welcome to the Havering Data Intelligence Hub
3. Population - UTLA | Havering | Report Builder for ArcGIS (haveringdata.net)

Protected Characteristic – Ethnicity / race / nationalities: Consider the impact on different minority ethnic groups and nationalities

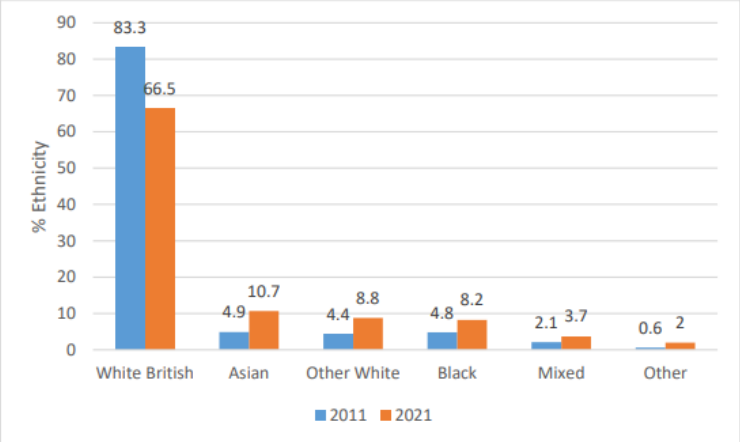
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	

Overall impact:
Havering is a growing and diverse borough, and this diversity is reflected in our workforce. As an Employer of Choice, Havering Council strives to employ a workforce that mirrors the diverse communities we serve.

This strategy is non-discriminatory and leverages the varied perspectives of our diverse workforce in decision-making processes. By considering the unique viewpoints of different minority ethnic groups, we ensure that our strategies and services are inclusive and equitable for all residents.

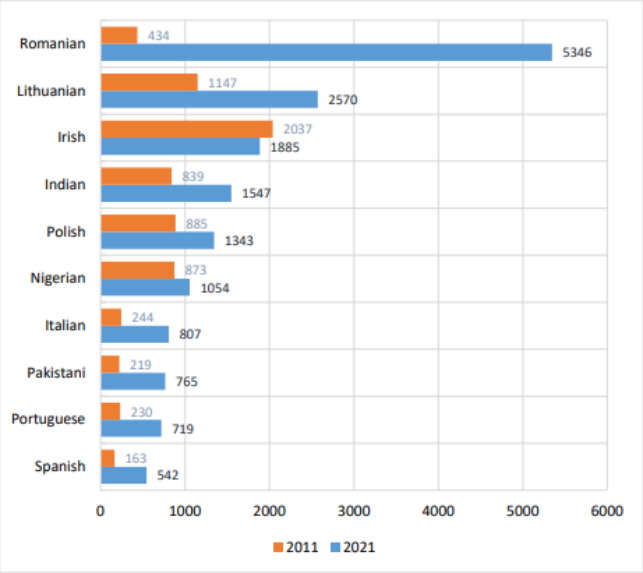
Evidence:

Figure 1 – Havering population in 2011 and 2021 by main ethnic group



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2011 & 2021; Produced by: Havering PHI

Figure 6 – Top 10 national identity excluding British



Sources used:

1. Census-2021-Topic-Summary-Ethnic-group-national-identity-language-religion.pdf (haveringdata.net)

Protected Characteristic – Religion / faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs, including those with no religion or belief		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:**
Positive		Recognising that intersectionality plays out across protected characteristics, there are no known inequality impacts related to religion or belief based on the Commercial Strategy. Planned actions are inclusive of people from all religions or beliefs, including those with no religion or belief.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence:

The religion question is voluntary in the Census. 94.5% of usual residents answered the question in 2021, compared to 93.3% in the 2011 Census.

The most commonly reported religion in Havering is Christian, with 52.2% of the total population in 2021 describing themselves as Christian. This is a reduction from 65.6% in 2011. No religion was the second most common response, with 30.6% identifying in this category, up from 22.6% in 2011. Other religions accounted for 11.7% of the total Havering population, which is an increase from 5.1% in 2011.

Sources used:

1. Census-2021-Topic-Summary-Ethnic-group-national-identity-language-religion.pdf (haveringdata.net)

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

Overall impact:
The Commercial Strategy will have a neutral impact on people of different sexual orientations. The Strategy is inclusive of people from all sexual orientations, therefore, there are no known inequality impacts associated with this protected characteristic group in this Strategy.

Evidence:
The Census question on sexual orientation was a voluntary question asked of those aged 16 years and over.

The number of people responding was very high with 93% (195,099) Havering residents answering the question; similar to the national response rate of 92.5% and better than the London response rate of 90.5%.

In total, 91.07% (191,007) Havering residents identified as straight or heterosexual. In total, 1.95% (4,092) Havering residents identified as one of the LGB+ orientations ("Gay or Lesbian", "Bisexual" or "Other sexual orientation"). In total, 6.98% (14,631) Havering residents did not answer the question.

Figure 1: Detailed breakdown of sexual orientation in Havering for residents aged 16 and over

Sexual Orientation	Number	Percentage
Straight or Heterosexual	191,007	91.07%
Gay or Lesbian	1,993	0.95%
Bisexual	1,540	0.73%
Pansexual	436	0.21%
Asexual	56	0.03%
Queer	21	0.01%
All other sexual orientations	46	0.02%
Not answered	14,631	6.98%
Total	**209,730**	**100.00%**

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021; Produced by: Havering PHI

Sources used:

1. Topic-Summary-Sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity.pdf (haveringdata.net)

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

Overall impact:

The Commercial Strategy will have neutral impact on people of different Gender Identify status. There are no known inequality impacts related to Gender reassignment based on the Commercial Strategy. Planned actions are inclusive of people from all Genders.

Evidence:

Figure 3: Detailed breakdown of gender identity in Havering for residents aged 16 and over

Gender Identity	Number	Percentage
Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth	196,462	93.67%
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given	528	0.25%
Trans woman	228	0.11%
Trans man	212	0.10%
Non-binary	60	0.03%
All other gender identities	39	0.02%
Not answered	12,201	5.82%
Total	209,730	100.00%

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021; Produced by: Havering PHI

Sources used:

1. Topic-Summary-Sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity.pdf (haveringdata.net)

Protected Characteristic – Marriage / civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership

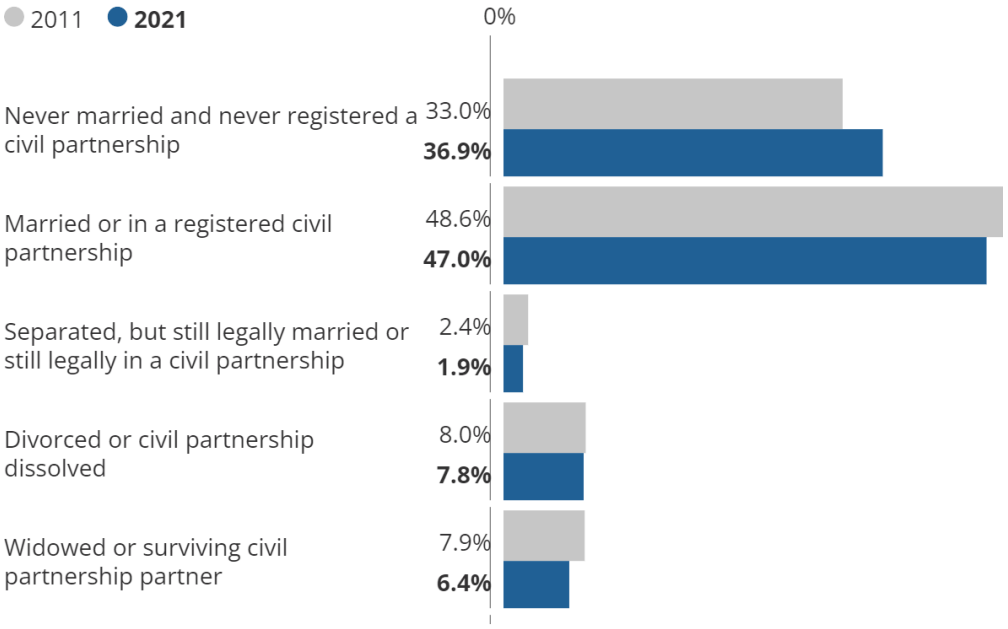
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

Overall impact:

The Commercial Strategy is inclusive of people of all relationship types. There are no known inequalities impacts related to this protected groups as related to the Strategy.

Evidence:

Percentage of usual residents aged 16 years and over by legal partnership status, **Havering**



Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 Census and Census 2021

Sources used:

1. How life has changed in Havering: Census 2021 (ons.gov.uk)

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are taking maternity or paternity leave		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:**
Positive		This Strategy does not have specific impact on this protected characteristic groups. There are no known inequalities impacts related to this protected groups as related to the Strategy.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence:
Not applicable

Sources used:
Not applicable

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:**
Positive		The Strategy is expected to have a neutral impact on individuals from low-income or financially excluded backgrounds as there are equal access to services and this will mitigate any potential impacts related to socio-economic status.
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence:

Table 1 Reasons for economic inactivity, Havering, London and England, 2021

Reason for economic inactivity	England and Wales	London	Havering
Economically inactive: Long-term sick or disabled	4.2%	3.6%	3.1%
Economically Inactive: Looking after home or family	4.8%	6.0%	5.1%
Economically inactive: Other	3.1%	4.1%	3.0%
Economically inactive: Retired	21.6%	12.9%	21.0%
Economically inactive: Student	5.6%	7.2%	4.6%

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021; Produced by: Havering Insight Team

Sources used:

1. Topic-Summary-Economic-Activity-and-Travel-to-work-Final-Version.pdf (haveringdata.net)

Health & Wellbeing Impact:

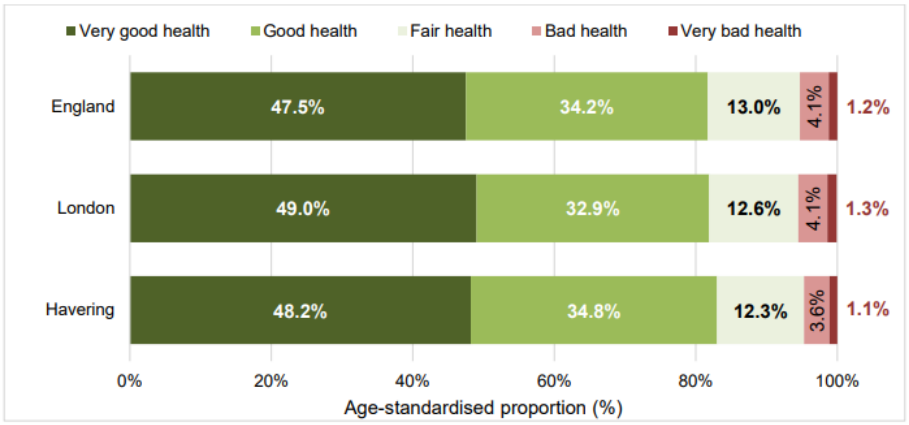
Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity?

Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:		**Overall impact:**
Positive	✓	The Commercial Strategy has the potential to positively impact health and wellbeing through enhanced service delivery. Income from commercial activities have been re-invested to support frontline services, such as social care which in turn reduce stress and improve the quality of life for vulnerable and at-risk groups. **Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment?** Please tick (✓) the relevant box **Yes** ☐ **No** ✓
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:

In Havering an estimated 219,777 residents had 'good' or 'very good' health in 2021. This is an age-standardised proportion (ASP) of 83.0%, which is higher than London (81.9%) and England (81.7%). However, in Havering, an ASP of 48.2% residents had 'very good' health compared to 49% in London.

Figure 1: ASP (%) reported health of the population



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021; Produced by: Havering PHI

Sources used:

1. Census-2021-Topic-Summary-Health-Disability-and-Unpaid-Care.pdf (haveringdata.net)

3. Health & Wellbeing Screening Tool

Will the activity / service / policy / procedure affect any of the following characteristics? Please tick/check the boxes below

The following are a range of considerations that might help you to complete the assessment.

Lifestyle YES ☐ NO ☒	**Personal circumstances** YES ☐ NO ☒	**Access to services/facilities/amenities** YES ☒ NO ☐
☐ Diet	☐ Structure and cohesion of family unit	☐ to Employment opportunities
☐ Exercise and physical activity	☐ Parenting	☐ to Workplaces
☐ Smoking	☐ Childhood development	☐ to Housing
☐ Exposure to passive smoking	☐ Life skills	☐ to Shops (to supply basic needs)
☐ Alcohol intake	☐ Personal safety	☐ to Community facilities
☐ Dependency on prescription drugs	☐ Employment status	☐ to Public transport
☐ Illicit drug and substance use	☐ Working conditions	☐ to Education
☐ Risky Sexual behaviour	☐ Level of income, including benefits	☒ to Training and skills development
☐ Other health-related behaviours, such as tooth-brushing, bathing, and wound care	☐ Level of disposable income	☐ to Healthcare
	☐ Housing tenure	☐ to Social services
	☐ Housing conditions	☐ to Childcare
	☐ Educational attainment	☐ to Respite care
	☐ Skills levels including literacy and numeracy	☐ to Leisure and recreation services and facilities
Social Factors YES ☐ NO ☒	**Economic Factors** YES ☒ NO ☐	**Environmental Factors** YES ☐ NO ☒
☐ Social contact	☐ Creation of wealth	☐ Air quality
☒ Social support	☐ Distribution of wealth	☐ Water quality
☐ Neighbourliness	☒ Retention of wealth in local area/economy	☐ Soil quality/Level of contamination/Odour
☐ Participation in the community	☐ Distribution of income	☐ Noise levels
☐ Membership of community groups	☒ Business activity	☐ Vibration
☐ Reputation of community/area	☒ Job creation	☐ Hazards
☐ Participation in public affairs	☐ Availability of employment opportunities	☐ Land use
☐ Level of crime and disorder	☐ Quality of employment opportunities	☐ Natural habitats
☐ Fear of crime and disorder	☐ Availability of education opportunities	☐ Biodiversity
☐ Level of antisocial behaviour	☐ Quality of education opportunities	☐ Landscape, including green and open spaces
☐ Fear of antisocial behaviour	☒ Availability of training and skills development opportunities	☐ Townscape, including civic areas and public realm
☐ Discrimination	☒ Quality of training and skills development opportunities	☐ Use/consumption of natural resources
☐ Fear of discrimination	☒ Technological development	☐ Energy use: CO2/other greenhouse gas emissions
☐ Public safety measures	☐ Amount of traffic congestion	☐ Solid waste management
☐ Road safety measures		☐ Public transport infrastructure

4. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

✓	1. The initial screening exercise showed a strong indication that there will be no impacts on people and need to carry out an EqHIA. 2. The EqHIA identified no significant concerns OR the identified negative concerns have already been addressed	→	**Proceed with implementation** of your activity
	3. The EqHIA identified some negative impact which still needs to be addressed	→	**COMPLETE SECTION 5:** **Complete action plan** with measures to mitigate the and finalise the EqHIA
	4. The EqHIA identified some major concerns and showed that it is impossible to diminish negative impacts from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level	→	**Stop and remove** the activity or **revise** the activity **thoroughly.** **Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.**

5. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise **negative** impacts and enhance/optimise positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will mitigate or reduce any **negative** equality and/or health & wellbeing impacts, identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; if required, will amend the scope and direction of the change; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Based on the completed EHIA assessment, no negative impacts have been identified regarding the Council's Commercial Strategy. The strategy has been carefully designed to be inclusive and equitable, taking into consideration all protected characteristics under the Equality Act. **As a result, no specific action plan is required to mitigate negative impacts.**

However, this does not mean that the monitoring of the strategy against protected characteristics will be ignored. Continuous monitoring and evaluation will be essential to ensure that the strategy remains inclusive and equitable.

6. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review:
There will be a continually review of the EHIA as the Strategy Action Plan progresses by the Commercial Boards.

Scheduled date of review: September 2027

Lead Officer conducting the review: Appropriate officer in post when the review is scheduled.

Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

CABINET

Subject Heading:	***North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024 – 2029)***
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Care services
ELT Lead:	Mark Ansell, Director of Public Health
Report Author and contact details:	Emily Grundy, Assistant Director of Public Health, Emily.grundy@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	This strategy supports the Council in delivering against its statutory responsibility for improving the health of the local population and the effective delivery of mandated sexual health service provision, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.
Financial summary:	Adoption of the strategy has no direct financial implications, but may encourage and facilitate commissioning of services across a larger footprint to deliver economies of scale or other efficiencies and maximise value for money within existing budgets. Any funding decisions arising will be subject to relevant financial governance/approval processes.
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes, significant effect on two or more Wards
When should this matter be reviewed?	October 2024
Reviewing OSC:	People

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

X People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy
Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

SUMMARY

This paper seeks Cabinet approval of the North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024-2029), and of proposed governance arrangements for the development and implementation of an accompanying local action plan. The strategy aims to support the delivery of a high quality, easy access and equitable sexual and reproductive health offer across the North East London, strengthening existing joint working practices to deliver best outcomes for local residents.
The strategy and proposed local oversight arrangements were endorsed by the Havering Health and Wellbeing board in July 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet are recommended to:

- approve and adopt the North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024-2029) (attached as Appendix 2).
- approve the proposed governance arrangements under the Havering Place-based Partnership for oversight of the development and implementation of a Havering action plan.

REPORT DETAIL

Background

1. The Council has statutory responsibility to commission a range of sexual and relationship health (SRH) services, including STI testing, treatment and contraception, alongside its broader responsibility to improve and protect the health of local residents.

2. There are numerous examples of the delivery of collaborative cross-borough approaches and initiatives in the field of sexual health; for example, the current specialist sexual health service provided by Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT) is jointly commissioned by the London Boroughs of Havering, Redbridge and Barking & Dagenham and pan-London efforts have delivered developments such as the shared e-service for easy online access to simple STI testing for the residents of participating authorities.

3. The North East London (NEL) Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy seeks to build on existing collaborative working arrangements and new opportunities arising from the establishment of integrated care systems, to agree an approach for addressing shared SRH priorities and challenges across NEL.

Strategy vision and priorities

4. The overall purpose of the strategy is to support the delivery of a high quality, easy access and equitable SRH offer across NEL, with the prevention of illness and the promotion of healthy relationships at the core of activity. In delivering this, the strategy seeks to support the realisation of the following vision for NEL residents:

Empowered residents leading healthy and fulfilling lives, in which they have the knowledge and agency to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health, with timely access to high quality, inclusive and equitable services.

5. The strategy has been developed through a programme of engagement with health professionals and residents, building on analysis of local and regional data and intelligence. This process has identified the following shared priority areas for action:

Priority 1: Healthy and Fulfilling Sexual Relationships

Priority 2: Good Reproductive Health across the Life Course

Priority 3: High Quality and Innovative STI Screening and Treatment

Priority 4: HIV: Towards Zero and Living Well

The full strategy and executive summary are enclosed with this report (Appendix 1 and 2)

Action plans

6. The strategy is underpinned by a NEL-level action plan, which identifies key opportunities to contribute towards progress across the priority areas (see appendix 3). This action plan has been developed with and approved by the relevant delivery partners across NEL, including Public Health teams, acute trusts, third sector providers and the NEL Integrated Care Board (ICB).

7. In recognition of the fact that each local authority will have its own particular issues or areas of focus, it has been agreed that each will develop an accompanying local action plan, intended to complement, rather than replicate, actions already in scope of the NEL action plan.

8. Activities to be included within the Havering action plan are to be agreed, but will likely include:
   - Evaluation of the local c-card condom distribution service, gathering insights from young people to explore service awareness, accessibility and best routes for promotion;
   - Review of the Havering teenage pregnancy strategy;
   - Exploration of opportunities to embed elements of sexual health provision within the new St George's Health & Wellbeing Hub;

- Steps leading towards the recommissioning of the BHR integrated sexual health service;
- Opportunities arising from the development of the BHR Women's Health Hub model.

Proposed strategy governance

9. At a NEL level, it has been agreed that the action plan will be delivered through new governance structures (to be established), with a quarterly NEL Action Plan Implementation Group Sexual Health Strategy Group taking responsibility for implementation and delivery, to be overseen by the NEL Sexual Health Commissioning Partnership Board.

10. At a local level, it is proposed that the development and implementation of the Havering action plan be taken forward through a new dedicated working group, with oversight provided by the Havering Place-based Partnership (PbP) (a proposal that was accepted by the PbP on 14 August 2024). This reflects the fact that the scope of the Havering action plan will predominately align with the PbP's focus on improving health and care services.

11. Each of these Partnership Boards/Groups involve senior representatives of the partner agencies, who will probably have executive delegated powers to commit their relevant agency. However, the partnership groups do not have the power to commit the Council to any spend or specific actions.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision:

12. The Council has a statutory duty to improve and protect the health of residents and to commission a range of sexual health services that address local population need.

13. The adoption of the NEL Sexual and Reproductive Health strategy offers the opportunity to build on and strengthen collaborative working amongst partners across NEL to deliver action on shared local priorities, achieving a cumulative impact beyond what could be realised through individual partners acting independently.

Other options considered:

Do not adopt the strategy

14. This option is not recommended; the strategy will act as an important vehicle to strengthen and develop opportunities for partnership working, while also raising the profile of SRH across NEL. Local stakeholders could still develop a Havering SRH action plan, but would not benefit from the scope and scale of impact that could be achieved through a collaborative approach at NEL-level.

Recommend an alternative governance arrangement for local action plan

15. This option is not recommended; as described, the scope of the Havering action plan will predominately align with the PbP's focus on improving health and care services, making it the best group to have oversight of local action plan development and implementation.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:
Adoption of the strategy has no direct financial implications. Any funding decisions arising from the NEL or local action plan will be subject to relevant financial governance/approval processes.

Legal implications and risks:
Under s 2B NHS Act 2006 as inserted by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 the Local Authority must take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area.

The adoption of the North East London Joint Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy is consistent with the Council's statutory duty set out above.

In terms of governance arrangements, as set out in the Report, if the Boards/Groups do not have power to commit the Council to any spend or actions there is minimal legal risk in participation.

Human Resources implications and risks:
The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.
The Strategy will strengthen and build on existing good work of the council teams and external partners across Havering and North East London.

Equalities implications and risks:
The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

(i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
(ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
(iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.
Note: 'Protected characteristics' are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

Addressing the known inequalities in SRH outcomes is a key part of the strategic vision of the North East London Joint Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy, and embedding universal proportionalism as a means of increasing the equity of SRH outcomes is identified as one of the strategy's guiding principles.

An accompanying local EqHIA assessment has identified broadly positive or neutral impacts of the strategy across the breadth of protective characteristics, while also identifying significant health and wellbeing benefits.

The strategy and accompanying NEL action plan identify a number of actions aimed specifically at addressing known inequalities in SRH outcomes, while broader actions are also deemed likely to have a positive impact on inequalities. Equally, the strategy identifies that there are opportunities to improve insight into and understanding of SRH inequalities across NEL, which will be able to inform further action to address these across the lifetime of the strategy.

In development of a local SRH action plan, there will be further opportunities to consider and respond to inequalities in SRH outcomes that may be of particular significance for the population of Havering.

Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks
SRH is fundamental to the overall health and well-being of individuals, couples and families, and as such, action to improve SRH is an important part of the Council's duty to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents.

Adoption of the NEL joint SHR strategy and implementation of the action plans will support the delivery of improved population SRH outcomes, while also seeking to address particular barriers or challenges faced by those populations that are disproportionately affected by poorer sexual health outcomes.

There are no perceived health and wellbeing risks arising from this decision.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS
The strategy has no direct environmental and climate change implications and risks.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (executive summary)
2. North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (full report)
3. North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (NEL action plan – year 1)
4. North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (data pack)
5. Local EqHIA

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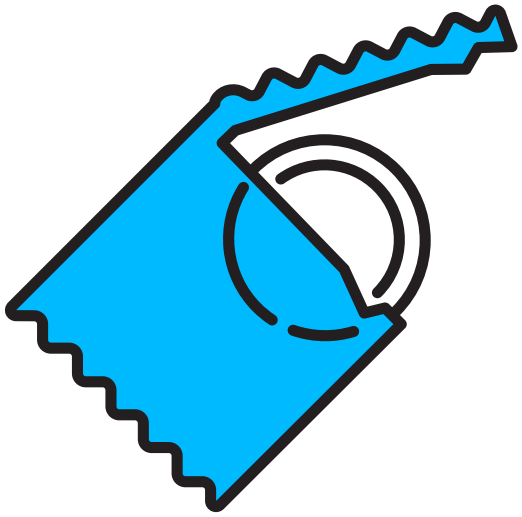
North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024 – 2029)

Executive Summary

A healthy and fulfilling relationship is integral to individual wellbeing, and a pro-active approach to sex and relationships (e.g. reducing abuse, avoiding unplanned pregnancies or preventing the transmission of HIV) can foster enormous benefits for communities and society as a whole.

Never before has Sexual and Reproductivity Health (SHR) been so relevant, with COVID-19 making lasting changes to the way that individuals interact and access services – and gender, sexuality and identity politics becoming ever more salient in the public consciousness.

There are numerous reasons why a strategic regional approach to SRH is required: in addition to enabling economies of scale and joining up pathways within a fragmented commissioning landscape, a regional strategy promotes a collaborative and holistic way of working, with resident wellbeing at the centre of our ambition.



The jointly developed vision for the North East London (NEL) sexual and reproductive health is to:

Empower residents to lead healthy and fulfilling lives, in which they have the knowledge and agency to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health, with timely access to high quality, equitable services.

The purpose of this strategy is to:

a. summarise where we are in relation to this vision

b. define where we want to be (outcomes and goals)

c. sketch a path for how we achieve this vision (recommendations)

However, all parties involved in the development of this strategy are clear that this is only a first step: a strategy is redundant without clear actions to help fulfil our shared objectives. As such, next steps in 2024-25 and beyond are vital, as regional and local Action Plans are implemented and monitored, with the goal of leading us towards our shared vision for a more integrated model of sexual and reproductive health.

Key points identified in the Strategy are outlined below against the four priorities for SRH across NEL. These priorities were agreed collaboratively during multi-stakeholder workshops and validated through engagement with patients and residents. They are:

Priority 1:
Healthy and fullfilling sexual relationships

Priority 2:
Good reproductive health across the life course

Priority 3:
High quality and innovative STI testing and treatment

Priority 4: HIV - towards zero and living well with HIV

The high-level five-year goals for SRH that have been agreed for the NEL system include:

- Reverse the trend of increasing STI diagnoses by preventing and reducing the onward transmission of STIs through effective testing and treatment.
- Improved prevention and early diagnosis of HIV, with a focus on increasing the uptake of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) in all high risk communities
- Increase knowledge and choice around reproductive health for NEL residents, with increased uptake of the most reliable forms of contraception, especially Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC)
- Reduce the number of unplanned and teenage conceptions.
- Reduce the number of abortions and repeat abortions, learning from models seen in Tower Hamlets and City & Hackney.
- Reduce demographic inequities in sexual health access and outcomes where they are known or identified in the future.
- Ensure that principles of 'Universal Proportionalism' run through all of our work on SRH over the next five years, prioritising our most vulnerable and high risk residents wherever possible.

