

**Romford Town Centre Masterplan**  
**Supplementary Planning Document**  
**Baseline Document**  
**March 2025**

## CLIENT

London Borough of Havering

## DESIGN TEAM

### **Maccreeanor Lavington**

Lead Consultant | Urban Design | Architecture

### **Avison Young**

Regeneration | Property | Economics

### **make:good**

Engagement

### **GHPA**

Planning

### **Periscope**

Landscape | Public Realm

### **Civic Engineers**

Transport | Engineering

### **Useful Projects**

Sustainability

### **Authentic Futures**

Heritage

## MACCREANOR LAVINGTON

London

63 Gee Street  
London EC1V 3RS  
United Kingdom  
+44 (0) 20 7336 7353

Rotterdam

Vijverhofstraat 47  
3032 SB Rotterdam  
The Netherlands  
+31 (0) 10 443 90 60

[maccreeanorlavington.com](http://maccreeanorlavington.com)

# Contents

---

<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>	6.3 Planning Designations	47
1.1 Overall Purpose	2	6.4 Identified Areas	49
<b>2 ROMFORD IN CONTEXT</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7 LANDSCAPE &amp; PUBLIC REALM</b>	<b>51</b>
2.1 Strategic Context	4	7.1 Landscape	53
2.2 Character, Context & Identity	5	7.2 Public Realm	55
<b>3 BUILT FORM</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8 TRANSPORT &amp; MOVEMENT</b>	<b>57</b>
3.1 Romford Timeline	9	8.1 Public Transport	59
3.2 Romford Morphology	11	8.2 Buses	61
3.3 Character Review	13	8.3 Vehicles	63
3.4 Building Uses	15	8.4 Cycling	67
3.5 Heritage	17	8.5 Pedestrians	69
3.6 Archaeology	21	<b>9 ENVIRONMENT &amp; SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>71</b>
3.7 Building Heights	23	9.1 Environment & Ecology	73
<b>4 ECONOMY</b>	<b>25</b>	9.2 Pollution	75
4.1 Economic Overview	27	9.3 Growth & Impact	77
4.2 Romford Sector Dynamics	29	<b>10 PREVIOUS STUDIES</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>5 PEOPLE</b>	<b>33</b>	10.1 Existing Visions & Objectives	95
5.1 Demographics	34	10.2 Key Objectives Matrix	103
5.2 Deprivation	37	<b>11 SUMMARY</b>	<b>105</b>
5.3 Health & Wellbeing	39	11.1 Summary of Objectives	106
<b>6 PLANNING &amp; POLICY</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>12 APPENDICES</b>	<b>107</b>
6.1 Planning & Regeneration Framework	43	12.1 Heritage Audit	107
6.2 Strategic Context	45		

# 1 INTRODUCTION

---



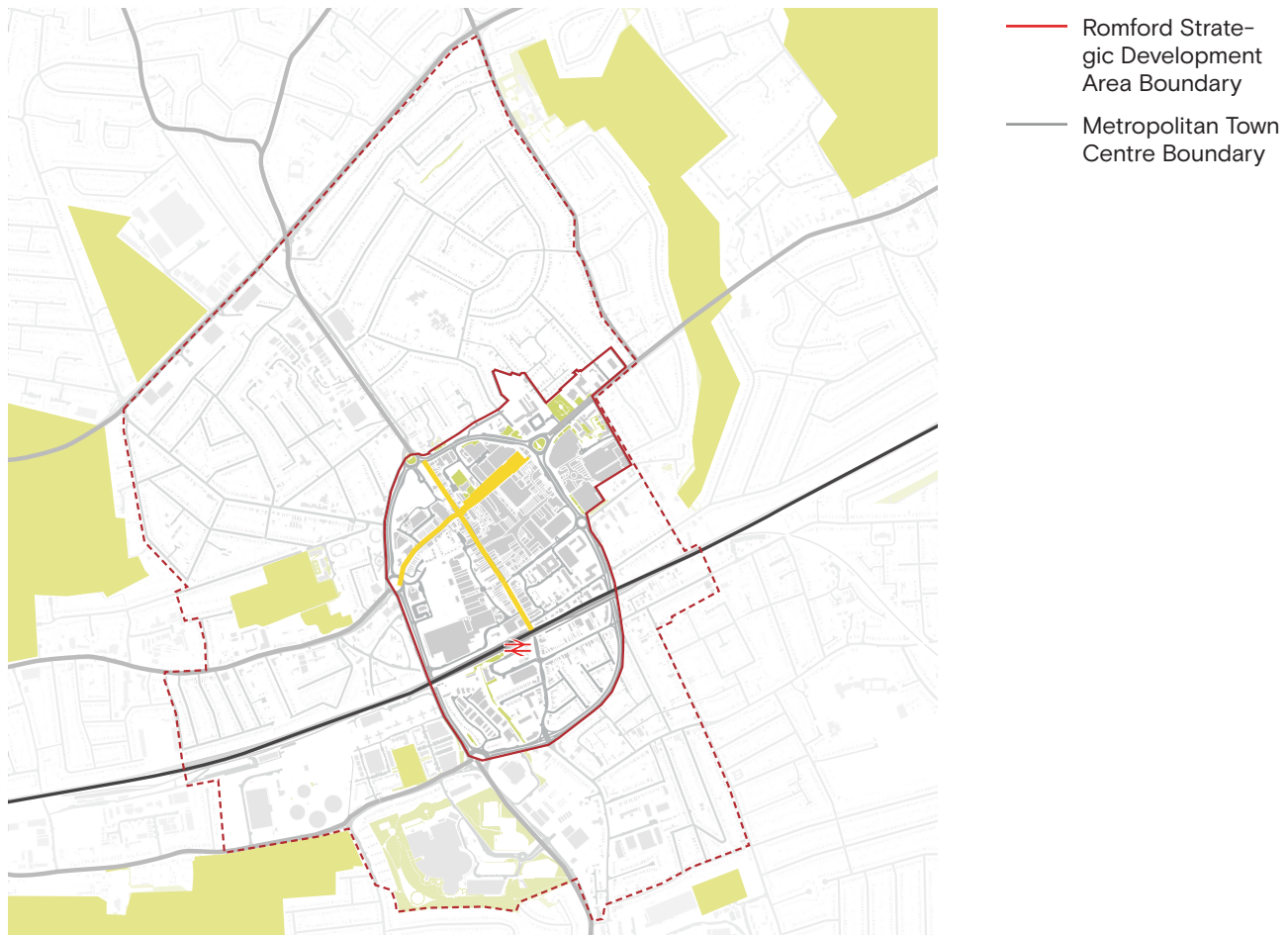


Fig. 01. Study Area – map showing Romford SDA boundary and Metropolitan Town Centre boundary

## 1.1 OVERALL PURPOSE

Maccreeanor 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

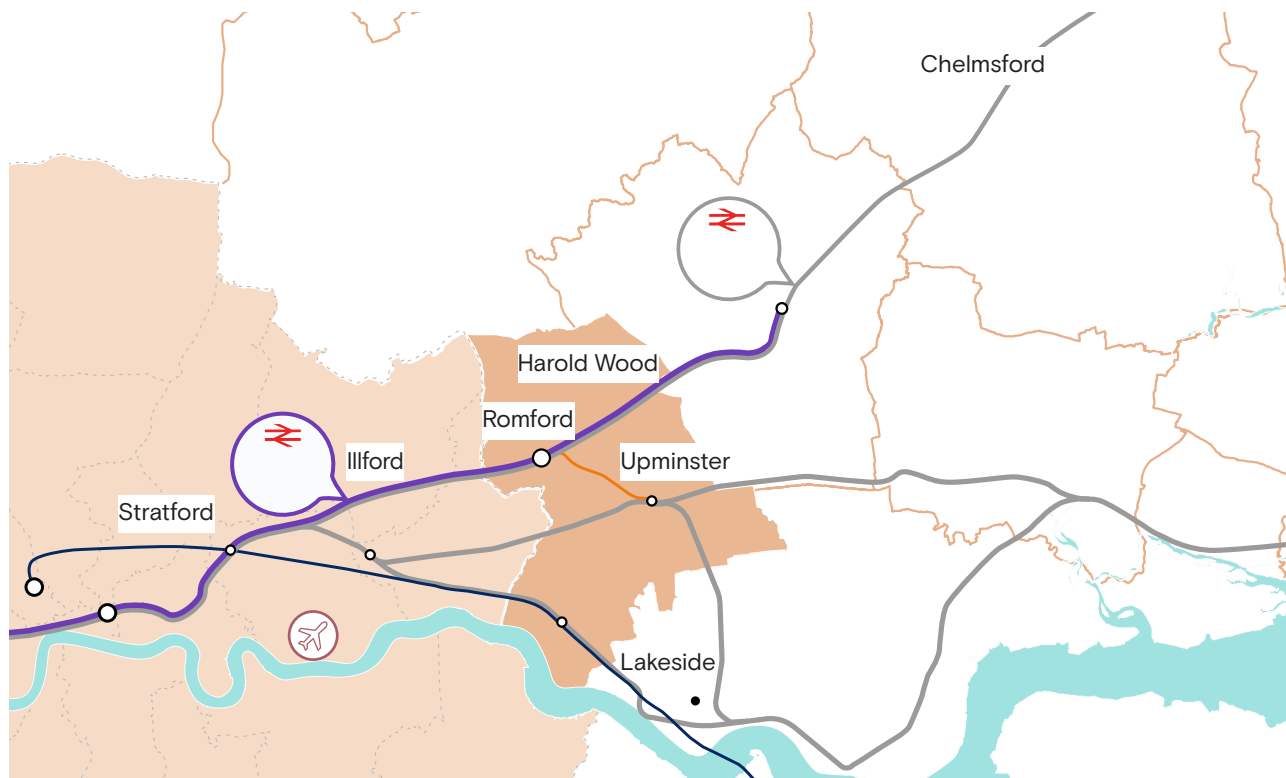


Fig. 02. Romford's strategic connectivity

### 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<sup>1</sup>. 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 84.5 years 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 81.1 years 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).<sup>2</sup>

---

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)



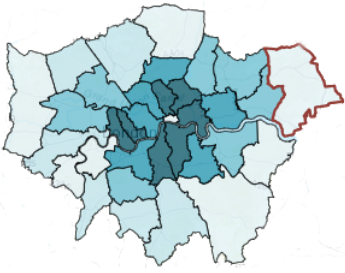


Fig. 03. Population per hectare (2024) Havering has a population density in the second lowest percentile in London after Bromley.

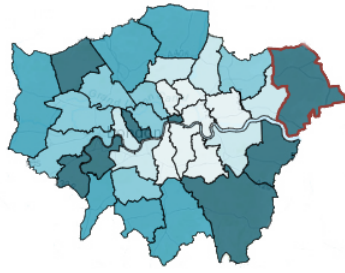


Fig. 07. Percentage age 65+ (2018) Havering has the largest share of elderly residents of any London borough, with an average age of 39



Fig. 11. % that is greenspace (2005) 59% of Havering is greenspace, the highest percentage in London borough

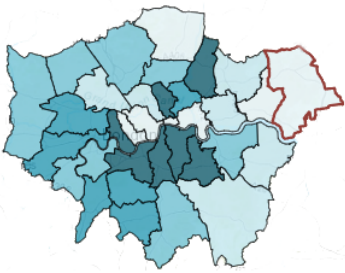


Fig. 04. Employment rate 16+ (2017) The employment rate in Havering is below average in comparison to the rest of London

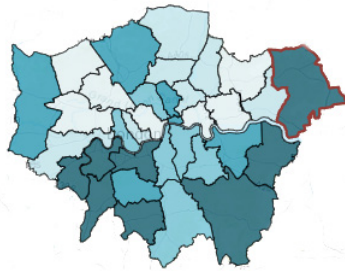


Fig. 08. Persons White British (2018) Havering has one of the most ethnically homogeneous populations in London, with 83% of its residents recorded as White British and 87% born in the UK

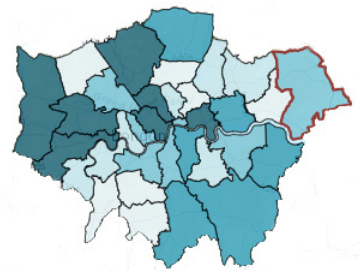


Fig. 12. Greenhouse gas emissions (2015). Havering has a medium rate of greenhouse gas emissions in comparison with London

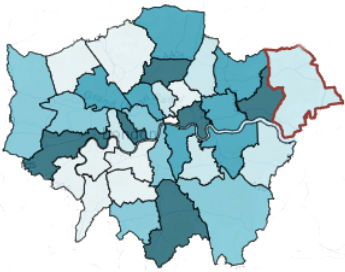


Fig. 05. Unemployment rate 16+ (2017) Havering has a low unemployment rate in comparison to the rest of London

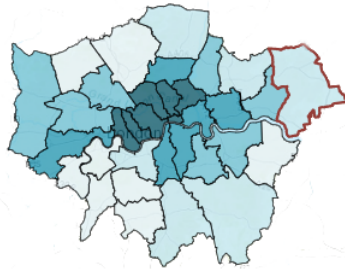


Fig. 09. All crime rate (2017-2018) Havering has comparatively low crime rates

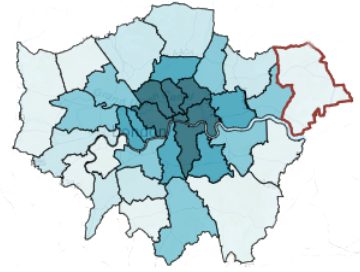


Fig. 13. No cars in household (2011) Havering has the second highest rate of vehicle ownership with 77% of households owning at least one vehicle

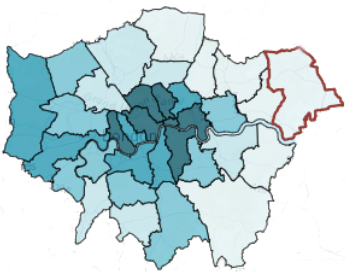


Fig. 06. Mean gross annual pay (2017) Household median income within the borough is in the lowest quartile within London

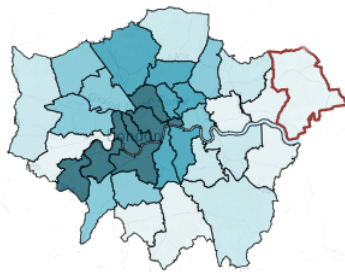


Fig. 10. Medium house price (2017) House prices are relatively low in Havering, the average price as of 2017 being 350,000.

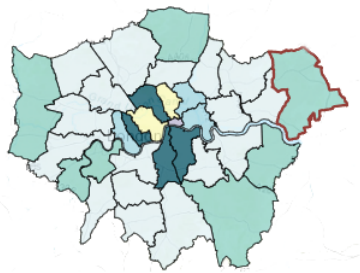


Fig. 14. Average PTAL level (2015) Havering has an average PTAL of 1B, in the lowest quartile in London.

Source: <https://data.london.gov.uk/london-area-profiles/>

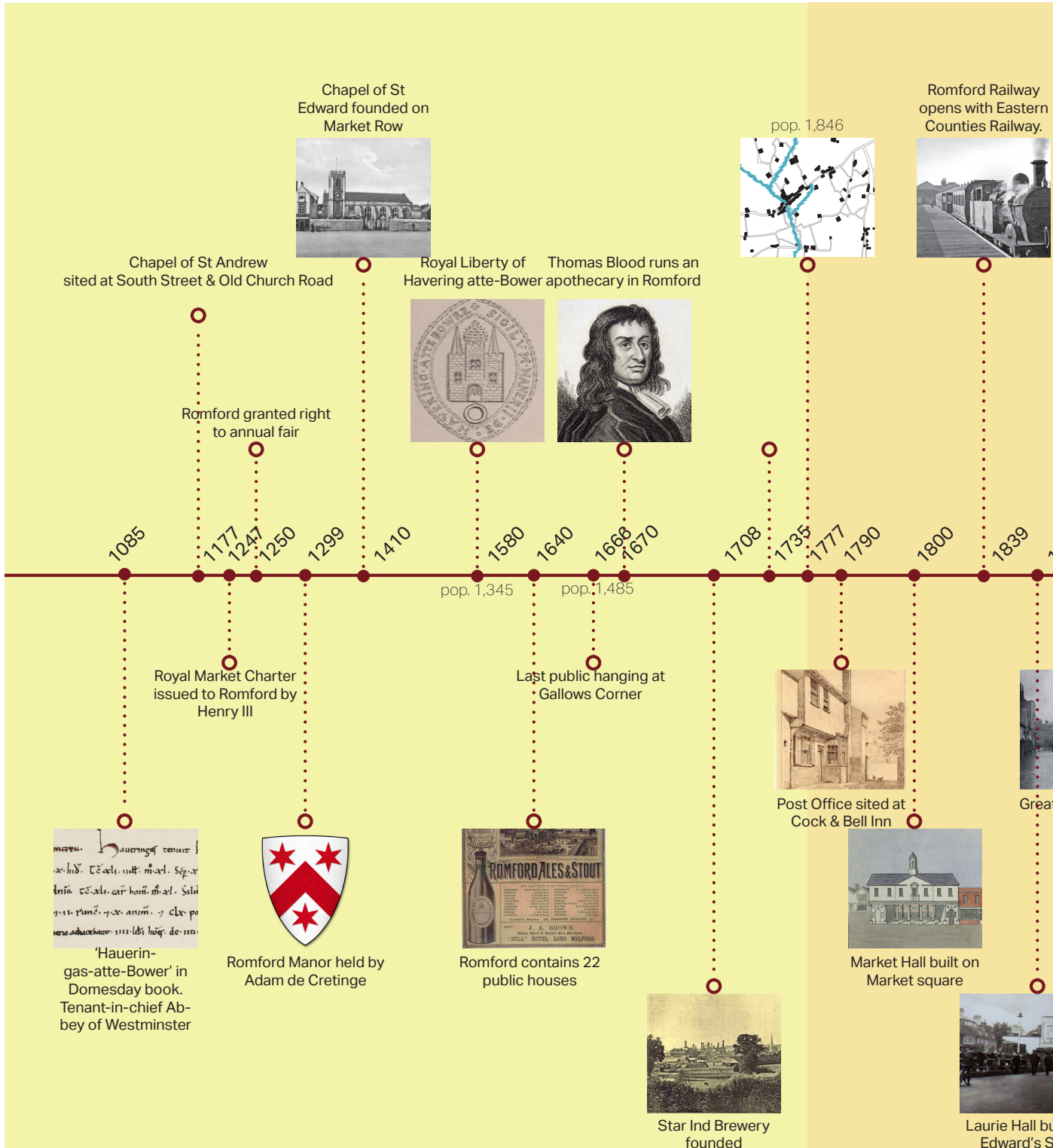
# 3 BUILT FORM

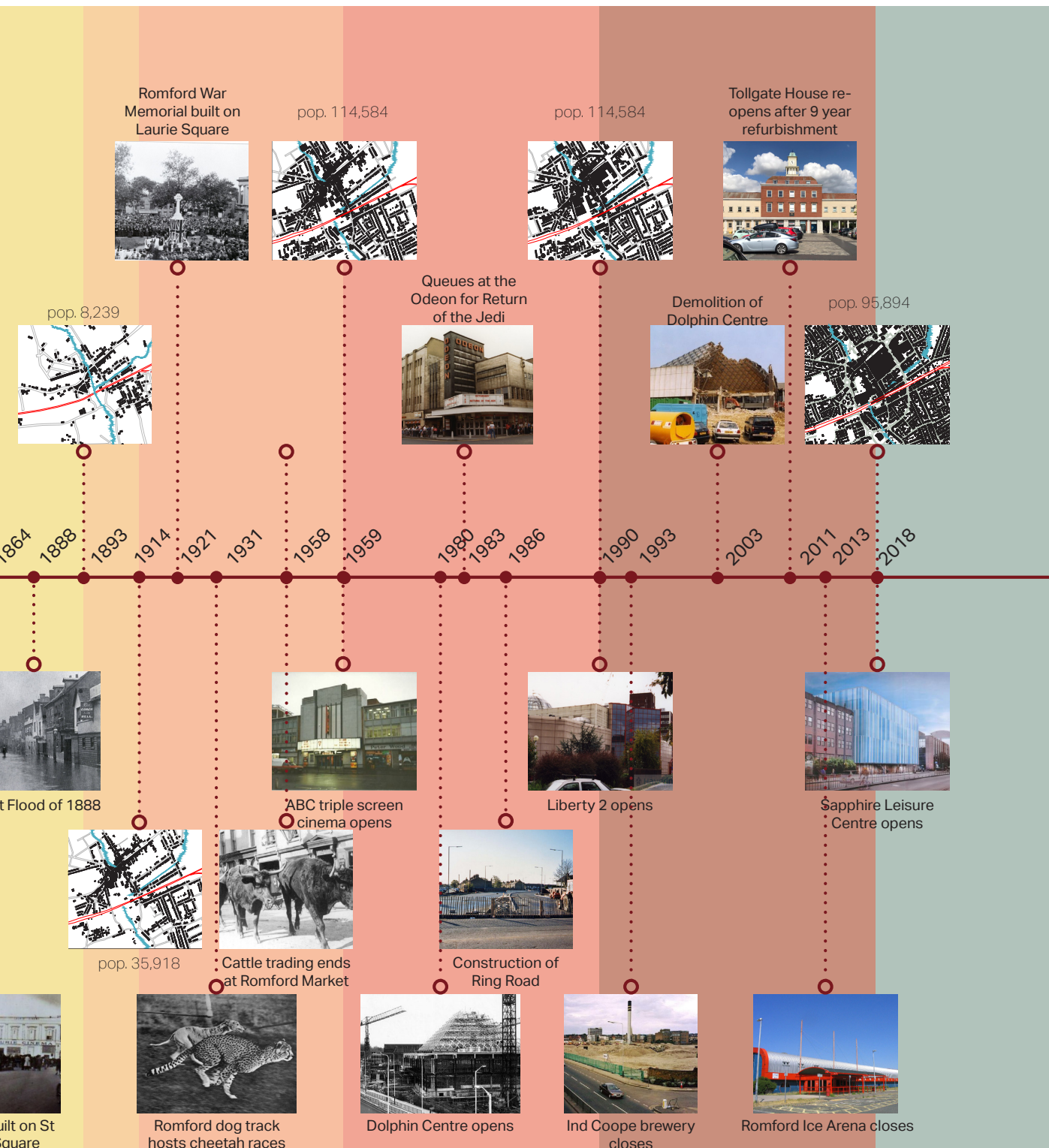
---





# 3.1 ROMFORD TIMELINE





## 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 20<sup>th</sup> century has resulted in a lack of high-quality civic or public space.



Fig. 15. Romford 1777 – population 1,846

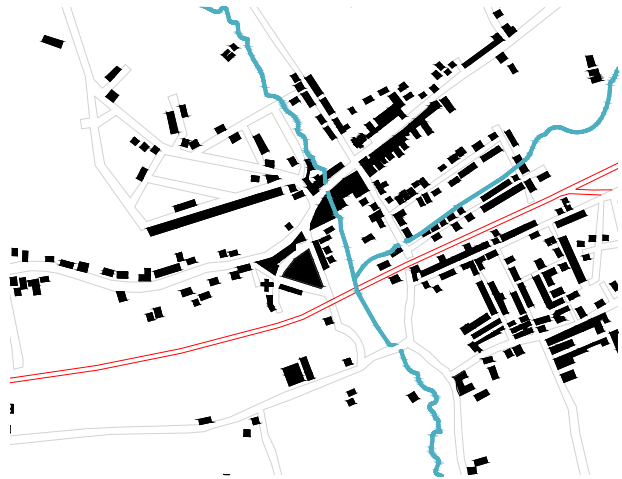


Fig. 18. Romford 1893 – population 13,915



Fig. 16. Romford 1914 – population 1,442



Fig. 19. Romford 1959 – population 114,584



Fig. 17. Romford 1990 (?) – population 230,900



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 buildings). 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

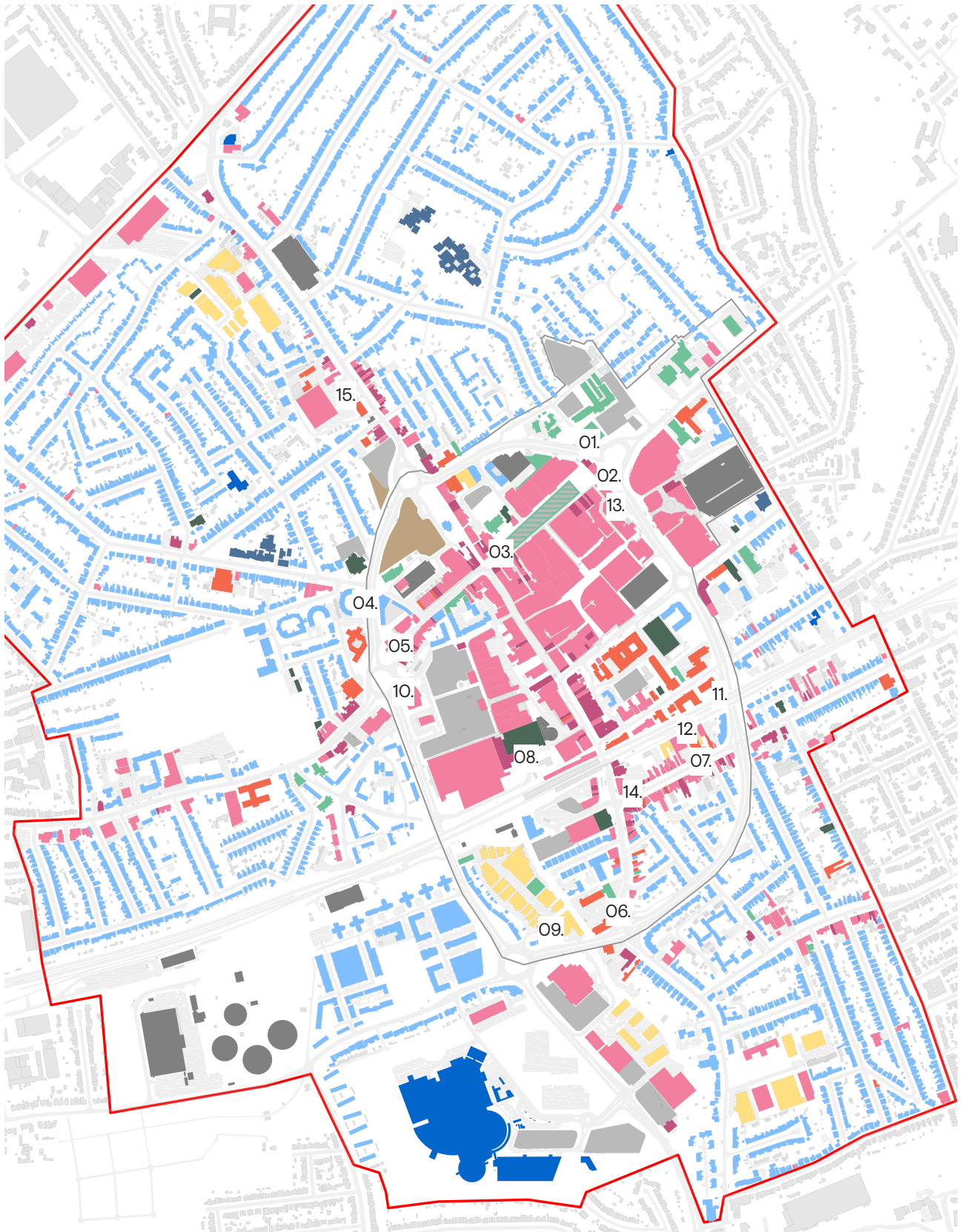
the same time, there has been a steady chipping away of historic fabric including the loss of entire locally listed buildings on Western Road and North Street.

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. 29,000 m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) of office space was either lost or sanctioned to be lost via the Prior Approval process – allowing for an additional 577 homes.<sup>1</sup>

---

1 Review of Prior Approvals – Change of Use from Office to Residential, March 2019



- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <span style="color: #e91e63;">■</span> Retail          | <span style="color: #42a5f5;">■</span> Residential | <span style="color: #2e7d32;">■</span> Leisure  |
| <span style="color: #9c27b0;">■</span> Food & Beverage | <span style="color: #00bcd4;">■</span> Hospital    | <span style="color: #545454;">■</span> Car park |
| <span style="color: #ff9800;">■</span> Employment B1a  | <span style="color: #3949ab;">■</span> Education   |   |
| <span style="color: #ffc107;">■</span> Employment B1c  | <span style="color: #4caf50;">■</span> Civic       |   |

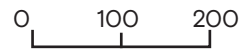


Fig. 21. Building Uses & Character

## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> Historic England, Heritage at Risk Register – <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/list-entry/2228>

<sup>2</sup> The Havering Local Plan



01.

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



02.



03.



04.



05.

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:

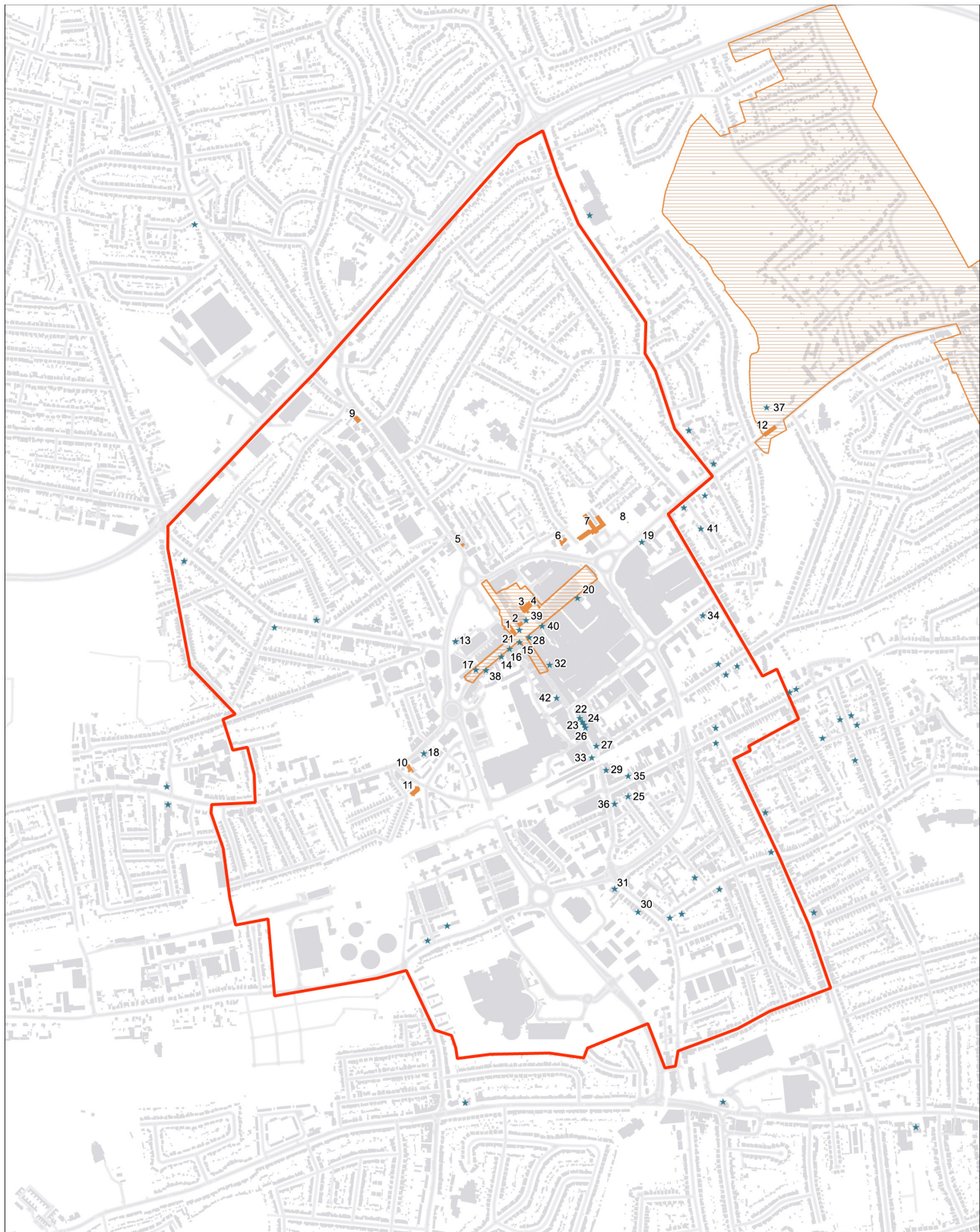
Key / No	Building Name	Building Address	Grade
1	The Golden Lion	2 High Street, Romford, RM1 1HR	Grade II
2	The Lamb Public House	5 Market Place, Romford, RM1 3AB	Grade II
3	Parish Church of St Edward the Confessor	Market Place, Romford, RM1 1XP	Grade II*
4	Church House	15 Market Place, Romford, RM1 1XP	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 - Locally Listed Buildings in the SDA**