4

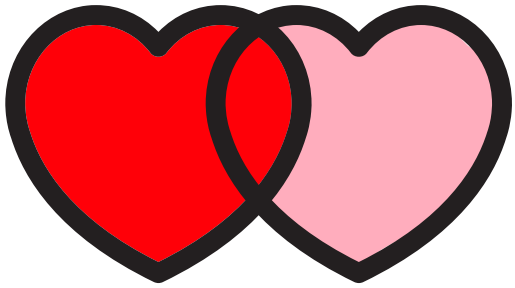
Priority 1: Healthy and Fulfilling Sexual Relationships

Like the rest of the world, residents and professionals in NEL are adjusting to new challenges (e.g. increasing access to online porn, digital child exploitation, rising levels of harm related to chemsex) while also trying to respond to increasing levels of domestic abuse, coercive relationships and harm related to sex work.

Unsurprisingly, this strategy highlights Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) as a vital tool for promoting healthy and fulfilling sexual relationships, and engagement with residents tells us that this is a priority area . Despite RSE becoming a compulsory part of curriculums in secondary schools from 2020, there is no clear understanding of how (or if) RSE is currently being delivered – and this is a fundamental starting point for Action Plans that will be developed at a regional level but implemented and monitored at Local Authority (LA) level via multi-partner groups including education providers and commissioning colleagues.

More generally, the breadth of 'Healthy Relationships' as a public health issue and the scale of the challenge lends itself towards a 'systems-based' approach to increasing knowledge of SRH among professionals in all sectors of health, social care staff, partners in the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector (CVFS), as well as engagement with and outreach to resident groups.

Furthermore, this strategy highlights gaps in our knowledge in relation to our most vulnerable and high-risk residents. Recommendations include improved NEL-wide data collection, and consistency of evidence-informed operating procedures is required for areas such as chemsex, suspected abuse or exploitation, sex work, under-age sex and/or consent issues (especially for residents diagnosed with learning disabilities). Individual LAs have well-established multi-partner forums for safeguarding and domestic abuse. LA-level Action Plans should therefore consider the best way to enhance collaborative working in these areas.



Priority 2: Good Reproductive Health across the Life Course

A life-course approach towards reproductive health acknowledges that good SRH is important for people of all ages and, importantly, that the SRH needs of our residents may change over time.

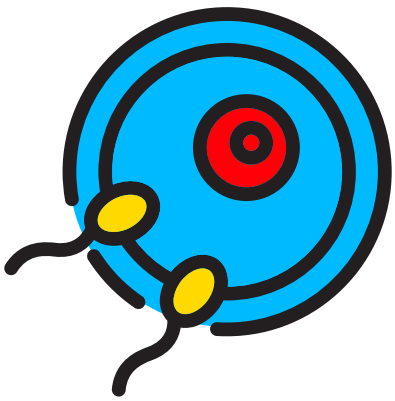
Reproductive health is important to the public's health because if, when and how often a pregnancy occurs should be a matter of choice. Access to information about preventing pregnancy but also preconception health, conception and assisted conception is important for a holistic and joined-up model for reproductive health.

Teenage conceptions, often unplanned, can have long-term negative consequences for young women and society as a whole, with many (33%) resulting in termination. A joined-up, partnership-based approach with integration between specialist sexual health services and Termination of Pregnancy Services (ToPS) has already been shown to be effective. In Tower Hamlets and City and Hackney, for example, these services are aligned in a Women's Health Hub model, and the data clearly indicates a positive impact on outcomes: in 2021, the legal abortion rates in Tower Hamlets were 41% lower than the NEL average. All partners behind this strategy are therefore keen to explore a more integrated approach to sexual health (SH) and ToPS across NEL as part of the nation-wide roll-out of Women's Hubs .

There is also a particularly stark equity challenge in this area: women from certain demographic groups experience worse outcomes in relation to early pregnancy, infertility, maternity, and gynaecological conditions. Furthermore, deprivation is strongly associated with higher admissions for conditions such as pelvic inflammatory disease and ectopic pregnancy.

Key areas identified for strengthened partnership working include:

- Increasing LARC uptake, especially among ethnically minoritised groups.
- Shift away from the traditional separation of clinic-based services towards the Women's Health Hub model and other peripatetically located services (e.g. LARC provision in ToPS clinics).
- Improved data collection for Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) alongside insight work in collaboration with youth services, schools and colleges.



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Priority 3: High Quality and Innovative STI Screening and Treatment

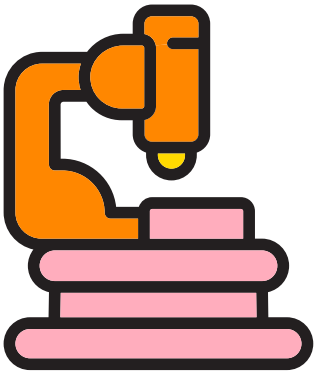
Overall incidence of STI diagnoses has increased year-on-year in NEL LAs following the Covid pandemic. Rates of syphilis and gonorrhoea have increased significantly during 2022-23, (mainly among gay, bi-sexual and men who have sex with men (GBMSM)), at a time when PrEP uptake among the same cohort has increased substantially.

This strategy calls for a renewed focus on STI prevention across the whole NEL system – especially for gonorrhoea and syphilis among GBMSM and chlamydia and gonorrhoea among under 25s – with emphasis on increasing use of condoms, enhancing Partner Notification (PN) and increased levels of repeat STI screening for high-risk groups at a regional level in line with guidance from the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) .

Another recommendation is to develop a jointly agreed strategic approach for NEL on digital vs 'in-clinic' diagnosis and treatment of simple STIs, with an ongoing commitment to explore innovative new opportunities in testing methods.

Ultimately, NEL's vision for high quality and innovate STI screening and treatment should deliver:

- A reduced burden of STIs, in particular among those who are disproportionately affected.
- An equitable, accessible, high-quality testing, treatment, vaccination and partner notification that is appropriate to need.
- A reduction in the transmission of STIs and repeat infections.



Priority 4: HIV - towards zero and living well with HIV

Great strides have been made in both the prevention and treatment of HIV in recent years, resulting in fewer new diagnoses and people with HIV living longer and healthier lives. However, in order to get to zero HIV, meaning, zero new HIV infections, by 2030 it is crucial that testing continues at scale. This includes opt-out testing in hospital and primary settings to find new cases, especially late diagnosis cases where people are more likely to have worse health outcomes.

Despite the falling number of newly diagnosed cases of HIV over the past five years, the demographic profile of new HIV cases in NEL is notable, with a significant burden of HIV observed among the heterosexual Black African population. The pattern is different in Hackney and Tower Hamlets, though, where a greater proportion of new HIV diagnoses are seen among the GBMSM community. Waltham Forest sits somewhere in between these contrasting positions.

PrEP uptake in NEL has grown year-on-year since routine commissioning commenced in 2020. However, PrEP uptake is uneven along geographic and risk categories: with uptake significantly lower among heterosexual people, and Black African populations in particular, compared to GBMSM. There is a growing body of literature related to increasing awareness of and access to PrEP among non-GBMSM groups, and a review of this literature accompanied by a NEL-wide intervention to improve uptake is recommended. Continued funding for GP HIV Champions is likely to help to address the demographic inequity seen in PrEP uptake.

Late diagnosis of HIV remains an issue in NEL, especially in the LAs where HIV is more commonly seen among Black African residents compared to GBMSM. This finding is of particular concern against a backdrop of decreased HIV testing coverage since 2020. A well-targeted 'dual-pronged attack' of increased HIV screening and PrEP uptake is required to address this inequity. Continued funding for opt-out HIV screening in hospital Emergency Departments (ED) is also essential, with initial data suggesting that this approach will be an important tool for detecting otherwise hidden cases of HIV.

The 'Towards Zero and Living Well with HIV' section of the strategy recognises HIV as a long term condition. It touches on the fragmentation of HIV services across the health and social care sector and the ongoing challenge of reducing stigma. There are opportunities to better align services in this area, and the pending shift of commissioning responsibility for HIV care from NHS England to Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) should be used as a catalyst to work towards a holistic model for HIV prevention, treatment and care.

Overarching Recommendations

Key recommendations for the four priority areas are outlined above in the strategic vision of each priority. A cross-cutting themes are summarised below:

Strengthen joint commissioning and contract management across LAs and ICB, of services across the SRH system – such as Specialist Sexual Health, HIV treatment and care, ToPS, Gynaecology and Maternity. Enable shared access to data dashboards to track activity and outcomes for residents across service areas.

Pursue a collaborative approach between commissioners and providers (specialist and non-specialist), driven by data and focused on the areas of SRH intervention with the highest public health value; and utilising commissioning tools including incentives to direct activity.

Standardise and improve offer for the most vulnerable and/or 'high-risk' residents: building robust pathways between services and developing evidence informed operating procedures across providers and LAs.

Review and standardisation of commissioning practices for primary care SRH services such as LARC, EHC, condom provision and the screening and treatment of simple STIs.

Consistent collection and monitoring of 'patient level' data (including demographic characteristics) across the region, with shared data dashboards aligned to our strategic priorities.

Barking & Dagenham · City of London · Hackney · Havering London Borough · Newham London · London Borough of Redbridge · Waltham Forest · Tower Hamlets · NHS North East London

North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024 – 2029)

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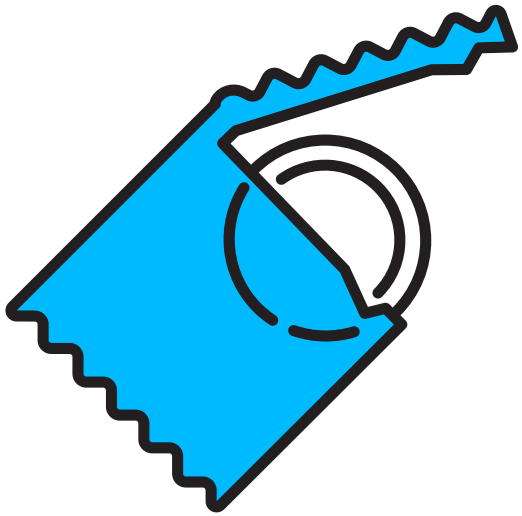
Introduction

CONTENTS

Good sexual and reproductive health is a fundamental part of everyone's health and wellbeing. Poor sexual and reproductive health (SRH) can have wide-ranging public health consequences, impacting not only individuals but families and society as a whole.

The significant rise in the prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) both nationally and locally is alarming and highlights the need for a clear strategic vision, alongside a more integrated approach among all parties involved in commissioning and delivering sexual and reproductive health services and incorporating the views of our residents.



Increasing incidence of STIs, and the adverse health effects of these infections, have disproportionately impacted young people, ethnically minoritised groups, gay, bisexual and other men having sex with men (GBMSM), as well as people living with HIV. The relationship between structural inequalities (e.g. racism, sexism, and homophobia) and wider determinants of health (e.g. poverty, education, ethnicity, and age) and how these factors impact individual and societal sexual health is complex; a collaborative and multidisciplinary approach is therefore required in response.

North East London (NEL) is a vibrant, diverse and distinctive area of London. Our residents come from different age groups, ethnic backgrounds, faith, beliefs and socio-economic levels. The principles of equity, equality and inclusivity are therefore an integral part of our strategic vision for better SRH across NEL.

However, despite the diversity of our population, there are many commonalities in the sexual health inequalities seen across NEL. This is one of the main reasons for a strategic approach that advocates for a more joined-up and integrated way of working across the wider health, care and education landscape.

NEL's local sexual health provision has undergone necessary optimisation and transformation as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, adopting new approaches to support residents with the most urgent and complex needs. Nevertheless, SRH-related inequalities persist; with large parts of NEL seeing an increasing number of teenage pregnancies and repeat abortions, some of the highest STIs diagnostic rates in London, high HIV prevalence and increasing rates of HIV late diagnosis.

Rather than proposing a "new start," this strategy advocates an approach that builds on the optimisation of local services that began in response to COVID-19, underpinned by collaboratively agreed goals and delivered through detailed local Action Plans that will be monitored regularly and refreshed on an annual basis.

Vision

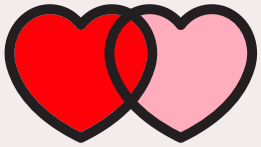
This strategy, alongside local and regional Action Plans, sets out the intention to work collaboratively with residents and partners from across the spectrum of integrated SRH in order to achieve a vision of:

Empowered residents leading healthy and fulfilling lives, in which they have the knowledge and agency to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health, with timely access to high quality, inclusive and equitable services.

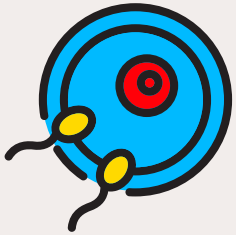
Priorities

Engagement with local health professionals and residents has identified four priority areas, with underlying aims and expected outcomes. These priorities – identified through local data, engagement and intelligence – address the key challenges facing the region in terms of sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.

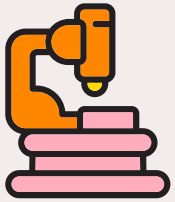
Priority 1: Healthy and fullfilling sexual relationships



Priority 2: Good reproductive health across the life course



Priority 3: High quality and innovative STI testing and treatment

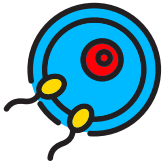


Priority 4: HIV - towards zero and living well with HIV

Priority 1:
Healthy and fullfilling sexual relationships

- All young people should have access to high quality Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)
- All residents should be able to recognise whether a relationship is abusive or unhealthy
- People in unhealthy or risky sexual relationships should be appropriately supported
- Reproductive health and wellbeing is just as important as preventing and treating STIs

Priority 2:
Good reproductive health across the life course



- Residents are empowered to make informed choices that support good reproductive health
- Residents have access to timely, high-quality, inclusive and holistic services to support their reproductive health needs

Priority 3:
High quality and innovative STI testing and treatment

- Residents have easy access to high quality, innovative and confidential STIs screening for all
- Transmission of STIs and repeat infections among our residents are reduced
- Stereotypes and stigma associated with STI infections are challenged

Priority 4:
HIV - towards zero and living well with HIV

- Residents have access to rapid HIV testing across North East London
- Residents at risk for HIV are informed about prevention measures and have access to HIV prevention methods
- Residents living with HIV have access to HIV prevention and the best treatment and care
- Stereotypes and HIV related stigma are addressed and challenged

Guiding principles

Our strategy is underpinned by the following guiding principles:

- Universal proportionalism embedded across all actions to ensure increased equitable outcomes.
- Right care, right time, right place. Making every contact count.
- Safety and safeguarding highest quality offer (for staff and patients) and highest standards in London.
- Commitment to developing sustainable and cost-effective services.
- Innovative, research and evidence based approach that makes the best use of emerging technology.
- Outcomes-focused with a shared multi-stakeholder action plan, aligned to regional/ national strategies and supporting local authority/ place based action plans to monitor and evaluate success. Data-driven with a cross-cutting data sharing agreement and a commitment to a standardised approach to data collection and analysis.
- A life-course approach with focus on the wider determinants of health
- Co-development of services with ongoing resident/patient and stakeholder participation.
- Whole-system approach: Partnership working and system leadership from providers of integrated sexual health services (e.g. primary care, education, substance misuse, domestic abuse services etc.).

The strategy has been informed by the Women's Health Strategy in England (2022)[1], the National HIV Action Plan (2021)[2], Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV guidance (OHID, 2022)[3] as well as local needs assessments and reports from extensive co-production with local residents.

There is an accompanying 'Data Pack' that sits alongside this strategy. Insights from the Data Pack have been used to inform the statements in the strategy and attempts have been made to reference the relevant section of the data pack as required.

Current Sexual and Reproductive Health Support in North East London

Sexual and Reproductive Health commissioning landscape

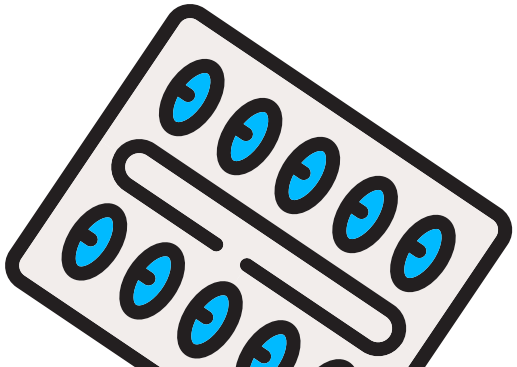
In 2017, local authorities across London worked alongside partners from the health sector to transform specialist sexual and reproductive health services. Key changes included the merging of Genitourinary Medicine (GUM) and Contraception and Sexual Health (CASH) services, the implementation of a London-wide 'Integrated Sexual Health Tariff' (ISHT) and the development of the online sexual health 'e-service' (Sexual Health London or 'SHL'. This transformation has been widely acknowledged as a success, helping to ensure that the access and a high standard of sexual and reproductive health care is maintained within pressurised budgets.

Currently, local authorities commission the majority of sexual and reproductive health services, however certain responsibilities for sexual health provision remain with NHS England or Integrated Care Boards (ICB). ICB and LA planning for social care services is guided by the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), a larger partnership comprising partners from across the local area (Figure 1). This disjointed commissioning landscape is complex and, at times, difficult to manage.

Figure 1: Delegated Responsibilities of Sexual and Reproductive Health

Local Authorities (LAs)	NHS England	Integrate Care Board (ICB)
• Contraception - except within GP contracts • STI testing • Psychosexual support (sexual health) • Specialist sexual health services • Sexual health support for young people • HIV prevention • Sexual health outreach	• GP contraception • HIV treatment and care • Sexual health in prisons • Cervical screening • Sexual assault services (SARCs, Havens)	• Termination of pregnancy • Vasectomy • Gynaecology • Psychosexual support (non-sexual health) • HIV treatment and care (transfers from NHSE April 2025)

In light of the ambition for increasing integration between health and local authority commissioning and a growing focus on place-based working, now is a good time to look at closer alignment for sexual and reproductive health across the wider landscape of NEL.



Current provision of sexual and reproductive health services

Local authorities are required by law to provide 'open access' sexual and reproductive health services for everyone present in their area. In NEL, the bulk of SRH activity takes place through specialist clinics and the SHL e-service. Broadly speaking, the SHL e-service is designed to help manage capacity across the system by providing screening and basic treatment for low-risk asymptomatic patients.

All LAs in NEL also commission some form of sexual and reproductive health provision via primary care (GPs and Community Pharmacies). The exact scope of primary care-based SRH provision varies between Local Authorities, but typically includes:

- Opportunistic screening of young people (15-24 year olds) for chlamydia and gonorrhoea as part of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP)
- Condom provision
- Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC)
- Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) provided by GPs
- Oral contraception (commissioned by the NHS and delivered by GPs)
- Quick-start Progesterone Only Pill (POP) – oral contraception provided via some community pharmacies and commissioned by the NHS.

Across North East London, specialist sexual and reproductive health provision is delivered by three separate providers:

- Barts Health NHS Trust delivers the All East Sexual Health Service which covers Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets, Newham and partly Redbridge
- Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Trust (BHRUT) delivers the BHR Sexual Health Service which covers Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.
- Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust delivers the Homerton Sexual Health Service which is a joint provision across Hackney and City of London

All NEL providers adopt a 'hub and spoke' model of delivery. Sexual and reproductive health services are delivered from Centres of Excellence (CoE) and a number of satellites to facilitate equitable and easy access (Figure 2). Centres of Excellence offer a wide range of clinical and non-clinical support including: GUM, STI testing and treatment, contraception, HIV prevention (PrEP), psychosexual support, Hepatitis A, B, and HPV vaccinations, support for people engaging in high risks sexual behaviours (e.g., sex workers) and cervical screening services (which are offered but commissioned through NHS). The services provided by satellite clinics are customised to meet the needs of the local population in the location of the satellite.

Specialist SRH services for young people are available in some (but not all) NEL LAs. In some cases, these services are commissioned separately from the main specialist SRH contract (e.g. in Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest) and in other cases, the CYP SRH service is provided as an additional 'Work Package' under the main specialist contract (e.g. Newham). The focus for these services is towards high-risk and vulnerable young people with more complex issues.

Figure 2: NEL Sexual Health Service Provision

All East

Commissioned through Barts Health Trust

Centre of Excellence

- Sir Ludwig Guttmann (Newham)
- Ambrose King Centre (Tower Hamlets)

Satellite clinics

- Forest Road (Waltham Forest)
- West Ham (Newham)
- Shrewsbury Road (Newham)
- SPC Mile End (Tower Hamlets)

BHR

Commissioned through Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Trust

- Barking Hospital (Barking and Dagenham)
- Queens Hospital (Havering)
- Loxford Polyclinic (Redbridge)

Hackney and City of London Specialist Sexual Health Service

Commissioned through Homerton University Hospital Trust

- Clifden Centre (Hackney)
- John Scott Clinic (Hackney)
- Ivy Centre (Hackney)
- 80 Leadenhall (City of London)

Integrated Specialist Sexual Health Shared Service

Local sexual health service provision in general practices (GPs)

Local sexual health service provision in community pharmacies

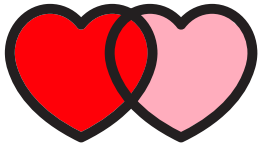
Online STI treatment

Local HIV prevention and suport provision

Moving Forward: Our Priorities

The four priority areas outlined below have been identified through local data, a 'Mystery Shopping' exercise and insights from over 1,500 residents and service users across NEL. Resident engagement comprised a mix of online and face-to-face surveys, groups and semi-structured interviews. The priorities reflect the key SRH challenges facing the region.

Priority 1: Healthy and fullfilling sexual relationships



Strategic vision

Residents understand and recognise the key ingredients to a safe, healthy and fulfilling relationship, and can make informed choices about their sexual and relationship health.

Residents in unhealthy or risky relationships (and victims of sexual assault, rape, exploitation, coercion or abuse) are identified by professionals – through collaborative outreach if required – and supported in a timely, respectful and effective manner.

Reduce inequalities in sexual and reproductive health and ensure people with more complex needs are recognised and met within a proportionately universal service provision.

Background

Healthy and fulfilling sexual relationships are underpinned by four interconnecting pillars – sexual health; sexual pleasure; sexual justice; and sexual wellbeing.[4]

Communication, negotiation and trust are important. Positive environments that encourage secure emotional attachments and allow a person to express who they are in a safe way, whether that is at home, school or work are key to developing healthy relationships.

The risk factors for poor relationships are complex and there are a number of inequalities in SRH outcomes for different groups. For example, rates of STI diagnoses are higher among GBMSM, younger people (aged 16-25 years) and in people of Black Caribbean ethnicity. Considering the diverse population of NEL, improving understanding of need and reducing harm among at-risk and vulnerable groups is a key priority to be collaboratively addressed at regional and local levels.

73% respondents (n=631) to a recent Resident Survey (2023), strongly agreed that 'North East London Residents should be able to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health'.

Source: NEL Engagement Survey 2023

Local Context

Focus on young peoples' relationship and sex education

Research shows that the high quality, comprehensive and contemporary Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in schools has been found to reduce early sexual activity, teenage conceptions and STIs and empower young people to engage in healthy sexual relationships over engaging in risky sexual behaviours[5]. It also raises awareness of the dangers of child sexual exploitation, cyber-bullying and abuse.

From September 2020, all secondary schools in England were mandated to teach RSE and primary schools were mandated to teach Relationship Education. However, lack of a standardised curriculum makes RSE provision inconsistent across the education sector with significant variations in topics covered and the teaching approaches taken by schools.

Resident feedback tells us that there is a lack of confidence about the quality and content of current RSE provision. Furthermore, 88% of all survey respondents strongly agreed that young people should have access to high quality RSE[6].

Groups with increased risk of poor SRH outcomes and / or with more complex needs

SRH and wellbeing are a right like all other human rights but some people have greater difficulty in achieving good SRH outcomes and require additional or tailored support.

A key challenge to reducing inequalities in SRH is that both sexual and reproductive health are still stigmatised within some communities and there can be cultural or religious norms that can act as barriers to access to information and services. Some communities with higher complexity or vulnerability can be relatively small in size and limited information is known about their specific needs.

It is essential, therefore, that regional and local action plans set out ways in which to ensure that residents with more complex needs or greater vulnerabilities are not stigmatised and their additional needs are recognised and met within the overall service provision. Groups at risk of poorer outcomes and / or with more complex needs include:

- LGBTQ+
- Chemsex and substance users
- Homeless people and rough sleepers, asylum seekers and migrants
- Commercial sex workers
- People with disabilities (learning and physical)
- Young people in foster care, leaving care or known to the Youth Justice Service

Our residents would like for RSE to be more LGBTQ+ inclusive and more culturally sensitive. They also think that safety and safeguarding should be at the heart of the RSE curriculum.

Source: NEL Engagement Survey 2023

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The key task and challenge will be to ensure services are open and truly accessible to those with increased or complex needs. Co-production with communities on both service provision but also awareness campaigns will remain essential to ensure health inequalities are reduced. Outreach and in-reach to non SRH settings is important alongside broadening professional willingness to raise sexual and reproductive health through Making Every Contact Count (MECC) training and increased awareness of referral pathways into SRH services.

Annual equity audits provide a powerful tool for services to ensure they are meeting the needs of inclusion communities and those with complex needs. The equity audits should then be used to inform action plans. Data collection, surveys and user feedback are important tools for developing a more comprehensive picture of the needs of and barriers facing those with more complex lives or vulnerabilities.