Locally listed buildings in Romford SDA include:

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	Kingsmead Mansions	Kingsmead Avenue, Romford, RM1 2BT
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	230-268 South Street	RM1 2AD
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	62-76 Western Road	RM1 3LP
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 Place	Romford, RM1 3AF
40	28 Market Place	Romford, RM1 3ER
41	10 Gilbert Road	Romford, RM1 3BX
42	64 South Street	Romford, RM1 1RB



Heritage

- \* Locally Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas

- Romford Town Centre Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas (Heritage at Risk) [2017]

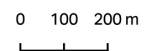


Fig. 22. Romford Heritage Map

## 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.



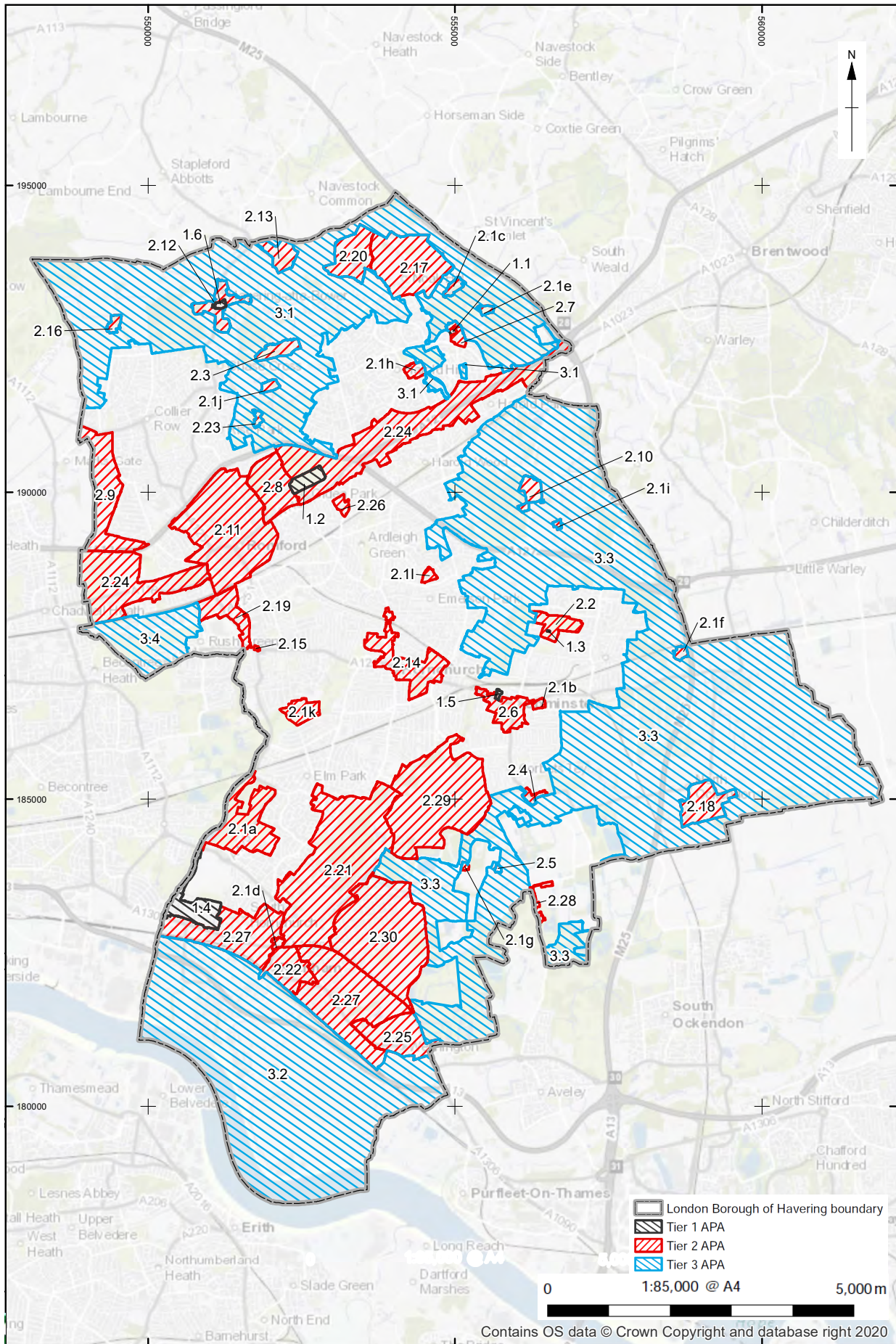


Fig. 23. London Borough of Havering New Archaeological Priority Areas 2024 (excerpt from the London Borough of Havering Archaeological Priority Area Appraisal Final Report May 2024)

# 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”<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup>”.

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

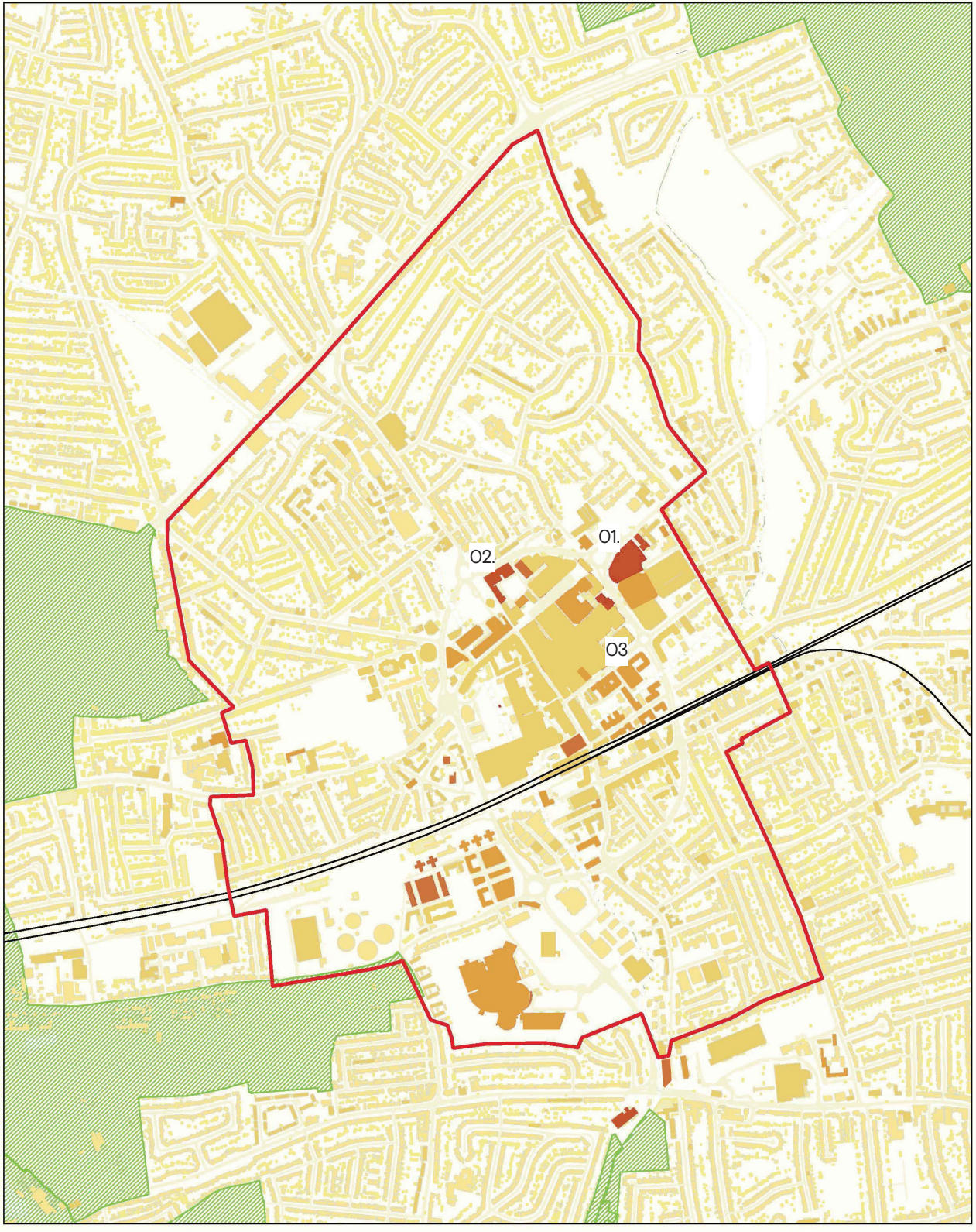


Fig. 24. Primary Building Heights

# 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%)<sup>1</sup>.

## 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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 <sup>2</sup>**

Type	Quantum
Comparison goods	Base year 2023, forecast to 2038: 2,323 m <sup>2</sup> net Havering / 762 m <sup>2</sup> net (Romford)
Convenience goods	Base year 2023, forecast to 2038: 580 m <sup>2</sup> net (Havering) / -17 m <sup>2</sup> 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 33,250 m <sup>2</sup> office floorspace in the planning period to 2041 for Havering as a whole. Space should be orientated to support local businesses, and delivery of smaller spaces (500 m <sup>2</sup> ). Applicable to consider for Romford

<sup>2</sup> 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 m<sup>2</sup> 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 m<sup>2</sup> office floorspace in the planning period to 2041<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup>**

Use Class	GIA (gained m <sup>2</sup> )	GIA (lost m <sup>2</sup> )	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

<sup>3</sup> Havering’s Employment Land Review 2024

<sup>4</sup> 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 placed 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, cafés and bars, and local community uses. A unique characteristic 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 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.



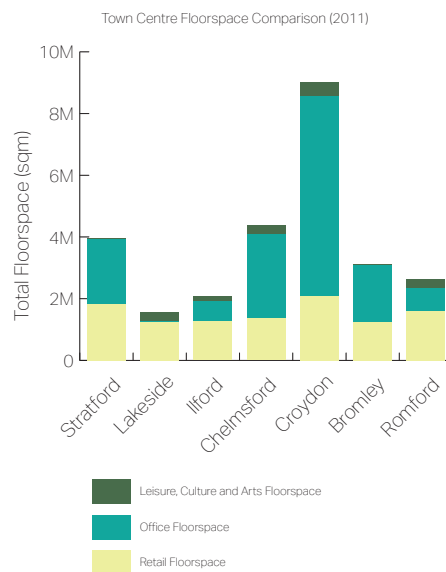
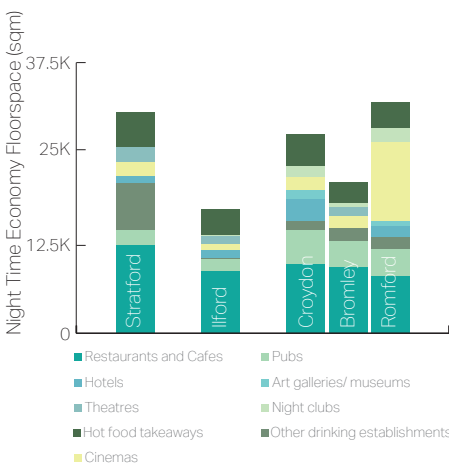
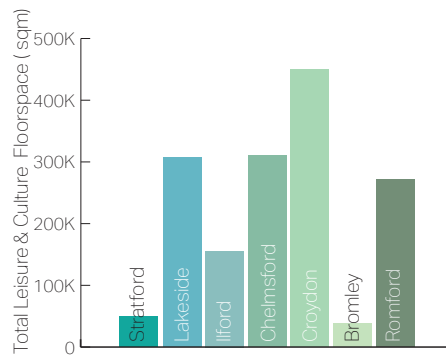
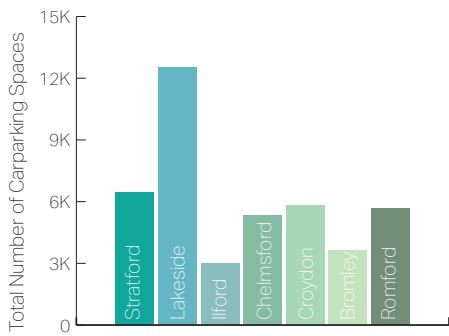
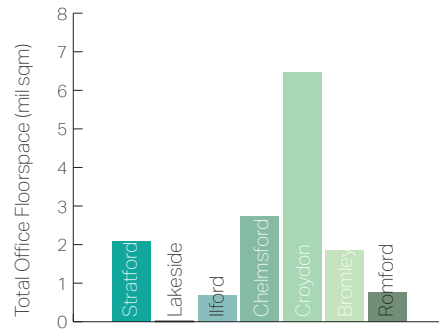
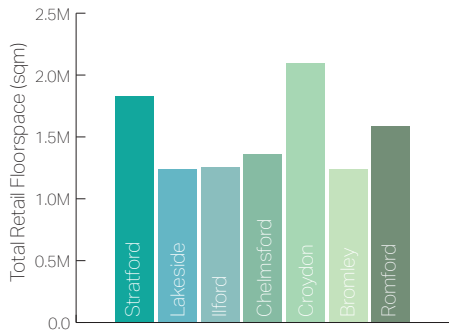


Fig. 25. Romford comparator analysis

## 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.

### 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.



Fig. 26. Brewery Shopping Centre Romford



Fig. 27. Liberty & Mercury Shopping Centres Romford

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), negatively impacting 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 to 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

---

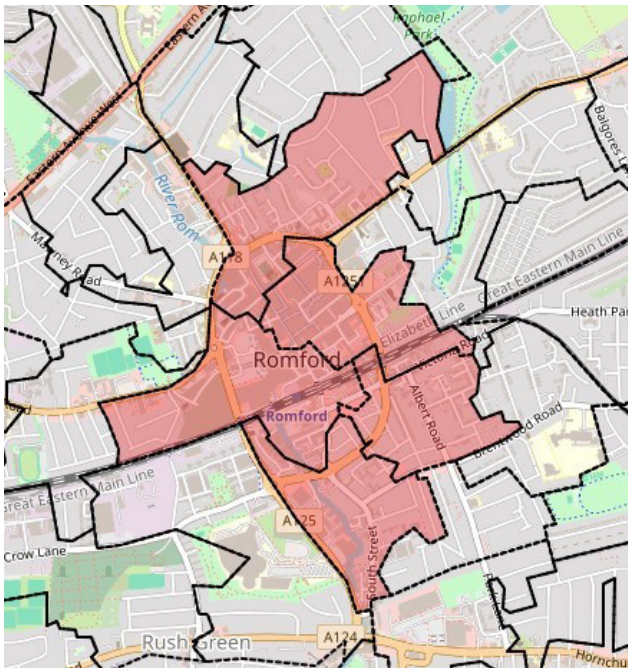


# 5.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

## 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<sup>1</sup> (48% Male and 52% Female)<sup>2</sup> 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<sup>3</sup>**

	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<sup>3</sup>**

	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)<sup>4</sup>**

	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)<sup>5</sup>**

	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)<sup>6</sup>**

	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

Between the censuses of 2021 and 2011, the average (median) age of Havering decreased by one year, from 40 to 39 years of age (Fig. 28). Havering had a higher average (median) age than London as a whole in 2021 (35 years) but a slightly lower average (median) age than England (40 years). The percentage of children aged 9 years and under in Havering rose between 2011 and 2021. Further comparisons between 2011 and 2021 can be found through the ONS<sup>1</sup>.

Between the censuses in 2011 and 2021, the population of Havering increased by 10.5%, from around 237,200 in 2011 to around 262,100 in 2021<sup>1</sup>. 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, the number of people aged 25 to 34 years rose by around 7,100 (an increase of 24.3%), while the number of residents between 20 and 24 years fell by just over 850 (5.8% decrease).

The young adult population 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, higher education is offered via New City College (formed of New City College – Havering Sixth Form Campus, New City College – Havering College – Ardleigh Green Campus, New City College – Rainham Construction and Engineering Campus, and, Havering Adult College). Despite this, Educational Attainment though comparable to neighbouring boroughs (Fig. 30) is still lower than the London average.

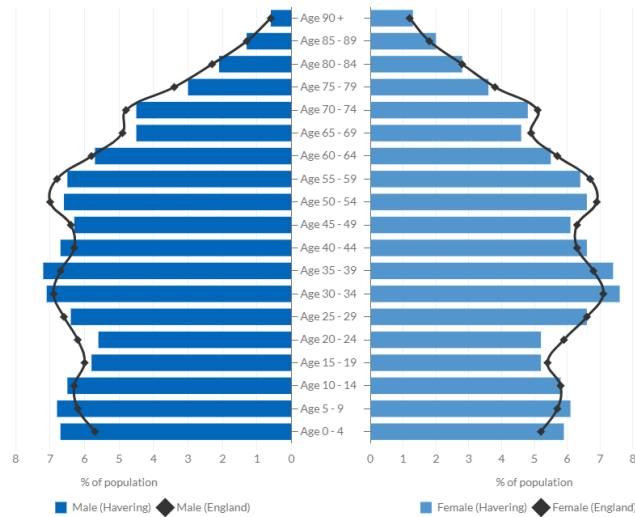


Fig. 28. Age Profile 2021 (source ONS)

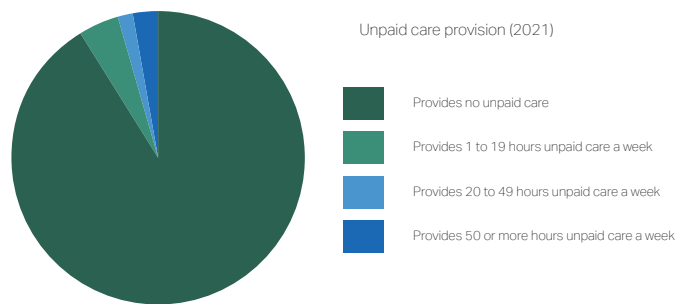


Fig. 29. Care Provision (source ONS)

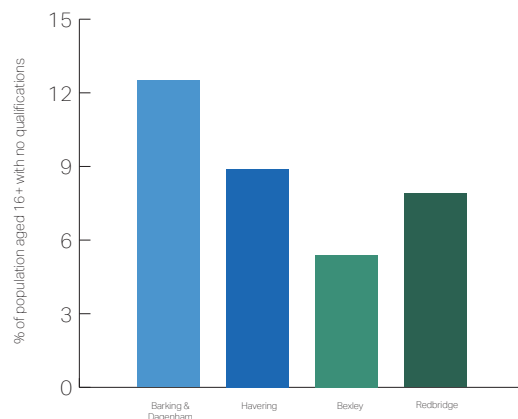


Fig. 30. Education Attainment (source London Data-Store)

<sup>1</sup> ONS 'How Life Has Changed in Havering: Census 2021' ons.gov.uk (2025)

# 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

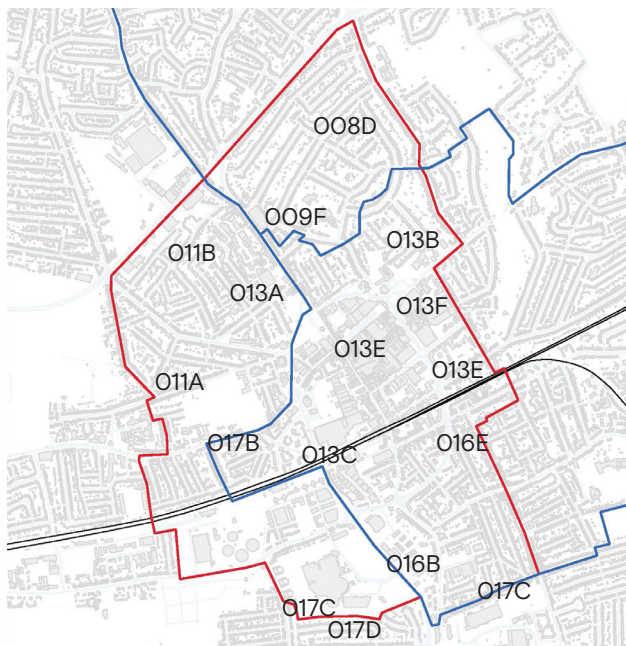


Fig. 31. LSOAs within the Romford SDA area

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.<sup>2</sup>

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)



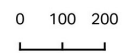
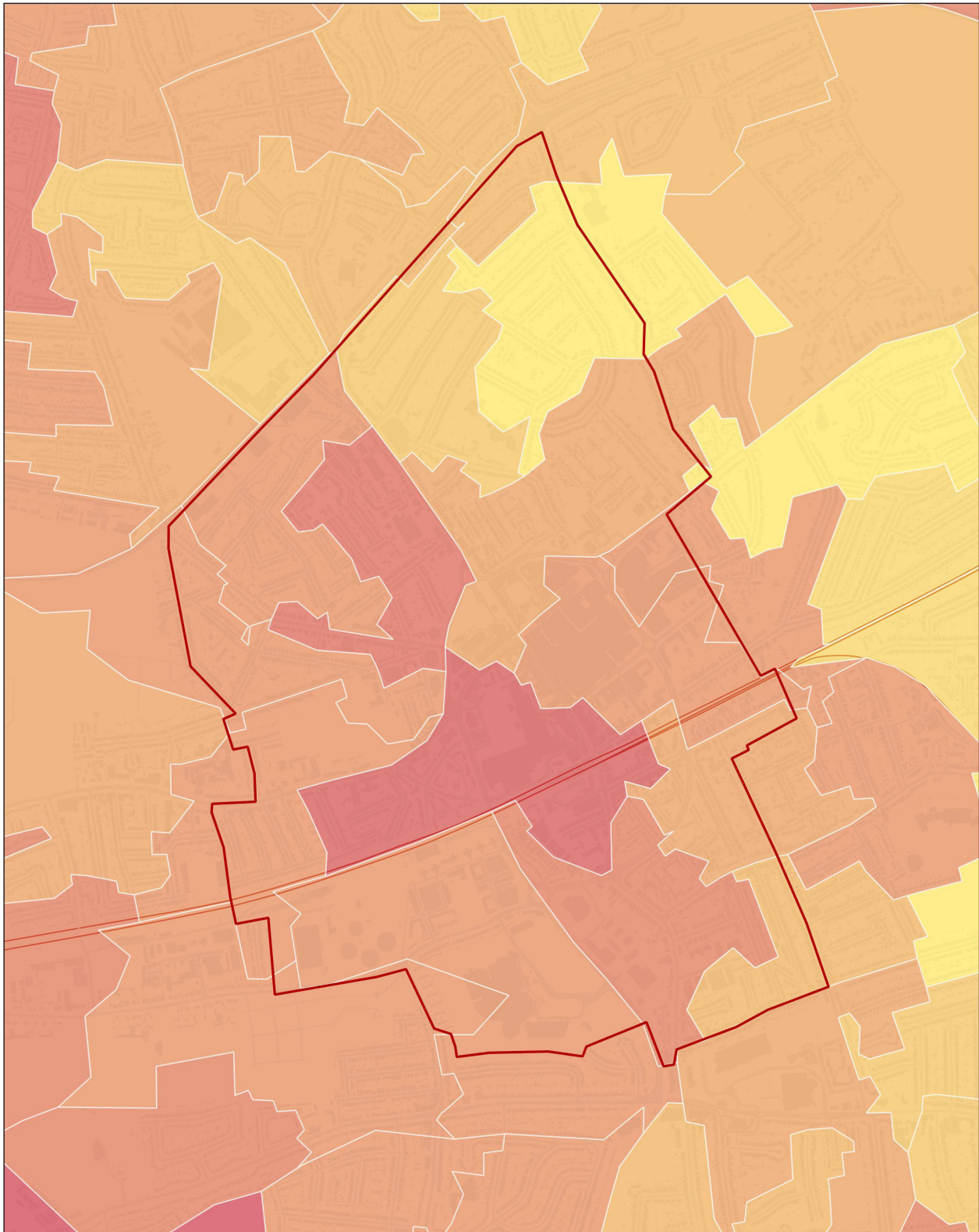


Fig. 32. Romford Indices of Multiple Deprivation

## 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. 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 ‘whole 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<sup>1</sup>. These are lower than both the England and London averages.

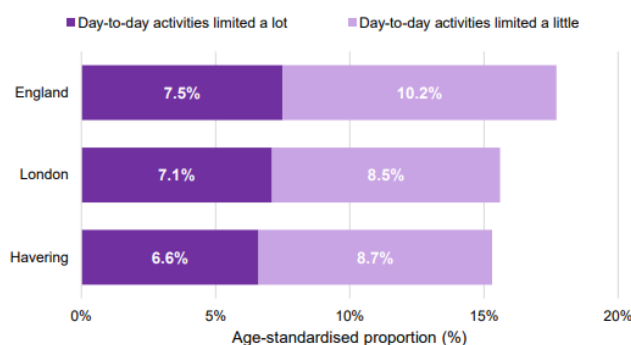


Fig. 33. ASP % of population with a disability<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>. 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<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.haveringdata.net/a-demographic-and-socio-economic-profile>, accessed July 2024

<sup>3</sup> Healthy life expectancy is taken to mean the average number of years a person would expect to live in good health

<sup>1</sup> Havering Demographic Profile: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2023-2024

**Table 11 – Life expectancy<sup>2</sup>**

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

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%).

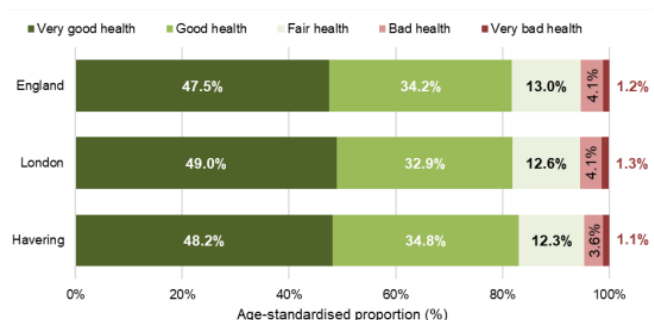


Fig. 34. Self Reported Health<sup>1</sup>

### 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<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup>. 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.

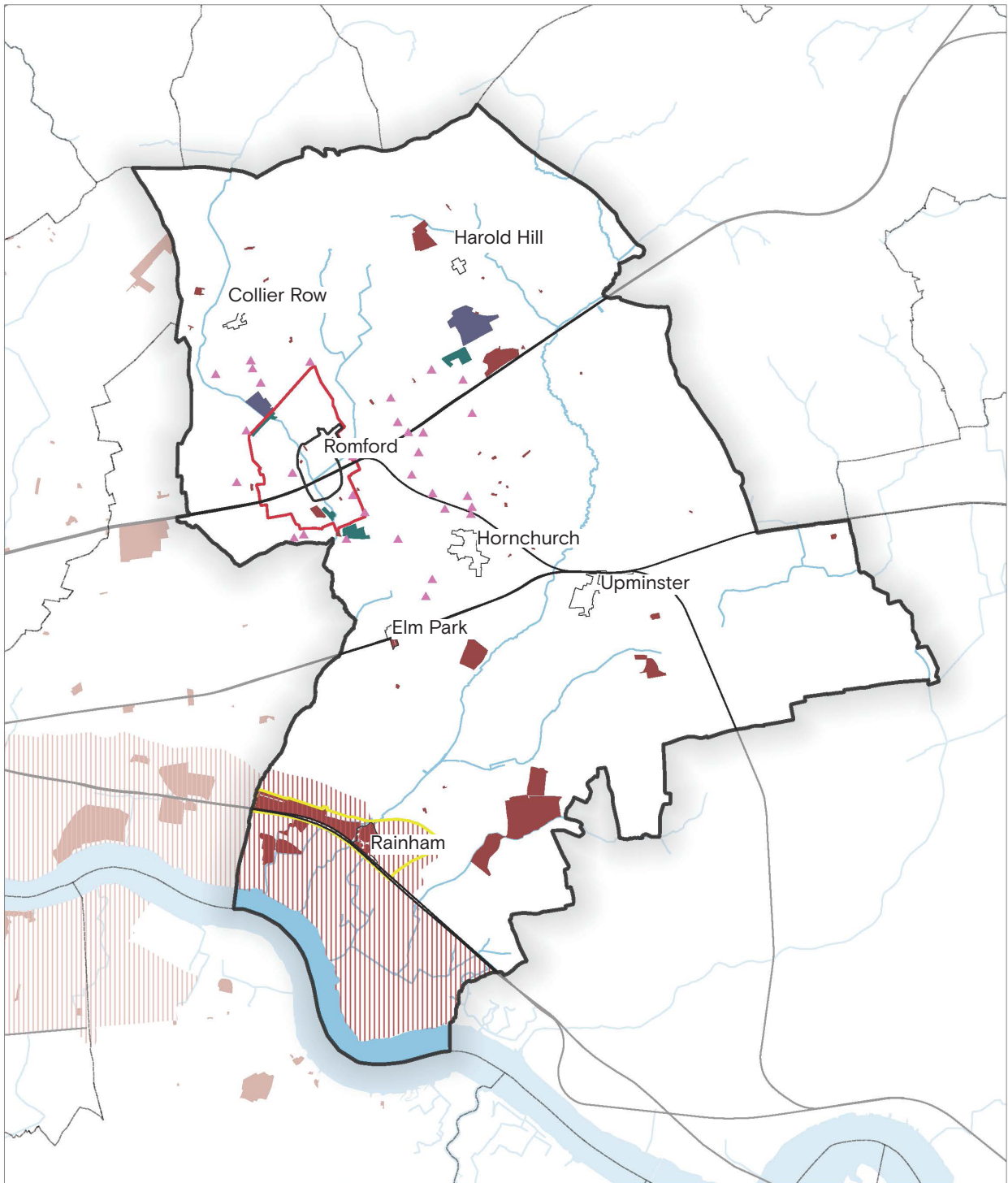
<sup>4</sup> Havering Healthy Weight Strategy 2024–2029: Everybody’s Business

<sup>5</sup> LLDC handbook: Creating places that work for Women and Girls 2024

# 6 PLANNING & POLICY

---





LB Havering Town Centres

- ▲ Minor Local Centres
- ▭ LB Havering Metropolitan Centres
- ▭ LB Havering District Centres

Policy

- Romford Strategic Development Area Boundary

- ▭ Rainham and Beam Strategic Development Area Boundary

- ▨ LB Havering Adopted Opportunity Areas (2018)
- ▭ Strategic Industrial Locations (DC9)
- ▭ Out of Town Centres (DC15)
- ▭ Brownfield Land (2009-10)



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 20 years. 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 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