Tackling abusive and coercive relationships

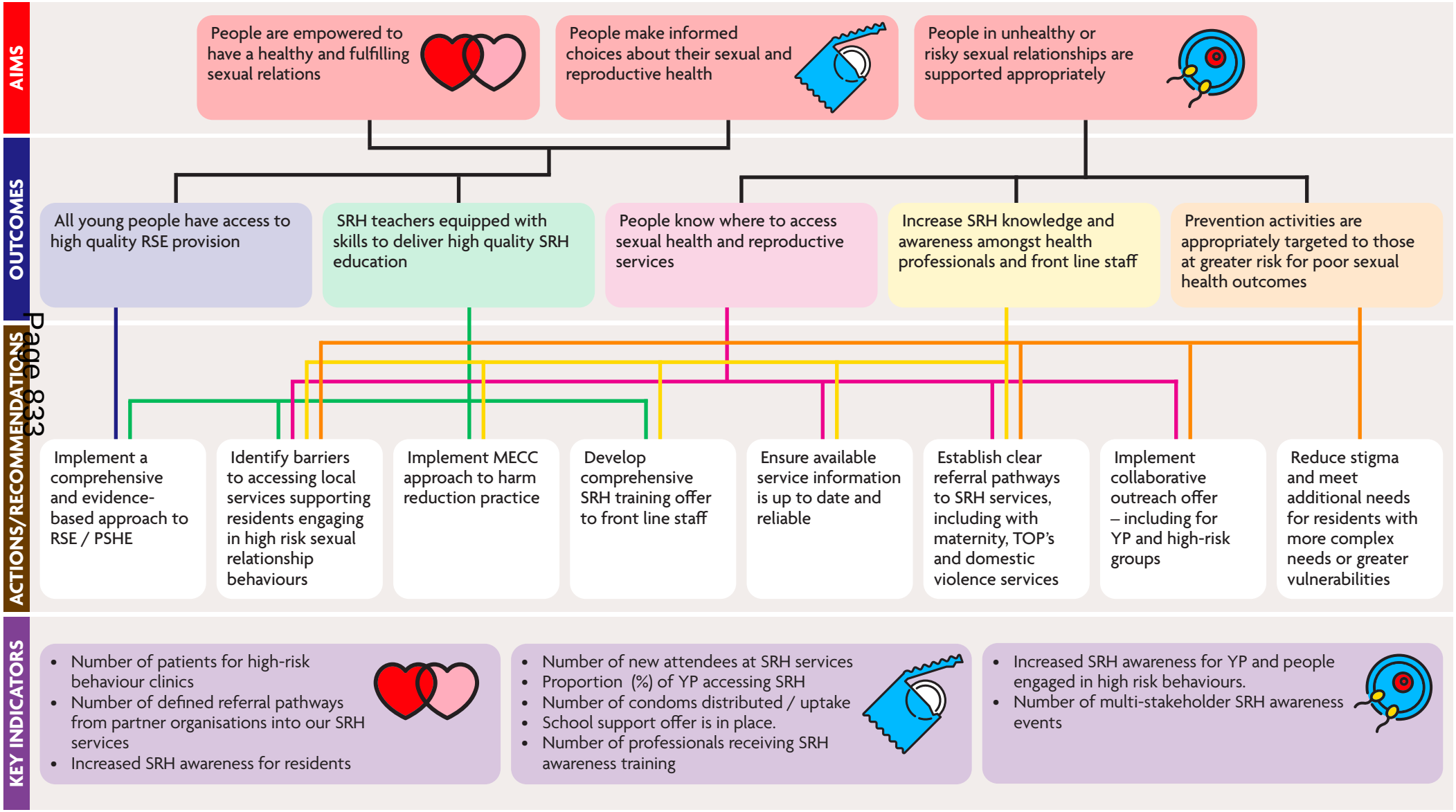
Everyone can experience unhealthy relationships, however some groups (e.g. young people, GBMSM, sex workers, LGBTQ+ communities) are at greater risk. The London statistics outlined below are concerning:

- The Crime Survey for England and Wales (2020) reported 7% growth in police recorded domestic abuse crimes.
- There was 65% increase in calls to the national Domestic Abuse Helpline during lockdowns
- In 2022, there was a 34% increase in reported rapes and sexual assaults in London.[7]

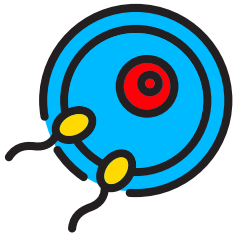
All partners across NEL must work collaboratively to ensure that adequate safeguarding practices are in place and that front line staff are equipped to recognise signs of harmful or unhealthy relationships – including sexual exploitation.

Provision for sex workers across NEL should be mapped and partnership working undertaken to consider whether outreach is required to improve SRH outcomes within these vulnerable communities.

Figure 3: The summary diagram for Healthy and Fulfilling relationships



Priority 2: Good reproductive health across the life course



Strategic vision

The wider SRH system (especially primary care) understands the public health benefits of long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) and women of all ages and ethnicities are supported to make informed choices about their preferred method of contraception with local, timely access to LARC if desired.

Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) is easily accessible when required, alongside condom provision, STI screening and advice on more effective forms of contraception.

Reproductive health inequalities are lessened through a reduction in repeat EHC usage, unwanted pregnancies and terminations.

Background

In 2022, the government published a Women's Health Strategy for England, setting out a 10-year plan to improve women's health across the life course. It offers a six-point long-term plan for transformational change in critical stages, transitions, and settings where there are opportunities to: promote good health, prevent negative health outcomes, and restore health and wellbeing. Our strategic vision for better reproductive health outcomes among NEL residents is underpinned by aims and objectives of this strategy.

66% respondents (n=631) to a recent Resident Survey (2023), agreed or strongly agreed that 'NEL women should be empowered to make informed choices about their reproductive health.'

Source: NEL Engagement Survey 2023

Local Context

Focus on teenagers and young girls

Teenage years are associated with a greater risk of peer pressure, vulnerability to violence, separation from families, sexual abuse and exploitation. These factors can disrupt protective family and social structures, and consequently the ability to make safe and informed reproductive choices.

Teenage conceptions, often unplanned, can have long-term negative consequences for young women and society as a whole, since they are associated with increased costs to health, social care, housing and education. Rates of teenage pregnancies in most NEL LAs are above the London average, with the exception of Tower Hamlets and Redbridge[8].

For NEL as a whole, the proportion of under-18s conceptions leading to abortion is very similar to the London average. However, there is significant variation: the highest rates are noted in Hackney (74.5% of teenage pregnancies ended in abortion) and Havering (73.7%), with the lowest rates observed in Redbridge (50%) and Waltham Forest (53.4%).

Young people are more likely to engage in unprotected sex[9]. One way to avoid unwanted pregnancy is to increase LARC provision, because LARC (long-acting and non-user dependant) is the most effective method of contraception.

The proportion of women in NEL choosing LARC as their preferred method of contraception is lower than the London average[10]. However, the London-wide trend towards fewer young women choosing LARC in 2021 compared to 2019 was less noticeable in NEL, further suggesting a relatively good recovery from COVID-19 for the region's specialist SRH clinics. Service-level data from Barts and BHRUT supports this theory: in 2021, the proportion of young women (aged under 25) who chose LARC as their main contraceptive method increased by 27% compared to 2020. A further increase of 8.9% was observed in 2022[11]. This pattern was not just limited to younger women: overall, the proportion of women living in NEL who chose LARC as their main method of contraception increased by 30% between 2020 and 2021. In 2022, LARC uptake continued to grow, exceeding pre-pandemic levels by November 2022[12].

We acknowledge, however, that not every young person knows what LARC is, what benefits it brings and where it can be accessed. In fact, the key concerns identified via a NEL side Mystery Shopping Exercise (2022) were a lack of clarity on where to get LARC fitted and difficulties in securing LARC appointments. Recent feedback from a NEL Resident Survey (2023) confirmed this view.

All partners are committed to improving residents' experience in accessing local contraception services. Our strategic vision moving forward is to address all barriers associated with LARC uptake and to make LARC easily accessible for all. A crucial step towards this ambition is to improve the equity of LARC uptake among Black and Asian women, in particular[13].

One way to improve equity of LARC uptake may be to build a strong and comprehensive Primary Care LARC pathway. Currently, around 65% of all LARC consultations in NEL take place in specialist sexual health clinics[14]. Action plans should thus work towards a collaborative approach between sexual health services and primary care to free-up capacity within specialist sexual health clinics and enable women to access LARC closer to their home.

Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC)

EHC is another important element of the overall reproductive health offer. There is data to suggest that EHC usage is significantly higher among women of Black African and Black Caribbean ethnicities[15]. EHC is a complex area, because accessing EHC can be seen as both an indication of success for local provision (prevention of unplanned pregnancy) but also regarded as a failure (no reliable form of contraception was used). Thus NEL LAs should not necessarily aim to increase rates of EHC, but rather to ensure easy access while steadily increasing the proportion of women on contraception that choose the most reliable long-acting methods. Action plans should specify that robust data collection and monitoring is in place for EHC, both in specialist and primary care services, with a focus on addressing the demographic disproportionality in access referenced above.

Addressing local inequalities in reproductive health

Not all people have the same experiences when it comes to their reproductive health and wellbeing. Women from certain demographic groups experience far worse outcomes in relation to early pregnancy, infertility, maternity, and gynaecological conditions. Research shows that the risk of miscarriage for Black women is 43% higher than white women. The same paper found that maternal death rates were almost four times higher for women from Black ethnic backgrounds and almost two times higher for women from Asian ethnic backgrounds, compared to white women[16].

Furthermore, deprivation is strongly associated with higher admissions for conditions such as pelvic inflammatory disease and ectopic pregnancy. Lesbian and bisexual women are also disproportionally affected especially when accessing cervical screening services. Inequalities can also exist between age groups: older women tend to have higher levels of unmet need for contraception and may not seek support for their changing contraceptive needs as they progress through peri-menopause into menopause.

The main reasons stopping NEL residents from accessing their local Sexual and Reproductive Services are:

Difficulties in getting appointment
Inability to travel
Stigma
Embarrassment
Risk of being recognised

Source: NEL Engagement Survey 2023

Women's Health Hubs

In March 2023, the Department of Health and Social Care announced a £25 million investment to enable the establishment of at least one Women's Health Hub in every Integrated Care Board (ICB). Our local LAs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets helped to inform the roll-out of the national programme. As a region, the rest of NEL aims to build on their success and implement additional Hubs in the local area in partnership with NHS and other local stakeholders.

Reducing abortion rates and repeat abortions

Overall, NEL's total abortion rate is higher than the England average but comparable to the London average[17].

Reducing repeat abortions is an important aim for stakeholders across NEL over the next five years: on average, 33% of women in NEL choosing an abortion in 2021 through Termination of Pregnancy Services (ToPS) had used this service at least once previously[18]. Most NEL LAs saw a relatively small increase in the proportion of repeat abortions between 2019 and 2021, though this pattern is not uniform[18].

The partnership between specialist sexual health services and ToPS is crucial. In Tower Hamlets and City and Hackney, these services are already aligned through a single provider, and the data shows that this has had a positive impact on outcomes: in 2021, the legal abortion rates in Tower Hamlets were 41% lower than NEL average[19].

All partners behind this strategy are therefore keen to explore a more integrated approach to SRH and ToPS across NEL as part of the nation-wide roll-out of Women's Hubs[20]. Regional and local Action Plans will reflect this commitment, underpinned by a shared data dashboard and collaborative, evidence-based pathway development.

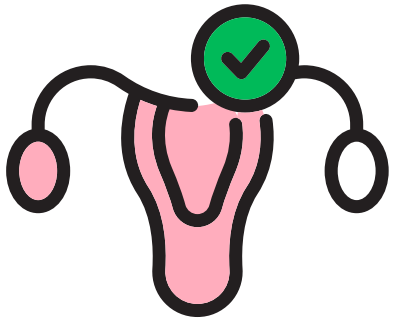
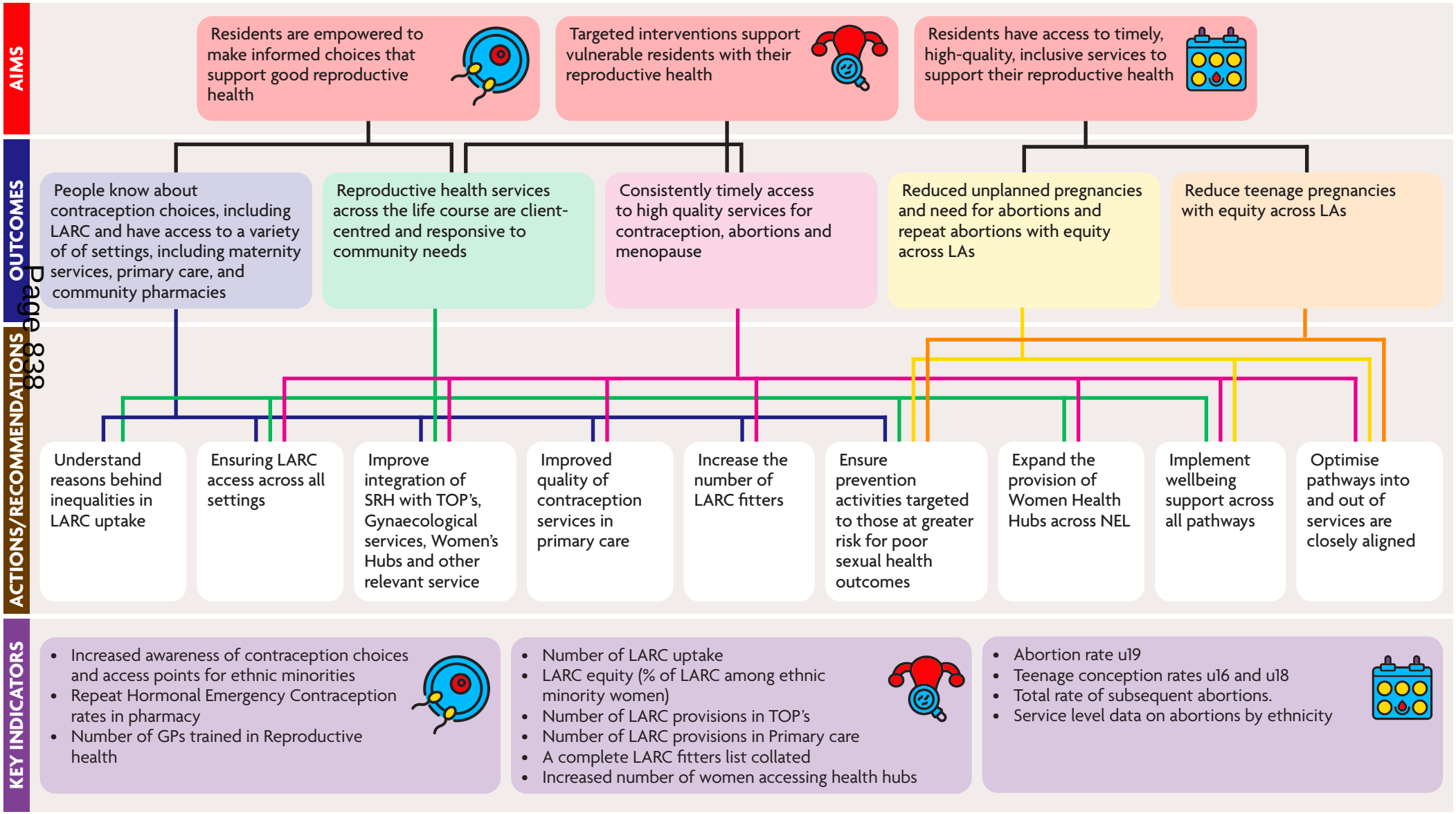
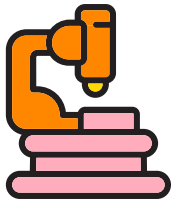


Figure 4: The summary diagram for Good Reproductive Health across the Life Course



Priority 3: High quality and innovative STI screening and treatment



Strategic vision

The burden of STIs is reduced, in particular among those who are disproportionately affected.

There is equitable, accessible, high-quality testing, treatment, vaccination and partner notification that is appropriate to need.

Transmission of STIs and repeat infections are reduced.

Background

Being free from STIs is a key indicator of good sexual health. However, many people with STIs have no symptoms and are unaware that they are at risk of transmitting an STI infection to other partners. Regular STI screening and effective treatment is crucial because delays in diagnosis and treatment may lead to onward transmission and poorer health outcomes.

In the strategic context for NEL, '" high quality and innovative STI testing and treatment" means accessible and comprehensive STI testing and treatment, widely available via different routes accompanied by enhanced partner notification allowing for swift identification of residents that may be at risk of STI infection.

A recent report from the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT)[21] revealed that, nationally, 49% of all SRH appointments requested were denied, with "access to sexual health services" named by respondents as the biggest barrier toward achieving good sexual health. The report highlighted the need for online booking systems, which NEL providers already, putting them a step ahead of many other regions. Nonetheless, an important theme of regional and local Action Plans must be to continue to monitor access on an ongoing basis. A longer-term ambition is to create and implement a NEL-wide shared booking service, but this would require investment.

Our residents say that digital online booking systems are easy to use and makes booking appointments quicker than before

Source: NEL Resident Survey 2023

Local Context

Like the rest of the country, overall incidence of STI diagnoses has increased year-on-year in NEL LAs following the Covid pandemic in 2020[22]. GBMSM account for nearly half of diagnoses in outer-London NEL LAs (Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham and Havering), and more than 8 in 10 of new cases from inner-London LAs (City of London, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest)[23].

A 'Mystery Shopping' exercise undertaken in 2022 indicated that accessing SRH services could sometimes be problematic. It should be noted that this work was undertaken while clinics were recovering from COVID-19 and working under restrictions linked to outbreaks of 'Monkey Pox' (MPV). Nonetheless, access issues are acknowledged as an ongoing area of challenge within specialist SRH services across London. Therefore, regional and local Annual Action Plans should include steps to monitor and improve access to clinics as required.

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More broadly, commissioners and clinicians across NEL support a strategic approach to STI screening that encourages asymptomatic residents to undertake appropriate testing online, with enhanced in-clinic offers for symptomatic patients and/or more complex STI-related issues. However, residents must always have choice, and there is currently no London- or NEL-wide consensus around exactly what symptoms or infections should be treated online or in-clinic, and/or any possible exceptions based on risk factors or demographics.

A jointly agreed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for NEL providers and commissioners on this topic is an ambition to be addressed through regional and local Action Plans.

Increasing number of New STI infections

In 2022, there were 22,224 new STI diagnoses in NEL. Chlamydia was the most commonly diagnosed STI for all NEL local authorities, followed by gonorrhoea and syphilis[24].

STI diagnostic rates have increased significantly after a decline in 2020[25], suggesting increased testing both in clinic and online.

Men in NEL have significantly higher STI infection rates compared to women[26], which is likely to reflect increased awareness and testing among the GBMSM community.

Geographically, the greatest burden of STIs is seen in Tower Hamlets and Hackney[27], where rates of gonorrhoea, in particular, are especially high. This is likely to reflect the fact that these areas have a greater number of GBMSM compared to the other LAs.

Focus on young people

High STI rates among young people can be linked to higher rates of unprotected sexual activity with more frequent changes of sexual partner. Nationally, young people are also at higher risk for STI re-infection: approximately 17% of young women (15-19) and 11% of young men (15-19) become re-infected within 12 months[28].

Chlamydia detection rates are impacted by opportunistic testing within primary care and the frequency of appropriately targeted outreach activities. In NEL, each LA has varying services linked to the promotion of safe sex among younger people. The mixed picture of Chlamydia detection rates indicates a need for a more collaborative and strategic approach (Table 1), with learnings to be taken from City & Hackney, in particular.

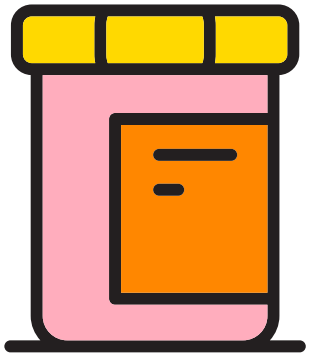
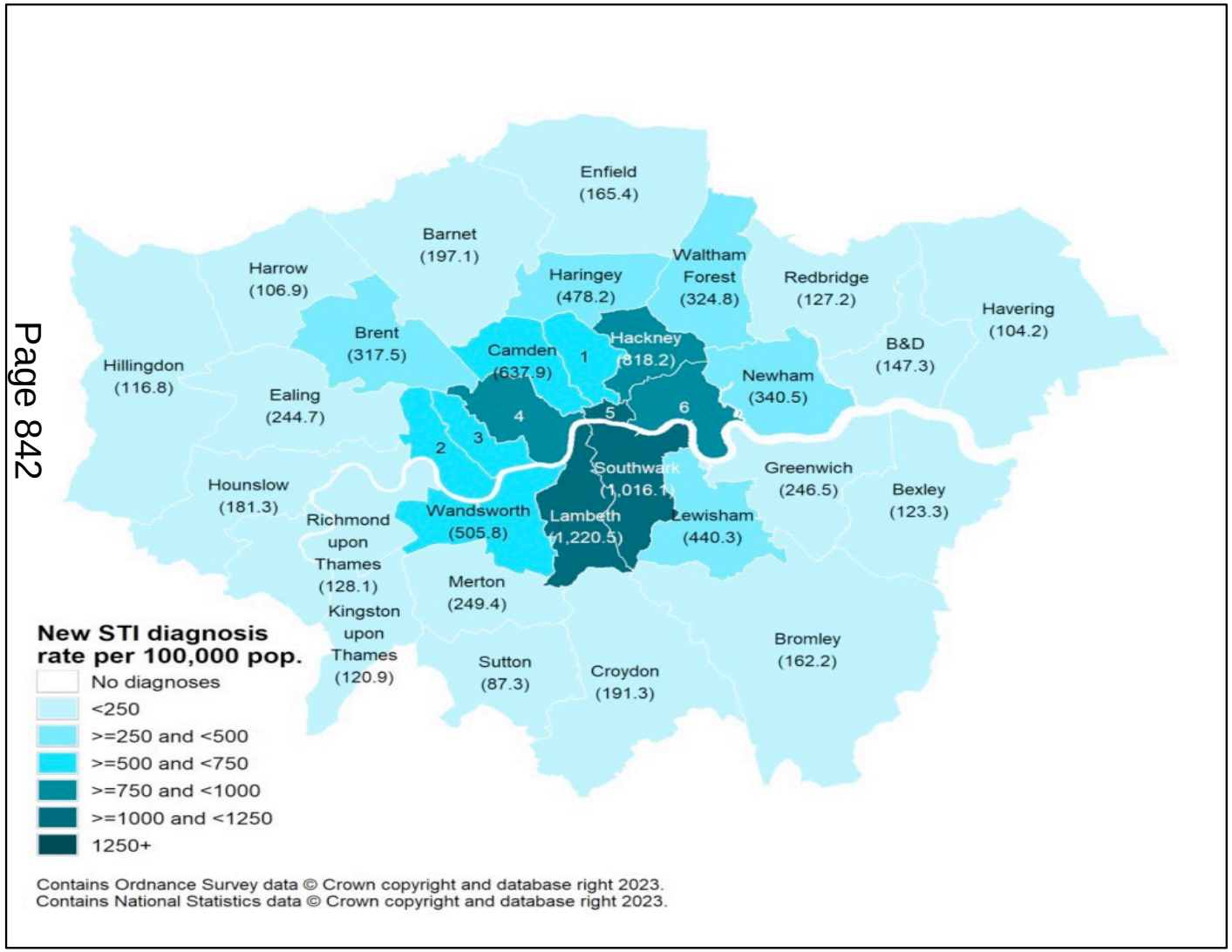


Table 1: Chlamydia detection rates and % of chlamydia screens amongst young people (15-24) in NEL (2022)

LA	Chlamydia detection rates (ages 15-24)	Chlamydia % screened (ages 15-24)
Barking and Dagenham	1,583	12.9
City of London	3,185	32.7
Hackney	3,521	33.4
Havering	1,262	11.8
Newham	1,522	16.3
Redbridge	893	9.1
Tower Hamlets	1,803	23.7
Waltham Forest	2,061	18.6
London	1,835	15.2

Furthermore, antibiotic resistance in chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis has steadily increased over the past five years[29]. Coupled with the increasing incidence in these most common STIs , especially among young people, treatment and management are likely to become more complex over time, requiring additional resources and a more joined-up strategic approach from NEL commissioners and providers, especially in relation to partner notification.

Figure 5: Diagnostic rates for new STIs across NEL (2022)



Service availability

The National Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea Screening Programme (NCPS) aims to reduce the burden of untreated Chlamydia among people aged 15-24. In most of NEL LAs, young residents can access NCSP via local GP settings and/or community pharmacies, as well as online provision.

Furthermore, most NEL LAs commission free condom provision for young people (aged 15-24) through community pharmacies. Condoms remain the simplest and cheapest way to avoid STI infection and onward transmission. However, condom provision via community pharmacies is currently being underused which indicates a need for a service review and a more concerted and joined-up approach across the region. This issue has been noted in other regions, too[30], so a London-wide review and refreshed approach should also be considered.

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Social Inequalities

Evidence suggests that sexual and reproductive health is influenced by social factors including health care access, social and cultural norms, education level, health literacy, economic status, age, gender identity, sexual orientation and behaviours[31]. There is a strong correlation between STI infection rates and level of deprivation in NEL, indicating a need for better STI education and improved access in the most deprived areas of our region (Figure 6).

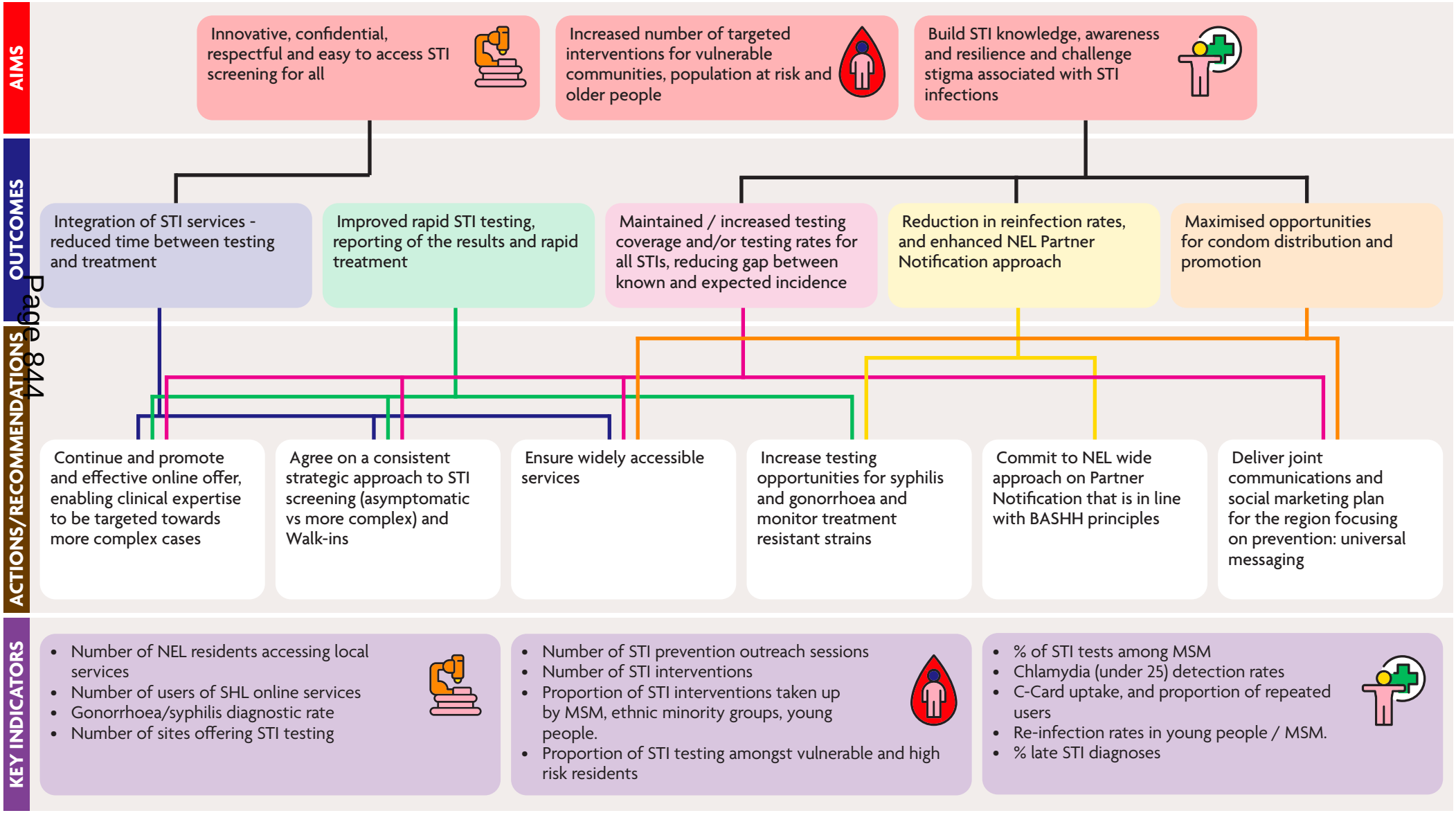
Regional and local Action Plans should include measures for monitoring and improving (where required) the cultural competence of services, as well as targeted outreach and engagement (e.g. to promote LARC among women of South Asian heritage). There is also an ambition across NEL to develop shared data dashboards capable of analysing data by demographic characteristics, in order to more fully understand and monitor potential inequities in access and outcomes for the full range of SRH services (not just specialist SRH services).