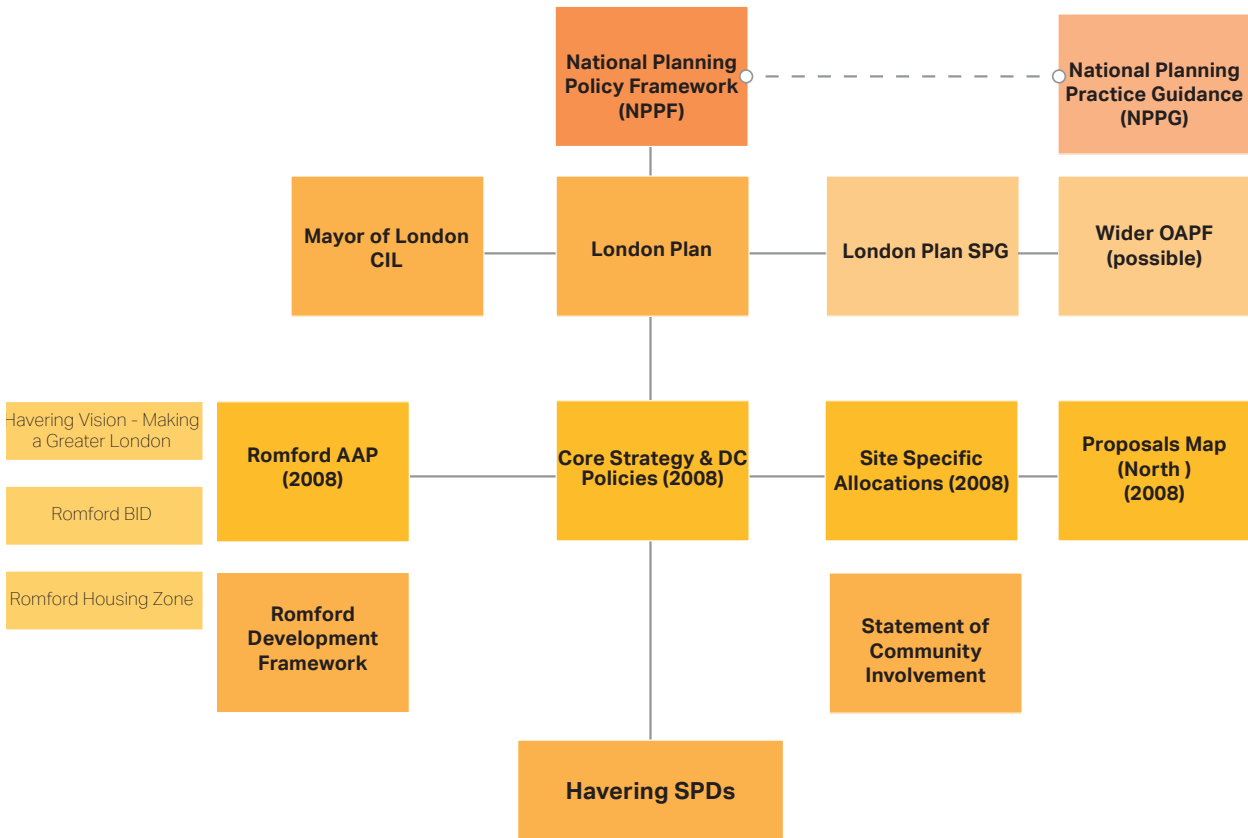


Fig. 36. Current Planning Framework

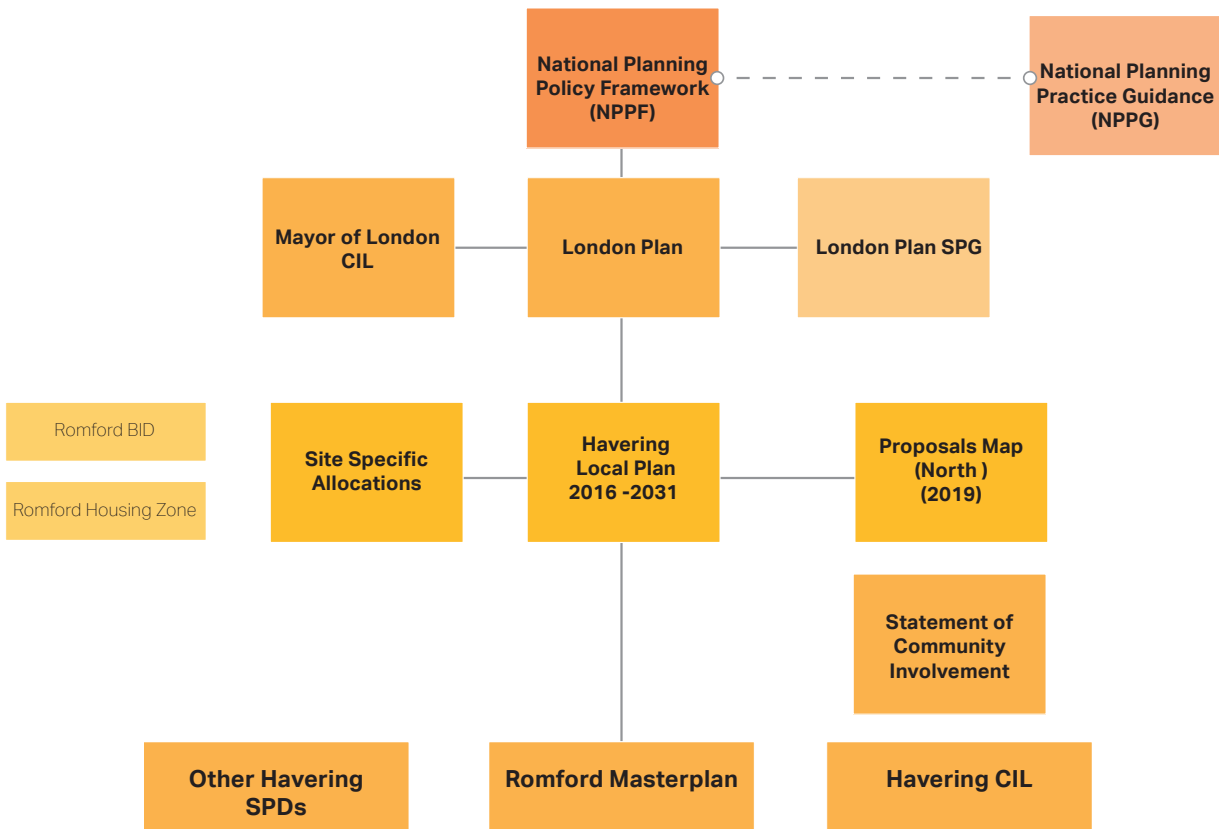


Fig. 37. Emerging Planning Framework

## 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.



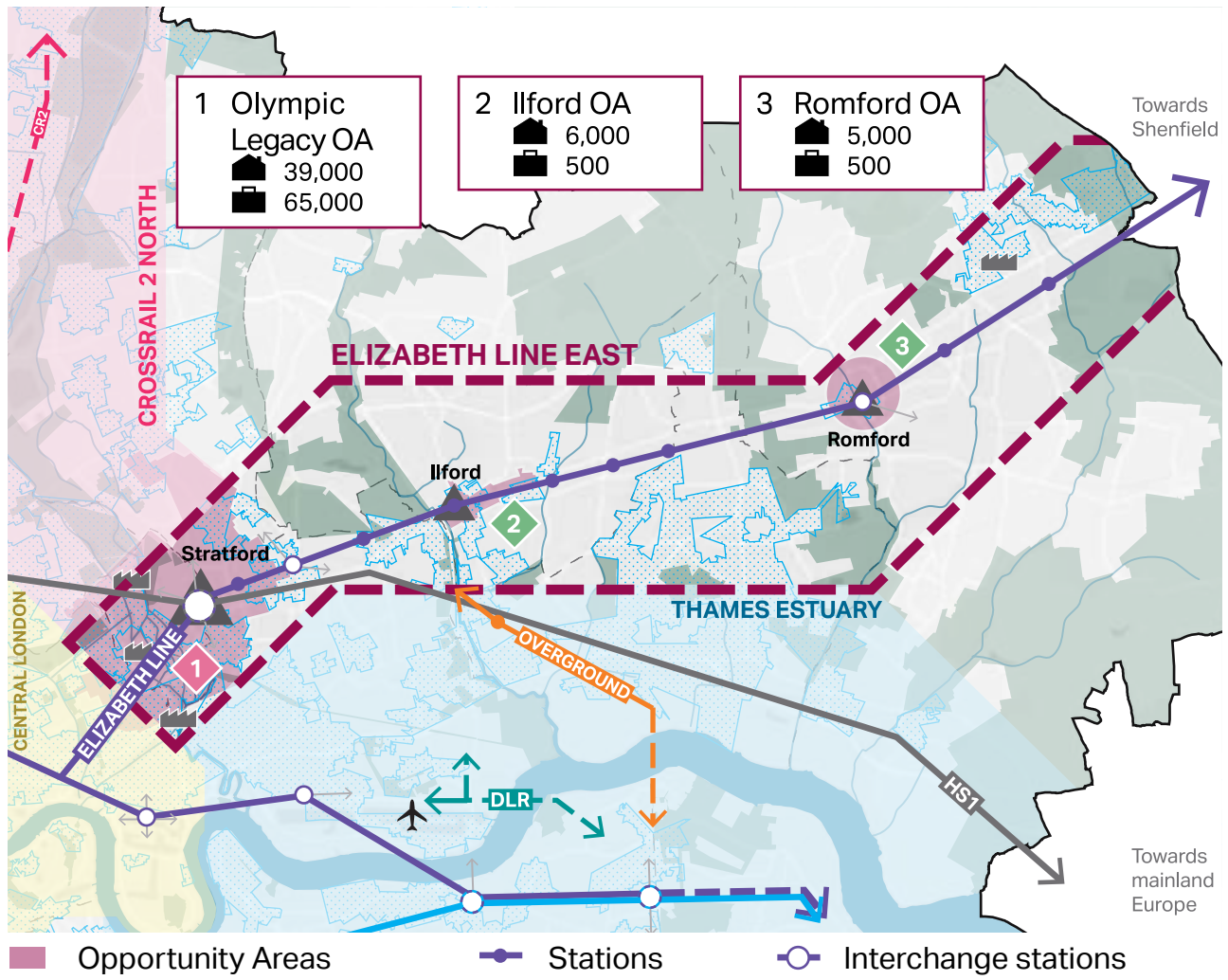


Fig. 38. London Plan, Elizabeth Line East Opportunity Area Map

# 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 offer

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.

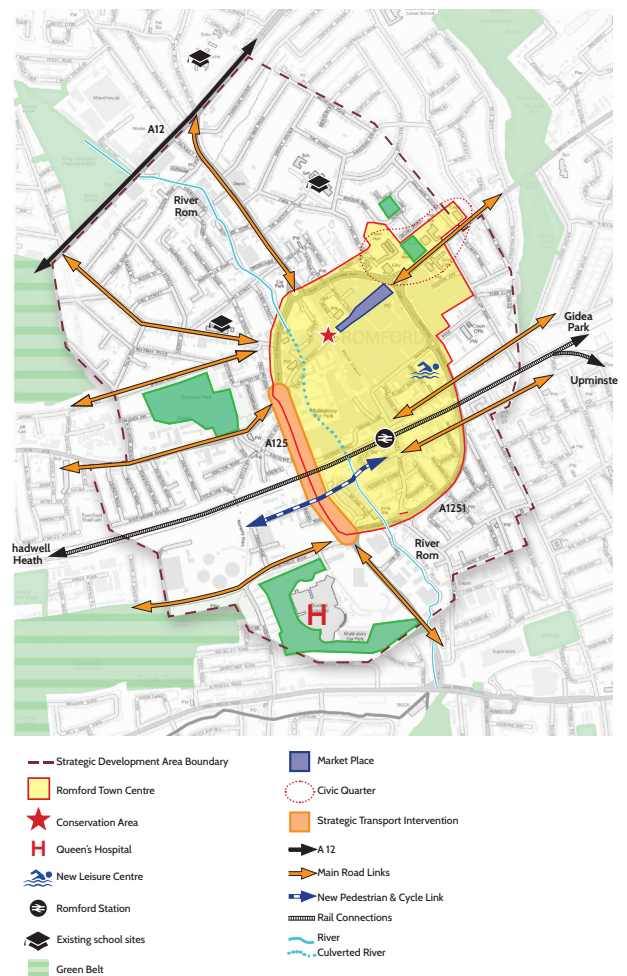


Fig. 39. Havering Local Plan Development Strategy Map

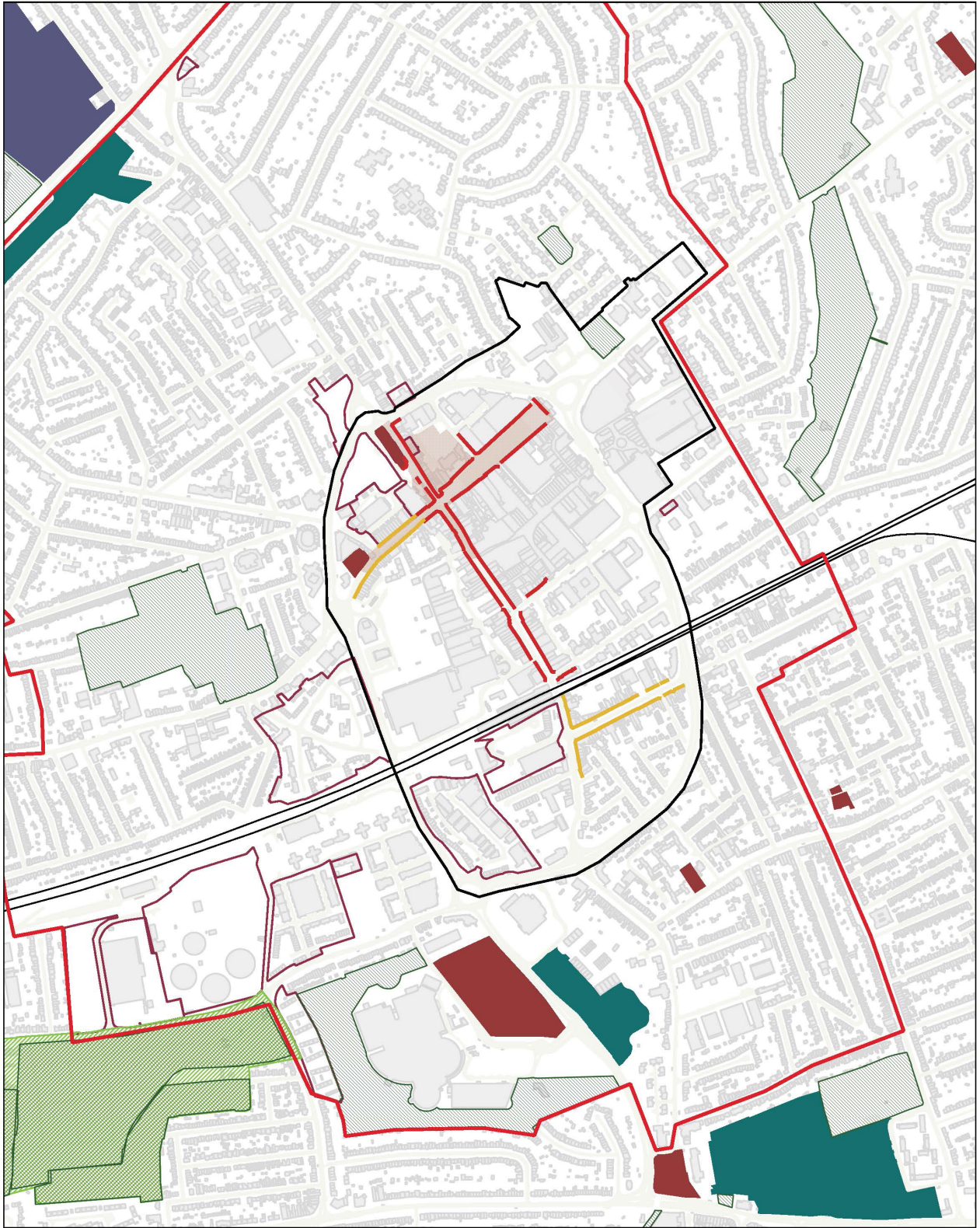


Fig. 40. Romford Policy Map

## 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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,584</b>
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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,720</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>3,304</b>



# 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<sup>1</sup>, 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 Character Study (Draft 2024)



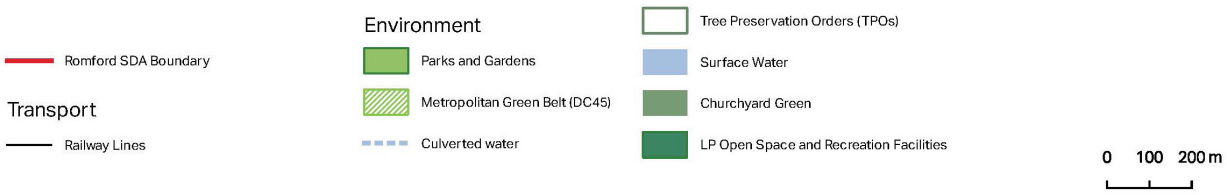
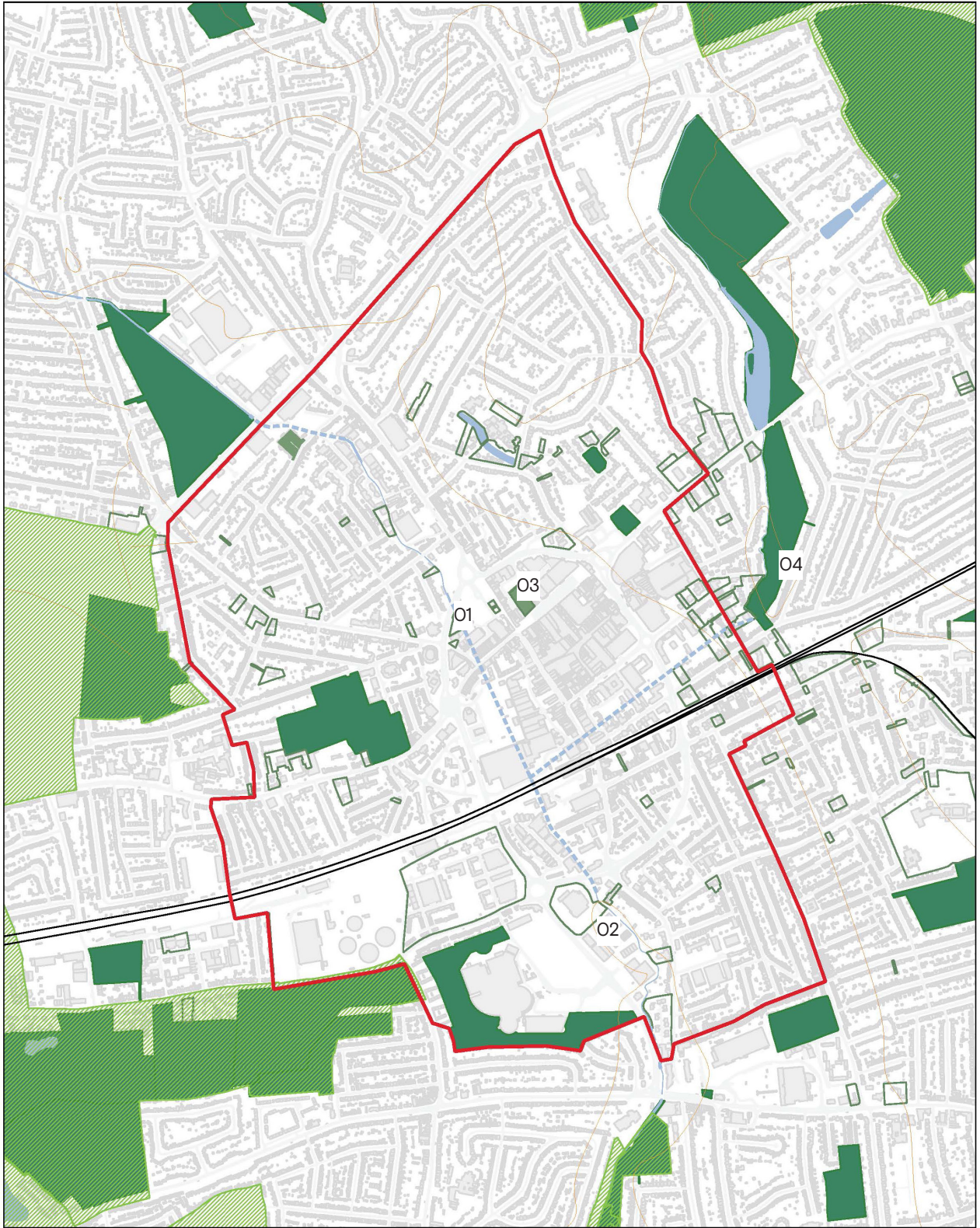


Fig. 42. Romford Open Space

## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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 underwhelming 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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

---



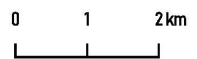
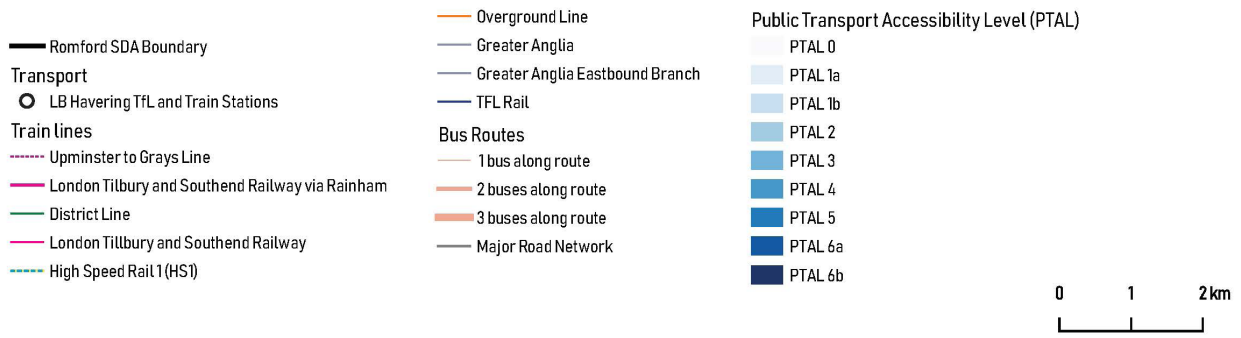
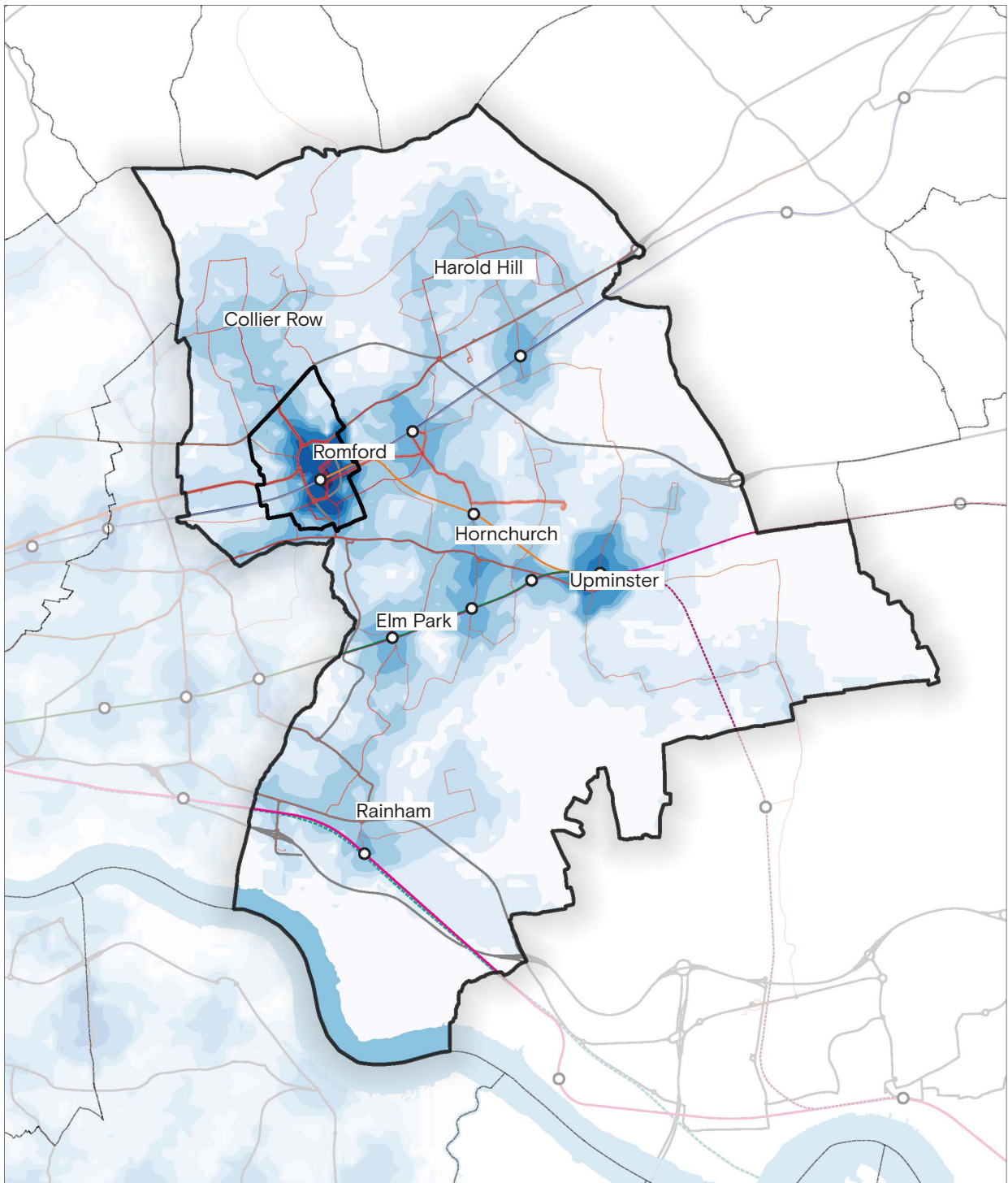


Fig. 43. Romford Transport Routes

# 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

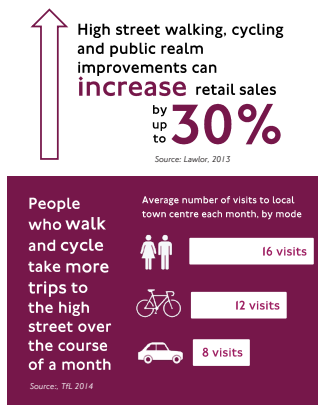
The arrival of the Elizabeth Line in May 2022 has improved east-west connectivity and alongside the relative affordability of this area is a key driver of growth. The area's significant growth potential is recognised through its designation as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan. The Council aims 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.

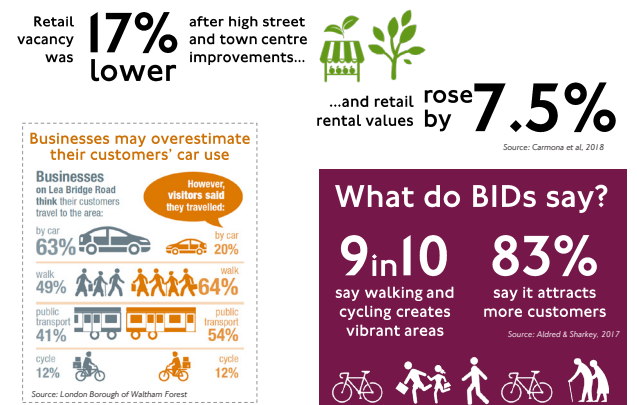
Currently the station and nearby bus depot have limited crossing places for pedestrians and vehicle, little or no visual permeability and does not engage with the wider context of the River Rom or South Street.

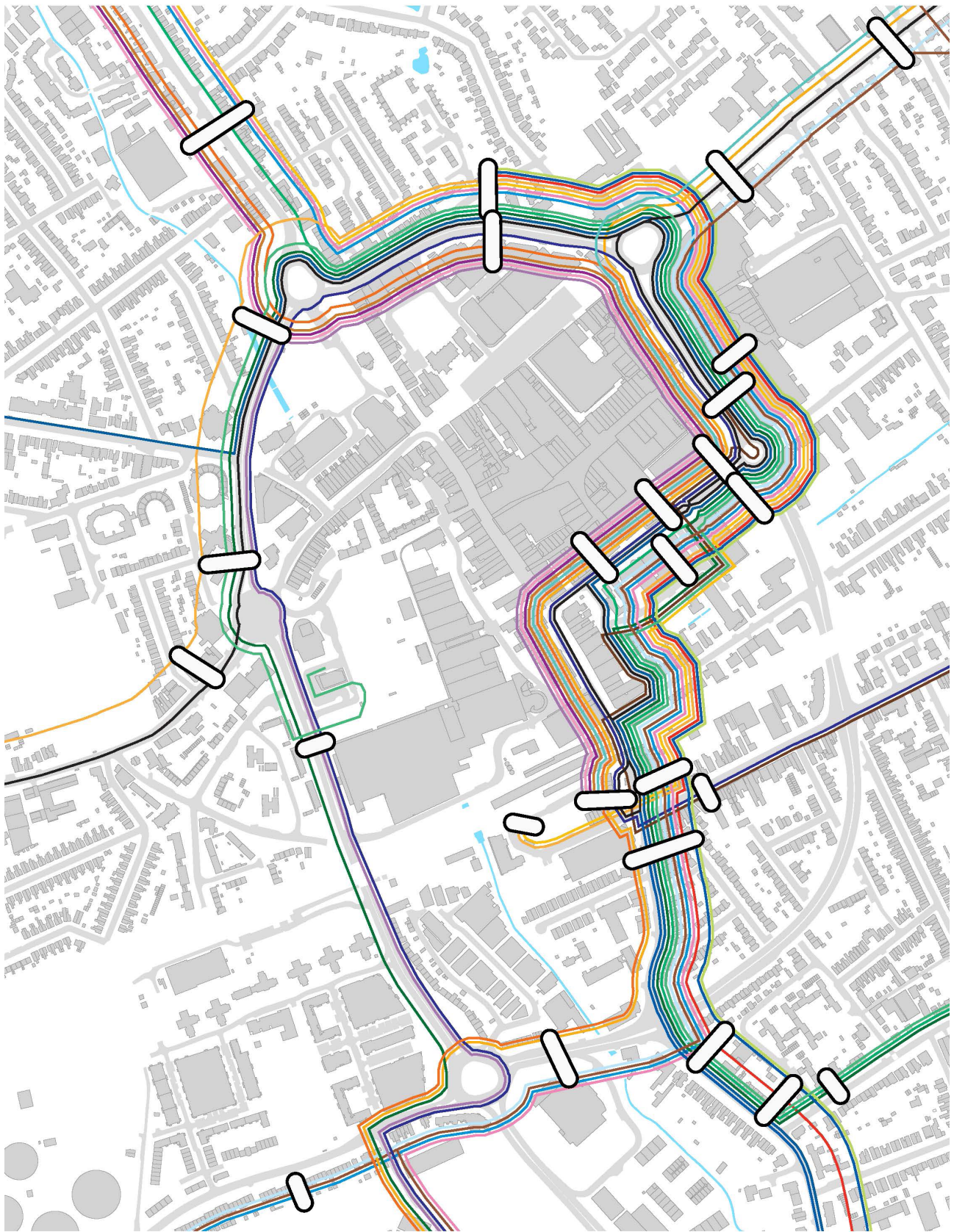
The station has regular departures to London Liverpool Street (up to 12 services per hour at peak times), and out to Shenfield, in Essex. Additionally, Elizabeth line trains provide direct access to Heathrow Airport from Romford. London Overground services connect Romford with Upminster via Emerson Park.

### HIGHER SPENDS



### THRIVING HIGH STREETS





- |               |               |               |               |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| ■ Bus No. 5   | ■ Bus No. 165 | ■ Bus No. 247 | ■ Bus No. 296 | ■ Bus No. 375 | ■ Bus No. N15 |
| ■ Bus No. 66  | ■ Bus No. 174 | ■ Bus No. 248 | ■ Bus No. 347 | ■ Bus No. 496 | ■ Bus No. N86 |
| ■ Bus No. 86  | ■ Bus No. 175 | ■ Bus No. 252 | ■ Bus No. 365 | ■ Bus No. 498 | ■ Bus No. 103 |
| ■ Bus No. 128 | ■ Bus No. 193 | ■ Bus No. 284 | ■ Bus No. 370 | ■ Bus No. 499 |               |

0 100 200m

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.<sup>1</sup>

#### 8.1.3.1 Bus Frequency

Assessment of bus frequency indicates that weekday buses in the the Town Centre extremely frequent.