STI reinfection

Between 2016 and 2020, NEL recorded higher rates of reinfection than the national average, especially among women[32]. Overall reinfection rates are above the national average for each LA (apart from Havering), though the extent of the pattern varies locally[33]. It is notable that reinfection rates for men in Tower Hamlets are lower than the England average. This pattern is worthy of further exploration.

A NEL-wide focus on meeting guidance from the National Institute of Health & Care Excellence (NICE) and the British Association for Sexual Health & HIV (BASHH) in relation to repeat screening and partner notification should therefore be reflected in regional and local Action Plans.

Figure 6: The summary diagram for High Quality and Innovative STI Testing and Treatment



Priority 4: HIV - towards zero and living well with HIV

Strategic vision

Cross-region implementation of the national HIV action plan of zero new HIV transmissions by 2030 focusing on prevention, testing, rapid access to treatment and retention in care whilst improving the quality of life for people living with HIV, and ending HIV related stigma and discrimination.

Increasing HIV screening, access to PrEP and linkage to HIV care among under-represented groups such as women and Black African residents, in particular.

Background

Since the 1990s, the combination of a prevention-focused approach, increased screening (especially among the GBMSM community) and the development of new medications such as Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) has contributed to a sharp decline in new HIV infections and transformed the care available for those living with the infection. Antiretroviral therapy (ART) is now so effective that those on treatment are able to maintain an undetectable viral load.

However, of the estimated 106,890 people living with HIV in the UK, over 5,000 are thought to be undiagnosed and unaware of their HIV status, which presents an increased risk of severe health problems and death, as well as further HIV transmission. The burden of HIV also falls on some groups more than others, exacerbated by health and social inequalities[34].

Maintaining a strong HIV response through prevention, testing, treatment and care (including re-engaging those who have been lost to care) is an essential part of the overall sexual and reproductive health work as HIV impacts on people's sexual and reproductive lives, is linked to poorer socio-economic outcomes, and is associated with other infections such as Tuberculosis and viral Hepatitis.

NEL's 'Towards Zero and Living Well with HIV' approach aligns with the primary aim of 'Fast Track Cities' (FTC) – i.e. zero HIV new diagnoses, zero HIV-related stigma and zero HIV-related deaths by 2030. Importantly, 'Towards Zero and Living Well with HIV' also emphasises the evolving nature of HIV as a long-term condition. It touches on the fragmentation of HIV services across the health and social care sector and the ongoing challenge of reducing stigma against a back-drop of increasing multi-morbidity, as residents with HIV live longer into old age.

Impact of fragmented HIV commissioning

The Health and Social Care Act (2012) created a fragmented and complex system which split responsibilities for commissioning across the HIV care pathway. Specifically:

- NHS England is responsible for commissioning HIV treatment through its specialised commissioning programme. Local authorities are responsible for HIV testing and prevention as part of their public health functions, alongside their responsibility for commissioning broader sexual health services to prevent, diagnose and treat sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- ICBs are responsible for HIV testing and diagnosis within other treatment episodes that they fund. They are also responsible for commissioning the treatment of most other co-morbidities (such as hypertension) that are experienced by people living with HIV.

This arbitrary division of commissioning responsibilities creates obstacles to developing optimised pathways. However, there are emerging opportunities to better align services in this area. The planned shift of commissioning responsibility for HIV care from NHS England to Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) in 2025 should be viewed as a catalyst to work towards a more integrated model of HIV prevention, treatment and care.

Living well with HIV

HIV must now be recognised as a long-term condition: we have a stable, ageing population living with HIV that is experiencing new challenges related to quality of life and managing multiple co-morbidities. The inter-section of HIV with ageing is an area that requires deeper understanding at a national level – and NEL Action Plans should commit to review evidence in this area and translate guidance into practice.

Local Context

Diagnosed HIV prevalence in NEL continues to be above the London average[35] and there is considerable variation in HIV prevalence rates across the NEL LAs, with the highest rates seen in City of London (10.1 per 1,000) Hackney (5.79 per 1,000), Tower Hamlets (5.94 per 1,000) and Newham (4.55 per 1,000)[36].

Communities engaging in unprotected sex or sharing injectable equipment are more likely to be diagnosed with HIV. High HIV prevalence among certain communities is also linked with an increasing number of LGBTQ+ residents in NEL (Newham has the highest transgender population in London[37]) and with relatively high levels of internal and external migration.

A significant portion (48%) of HIV infections diagnosed among heterosexuals in the UK occur among people born outside the UK[38], and heterosexual Black African residents are disproportionately more likely to be diagnosed with HIV[39]. Therefore, increasing HIV screening and access to PrEP among Black African residents, in particular, is an important goal for the region. The pattern of HIV diagnosis is different in Hackney and Tower Hamlets, though, where the majority of HIV infections are seen in the GBMSM community.

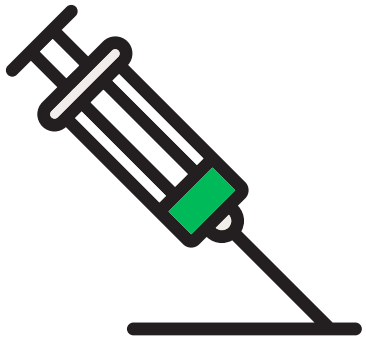
In 2022, approximately 37% of all new HIV cases NEL were diagnosed at a late stage of infection. There are substantial variances in the number of late HIV diagnoses across NEL LAs, with Barking and Dagenham (48%), Havering (41%) and Redbridge (48%) exceeding the London average (39%)[40].

HIV Prevention

Routine commissioning of PrEP for communities at risk has been a significant development in HIV prevention. There was a 55% increase in overall PrEP uptake in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22, and the number of NEL residents who started PrEP in 2022-23 was 36% higher than 2021-22[41]. However, PrEP uptake is uneven among demographic groups with an increased risk of HIV infection, with uptake significantly lower among Black African populations compared to GBMSM[42].

There is a growing body of literature related to increasing awareness of and access to PrEP among non-GBMSM groups, and reviewing this literature and developing a NEL-wide intervention should be a key focus for commissioners and providers over the next five years. Continued funding for GP HIV Champions is also likely to help to address the demographic inequities seen in PrEP uptake and late diagnosis of HIV.

Overall HIV testing coverage in specialised clinics across NEL generally meets or exceeds the London average[43]. However, there are notable discrepancies among demographic groups; with the highest testing coverage seen among GBMSM and significantly lower levels among heterosexual populations, especially women[44]. There is also a growing number of new cases of HIV being observed nationally among heterosexual women[45] which, taken alongside relatively low levels of testing coverage in this population, shows a clear development area that should be reflected in annual Action Plans.



CONTENTS

HIV screening in hospital Emergency Departments

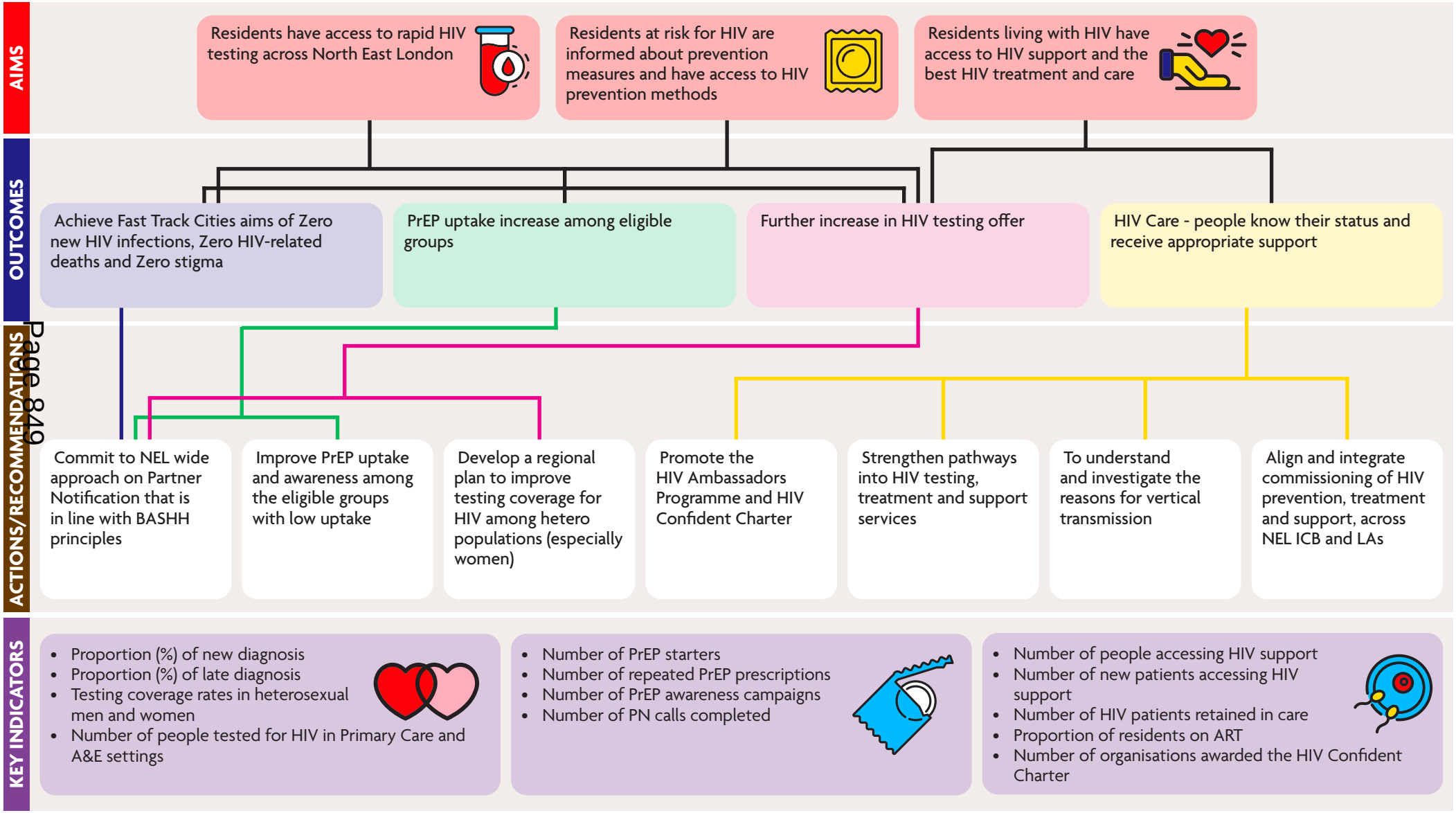
In 2022, 'opt out' HIV testing was introduced in Emergency Departments (EDs) across London. Initial data shows the programme has significantly contributed to an overall increase in testing coverage and the identification of new cases of HIV: between April 2022 and June 2023, 1,628 HIV tests were performed across NEL ED departments, identifying 75 new cases of HIV and 67 residents that were previously diagnosed but not accessing care.

Collaborative work is currently underway to ensure that NEL residents diagnosed with HIV via the ED programme are swiftly linked to HIV care. Alongside widespread testing, it is equally important that people are supported to start and maintain effective treatment to achieve viral suppression. A NEL-wide approach should also be formalised to ensure that patients lost to care are re-engaged with treatment at the earliest possible opportunity.

Tackling stigma and discrimination

Stigma and discrimination around HIV remains an important barrier to achieving FTC goals. All NEL local authorities should therefore sign up to the HIV Confident Charter[46] and implement relevant training throughout statutory and voluntary organisations. Annual Action Plans should also include steps to promote the HIV ambassadors programme to ensure the voice of people living with HIV is central to the provision of services across NEL[47].

Figure 7: The summary diagram for HIV: Towards Zero and Living Well with HIV



How are we planning to deliver our vision?

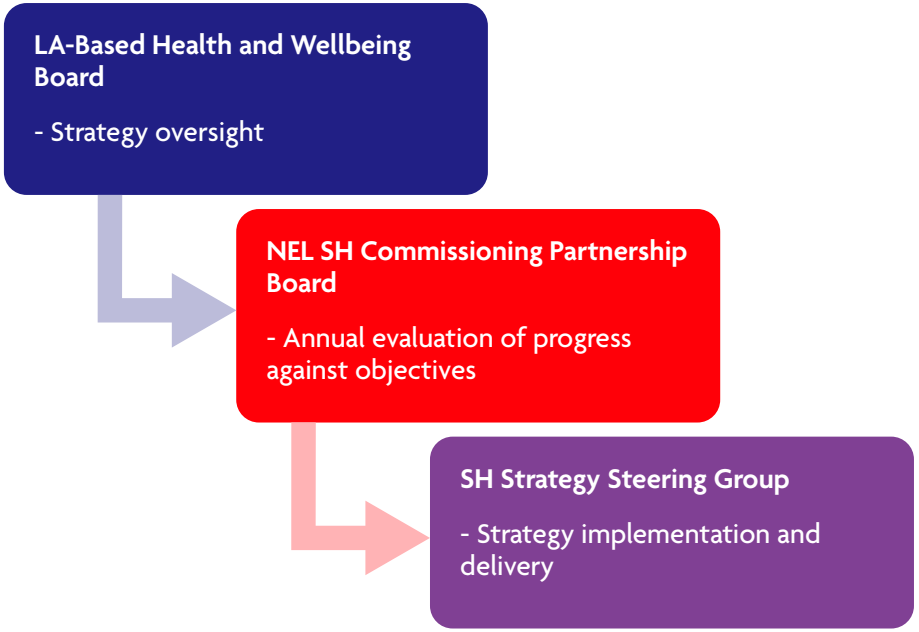
This strategy takes a system-wide approach across LAs, NHS, public health, third sector and residents across NEL. In addition to the provision of mandated open access sexual health services, many of the services available across NEL span LA boundaries or serve residents from multiple LAs. In the context of ICBs, health and social care partners are seeking to work together wherever possible to create seamless services for the benefit of the region.

This strategy outlines shared approaches and actions for each of the identified priorities. We acknowledge, however, that each LA has a different social and political landscape and specific sexual health and reproductive challenges according to the needs of local populations. The detailed LA-based annual Action Plans allow the flexibility required to target local resources to meet local needs. This dual approach allows us to collaborate and at the same time take local action as needed.

The Health and Wellbeing Boards of each LA will have oversight of the strategy from a governance perspective. Progress against objectives will be reviewed annually by the NEL Sexual Health Partnership Board, which will comprise Commissioners, Public Health, Providers and ICB representatives from across NEL. The Sexual Health Strategy Steering Group comprising strategic/public health/commissioning representatives from each LA will be responsible for the performance management of the strategy and will actively work with the appointed service providers to ensure efficient and effective implementation of this strategy (Figure 22).

Figure 8: The Governance Process

System-wide approach across: Local Authorities, Public Health, NHS, Third Sector and Residents



Key NEL-wide recommendations

The summary diagram at the end of each priority section includes key recommendations for each priority area.

Strengthen joint commissioning and contract management across LAs and ICB, of services across the SRH system – such as Specialist Sexual Health, HIV treatment and care, GPS, Gynaecology and Maternity. Enable shared access to data dashboards to track activity and outcomes for residents across service areas.

Pursue a collaborative approach between commissioners and providers (specialist and non-specialist), driven by data and focused on the areas of SRH intervention with the highest public health value; and utilising commissioning tools including incentives to direct activity.

Standardise and improve offer for the most vulnerable and/ or 'high-risk' residents: building robust pathways between services and developing evidence informed operating procedures across providers and LAs.

Review and standardisation of commissioning practices for primary care SRH services such as LARC, EHC, condom provision and the screening and treatment of simple STIs.

Consistent collection and monitoring of 'patient level' data (including demographic characteristics) across the region, with shared data dashboards aligned to our strategic priorities.

CONTENTS

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
BASHH	British Association for Sexual Health and HIV
CASH	Contraception and Sexual Health
CVFS	The Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector
ED	Emergency Departments
EHC	Emergency Hormonal Contraception
GBMSM	Gay Bisexual and other Men who have sex with Men
GP	General Practice
GUM	Genitourinary Medicine
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ISHT	Integrated Sexual Health Tariffs
LA	Local Authority
LARC	Long Acting Reversible Contraception
LGBTQ+	Lesbian Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Community
LHPP	London HIV Prevention Programme
NCPS	National Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea Screening Programme
NEL	North East London

Abbreviation	Description
ICB	Integrated Care Board
ICP	Integrated Care Partnership
NHS	National Health Service
MSM	Men who have sex with Men
OHID	Office of Health Improvement and Disparities
PN	Partner Notification
PEPSE	Post Exposure Prophylaxis after sexual exposure to HIV
PrEP	Pre Exposure Prophylaxis
RSE	Relationships and Sex Education
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SH	Sexual Health
SHL	Sexual Health London (e-service)
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
ToPS	Termination of Pregnancy Services
YP	Young People

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North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024 – 2029)

Edited by: Aneta J Hutek and Kieran Scott (LBN Newham) with contributions from NEL Local Authorities , Local Specialist Sexual Health Providers, Health Professionals and Voluntary Organisations.

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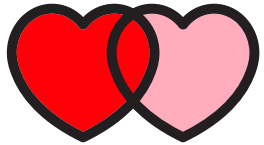
North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024 – 2029)

Action Plan

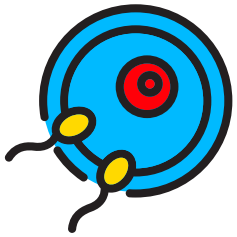
Priority 1:
Healthy and fullfilling sexual relationships



Ref	Strategic Aim/ Outcome	Action	No.	Task for 2024-25 (Year 1)	Measure of success	Rationale for the target	Estimated delivery date
A	Recommission NEL specialist SRH services	Recommission NEL specialist SRH services	1	See separate Project Plan (GANNT)	Providers working to new service specification by 1 Dec 2025	Contracts expiring	Dec 2025
B	Ensure services are open and truly accessible to those with increased or complex needs	Ensure that residents with more complex needs or greater vulnerabilities are not stigmatised and their additional needs are recognised and met within the overall service provision	2	Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers	Annual Equity Audits implemented consistently across all SRH providers	Monitoring equity and improving where required	Nov 2024
			3	Plan developed for resident engagement among groups where need is currently not well understood (e.g. LD YP and Adults)	Insights gained in time for ISHS new service spec	Monitoring equity and improving where required	Sep 2024
			4	Review and refresh Barts KPIs related to access. New dashboard created for monthly contract monitoring meetings	Access KPIs agreed by June 24. Reported monthly by Barts from July 24 (Q2)	Monitoring equity and improving where required	Jul 2024
			5	Develop and pilot a Trans and Non-Binary Clinic - collaboration between Barts and Homerton	Increasing number of residents attending clinic, collaborative work across NEL	Need identified through Mystery Shopping, Chemsex Working Group and feedback from surveys	Sep 2024

Ref	Strategic Aim/ Outcome	Action	No.	Task for 2024-25 (Year 1)	Measure of success	Rationale for the target	Estimated delivery date
C	RSE: People make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health	• Implement and oversee a consistent, comprehensive and evidence-based approach to RSHE across NEL • Understand current provision of SRE provision in schools	6	'Draw together a working group consisting of Healthy Schools Leads/Education reps	Working group established by July 24. Meet quarterly. Track actions and outcomes	Feedback from stakeholder focus group suggested current RSE provision is patchy and inconsistent. Year one targets linked to identifying correct stakeholders and agreeing an approach for NEL	Sep 2024
			7	Mapping: Develop survey to establish consistency of current SRE provision i.e. curriculum, frequency etc	SRE content mapped for secondary schools across NEL by Jan 25. Minimum one school per Neighbourhood		Jan 2025
			8	Benchmarking and best practice agreed by working group and summarised into action plan. Reach out to London and national networks	Benchmarking and best practice review completed by Feb 24		Feb 2025
D	Comms and Marketing: People make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health	Ensure available service information is up to date and reliable	9	'Complete audit of online content and consistency	Service information provided online is validated as correct	Feedback from strategy resident survey, priority workshops and Mystery Shopping identified gaps, errors and inconsistency in online information	Dec 2024
			10	Develop NEL-wide comms plan Agree on consistent messages	Comms Plan developed		
E	Integrated approach towards Chemsex support	Identify barriers to accessing local services supporting residents engaging in chemsex	11	Pathway Mapping	Pathways flow chart developed by July 24	Chemsex working group was established in 2022. Group have identified gaps in Chemsex provision and staff training	Sep 2024
			12	Co- production to identify support and location	Improvement action plan for pathways which are currently ineffective		Oct 2024
			13	Staff Training : Ensure staff are confident to work with residents presenting with chemsex issues	Staff training booked or completed		Sep 2025

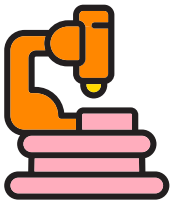
Priority 2:
Good reproductive health across the life course



Ref	Strategic Aim/ Outcome	Action	No.	Task for 2024-25 (Year 1)	Measure of success	Rationale for the target	Estimated delivery date
F	LARC: Improve uptake of LARC, especially among women of colour	Establish consistent data and reporting for primary care LARC across NEL.	14	Primary care - standardise output data collection in Power BI as per LBN (CEG contract for NEL)	CEG contract(s) updated for line-by-line LARC data by 25-26	Consistency of data collection	Mar 2025
		Standardise NEL data collection on fitters, training etc	15	Standardise NEL data collection on fitters, training etc	Fitter database established and up-to-date by Dec 24	Fitter numbers are low. Can fitters work across NEL?	Dec 2024
		Understand why women of colour (and 'White Other') are less likely to choose LARC compared to White British women	16	Qualitative engagement with women on LARC - views, beliefs, barriers etc	Qualitative engagement carried out in each LA and results compiled into a report with LA-level LARC Equity targets for 25-26	Inequity in LARC data	Mar 2025

Ref	Strategic Aim/ Outcome	Action	No.	Task for 2024-25 (Year 1)	Measure of success	Rationale for the target	Estimated delivery date
G	EHC: Address the demographic disproportionality in access to EHC	Robust data collection and monitoring is in place for EHC across NEL, both in specialist and primary care services	17	Pharmacy: Pharmoutcomes data for INEL / ONEL EHC brought into Power BI (as per LBN)	Data in Power BI	Improve intelligence around inequity	Sep 2025
			18	Review of EHC templates on Pharmoutcomes. Updated to be evidence-based and consistent across NEL	Templates updated. Pharmacists trained		Dec 2024
H	Consistent, timely access to high quality services for contraception, abortion and menopause Reduce the need for abortions and repeat abortions, with equity across boroughs	Improve integration of SRH with ToPS, Gynae, HIV Treatment and Women's Hubs	19	Establish joint NHS and LA Task/ Finish Group to explore possibilities for more collaborative contract management and data sharing	Plan agreed for enhanced integration	• Improved patient experience: Fragmented comissioning can cause dissatisfaction among residents (as per feedback from resident survey) • Evidence of effectiveness in TH (ToPS) • Efficient use of commissioning capacity	Nov 2024
			20	Develop a joint data dashboard to monitor impact of improved integration	Dashboard work underway (e.g. CEG)		Sep 2025
I	Increase condom provision	Explore options to increase uptake of free condoms among young people (15-24)	21	Explore pharmacy condom provision at borough level - establish learnings and summarise into recommendations	Recommendations by Dec 24	Variability in LA-level models	Dec 2024
			22	Increase distribution via outreach events and other partners such as YP services, school nurses and substance misuse	More condoms distributed (provider reports)	Low levels of condom distribution, currently	Sep 2025

Priority 3:
High quality and innovative STI testing and treatment



Ref	Strategic Aim/ Outcome	Action	No.	Task for 2024-25 (Year 1)	Measure of success	Rationale for the target	Estimated delivery date
J	Ensure widely accessibile services. Effective online offer helps target clinical expertise towards more complex cases (value)	E-service re-procurement	23	Agree a NEL-wide approach to e-service requirements (in / out of scope) and feed into London working group	Approach agreed and fed into London process	Balance and consistency in screeninig done online vs in clinic	Jul 2024
			24	Undertake LA-level governance to get permission to commission the service via City of London	Permission granted by all LA Cabinets	Necessary to proceed	Dec 2024
K	Agree a consistent strategic approach to STI screening (asymptomatic vs more complex) and Walk-ins	Jointly agreed STI Screening and Walk-In Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for NEL	25	Jointly agreed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for NEL providers and commissioners	Evidence of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) being implemented (via contract monitoing dashboards)	Consistent strategic approach to STI screening across NEL	Mar 2025
L	Reduce onward transmission of STIs	Meet BASHH guidance in relation to partner notification (PN)	26	Review of current PN across NEL to identify strengths and weaknesses of current approaches	Review undertaken by Dec 24	Reduce onward transmission of STIs	Dec 2024
			27	Record baseline levels of PN for each provider (by borough)	Baselines established by Jan 25	Reduce onward transmission of STIs	Jan 2025
			28	Set targets for improving PN in areas / providers below average	25-26 Targets set and agreed by Feb 25	Reduce onward transmission of STIs	Feb 2025

Priority 4:
HIV - towards zero and living well

Ref	Strategic Aim/ Outcome	Action	No.	Task for 2024-25 (Year 1)	Measure of success	Rationale for the target	Estimated delivery date
M	Re-commission HIV Prevention & Support	Re-commission HIV Prevention & Support	29	See separate Project Plan (GANNT). Establish NEL HIV Working Group to cover recommssion and address actions below	Providers working to new service specification by 1 Mar 2025	Contracts expiring	Mar 2025
N	Support residents to Live Well with HIV	Promote the HIV Ambassadors Programme and HIV Confident Charter	30	NEL Project Plan agreed	Plan agreed by Oct 24	Reduce HIV stigma	Oct 2024
O	Improve HIV testing coverage among heterosexual populations, especially women	Develop a regional plan to improve testing coverage for HIV among hetero populations (especially women)	31	Develop a regional plan to improve testing coverage for HIV among hetero populations (especially women)	Plan agreed by Dec 24	Increasing incidence of HIV among hetero women	Dec 2024

Ref	Strategic Aim/ Outcome	Action	No.	Task for 2024-25 (Year 1)	Measure of success	Rationale for the target	Estimated delivery date
P	To increase uptake of PrEP in all eligible populations (not just GBMSM)	Increased public health promotion and increased targeted focused on specific communities at increased risk of HIV	32	Develop baselines for PrEP uptake among different eligible groups (by borough and provider)	Baseline data established	Relatively poor uptake of PrEP and late HIV diagnosis among non GBMSM groups	Mar 2025
			33	Review of literature related to increasing awareness of and access to PrEP among non-GBMSM groups	Review of literature undertaken, with recommendations to feed into...	Relatively poor uptake of PrEP and late HIV diagnosis among non GBMSM groups	Mar 2025
			34	Create a health promotion plan around PrEP to raise awareness among eligible groups with relatively low uptake	Plan for engagement and marketing co-produced with target groups	Relatively poor uptake of PrEP and late HIV diagnosis among non GBMSM groups	Mar 2025
Q	Increase HIV/BBV testing in A&E in locations below average for NEL	Increase number of residents screened, especially in hospitals with lower numbers	35	Hospitals without dedicated support roles (funded by ICB) to recruit to these posts by Sept 24	Increase in testing rates for sites below NEL average	Equity of HIV screening across NEL	Sep 2024
			36	Cerner system implemented across NEL	Increase in testing rates for sites below NEL average	Equity of HIV screening across NEL	Mar 2025
R	Improve linkage from A&E HIV testing to follow up treatment / support	Review of current pathways and SPOs - learn from sites performing well	37	Review of current pathways and SPOs - learn from sites performing well	Improve the proportion of new patients diagnosed that engage with care	Udetectable = Unstransmissable	Dec 2025
S	To understand the reasons of incidents of vertical transmission	To understand the reasons of vertical transmission	38	To work with Hospitals and ICB to collect information on vertical transmission	Data sets and reporting mechanism established by Oct 24	Target for zero vertical transmissions	Mar 2025

Ref	Strategic Aim/ Outcome	Action	No.	Task for 2024-25 (Year 1)	Measure of success	Rationale for the target	Estimated delivery date
T	Improve integration between SRH and HIV treatment in advance of HIV transition to ICB commissioning in 2025	ICB HIV commissioner to join NEL SRH Steering Group and Task/ Finish group for HIV Support & Prevention	39	ICB colleagues to engage with patients and other health professionals services to understand improvement areas in advance of 2025 transition	Engagement undertaken before Aug 24	Better intergration with SRH and HIV services could improve health outcomes for PLWHIV	Aug 2024
			40	Consider extra work package(s) as part of new HIV Prevention & Support Framework service spec	Plan agreed and shared for how ICB will approach novation of commissioning responsibilities in advance of 2025	Better intergration with SRH and HIV services could improve health outcomes for PLWHIV	Aug 2024

North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024 – 2029)

Action Plan

Aneta J Hutek – Commissioner NEL Sexual Health Shared Service
Kieran Scott – Senior Commissioner NEL Sexual Health Shared Service

Barking & Dagenham | City of London | Hackney | Havering London Borough | Newham London | London Borough of Redbridge | Waltham Forest | Tower Hamlets | NHS North East London

North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024 – 2029)

Data Summary

To inform North East London Sexual And Reproductive Health Strategy and Commissioning Intentions

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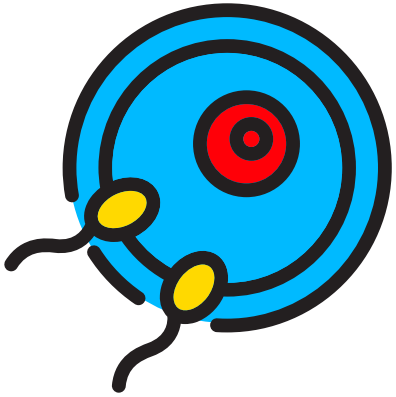


1. Scope and Purpose

Purpose:

i. Document North East London (NEL) residents' present and future needs in relation to sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

ii. Inform NEL Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy and Commissioning Intentions for the period 2024 – 2029.

Scope:

NEL consists of eight Local Authorities (LAs): Barking and Dagenham (B&D), City of London (CoL), Hackney, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets (TH) and Waltham Forest (WF).

The data covers HIV testing and diagnoses, contraception, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and early termination of pregnancy (ToPS).

The data describes:

- the NEL population profile along with its anticipated future changes
- how NEL sexual health services are currently used
- the present-day population's sexual health outcomes.

Data sources:

Routinely collected data indicators:

- Office of Health Disparities and Improvements (OHID)
- Business Intelligence (BI)
- Genitourinary Medicine Clinic Activity Dataset STI Surveillance System (GUMCAD)
- Census 2021

Specialist Reports:

- Summary Profiles of Local Authority Sexual Health (SPLASH)
- Data provided by specialist SRH providers from Pathway Analytics (PA)
- Preventx website for e-service user data
- Resident and service user engagement

2.Population of North East London

2.1 Population Profile

North East London (NEL) has nearly 2 million residents (2021 Census). Since 2022, the population has increased by 11.4%. NEL is a vibrant, diverse and distinctive area of London, with a wide range of age groups, ethnic backgrounds, faiths and socio-economic levels (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Summary of Population Profile of North East London

NEL population 2021 (including changes between 2011-2021)

Age

- Grew by 11.4%, higher than England (6.4%) and London (7.7%); TH highest (22%) followed by B&D (17.7%)
- Population breakdown - 16-64 (70%), 0-15 (19%), 65+ (11%)
- The median age is 34 (lower than England at 40)
- Working population (15-65) increased by 6%, 65+ increased by 8%
- 16-25 - 13% (decrease of 6%)

Ethnicity

- 50.2% non-white, decrease of 1%
- 27% Asian ethnic background, Redbridge highest (47.3%), TH (44.4%) and Newham (42.2%). Higher than England average (7.8%)
- 12% Black, Black Caribbean and African ethnic background, B&D highest (31.4%), Hackney (21%) and Newham (17.5%). Higher than England average (7.8%)
- 49.8% White ethnic background, 10% less than England (59.8%), highest Havering (75%), CoL (69.4%) and WF (52.8%)

Sexual Orientation

- 4% identified as LGBTQ, Hackney highest (7.8%), TH (7.2%) and WF (4.5%)
- Newham has highest transgender population in London (1.5%), B&D (1.17%) and WF (1.08%)

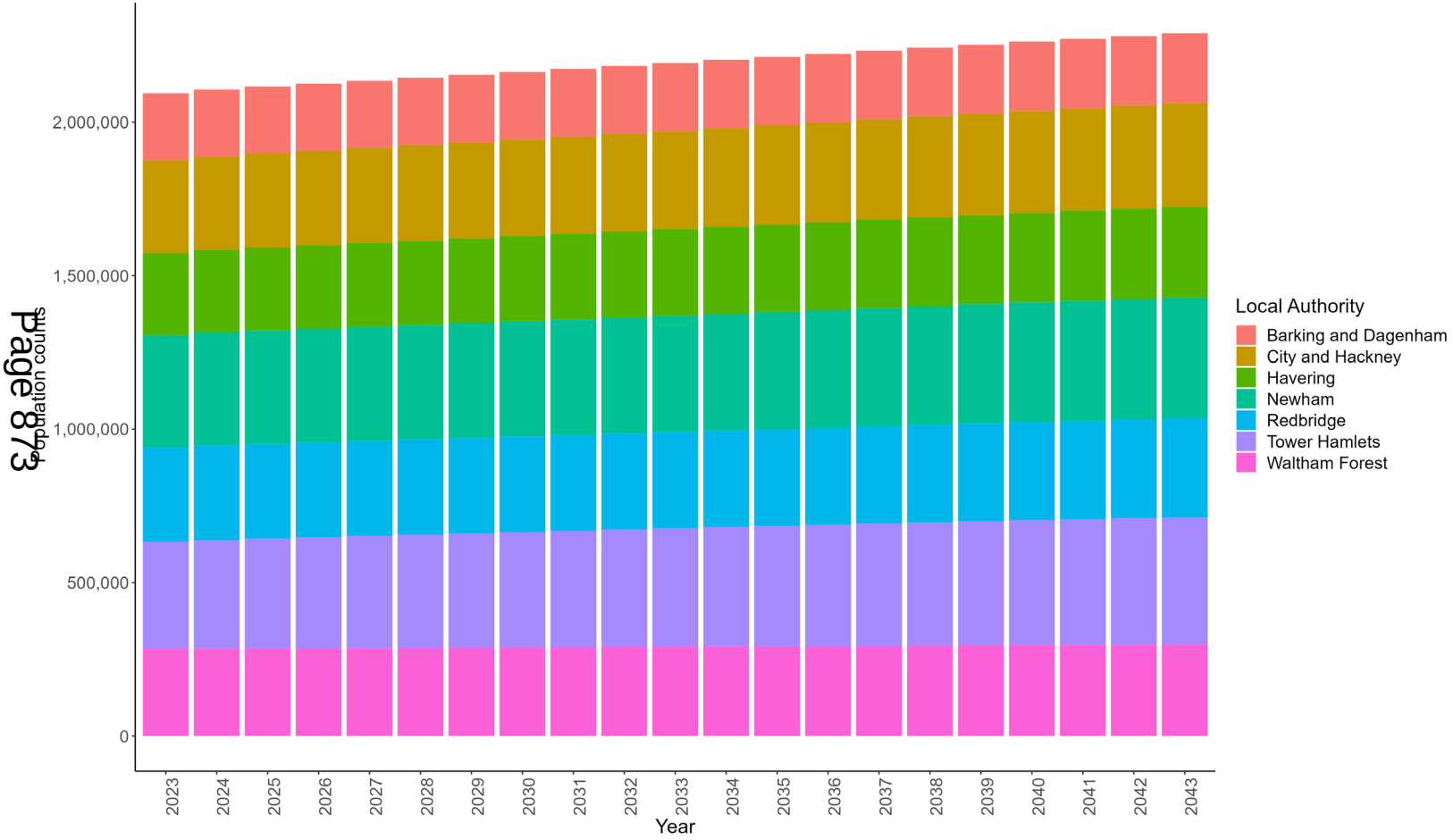
Religion

- 36% Christian, 22% Muslim, 3.3% Hindu, 1.6% Jewish and 27.8% said they had no religion

Source: How your area has changed in 10 years: Census 2021 - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

The population of NEL is predicted to rise by nearly 19% in the next 20 years. All NEL LAs will see population growth, with Tower Hamlets seeing the greatest rise of just under 25% (Figure 2).

Figure 2: North East London Population Projection (2023-2043)



Source: ONS 2018 based projections.

2.2 Deprivation

Sexual and reproductive health outcomes are consistently worse in more deprived areas – and just over 40% of the population of NEL lives in the three most deprived deciles.[1]

The level of deprivation varies across NEL; with the highest levels seen in Tower Hamlets (61% of the population live in the three most deprived deciles) and lowest in Redbridge, where around a quarter of the population live in the most deprived areas[2].

2.3 Disability

According to the 2021 census, the proportion of NEL residents who identified as being "disabled and limited a lot" had decreased by 2.9% overall compared to 2011 (Table 1). The highest drop was observed in Newham (4.4%) followed by Hackney and Tower Hamlets (3.6% each) and Barking and Dagenham (3.2%).

Table 1: Changes in proportion of NEL residents who were identified as being disabled and limited a lot per local authority (2011-2021)

Local Authority	2021	2011	Difference
B&D	9.0%	12.2%	-3.2%
City of London	3.9%	5.6%	-1.7%
Hackney	9.6%	13.2%	-3.6%
Havering	6.6%	8.5%	-1.9%
Newham	9.1%	13.5%	-4.4%
Redbridge	7.9%	10.1%	-2.2%
Tower Hamlets	10.4%	14.0%	-3.6%
Waltham Forest	7.7%	10.3%	-2.6%
Average	**8.03%**	**10.9%**	**-2.9%**

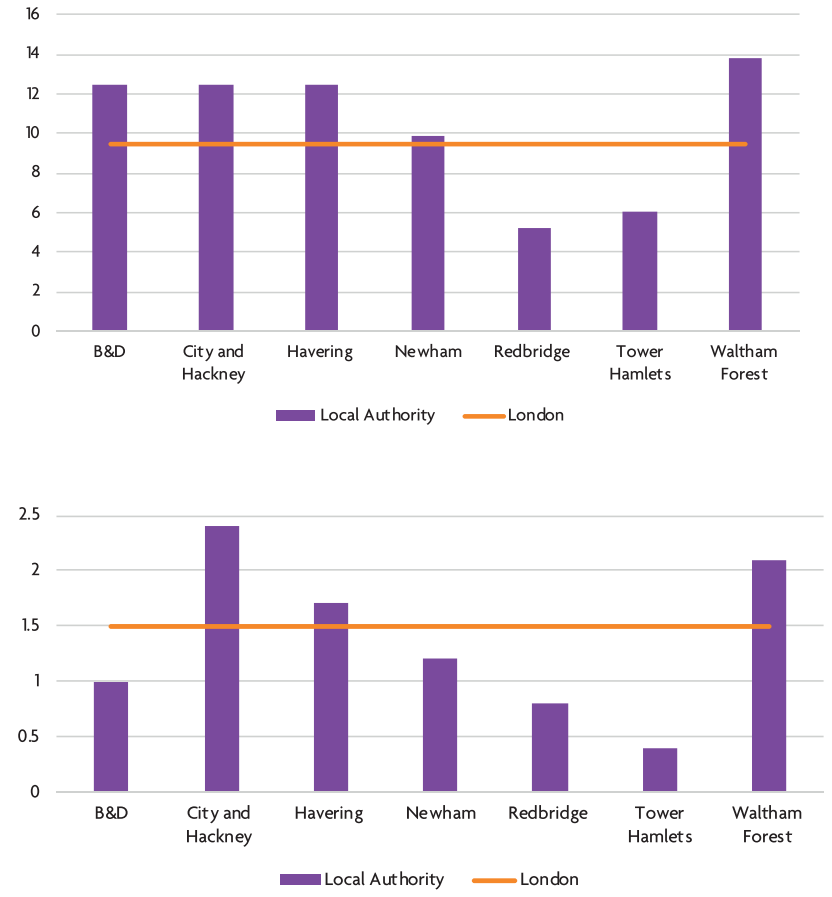
Source: How your area has changed in 10 years: Census 2021 - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

3. Reproductive Health

3.1 Teenage Conceptions and Abortions

Teenage pregnancy is a complex issue. Access to sexual education, contraception, and behavioural advice are some of the contributory factors. Deprivation also plays a key role, with higher rates observed in more deprived areas and fewer conceptions leading to termination[3]. Babies of adolescent mothers are at increased risk of low birth weight, preterm birth, and severe neonatal illness. Teenagers are also more likely to present late for antenatal care and for abortion services[4]. Figure 3 (top graph) shows that in 2021 under- 18s conception rates are above the London average for all NEL LAs aside from Tower Hamlets and Redbridge, while Figure 3 (bottom graph) shows that in 2021 under-16s conception rates are above the London average for all NEL LAs aside from Tower Hamlets and Redbridge and Newham[1].

Figure 3: Under 18s (a) and Under 16s (b) conception rate per 1,000 (NEL, 2021)



Source: ONS 2018 based projections.

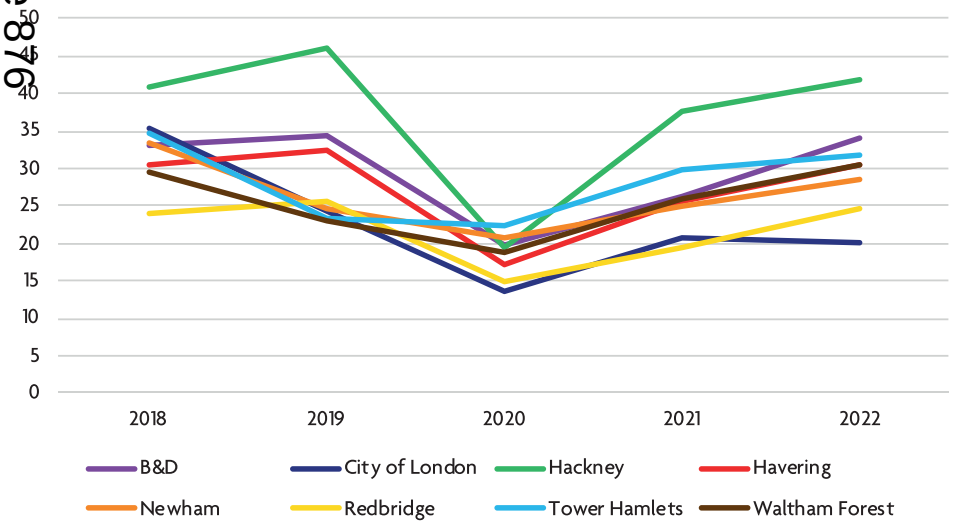
1 Note: At the time of writing (Feb 2024) LA-level data for under-18s conception rates is only available on Fingertips for the year 2021.

In 2023, the areas in NEL with the highest proportion of under-18 conceptions leading to abortions were Hackney (where 74.5% of teenage pregnancies ended in abortion), Havering (73.7%) and Barking and Dagenham (68.3%), while the lowest rates were observed in Redbridge (50%) and Waltham Forest (53.4%).

3.2 Contraception

The proportion of women choosing LARC as their main method of contraception recovered after a significant drop in 2020, due to pandemic, and in 2022 has reached and in some LA's exceeded pre-pandemic levels (Figure 4)[2].

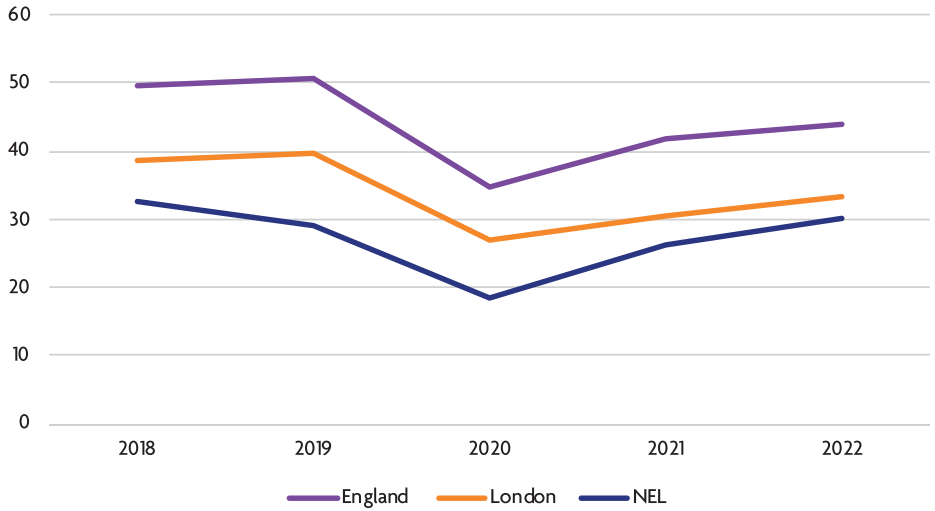
Figure 4: Total Prescribed LARC (excluding injections) per 1000 (2016-2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Between 2016 and 2020, LARC uptake in NEL was significantly below the London average. However, in years 2021-22 NEL's rate of prescribed LARC (per 1,000 women) increased and is similar to the London average (Figure 5). This suggests that providers of specialist SRH services in NEL recovered more quickly, on average, than other providers following the pandemic.

Figure 5: Total Prescribed LARC (excluding injections) per 1000 for NEL, London and England (2016-2022)

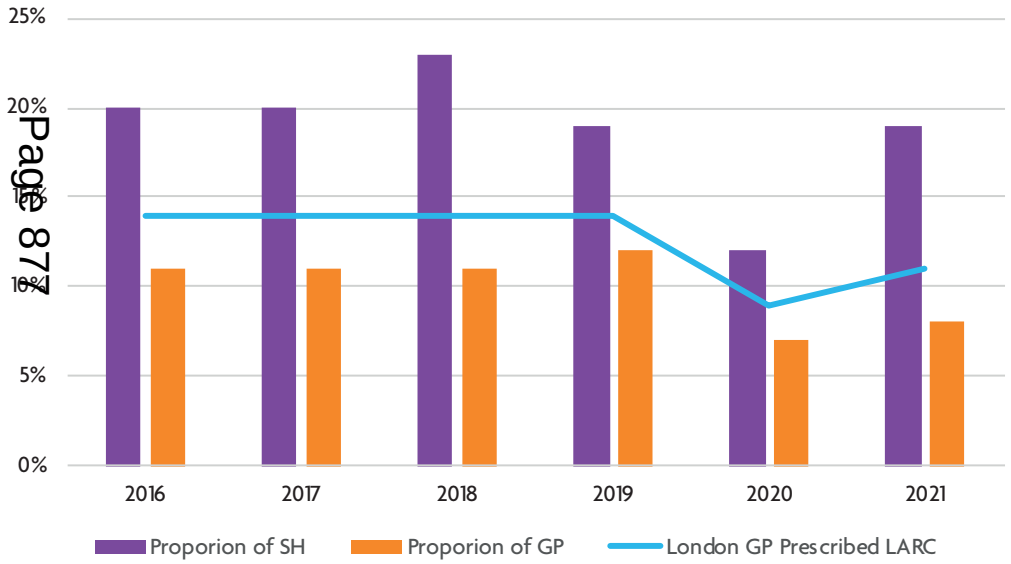


Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

2 The dip in LARC in 2020 was seen across London and reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with fewer face-to-face appointments happening in clinics.

LARC provision is likely to reflect local geography and service models. For example, there may be more provision through primary care in areas that are father from sexual health clinics. In 2022, 65% of LARC across NEL is prescribed by specialist sexual health services and remaining 34% of LARC is prescribed by primary care settings (i.e. GPs). The GP LARC uptake in NEL is higher than London (10.7% per 1000 population) (Figure 6).

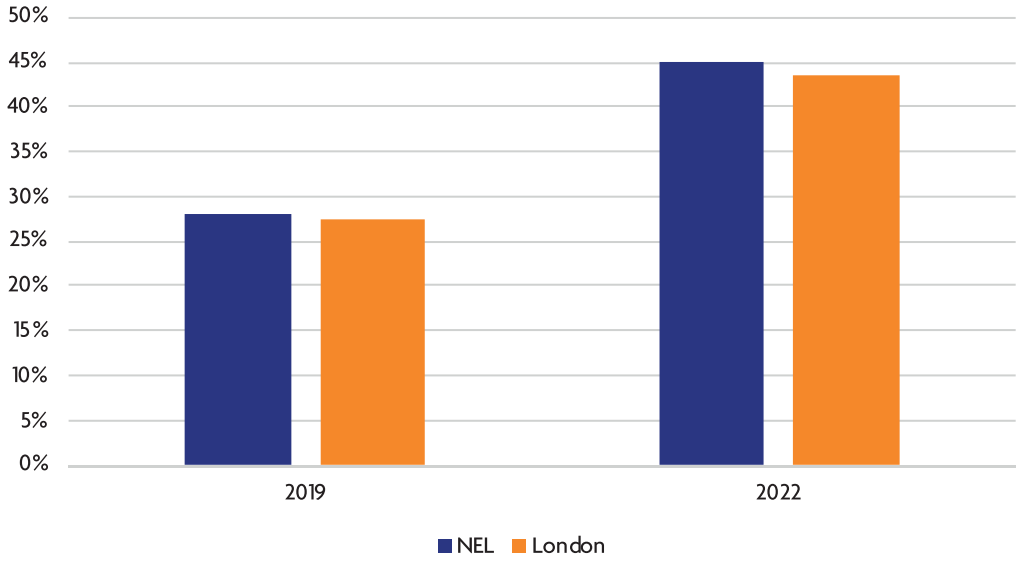
Figure 6: Proportion of prescribed LARC (excluding injections) in Primary Care and Specialist Sexual Health Clinics per 1000 (NEL 2016- 2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

The proportion of younger women in NEL choosing LARC as their preferred method of contraception is similar to the London average (Figure 7). The London-wide trend towards more young women choosing LARC in 2021 compared to 2019 was equally noticeable in NEL as in London, further suggesting a relatively good recovery from COVID-19 for the region's specialist SRH clinics.

Figure 7: Proportion of unnder 25s choosing LARC (excluding injections) at Specialist Sexual Health Clinics for NEL and London (2019 and 2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

3.3 Abortions

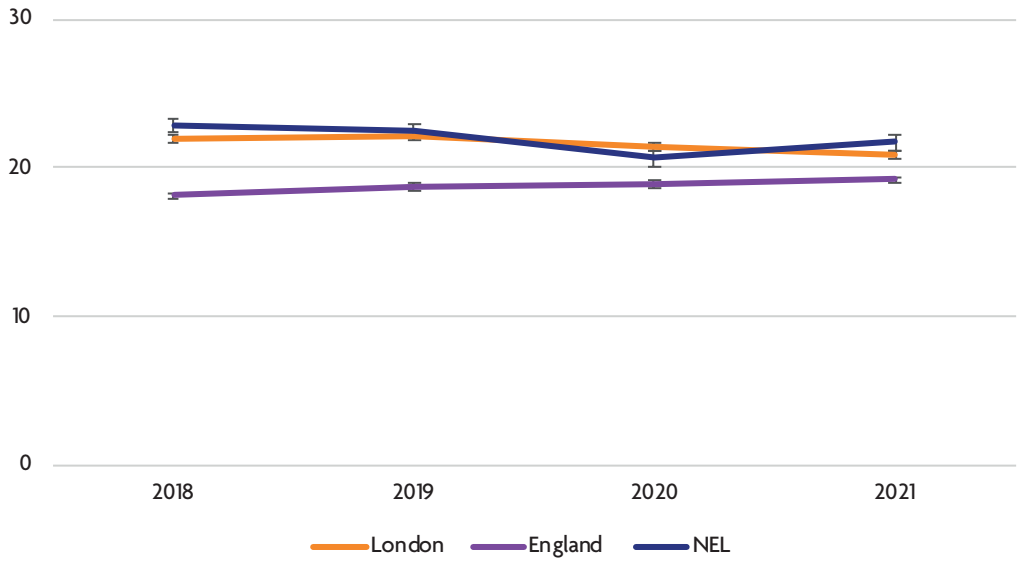
Between 2018 and 2021 the average total abortion rate among NEL females aged 15 to 44 reduced from 23 per 1,000 females to 21.6 per 1,000 females (Figure 8).

Overall, the NEL female population's total abortion rate is higher than the England average but comparable to the London average. However there are significant variation in total abortion rates per 1000 women among NEL LA's (Table 2).

Table 2: Total Abortion Rate per 1000 women (NEL, London 2018-2021)

Local Authority	2018	2019	2020	2021
BCD	28.9	30.8	31.0	29.4
City of London	21.5	12.9	9.5	14.0
Hackney	21.5	22.7	22.0	19.5
Havering	21.7	23.4	24.7	23.6
Newham	25.3	26.7	25.9	25.3
Redbridge	23.3	23.9	23.7	22.6
Tower Hamlets	16.6	15.9	15.3	16.6
Waltham Forest	24.1	23.5	23.0	22.5
London	21.9	22.1	21.5	20.9

Figure 8: Changes in total abortion rates between 2018-2021 (NEL, London and England)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Reducing repeat abortions is an important aim for stakeholders across NEL over the next five years. On average, 33% of women in NEL choosing an abortion in 2021 through Termination of Pregnancy Services (ToPS) had used this service at least once previously (Table 3 and Table 4). Most NEL LAs saw a relatively small increase in the proportion of repeat abortions between 2019 and 2021, though this pattern is not uniform.