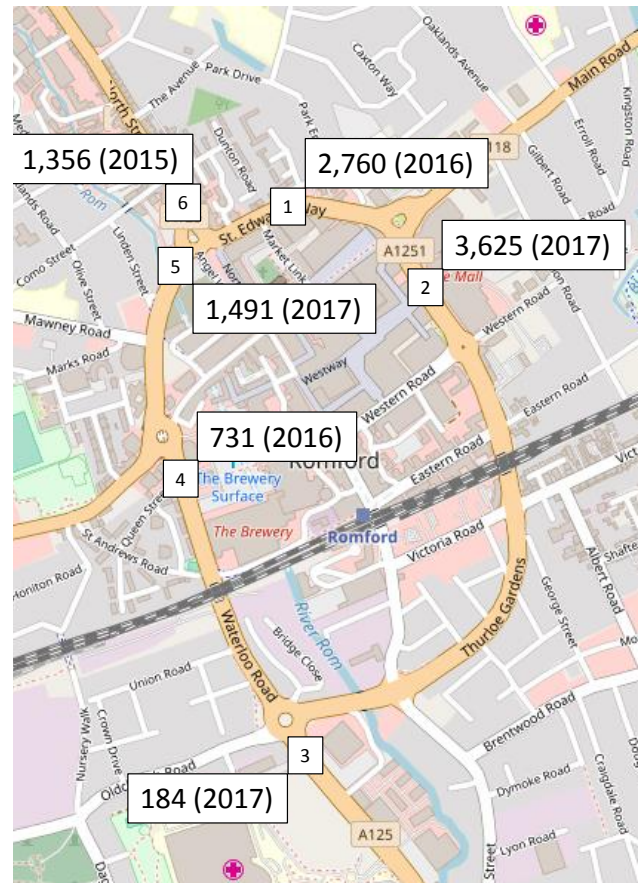
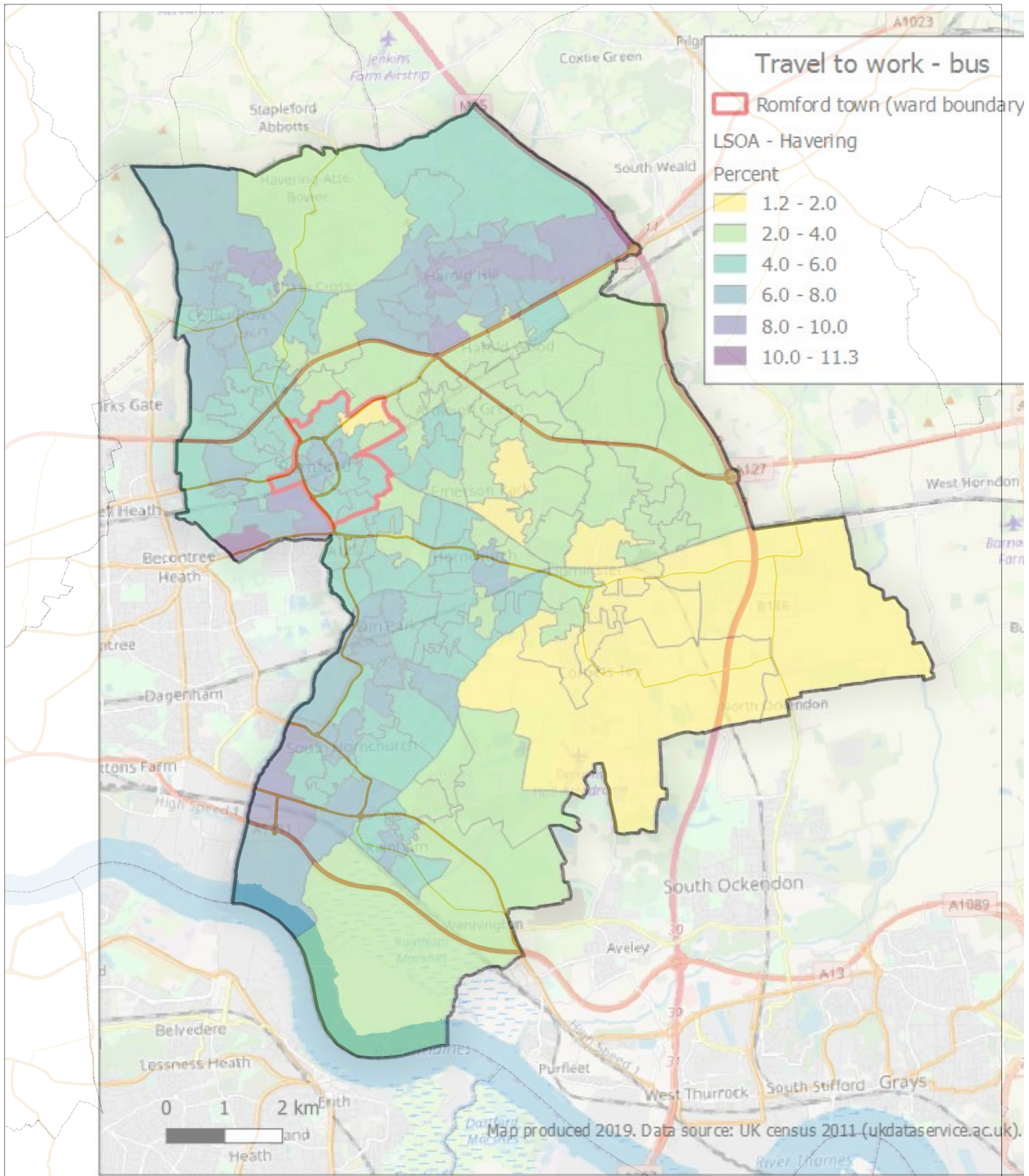


Fig. 45. Bus count figures (2016-2017)

<sup>1</sup> Parking Robert West (2015)





- Borough administrative boundaries
- Environment**
- Tidal Water
- Road network**
- Trunk Roads (Transport for London Road Network (TLRN))
- Primary Roads
- Motorway
- Secondary Roads

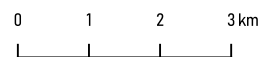


Fig. 46. Travelling to work by bus

## 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.

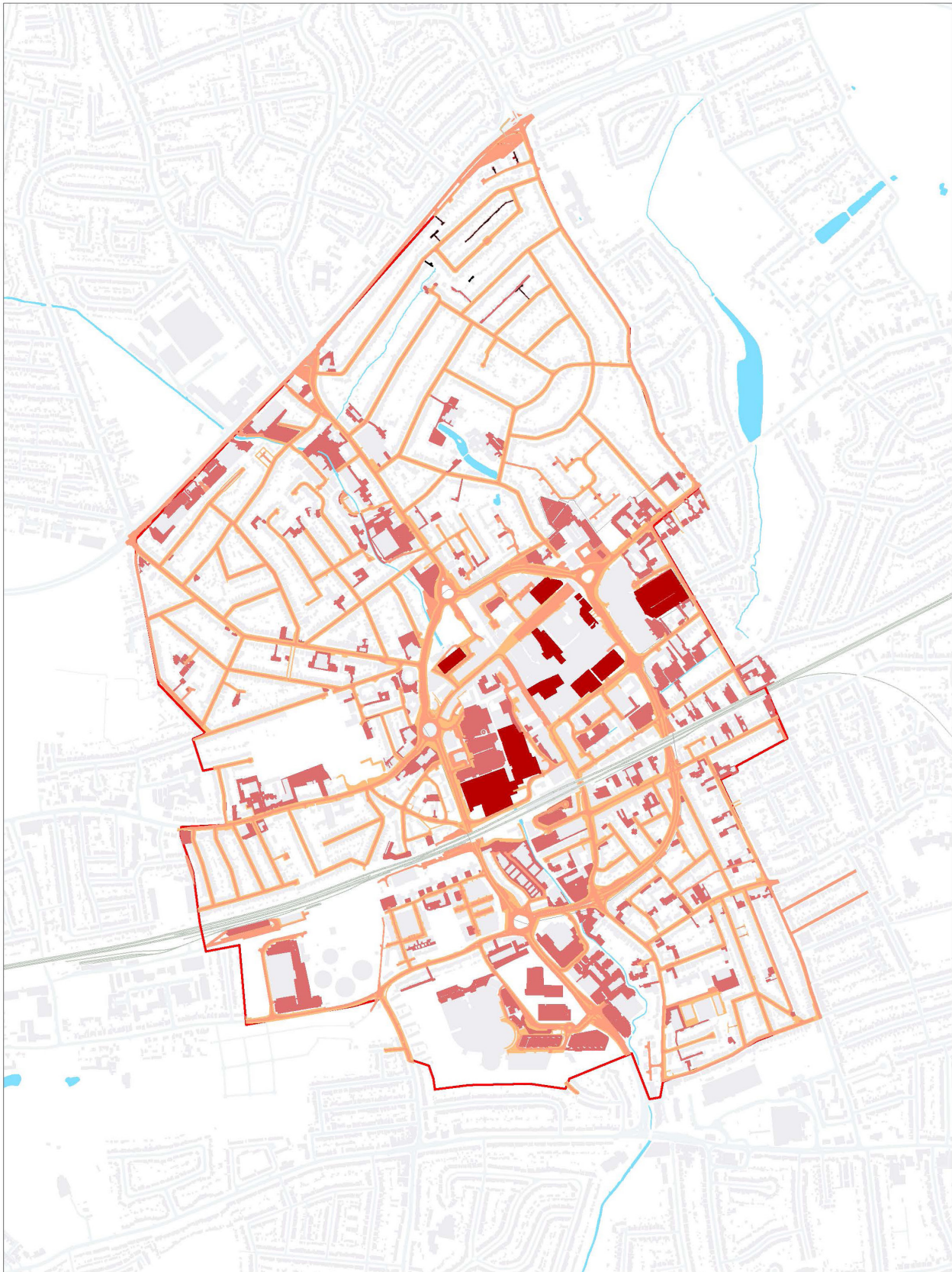
Havering Local Plan outlines that parking provision in new shopping and leisure developments should serve the centre as a whole and not be reserved solely for use in connection with the development proposed. Disabled parking and cycle parking should be located closest to town centres and the entrance 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.<sup>1</sup> 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	1,000	1,000
The Liberty	850	850
High Street (disabled)	43	43
TOTAL	5,323	4,950

<sup>1</sup> Parking Robert West 2015



- Built Car Parks
- Road Surface
- Surface Car Parks
- Residual Road Space

0 100 200m

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.

## 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).

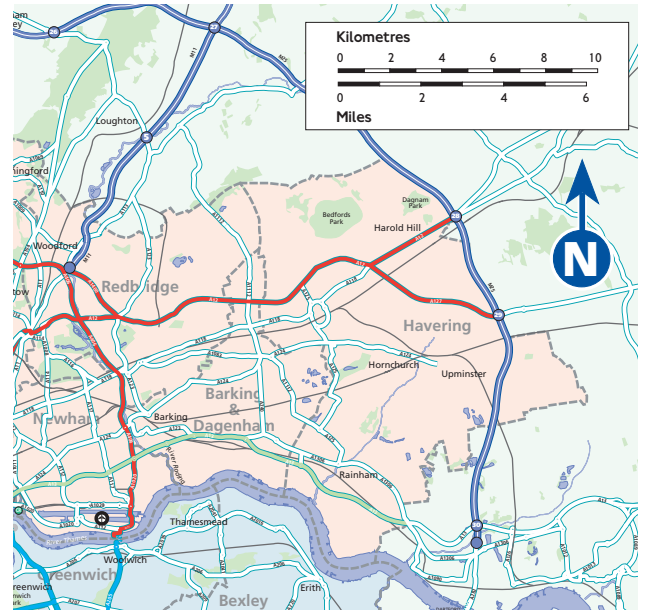


Fig. 48. TFL Strategic Road Network

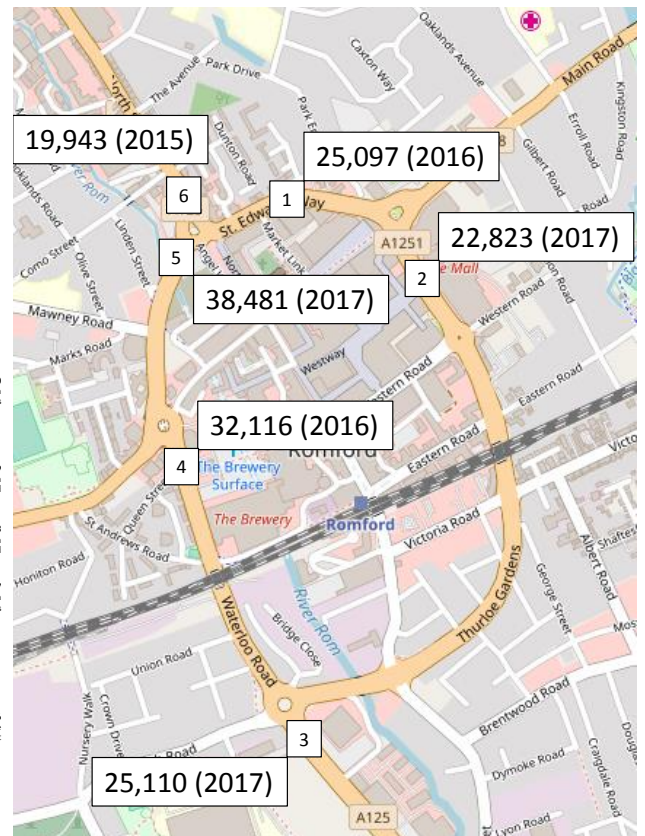
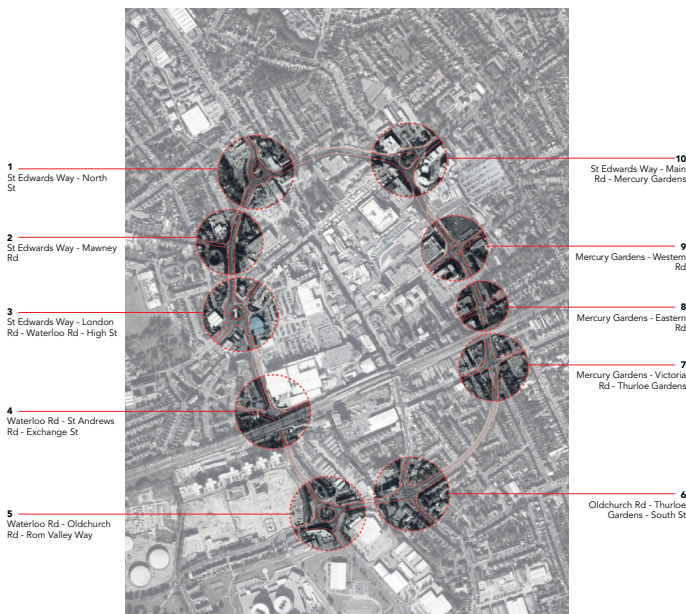


Fig. 49. Car count figures (2016-2017)

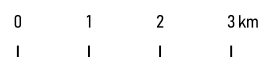
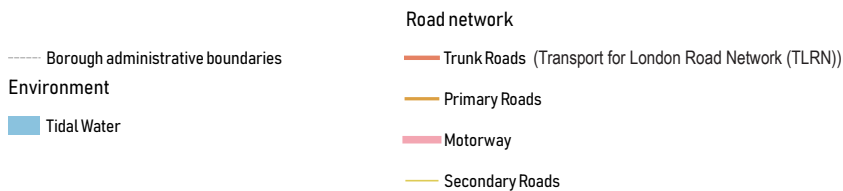
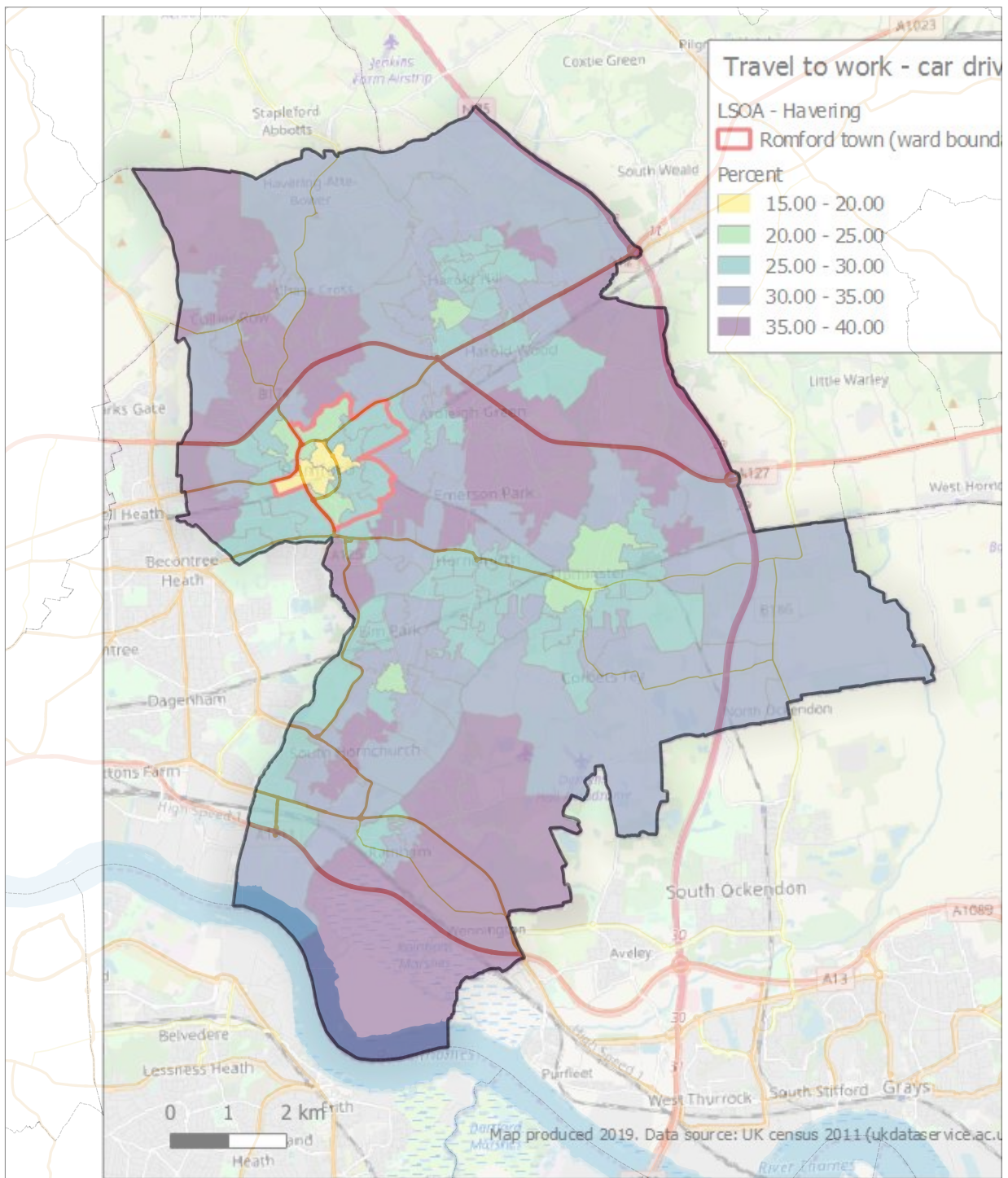