Table 3: Proportion of Repeated Abortions out of total number of abortions – All Ages (NEL, 2019-2021)

Local Authority	2019	Total number of abortions (2019)	2020	Total number of abortions (2020)	2021	Total number of abortions (2021)
B&D	45.5%	1423	49.9%	1423	47.4%	1349
City and Hackney	38.4%	1723	44.6%	1638	43.5%	1472
Havering	50.5%	1187	45.8%	1265	47.0%	1208
Newham	38.3%	2166	44.2%	2075	39.4%	2025
Redbridge	42.2%	1510	42.6%	1471	41.8%	1404
Tower Hamlets	35.5%	1423	34.0%	1362	38.2%	1480
Waltham Forest	46.4%	1440	44.6%	1389	47.7%	1360

Table 4: Proportion of Repeated Abortions out of total number of abortions – under 25's (NEL, 2019-2021

Local Authority	2019	Total number of abortions (2019)	2020	Total number of abortions (2020)	2021	Total number of abortions (2021)
B&D	35.9%	1423	38.6%	1423	33.3%	1349
City and Hackney	27.9%	1723	33.0%	1638	34.1%	1472
Havering	38.5|%	1187	30.8%	1265	33.7%	1208
Newham	28.7%	2166	34.7%	2075	29.6%	2025
Redbridge	31.9%	1510	32.3%	1471	30.0%	1404
Tower Hamlets	26.6%	1423	23.0%	1362	31.8%	1480
Waltham Forest	37.4%	1440	34.0%	1389	35.9%	1360

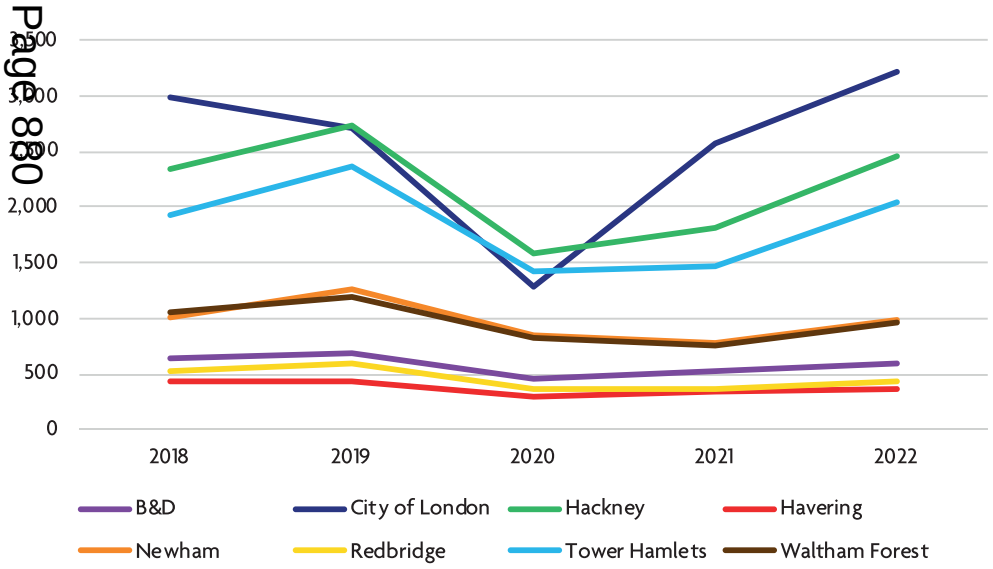
Source: Abortion Statistics Data Tables (2019-2021)

4.Sexually Transmitted Infections

4.1 STI Diagnosis Rates

STI diagnostic rates have increased significantly after a decline in 2020 (Figure 9), suggesting increased testing both in clinic and online.

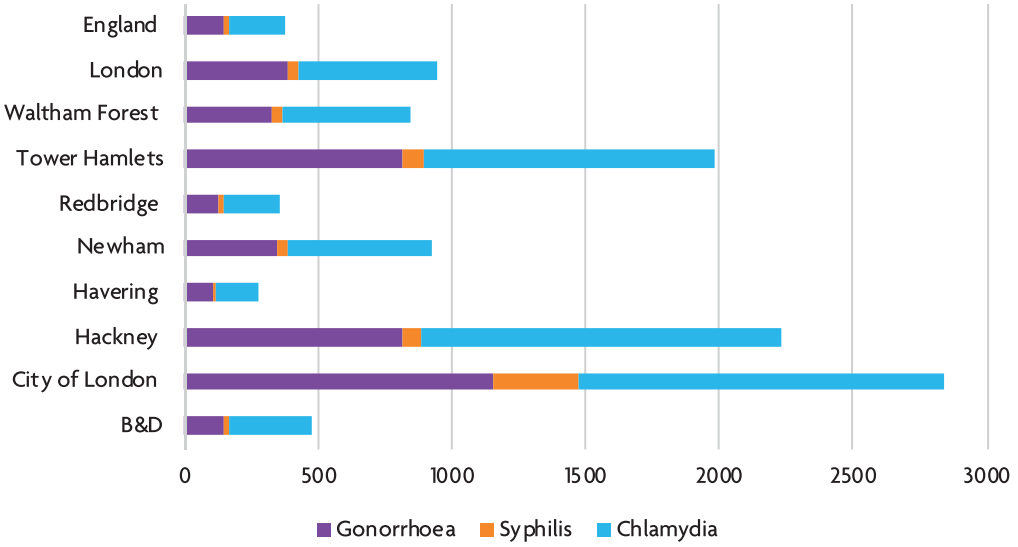
Figure 9: New STI Diagnosis (excluding Chlamydia under 25) per 100,000 people in NEL (All STIs) 2018-2022



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Figure 10 shows chlamydia and gonorrhoea remain the most commonly diagnosed STIs across NEL, with infection rates especially high in Hackney and Tower Hamlets.

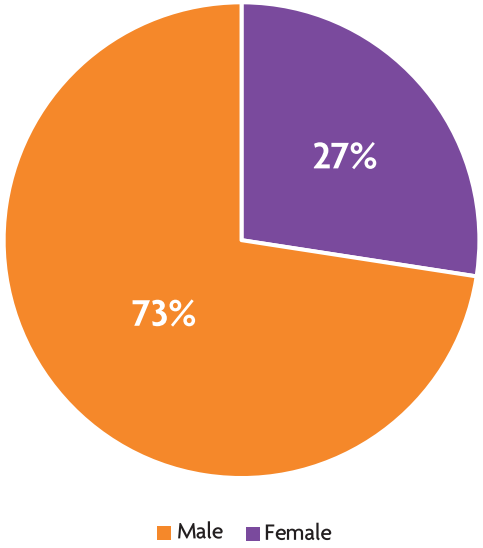
Figure 10: New NEL STI Infections rates per 100,000 residents per infection type (2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Of all new STIs diagnosed across NEL in 2022, 73% were among male and 27% among female (Figure 11)

Figure 11: Proportion of new STI Infections per gender (NEL, 2022)



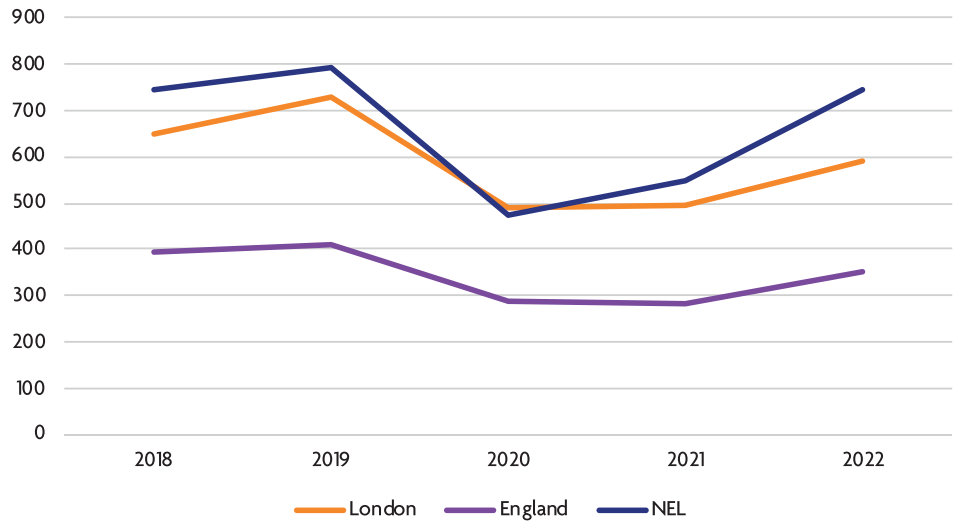
Source: Perceptions of Factors Leading to Teenage Pregnancy in Lindi Region, Tanzania: A Grounded Theory Study - PMC (nih.gov)

The LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) population makes up about 4% of the NEL population. The largest LGBTQ+ communities are found in City and Hackney (8%), TH (7.2%), and WF (4.5%). Of all London Local Authorities, Newham has the largest Trans population.

4.1.1 Chlamydia

Compared to the rest of London, NEL has one of the highest rates of chlamydia diagnoses per 100,000 people. There has been a discernible increase in new Chlamydia diagnoses in 2022 in NEL, which is comparable with national trends (Figure 12).

Figure 12: NEL Chlamydia diagnostic rate per 100,000 population compared to London and England (2018 - 2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Strong evidence suggests that chlamydia affects young people disproportionately[5]. Across the majority of the NEL Local Authorities, the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) is accessible in community settings such as general practices and community pharmacies[3].

Chlamydia screening among young people in most of NEL Local Authorities (with the exception of Hackney, City of London and Tower Hamlets) was significantly worse than London average for the last five years (Table 5)

Table 5: Chlamydia proportion in females aged 14-25 screened in NEL (2021-2022)

Local Authority	2021	2022
B&D	16.7%	17.6%
City of London	30.2%	38.3%
Hackney	39.3%	43.1%
Havering	17.6%	16.6%
Newham	21.3%	20.3%
Redbridge	12.4%	12.0%
Tower Hamlets	25.9%	28.4%
Waltham Forest	24.4%	24.4%
London	26.8%	26.6%

Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

There is a correlation between the proportion of Chlamydia screening taking place among young people and detection rates (Table 6), especially in Hackney where high rates of testing are seen alongside a high detection rate. Waltham Forest appears to screen slightly less young people for chlamydia compared to the London average (Table 5) but the screening is well targeted, with consistently high detection rates seen between 2018 and 2022 (Table 6).

Table 6: Chlamydia detection rate per 100,000 aged 14-25 (persons) in NEL (2018-2022)

Local Authority	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
B&D	1671	1908	1617	1290	1583
City of London	3075	2023	989	1006	3185
Hackney	5665	5499	3090	2683	3521
Havering	1177	1517	1098	1021	1262
Newham	2396	2933	1895	1520	1522
Redbridge	1306	1372	844	809	893
Tower Hamlets	2103	2490	1564	1368	1804
Waltham Forest	2944	2890	2068	1640	2061
London	2612	2831	1832	1607	1835

Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

3 In June 2021, NCSP changed focus and this opportunistic screening is now being offered mainly to women. Given the change in programme aim, the Public Health Outcome Framework (PHOF) Detection Rate Indicator (DRI) benchmarking thresholds have been revised and will be measured against females only. A new female-only PHOF benchmark DRI will be included in the PHOF from January 2022

Chlamydia detection rates have fallen significantly across London since 2020 (Figure 13) and this pattern is seen among the NEL LAs (except for Hackney and Waltham Forest). Furthermore, only Hackney met the national target of the Chlamydia detection rate, which in 2021 was set at 1,762 per 100,000[6].

Figure 13: NEL Chlamydia detection rate per 100,000 aged 15 to 24 compared to London (2018 - 2022)

Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

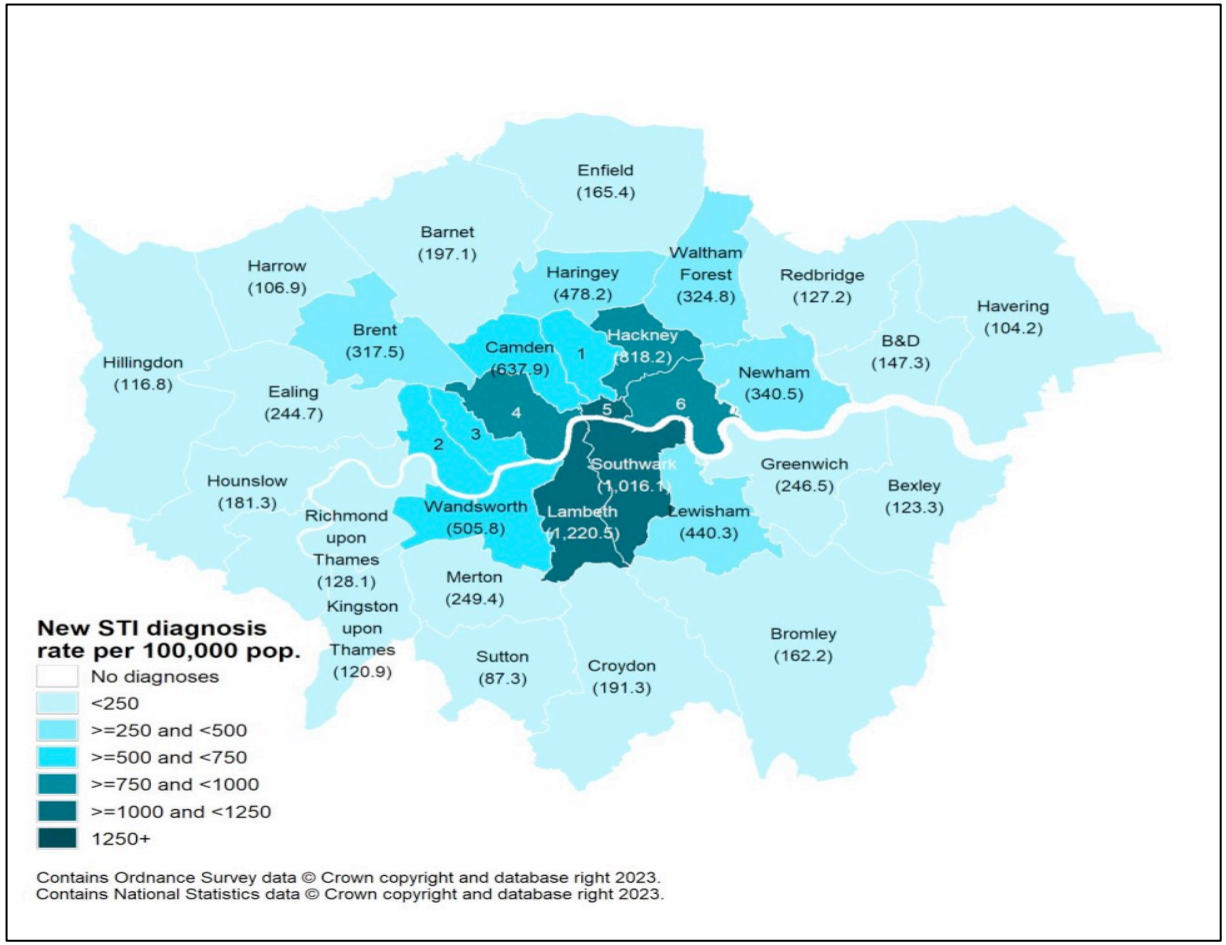
4.1.2 Gonorrhoea

Gonorrhoea diagnoses were rising before the pandemic (Figure 14) and rates have continued to rise: the latest (2022) NEL diagnostic rate for gonorrhoea is 10.5% higher than it was in 2019.

Figure 14: NEL Gonorrhoea diagnostic rate per 100,000 compared to London and England (2018 - 2022)

Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

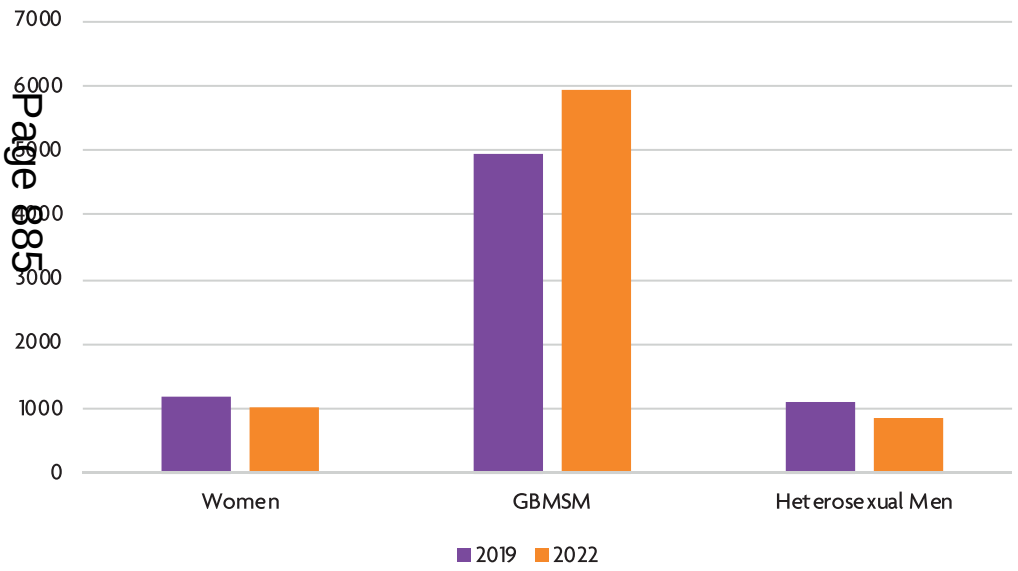
The map below shows gonorrhoea diagnosis rates (per 100,000 population) by LA for London residents in 2022. Rates are highest in inner London Local Authorities with more diverse populations including larger GBMSM populations: City of London has the highest rates in NEL followed by Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Newham.



Source: GUMCAD

The greatest burden of new gonorrhoea cases is seen among GBMSM, and this pattern grew between 2019 and 2022 (Figure 15). Where gender and, for males, sexual orientation are known, even in outer NEL Local Authorities such as Barking & Dagenham and Havering, GBMSM account for nearly half of diagnoses. In the inner NEL Local Authorities, GBMSM accounts for more than 8 in 10 of those diagnosed (Figure 15).

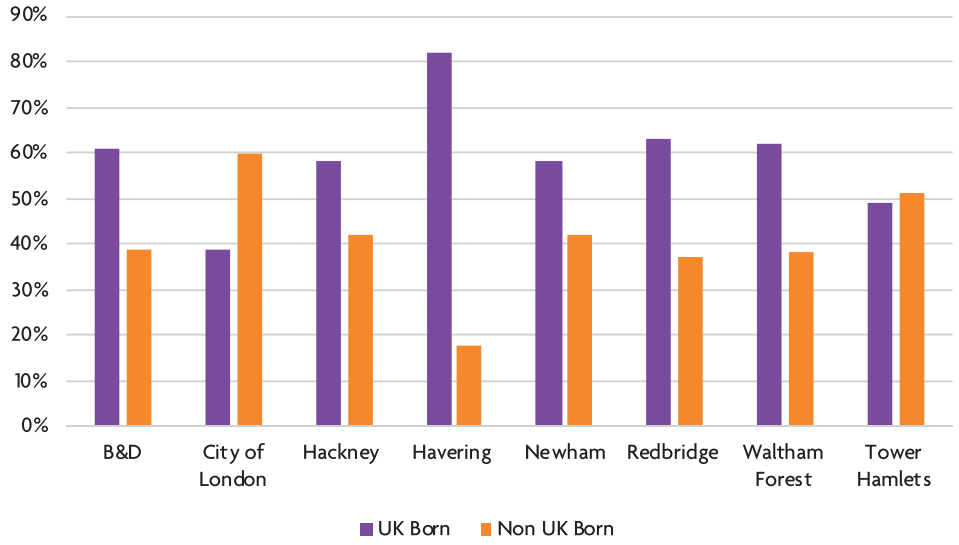
Figure 15: NEL Gonorrhoea Diagnosis (n) by gender and sexual orientation pre and post pandemic (2019 and 2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

In 2022, approximately 60% of all gonorrhoea diagnoses were among UK-born residents. (Figure 16).

Figure 16: NEL Gonorrhoea Diagnosis by percentage born the UK and outside of UK (2022)

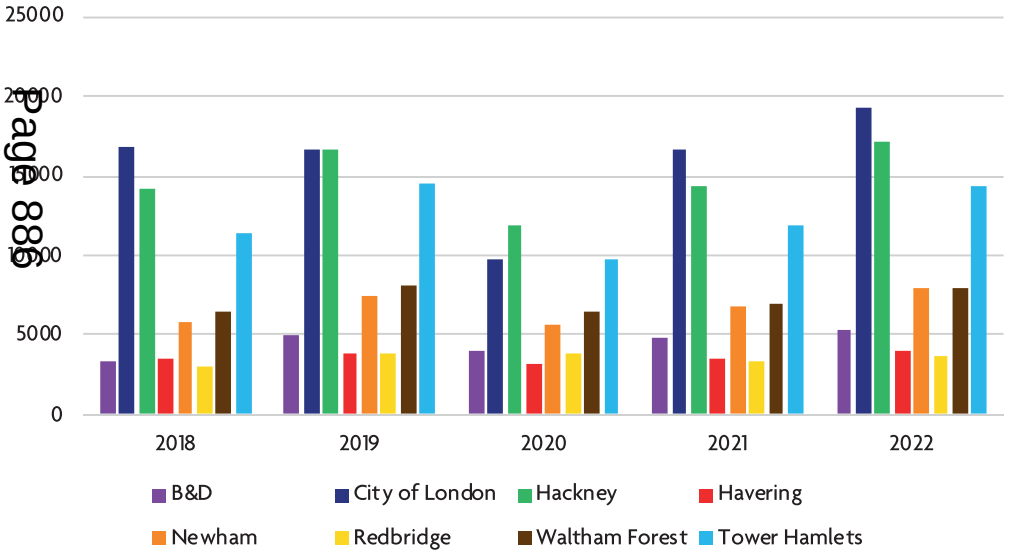


Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

4.2 STI Testing Rates

Testing rates (excluding chlamydia for young people) have increased for all LAs following the pandemic in 2020 (Figure 17) and testing rates for NEL have been consistently above the London average between 2018 and 2022 (Figure 18).

Figure 17: NEL STI Testing Rate (exclude Chlamydia aged under 25) per 100,000 population (2018-2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Figure 18: NEL, London and England STI Testing Rates comparison (exclude Chlamydia aged under 25) per 100,000 population (2018-2022)

Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

4.3 STI Positivity Rates

Positivity rates remained relatively stable between 2018 and 2020, suggesting that – even though less testing took place in clinics during the pandemic – the 'right' residents were still accessing screening (Table 6). Nonetheless, it is still worth noting that 2022 recorded the highest testing and positivity rates for the past five years.

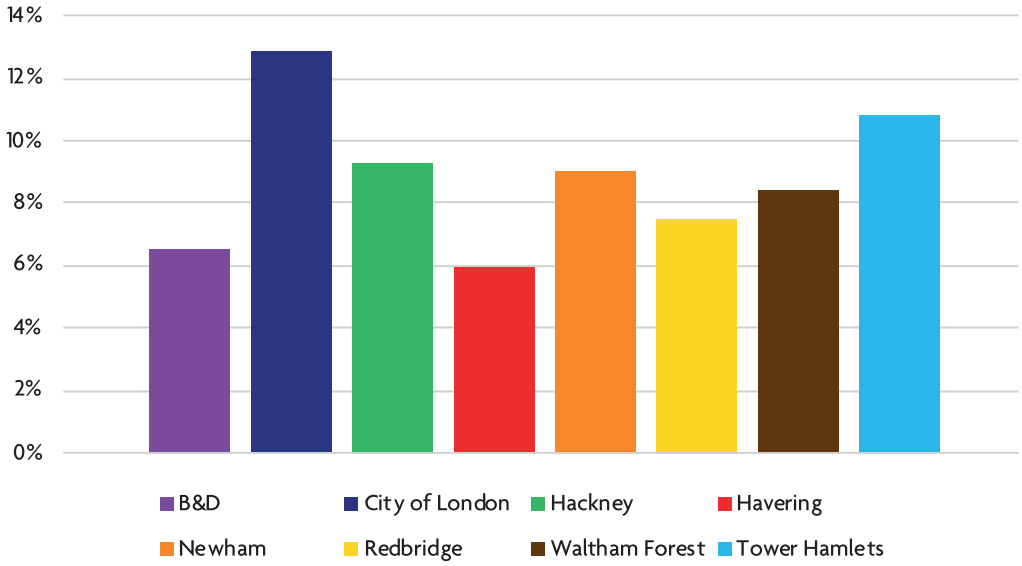
Table 7: STI tests, diagnoses and test positivity in NEL (2018-2022)

Indicator	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
NEL Average Testing Rate (exclude Chlamydia aged under 25) per 100,000 population	8098	9525	6836	8558	10007
NEL Total Number of Diagnoses (excluding Chlamydia aged under 25) per 100,000 population	10,916	11,972	7,070	8,609	11,082
NEL Test Positivity(excluding Chlamydia under 25)	8.40%	8.60%	8.30%	7.80%	8.80%

Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Table 7 shows that STI positivity rates differ between outer NEL Local Authorities (Barking and Dagenham, Havering, and Redbridge) and inner NEL Local Authorities (City of London, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest).

Figure 19: NEL proportion of STI positivity rates per Local Authority (2022)

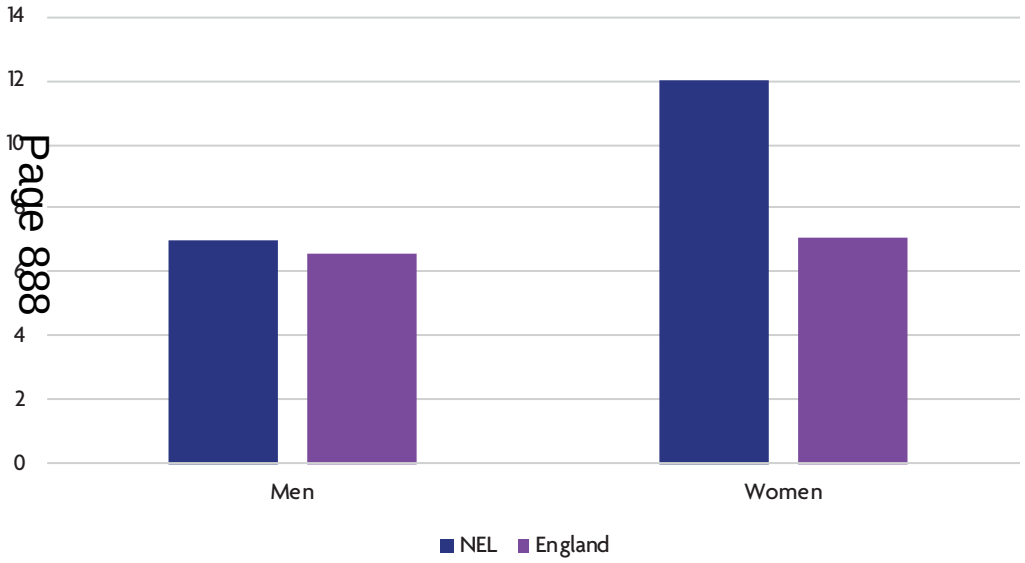


Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health

4.4 STI Reinfection Rates

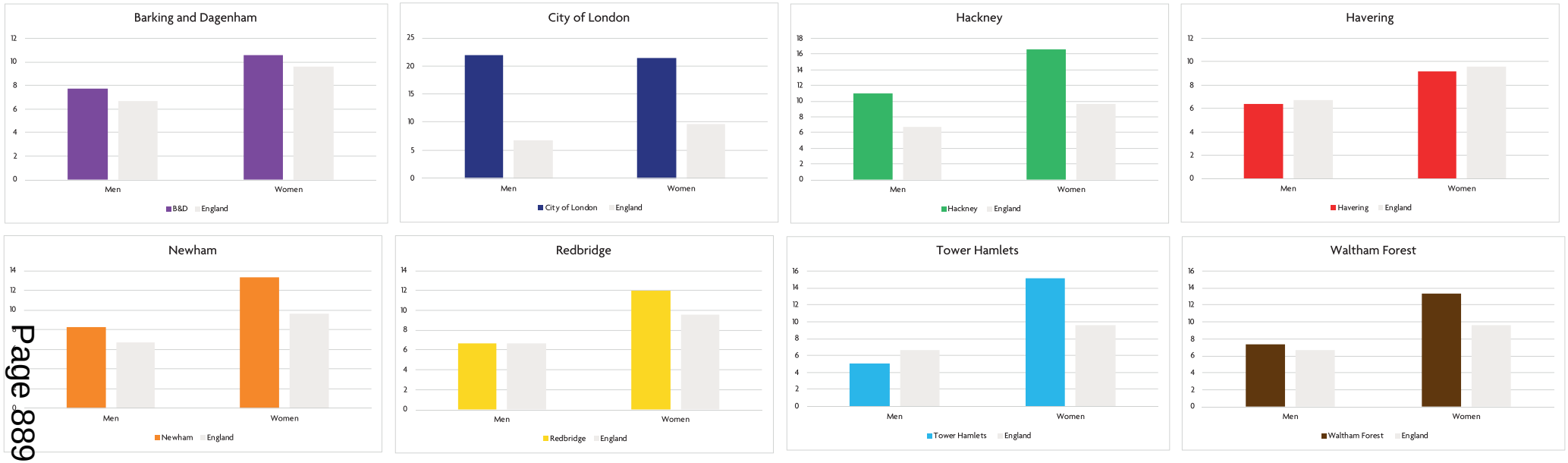
Between 2016 and 2020, NEL has recorded higher rates of reinfection than the national average, especially among women (Figure 20). Overall reinfection rates are above the national average for each LA (apart from Havering), though the extent of the pattern varies (Figure 21). It is notable, however, that reinfection rates for men in Tower Hamlets are lower than the England average. This effect is worthy of further exploration.

Figure 20: Proportion of reinfection rates in NEL and England per gender (%) (2016-2020)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health – SPLASH supplementary

Figure 21: Proportion of reinfection rates in NEL and England per gender for each NEL LA (%) (2016-2020)

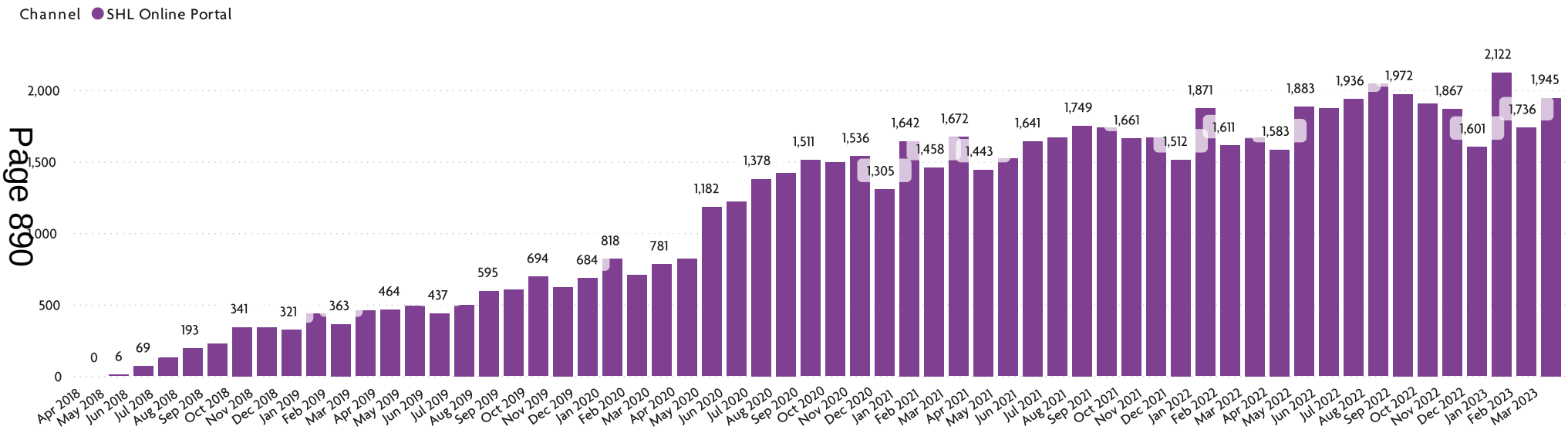


Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health – SPLASH supplementary

4.5 E-service[4]

The 'SHL' e-service has been a popular channel for STI screening since it was first introduced in 2018 and it became more popular following the pandemic (Figure 22). SHL remains the preferred STI screening pathway for most asymptomatic residents[5].

Figure 22: E- service Kits Issued, NEL (except City and Hackney) (April 2018- March 2023)



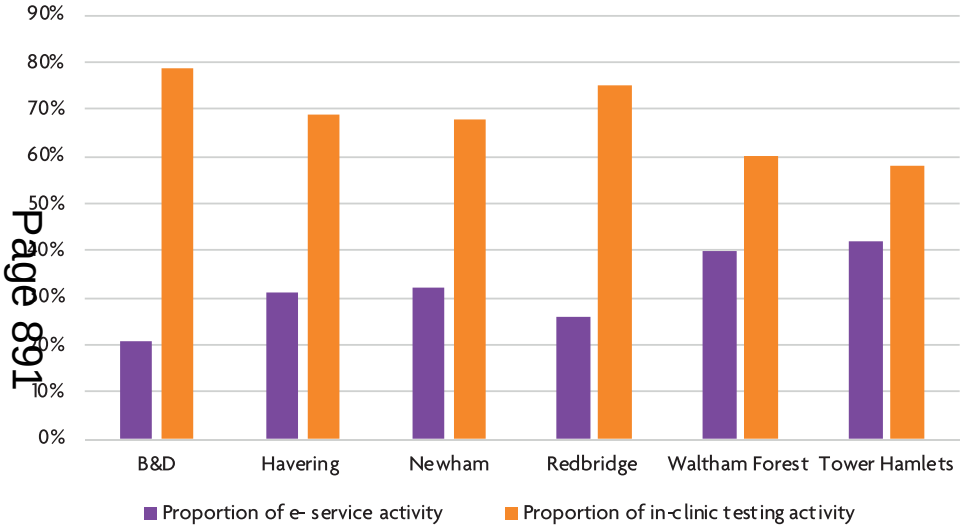
Source: Preventx

4 Note: All e-service data excludes Hackney and City of London

5 Apart from some higher risk cohorts where in-clinic screening is always preferred (e.g. young people)

Overall, about one-third of all STI screening undertaken across NEL in 2022-23 happened online (Figure 23). The proportion of online testing versus in-clinic testing varied for individual Local Authorities, with more online screening seen in Inner NEL (INEL) compared to Outer NEL (ONEL).

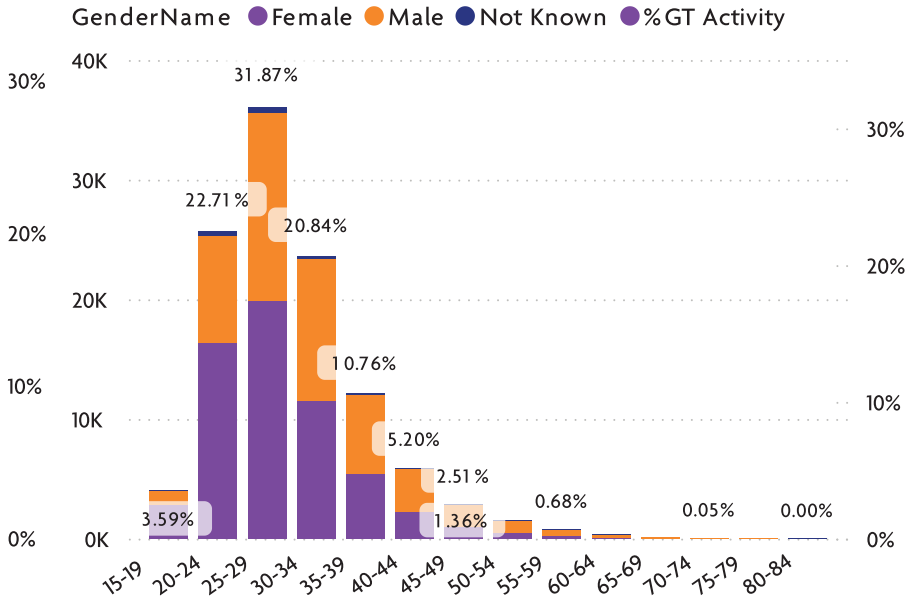
Figure 23: Proportion of e-service testing vs in-clinic testing for NEL (except City and Hackney) (April 22-March 23)



Source: Preventx

In 2022, the percentage of men and women using e-services was 36% and 64%, respectively. This is not the same as the pattern of attendance at specialist sexual health clinics, where men are more likely to attend. SHL is more popular among younger residents (Figure 24).

Figure 24: E- service users per age and gender NEL (except City and Hackney) (2022)



Source: Preventx

The majority of e-service users are of White British ethnicity, with Black African and Black Caribbean residents the next most frequent users (Figure 25). Although the ethnicity trends did not change significantly between 2020 and 2022, there was a slight increase in online screening seen among Asian and Black residents in most LAs (Table 8).

Figure 25: E-service users per ethnic background NEL (except City and Hackney) (2022)

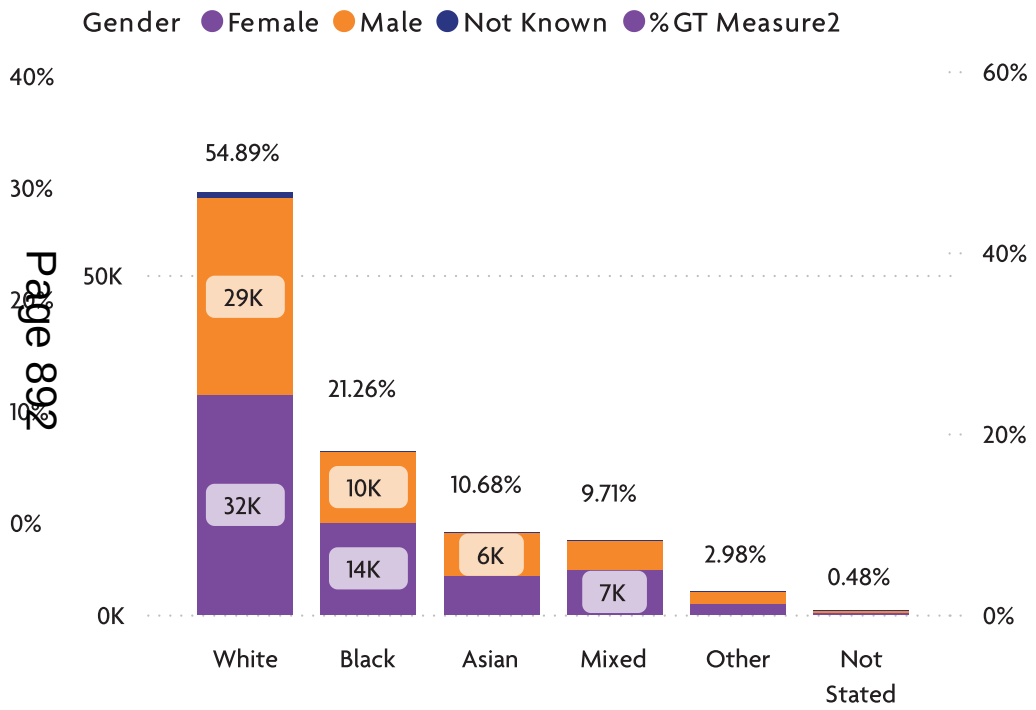


Table 8: Pre and Post Covid e -service activity per ethnicity (NEL 2020 and 2022)

Local Authority	Ethnicity	2020	2022	Difference
B&D	Asian	5%	6%	1%
	Black	39%	42%	3%
	Mixed	10%	11%	1%
	Other	4%	1%	-3%
	White	42%	40%	-2%
Havering	Asian	3%	5%	2%
	Black	17%	21%	4%
	Mixed	7%	8%	1%
	Other	3%	2%	-1%
	White	70%	64%	-6%
Redbridge	Asian	15%	16%	1%
	Black	22%	26%	4%
	Mixed	12%	13%	1%
	Other	28%	4%	-24%
	White	23%	41%	18%
Newham	Asian	9%	9%	0%
	Black	35%	31%	-4%
	Mixed	9%	11%	2%
	Other	3%	6%	3%
	White	44%	43%	-1%
Tower Hamlets	Asian	6%	9%	3%
	Black	8%	8%	0%
	Mixed	8%	8%	0%
	Other	8%	8%	0%
	White	70%	67%	-3%
Waltham Forest	Asian	6%	5%	-1%
	Black	25%	26%	1%
	Mixed	11%	11%	0%
	Other	3%	3%	0%
	White	55%	55%	0%

Source: Preventx

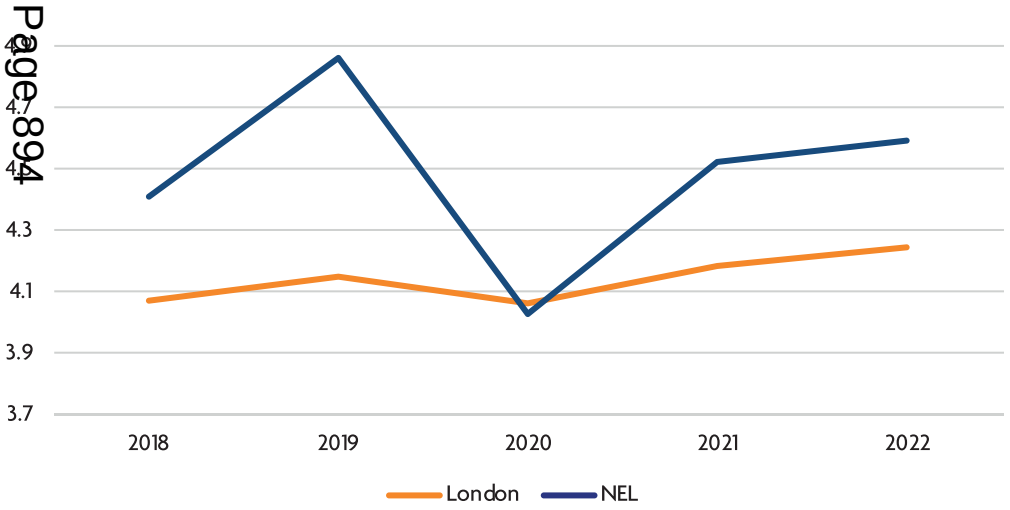
The average 'return rate' for NEL authorities (excluding C&H) for STI kits in 2022 was 77%, a 1% decrease from 2020[7]. Return rates did not differ significantly by LA.

5. HIV

5.1 HIV prevalence

Diagnosed HIV prevalence in NEL continues to be above the London average (Figure 26).

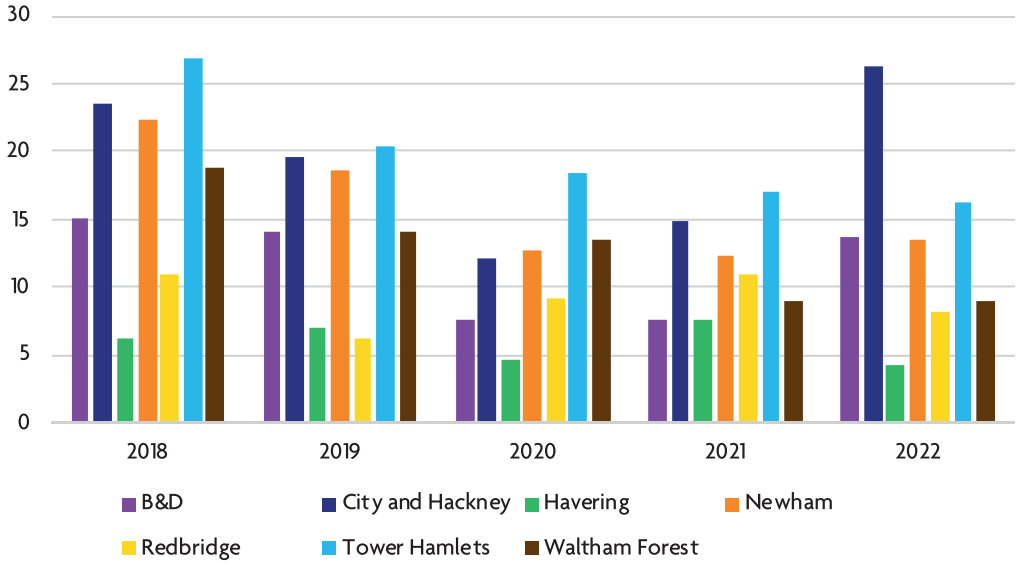
Figure 26: NEL and London HIV diagnosed prevelelence comparison; rate per 1000, (2018-2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profile

HIV incidence in NEL declined over the past five years, but continues to be one of the highest in London and England. There is considerable variation in HIV prevalence rates across the NEL Local Authorities (Figure 27) with the highest rates seen in City of London (10.1 per 1,000) Hackney (5.79 per 1,000), Tower Hamlets (5.94 per 1,000) and Newham (4.55 per 1,000).

Figure 27: HIV New Diagnosis Rate per 100,000 people between 2018 and 2021

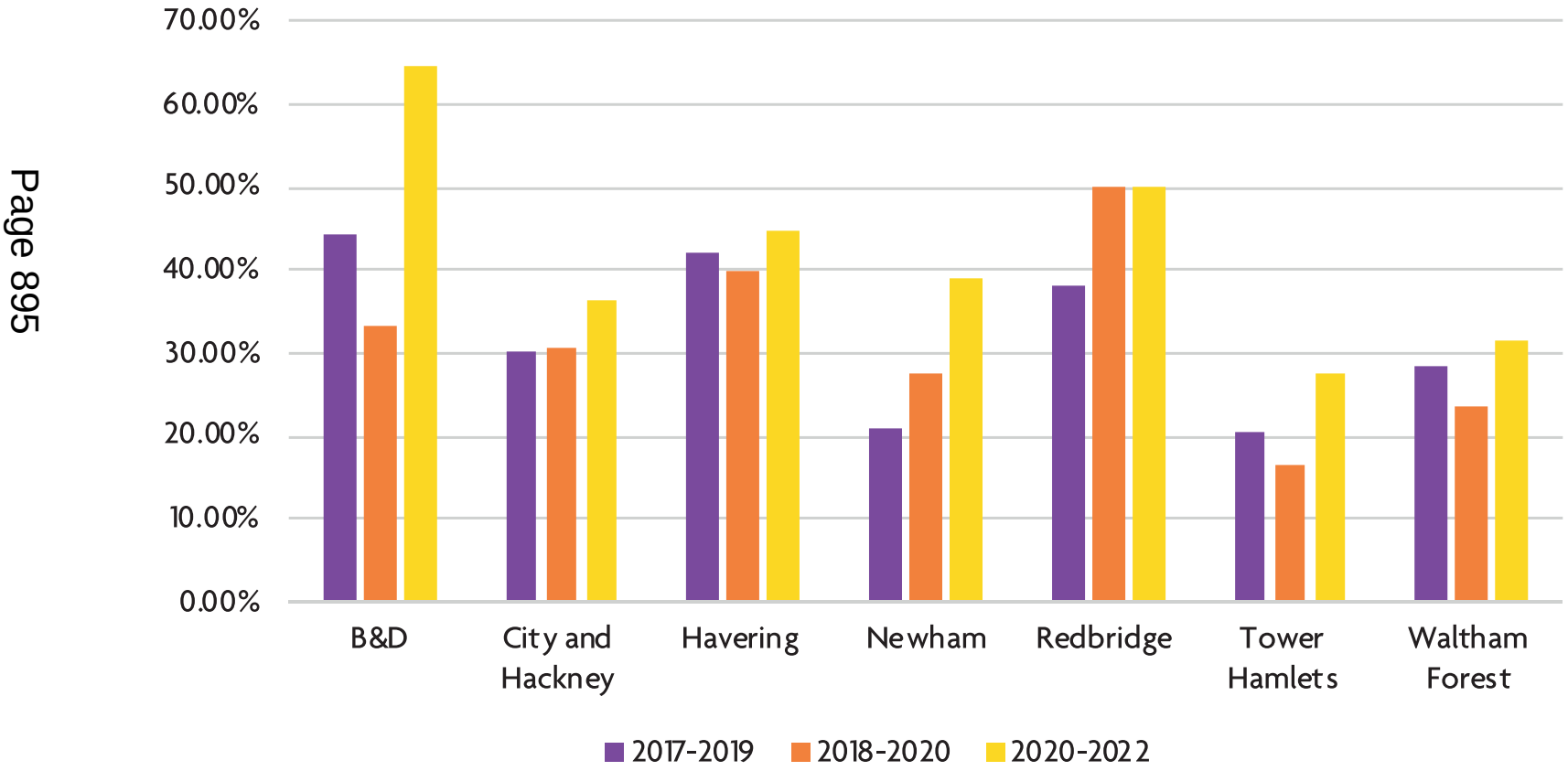


Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

5.2 HIV Late Diagnosis

Late diagnosis of HIV can lead to significantly worse outcomes for the individual and increased costs to the health and care system. There is substantial variance in rates of late HIV diagnoses across NEL (Figure 28), with Barking and Dagenham (48%), Havering (41.0%) and Redbridge (48.6%) exceeding average rates for London (38.6%) and England (43.4%).

Figure 28: Proportion (%) of late HIV Diagnosis out of all first diagnosis (NEL, 2017- 2022)



Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

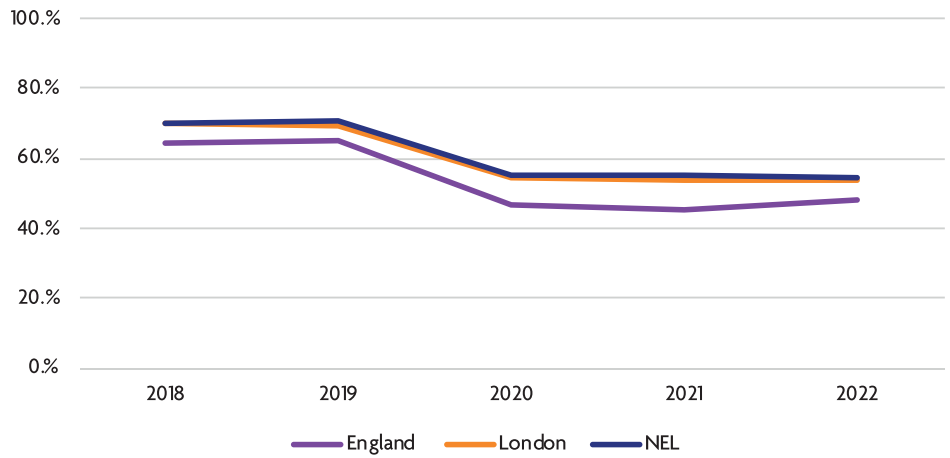
5.3 HIV Prevention

Among NEL residents attending SRH clinics in 2022, the percentage of eligible residents who received an HIV test was 54.5% (on average), which was similar to the London average (54%). However, this represented a 16% decrease since 2018 (Figure 29).

In 2022, HIV testing rates were significantly higher for men compared to women (Figure 30), which is most likely reflects relatively high awareness of HIV and familiarity in testing among the GBMSM community. Nonetheless, there is a clear need to increase testing for HIV among heterosexual populations, especially for women.

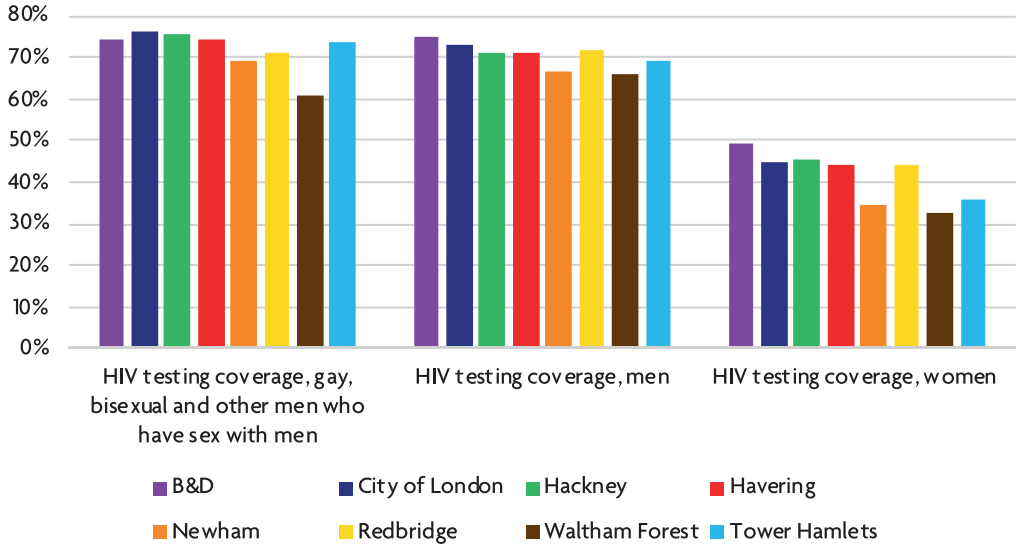
In 2022, the average NEL testing rate for GBMSM was 74.1%, similar to London (73.6%) and England (73.3%).

Figure 29: NEL, London and England Proporion of HIV testing coverage comparison; per 100,000 (2022)



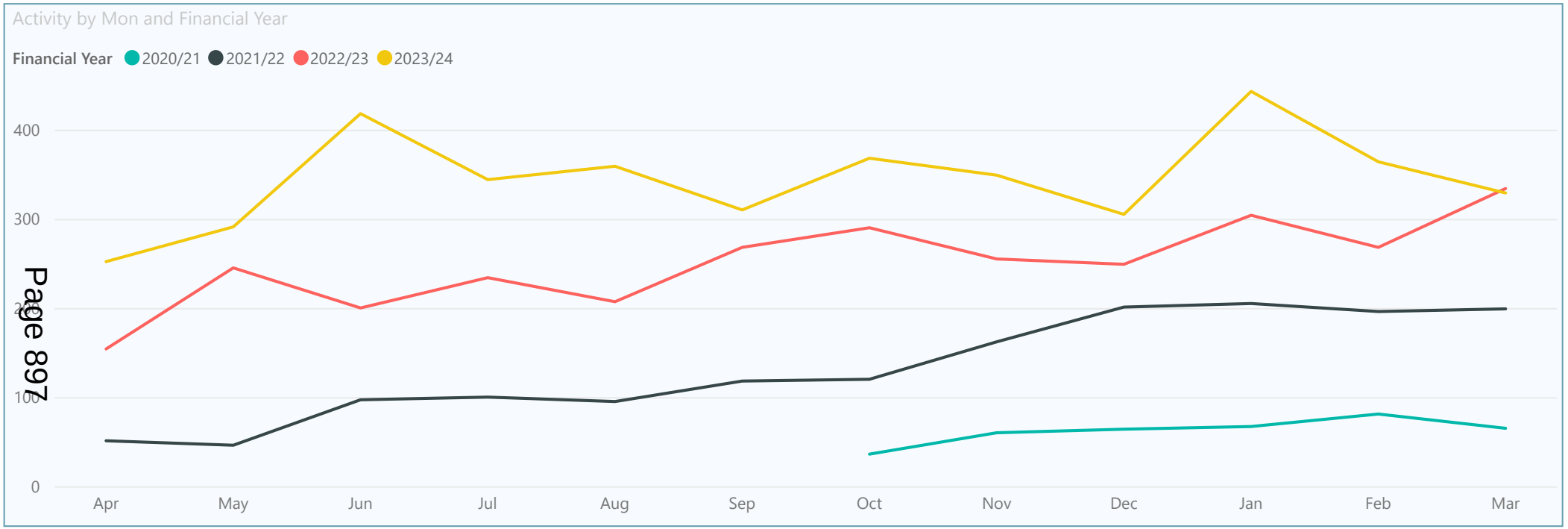
Source: OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

Figure 30: HIV testing coverage per 100,000 residents in NEL by Gender (2022)



Routine commissioning of PrEP for communities at risk has been a significant development in HIV prevention. There was a 55% increase in overall PrEP uptake in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22, and the number of NEL residents who started PrEP in 2022-23 was 36% higher than 2021-22 (Figure 31).

Figure 31: Increase in PrEP activity in NEL Sexual Health Clinics (October 2020 – March 2023)



Source: LBN Power BI (including B&D, Havering, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest

6. Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
B&D	Barking and Dagenham
BI	Business Intelligence
CoL	City of London
DRI	Detection Rate Indicator
GBMSM	Gay, Bisexual and Men who have sex with Men
GUMCAD	Genitourinary Medicine Clinic Activity Dataset STI Surveillance System
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
NA	Needs Assessment
NCSP	National Chlamydia Screening Programme
NEL	North East London
LA	Local Authorities
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer
OHID	Office of Health Disparities and Improvements
PA	Pathway Analytics
PHOF	Public Health Outcome Framework
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SPLASH	Summary Profiles of Local Authority Sexual Health
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TH	Tower Hamlets
ToPs	Termination of pregnancies
WF	Waltham Forest

Endnotes

1 How your area has changed in 10 years: Census 2021 - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
2 ONS 2018 based projections.
3 Perceptions of Factors Leading to Teenage Pregnancy in Lindi Region, Tanzania: A Grounded Theory Study - PMC (nih.gov)
4 https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-pregnancy#:~:text=Adolescent%20mothers%20(aged%2010%E2%80%9319,birth%20and%20severe%20neonatal%20condition.
5 A study of young peoples' attitudes to opportunistic Chlamydia testing in UK general practice - PMC (nih.gov)
6 Sexually transmitted infections and screening for chlamydia in England: 2022 report - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
7 Preventx

North East London Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy (2024 – 2029)

Data Summary

Aneta J Hutek – Commissioner NEL Sexual Health Shared Service
Kieran Scott – Senior Commissioner NEL Sexual Health Shared Service

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	Adoption of North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (2024-29)
Lead officer:	Emily Grundy, Assistant Director of Public Health
Approved by:	Emily Grundy, Assistant Director of Public Health
Version Number	**V0.1**
Date and Key Changes Made	01/08/24
Scheduled date for next review:	01/03/27

Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy & Diversity team? Please note that the Corporate Policy & Diversity and Public Health teams require at least **5 working days** to provide advice on EqHIAs.	Yes / ~~No~~
Did you seek advice from the Public Health team?	Yes / ~~No~~
Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website? See Publishing Checklist.	~~Yes~~ / No

Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and unless they contain confidential or sensitive commercial information must be made available on the Council's EqHIA webpage.

Please submit the completed form via e-mail to READI@havering.gov.uk thank you.

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact READI@havering.gov.uk for advice from either the Corporate Diversity or Public Health teams. Please refer to **this Guidance** on how to complete this form.

About your activity

<table>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Title of activity</td><td colspan="4">Adoption of Joint North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (2024-29)</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Type of activity</td><td colspan="4">Adoption of a new strategy</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Scope of activity</td><td colspan="4">A new strategy, developed collaboratively across North East London, with the aim of improving sexual and reproductive health services and outcomes for residents.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4a</td><td>Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?</td><td>Yes / ~~No~~</td><td rowspan="2">If the answer to <u>either</u> of these questions is ‘YES’, please continue to question 5.</td><td rowspan="3"></td><td rowspan="3">If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is ‘NO’, please go to question 6.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4b</td><td>Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people from different backgrounds?</td><td>Yes / ~~No~~</td></tr>
<tr><td>4c</td><td>Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people’s health and wellbeing?</td><td>Yes / ~~No~~</td><td>Please use the <u>Screening tool</u> before you answer this question.</td><td>If you answer ‘YES’, please continue to question 5.</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>If you answered YES:</td><td colspan="4">Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>If you answered NO:</td><td colspan="4"></td></tr>
</table>

Completed by:	Emily Grundy, Assistant Director of Public Health, Resources
Date:	02/08/2024

2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:
The North East London (NEL) Joint Sexual & Reproductive Health Strategy seeks to build on existing collaborative working arrangements and new opportunities to agree an approach for addressing shared sexual and reproductive health (SRH) priorities and challenges across NEL. The strategy has been developed collaboratively across NEL. The strategy has been based on a programme of engagement with health professionals and residents, building on analysis of local and regional data and intelligence. This process has identified the following shared priority areas for action: Priority 1: Healthy and Fulfilling Sexual Relationships Priority 2: Good Reproductive Health across the Life Course Priority 3: High Quality and Innovative STI Screening and Treatment Priority 4: HIV: Towards Zero and Living Well A NEL action plan that aligns against these priority areas has been developed with relevant delivery partners. A local action plan for Havering will also be developed to complement the NEL plan, leaving space to capture work that reflects particular nuances in local population need. **Expand box as required*

Who will be affected by the activity?
Sexual and reproductive health is a key part of human experience across the life-course, and as such implementation of the NEL joint SRH strategy will have a population-wide impact. Different elements of the strategy have more or less relevance or impact on some population groups than others, but ultimately the strategy seeks to deliver overall improvements in population SRH outcomes, as well as greater improvements for those groups that have traditionally experienced disproportionally poorer outcomes. **Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of people of all ages, adopting a life-course approach that acknowledges people's changing SRH needs over time. The strategy and action plan includes specific references to ways in which some of the existing age inequalities in SRH outcomes will be addressed, and broader actions are also deemed likely to have a positive benefit on age inequalities. The complementary Havering SRH action plan (to be developed) will also provide an opportunity to identify any other actions needed to address age inequalities for local residents.
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

		As such implementation of the strategy and action plans is considered to deliver a positive impact. **Expand box as required*

Evidence:
People's SRH needs change throughout the life course, and there are a range of age-related inequalities relating to SRH health, for example:

- In North East London, young people have higher rates of STI infection and reinfection within 12 months [1];
- Babies of adolescent mothers are at increased risk of low birth weight, preterm birth, and severe neonatal illness [2];
- Older women tend to have higher levels of unmet need for contraception [2];
- Adults and older people living with HIV may experience poorer quality of life due to the intersection of HIV and other age-related conditions [2].

There are also elements of SRH service provision which are targeted towards certain age groups (for example, free condom distribution schemes for young people aged 15-24 years).

Actions outlined in the NEL action plan to specifically address age inequalities include [3]:

- Actions 1.C.6/7/8 – Relationship and Sex education (RSE): People make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health
- Action 2.I.21/22 - Explore options to increase uptake of free condoms among young people (15-24)

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) will also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of age inequality, informing future action to address this.

The complementary SRH action plan (to be developed) will also identify any further local opportunities to address known age inequalities relating to SRH for residents.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
[1] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (data pack)
[2]
[3] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan)

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical, mental, sensory, progressive conditions and learning difficulties. Also consider neurodivergent conditions e.g. dyslexia and autism.

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:**
Positive	✓	The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of people, regardless of disability. The strategy commitment to improving local understanding about the needs and experiences of people with disabilities with regards to SRH presents an opportunity to improve service accessibility and outcomes across the lifetime of the strategy. As such implementation of the strategy and action plans is considered to deliver a positive impact, though taking action beyond improving local understanding will required in subsequent years of the strategy to achieve this.
Neutral		
Negative		

		*Expand box as required

Evidence:
There is limited information about the prevalence of sexual health issues and barriers to SRH services amongst people with disabilities.

National data suggests that rates of cervical screening are low for women with learning disabilities compared to the general population, while use of long-acting reversible contraception is high amongst women with learning disabilities Adults with learning disabilities may have their freedoms around their sexuality limited, due to concern about vulnerability but also due to stigma and infantilising attitudes.
However a nationally representative study found that young people with mild to moderate learning disabilities were as likely to have had sexual intercourse by the age of 19/20 as peers from the general population, but more likely to practice unsafe sex [1].
National evidence suggests that many people with a learning disability are not given appropriate support needed to engage in loving and sexual relationships with others [2].
People with physical disabilities may face physical barriers to accessing SRH services and/or stigma or discrimination in relation to the SRH from healthcare professionals and wider society.

The NEL joint SRH strategy acknowledges the need to improve local understanding of the needs of those with disabilities and other complex needs, to ensure that local services can better meet the needs of these groups.

Actions outlined in the NEL action plan to specifically address disability inequalities include [3]:
Action 1.B.3 Plan to be developed for resident engagement among groups where need is currently not well understood (e.g YP and Adults with learning disabilities)

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) will also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of disability inequality, informing future action to address this.

The complementary SRH action plan (to be developed) will also identify any further local opportunities to address known disability inequalities relating to SRH for residents.

*Expand box as required

Sources used:

[1] Health inequalities: Sexual health - Public health profiles
[2] Sexuality - research and statistics - Mencap
[3] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan)

*Expand box as required

Protected Characteristic – Sex / gender: Consider both men and women		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:**
Positive	✓	The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of people of all genders. The strategy and action plan includes specific references to ways in which some of the existing gender inequalities in SRH outcomes will be addressed, and broader actions are also deemed likely to have a
Neutral		

Negative		positive benefit on gender inequalities. The complementary Havering SRH action plan (to be developed) will also provide an opportunity to identify any other actions needed to address gender inequalities for local residents. As such implementation of the strategy and action plans is considered to deliver a positive impact. **Expand box as required*

Evidence:
There are a range of gender inequalities relating to SRH, for example, in North East London:

- Men have significantly higher rates of STI infection, while women experience higher rates of STI reinfection within 12 months;
- Women have lower rates of HIV testing;
- More women access online STI testing services, while more men attend specialist sexual health services [1].

There are also elements of SRH provision which are gender-specific (e.g. only women will directly access services offering long acting forms of contraception or termination of pregnancy).

Actions outlined in the NEL action plan to specifically address gender inequalities include [2]:

- Action 4.O.31 Develop a regional plan to improve testing coverage for HIV among hetero populations (especially women)
- Action 4.P.34 Create a health promotion plan around PrEP to raise awareness among eligible groups with relatively low uptake (including women)

Actions which address gender-specific SRH needs include:

- Actions 2.F. 14/15/16 - Improve uptake of LARC, especially among women of colour
- Actions 2.H.19/20 - Consistent, timely access to high quality services for contraception, abortion and menopause
- Action 4.S.38 - To understand the reasons of incidents of vertical transmission (transmission of HIV from mother to baby)

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) will also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of gender inequality, informing future action to address this.

The complementary SRH action plan (to be developed) will also identify any further local opportunities to address known gender inequalities relating to SRH for residents.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
[1] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (data pack)
[2] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan)

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic – Ethnicity / race / nationalities: Consider the impact on different minority ethnic groups and nationalities	
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	**Overall impact:**

Positive	✓	The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of people of all ethnicities. The strategy and action plan includes specific references to ways in which some of the existing ethnic inequalities in SRH outcomes will be addressed, and broader actions are also deemed likely to have a positive benefit on ethnic inequalities. The complementary Havering SRH action plan (to be developed) will also provide an opportunity to identify any other actions needed to address ethnic inequalities for local residents. As such implementation of the strategy and action plans is considered to deliver a positive impact. **Expand box as required*
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:

There are a range of ethnic inequalities relating to SRH, for example:

- heterosexual Black African residents in North East London are disproportionately more likely to be diagnosed with HIV [1];
- people of black Caribbean ethnicity continue to disproportionately impacted by STIs [2];
- There are differential rates of uptake of long acting reversible contraception (LARC) uptake by ethnicity [1];
- National research has shown that maternal death rates have been shown to be up to four times higher for women from Black ethnic backgrounds and almost two times higher for women from Asian ethnic backgrounds, compared to white women [3].

NEL strategy actions to improve outcomes for people from different ethnic groups include[4]:

- Action 2.F.16 - Actions 2.F. 14/15/16 - Improve uptake of LARC, especially among women of colour
- Action 4.P.32/33/34 - To increase uptake of PrEP in all eligible populations

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) will also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of ethnic inequality, informing future action to address this.

The complementary SRH action plan (to be developed) will also identify any further local opportunities to address known ethnic inequalities relating to SRH for residents.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

[1] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (data pack)
[2] OHID (2023) Fingertips Public Health Data, Sexual and Reproductive Health – SPLASH supplementary
[3] Quenby, S. et al. (2021). Miscarriage matters: the epidemiological, physical, psychological, and economic costs of early pregnancy loss. The Lancet, 397(10285), 1658–1667. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)00682-6
[4] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan)

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic – Religion / faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs, including those with no religion or belief		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of people of all religions/faiths. People of all religions/faiths can potentially benefit as a result of the actions proposed. **Expand box as required*
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		
Evidence: There is limited information of differences in SRH outcomes or experiences on the basis of religion or faith. Many religions espouse teachings which relate to sexual activity, sexual orientation and reproduction - resulting religious or cultural norms may contribute to stigma and create barriers to access to SRH information or services, which may in turn contribute to inequalities in SRH outcomes [1]. Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) may provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of any inequality issues relating to religion or faith, informing future action to address this [2]. **Expand box as required*		
Sources used: [1] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (full report) [2] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan) **Expand box as required*		

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of people of all sexual orientations. The strategy and action plan includes specific references to ways in which some of the existing inequalities in SRH outcomes relating to sexual orientation will be addressed, and broader actions are also deemed likely to have a positive benefit on these inequalities. The complementary Havering SRH action plan (to be developed) will also provide an opportunity to identify any other actions needed to address inequalities relating to sexual orientation for local residents. As such implementation of the strategy and action plans is considered to deliver a positive impact. **Expand box as required*
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		
Evidence: There are a range of inequalities around sexual orientation relating to SRH, for example: - Gay, bisexual and other men that have sex with men (GBMSM) have higher rates of STI diagnosis, accounting for nearly 50% of new gonorrhoea cases in outer North East London [1]		

- Levels of HIV testing are lower amongst heterosexual populations, particularly women [1]
- Available evidence suggests lesbian and bisexual women are less likely to access cervical screening than heterosexual women, with some reporting having been actively discouraged from accessing this important intervention by healthcare professionals [2]

Actions outlined in the NEL action plan to specifically address inequalities relating to sexual orientation include [3]:
Action 4.O.31 - Improve HIV testing coverage among heterosexual populations, especially women
Actions 4.P.32/33/34 - To increase uptake of PrEP in all eligible populations (not just GBMSM)

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) will also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of inequality relating to sexual orientation, informing future action to address this.

The complementary SRH action plan (to be developed) will also identify any further local opportunities to address inequalities relating to sexual orientation relating to SRH for residents.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
[1] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (data pack)
[2] Public Health England (2019) Addressing inequalities in LGBT cancer screening coverage
[3] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan)

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	

Overall impact:
The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of all people, regardless of how they identify their gender. The strategy and action plan includes specific references to ways in which some of the existing inequalities in SRH outcomes relating to gender reassignment will be addressed, and broader actions are also deemed likely to have a positive benefit on these inequalities. The complementary Havering SRH action plan (to be developed) will also provide an opportunity to identify any other actions needed to address inequalities relating to gender reassignment for local residents.
As such implementation of the strategy and action plans is considered to deliver a positive impact.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:
More evidence is needed about differences in SRH experiences and outcomes for trans, non-binary and gender diverse people compared to cis-gender populations.

- Organisations representing trans, non-binary and gender diverse people identify that these groups can often struggle to access information about SRH that meets their needs [1] often find they are left out of mainstream information relating to health and wellbeing.
- A national survey found that 40% of trans respondents reported having a negative experience when accessing healthcare services because of their gender identify, while 18% of respondents reported that they had avoided treatment because of fear of a negative reaction from healthcare provider [2]

Actions outlined in the NEL action plan to specifically address inequalities relating to sexual orientation include:
Action 1.B.5 Develop and pilot a Trans and Non-Binary Clinic - collaboration between Barts and Homerton.

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) will also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of inequalities relating to gender reassignment, informing future action to address this.

The complementary SRH action plan (to be developed) will also identify any further local opportunities to address known inequalities relating to gender identity relating to SRH for residents.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
[1] Terrence Higgins Trust (2024) Sexual health for trans and non-binary people
[2] British Medical Associate (2024) Inclusive care of trans and non-binary patients
[3] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan)

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic – Marriage / civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of people regardless of relationship status. People who are married or in a civil partnership have the same potential to benefit as a result of the actions proposed as people that are single or in other forms of relationship. **Expand box as required*
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence:
Despite traditional social norms and expectations, a person's marital or relationship status does not necessarily reflect their sexual and relationship behaviors and as such may not be necessarily related to their SRH needs.

People who have multiple partners or frequently change partners can be at increased risk of STIs, but again, this behavior is not always correlated to relationship status.

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) may provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of any inequality issues relating to marriage/civil partnership, informing future action to address this.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan)

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are taking maternity or paternity leave		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:** The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of people who are pregnant. The strategy and action plan includes specific references to ways in which some of the existing SRH issues relating to pregnancy/maternity/paternity will be addressed, and broader actions are also deemed likely to have a positive benefit. The complementary Havering SRH action plan (to be developed) will also provide an opportunity to identify any other actions needed to address issues relating to pregnancy/maternity/paternity for local residents. As such implementation of the strategy and action plans is considered to deliver a positive impact. **Expand box as required*
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:
Pregnancy, maternity and paternity are a fundamental part of SRH. Ensuring that people have easy access to effective contraceptive methods so that they can have better control of their reproductive choices can support reductions in rates of unwanted pregnancy, while improving the integration and accessibility of SRH services can support improvements in outcomes for people that are pregnant.

The strategy identifies a number of key issues relating to maternity outcomes

- North East London has a higher abortion rate than the England average, though similar to the rest of London [1];
- About 1 in 3 women in NEL accessing an abortion in 2021 had at least one prior termination of pregnancy [1];
- National research has shown that maternal death rates have been shown to be up to four times higher for women from Black ethnic backgrounds and almost two times higher for women from Asian ethnic backgrounds, compared to white women [2].

Actions outlined in the NEL action plan to specifically address issues relating to pregnancy/maternity/paternity include [3]:
Actions 2.F.14/15/16 - LARC: Improve uptake of LARC, especially among women of colour
Actions 2.G.17/18 – EHC (emergency hormonal contraception): Address the demographic disproportionality in access to EHC

Action 2.H.19 - Consistent, timely access to high quality services for contraception, abortion and menopause
Action 2.I.20 - Increase condom provision
Action 4.S.38 - To understand the reasons of incidents of vertical transmission

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) may also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of inequality relating to pregnancy/maternity/paternity, informing future action to address this.

The complementary SRH action plan (to be developed) will also identify any further local opportunities to address issues relating to pregnancy/maternity/paternity for residents.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

[1] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (full report)
[2] Quenby, S. et al. (2021). Miscarriage matters: the epidemiological, physical, psychological, and economic costs of early pregnancy loss. The Lancet, 397(10285), 1658–1667. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)00682-6
[3] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (action plan)

**Expand box as required*

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		**Overall impact:**
Positive	✓	The strategic approach outlined in the joint NEL SHR strategy is inclusive of all people, regardless of socio-economic status. SRH services are free at the point of use. While the strategy and action plan do not include specific actions relating to socio-economic inequalities, a range of action proposed are likely to support improvements in SRH outcomes that deprived populations may experience differently to more affluent peers. The complementary Havering SRH action plan (to be developed) will also provide an opportunity to identify any other actions needed to address socio-economic inequalities for local residents. As such implementation of the strategy and action plans is considered to deliver a positive impact.
Neutral		
Negative		

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

There are a range of socio-economic inequalities relating to SRH, for example:

- More deprived areas of North East London tend to experience higher rates of STI infection [1][
- Rates of under 16 and under 18 pregnancy are higher in more deprived areas, with fewer of these pregnancies resulting in termination [2];
- Deprivation is strongly associated with higher rates of hospital admission for conditions such as pelvic inflammatory disease and ectopic pregnancy [1].

While the strategy action plan does not explicitly identify any actions specifically targeted at addressing inequalities related to socio-economic status, many of the actions proposed (notably, improving uptake of effective contraception, improving provision of SRH

education) are likely to contribute to impact positively on the SRH outcomes of those living in more deprived areas.

Action 1.B.2 (Annual Equity Audits undertaken by all SRH providers) will also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding of socio-economic inequality, informing future action to address this.

The complementary SRH action plan (to be developed) will also identify any further local opportunities to address known socio-economic inequalities relating to SRH for residents.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
[1] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (full report)
[2] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (data pack)

**Expand box as required*

Health & Wellbeing Impact: Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool on the next page to help you answer this question.

Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity?

Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	

Overall impact:
Sexual and reproductive health is an integral part of a person's wellbeing, and the strategy aims to support people in North East London to live healthy and fulfilling lives by improving SRH services and outcomes. The strategy is therefore deemed to present a positive opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of Havering residents.

**Expand box as required*

Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box

Yes ☐ **No** ☐✓

Evidence:

The strategy and accompanying NEL action plan lays out a programme of work which supports improvements against a range of health and wellbeing outcomes (as identified via the Health and Wellbeing screening tool below):

Lifestyle

- *Sexual behaviors – the primary focus of the strategy, intended to deliver improvements across a range of sexual and reproductive health outcomes*
- *Illicit drug and substance use – improving support available to those who participate in Chemsex (sexual activity under the influence of drugs), by developing an integrated approach that addresses barriers in service access.*

Social factors

- *Social support – ensuring those newly diagnosed or living with HIV have access to appropriate support services;*
- *Discrimination and fear of discrimination – taking steps to tackle stigma and discrimination relating to sexual and reproductive health, including HIV.*

Personal circumstances

- *Life skills – identifying opportunities support young people (via RSE) and other vulnerable groups to be better informed and have greater agency regarding sexual health and relationships, including managing issues such as consent.*

Access to services

- *Healthcare services – takes steps to improve access to a range of sexual and reproductive health services, addressing barriers to and inequities in access, particularly for the most vulnerable or underserved groups.*

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

[1] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (data pack)
[2] North East London Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (full report)

**Expand box as required*

3. Health & Wellbeing Screening Tool

Will the activity / service / policy / procedure affect any of the following characteristics? Please tick/check the boxes below

The following are a range of considerations that might help you to complete the assessment.

Lifestyle YES ☒ NO ☐	**Personal circumstances** YES ☒ NO ☐	**Access to services/facilities/amenities** YES ☒ NO ☐
☐ Diet	☐ Structure and cohesion of family unit	☐ to Employment opportunities
☐ Exercise and physical activity	☐ Parenting	☐ to Workplaces
☐ Smoking	☐ Childhood development	☐ to Housing
☐ Exposure to passive smoking	☒ Life skills	☐ to Shops (to supply basic needs)
☐ Alcohol intake	☐ Personal safety	☐ to Community facilities
☐ Dependency on prescription drugs	☐ Employment status	☐ to Public transport
☒ Illicit drug and substance use	☐ Working conditions	☐ to Education
☒ Risky Sexual behaviour	☐ Level of income, including benefits	☐ to Training and skills development
☐ Other health-related behaviours, such as tooth-brushing, bathing, and wound care	☐ Level of disposable income	☒ to Healthcare
	☐ Housing tenure	☐ to Social services
	☐ Housing conditions	☐ to Childcare
	☐ Educational attainment	☐ to Respite care
	☐ Skills levels including literacy and numeracy	☐ to Leisure and recreation services and facilities
Social Factors YES ☒ NO ☐	**Economic Factors** YES ☐ NO ☐	**Environmental Factors** YES ☐ NO ☐
☐ Social contact	☐ Creation of wealth	☐ Air quality
☒ Social support	☐ Distribution of wealth	☐ Water quality
☐ Neighbourliness	☐ Retention of wealth in local area/economy	☐ Soil quality/Level of contamination/Odour
☐ Participation in the community	☐ Distribution of income	☐ Noise levels
☐ Membership of community groups	☐ Business activity	☐ Vibration
☐ Reputation of community/area	☐ Job creation	☐ Hazards
☐ Participation in public affairs	☐ Availability of employment opportunities	☐ Land use
☐ Level of crime and disorder	☐ Quality of employment opportunities	☐ Natural habitats
☐ Fear of crime and disorder	☐ Availability of education opportunities	☐ Biodiversity
☐ Level of antisocial behaviour	☐ Quality of education opportunities	☐ Landscape, including green and open spaces
☐ Fear of antisocial behaviour	☐ Availability of training and skills development opportunities	☐ Townscape, including civic areas and public realm
☒ Discrimination	☐ Quality of training and skills development opportunities	☐ Use/consumption of natural resources
☒ Fear of discrimination	☐ Technological development	☐ Energy use: CO2/other greenhouse gas emissions
☐ Public safety measures	☐ Amount of traffic congestion	☐ Solid waste management
☐ Road safety measures		☐ Public transport infrastructure

4. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	1. The initial screening exercise showed a strong indication that there will be no impacts on people and need to carry out an EqHIA. 2. The EqHIA identified no significant concerns OR the identified negative concerns have already been addressed		**Proceed with implementation** of your activity
	3. The EqHIA identified some negative impact which still needs to be addressed		**COMPLETE SECTION 5:** **Complete action plan** with measures to mitigate the and finalise the EqHIA
	4. The EqHIA identified some major concerns and showed that it is impossible to diminish negative impacts from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level		**Stop and remove** the activity or **revise** the activity **thoroughly.** **Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.**

5. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise **negative** impacts and enhance/optimise positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will mitigate or reduce any **negative** equality and/or health & wellbeing impacts, identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; if required, will amend the scope and direction of the change; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer

Add further rows as necessary

***** You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts.

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

6. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review: strategy mid-point

Scheduled date of review: 01/03/27

Lead Officer conducting the review: Emily Grundy

**Expand box as required*

Please submit the completed form via e-mail to READI@havering.gov.uk thank you.