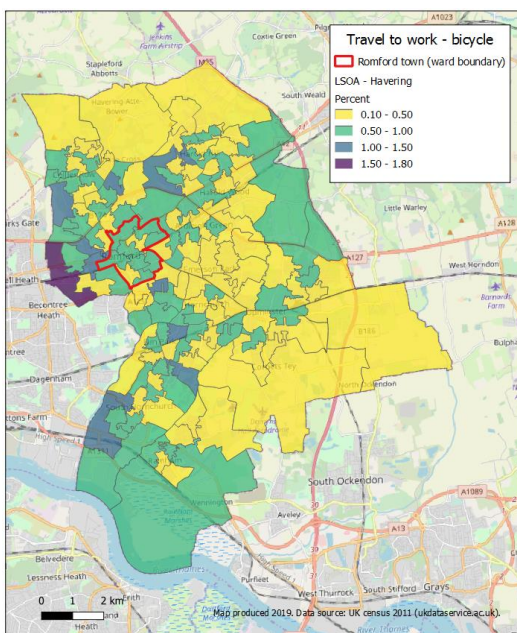
Fig. 50. Travelling to work by car (%)

# 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<sup>1</sup> 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%).<sup>2</sup> 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



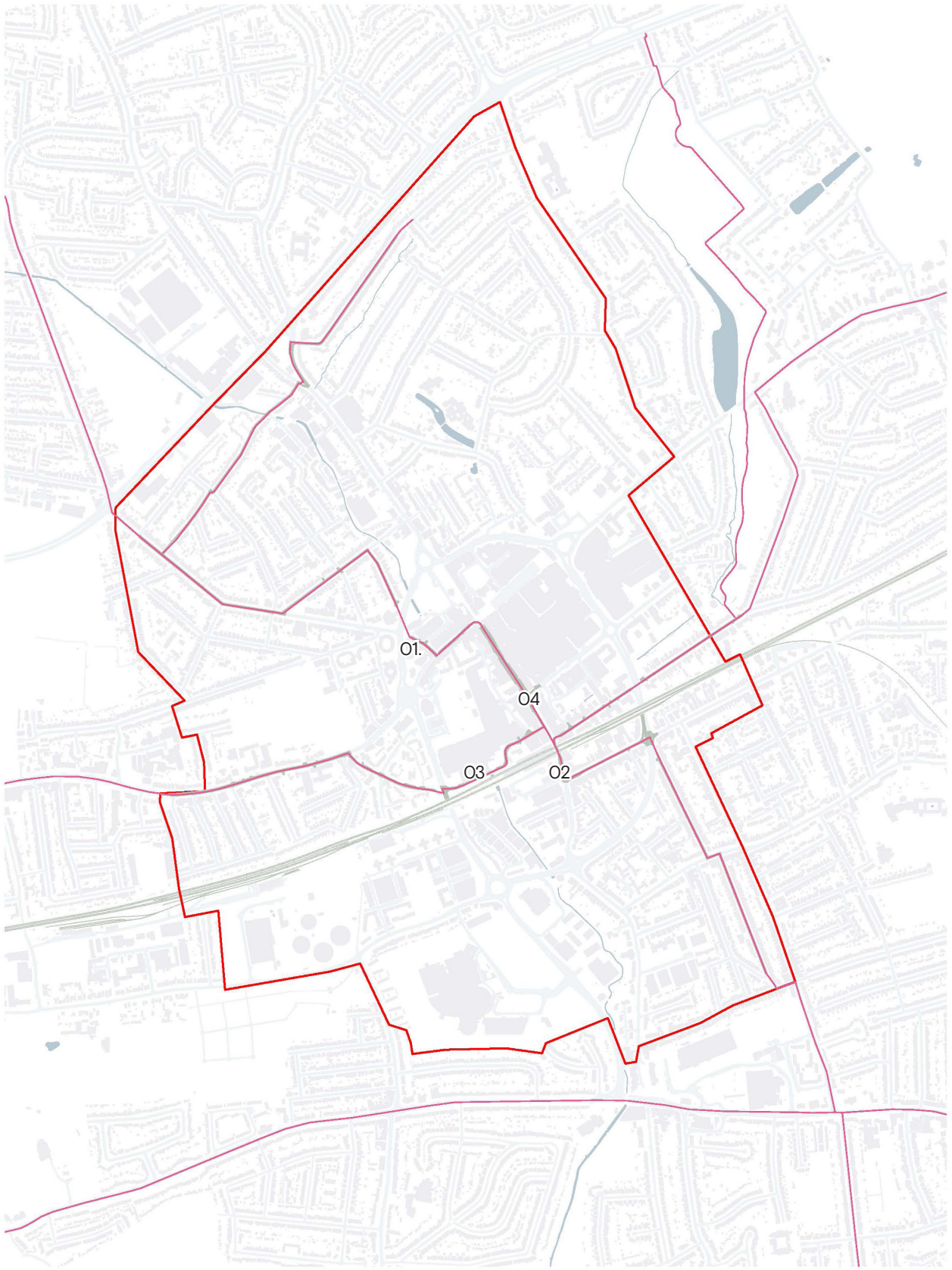
O2 – South Street



O3 – The Brewery



O4 – South Street.



— Cycle Routes

0 100 200m

Fig. 51. Romford Cycle Routes

# 8.5 PEDESTRIANS

## 8.5.1 Pedestrian Routes

Romford is a challenging place to be as a pedestrian, surrounded by 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<sup>1</sup>.

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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>.



O1 – Thurloe Gardens



O2 – Victoria Road



O3 – South Street



O4 – 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)



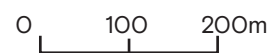
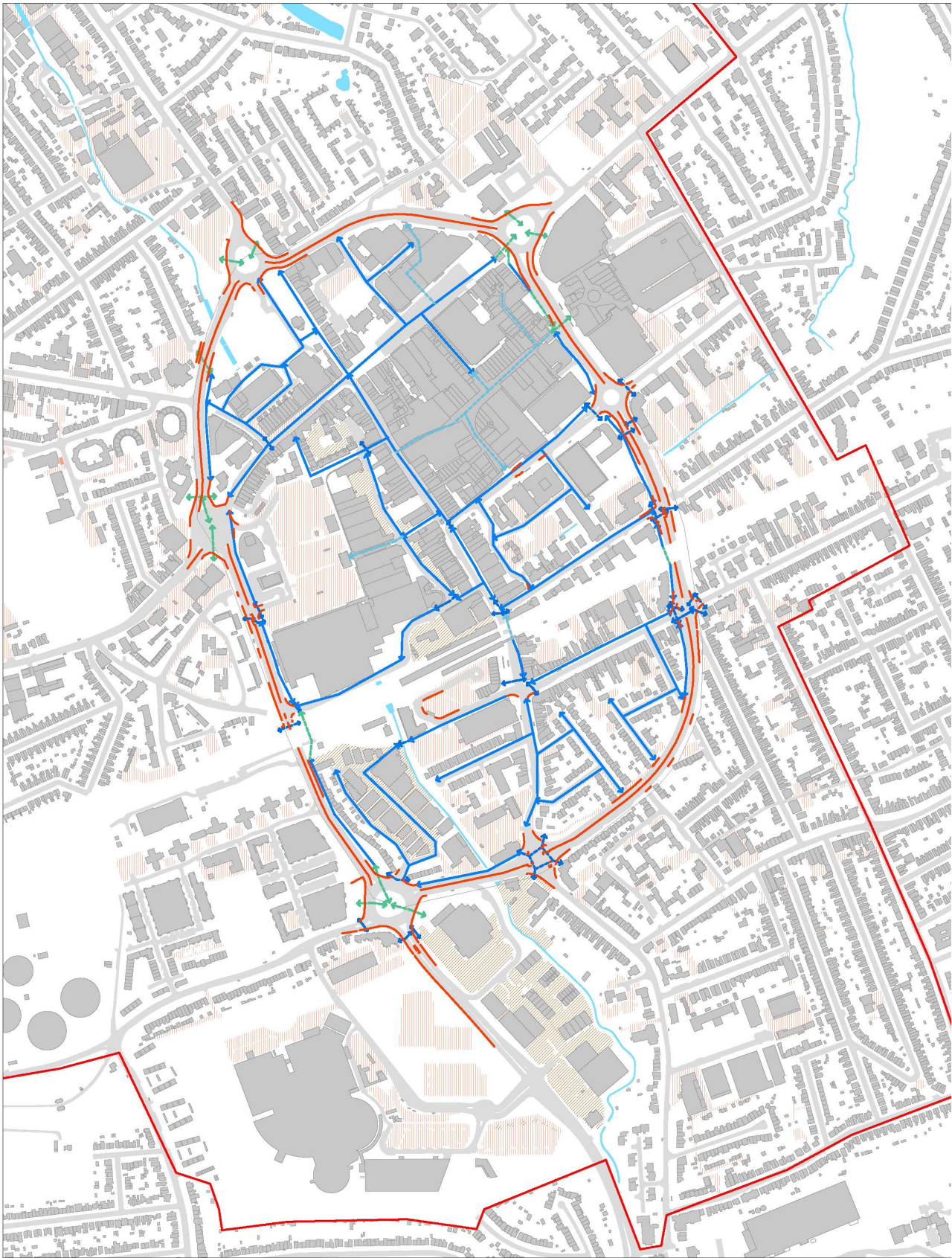


Fig. 52. Romford Pedestrian Routes

# 9 ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

---



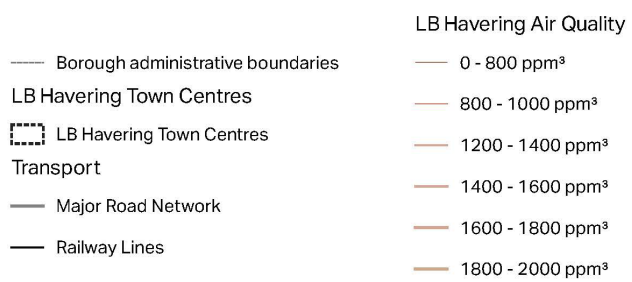
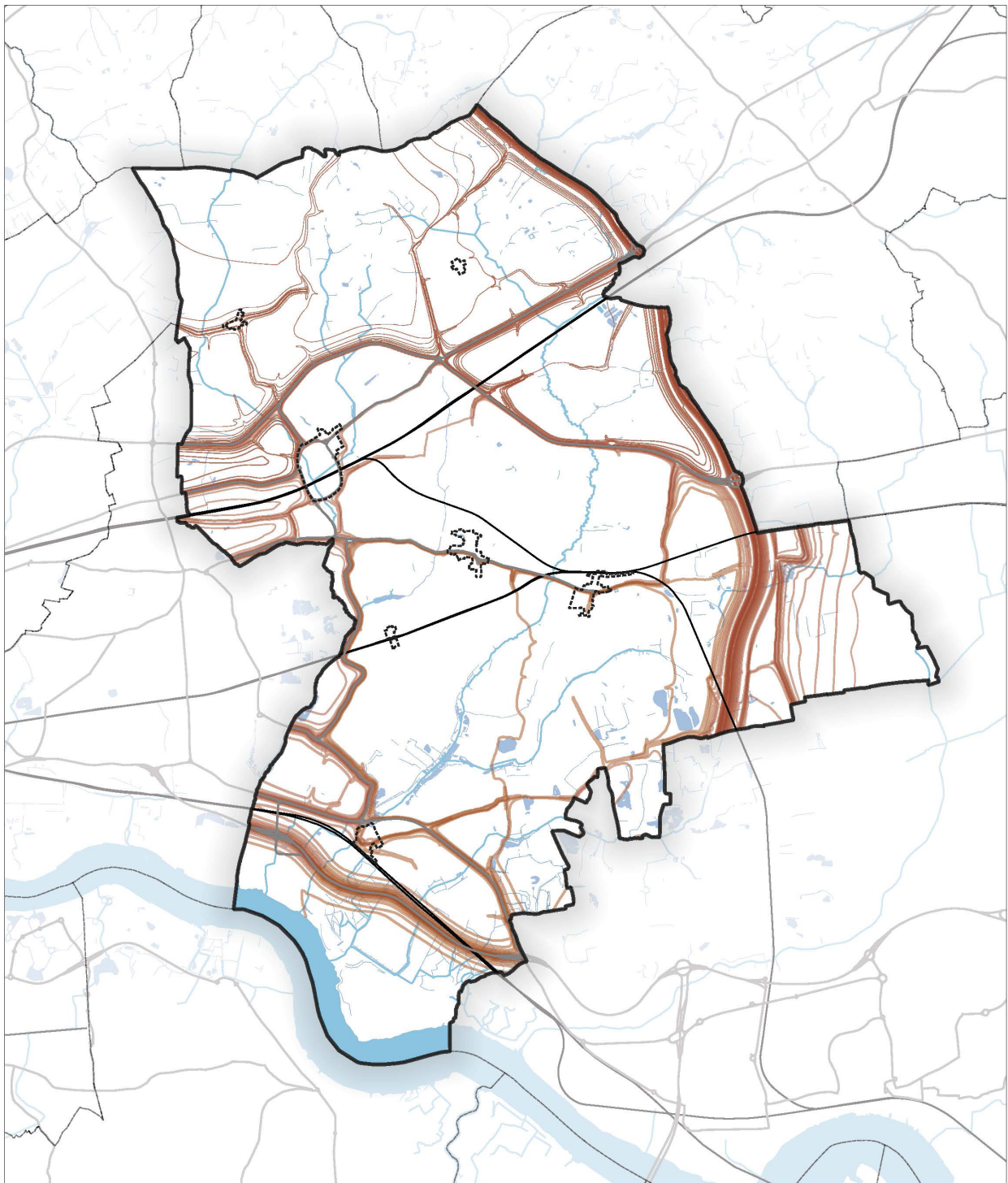


Fig. 53. Havering Air Quality

# 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 deculverted 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.'*<sup>1</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> London Borough of Havering Local Plan

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)<sup>2</sup>. Wherever possible, the opportunity to create new areas of wildlife habitat should be taken.

<sup>2</sup> London Borough of Havering Local Plan

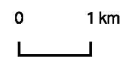
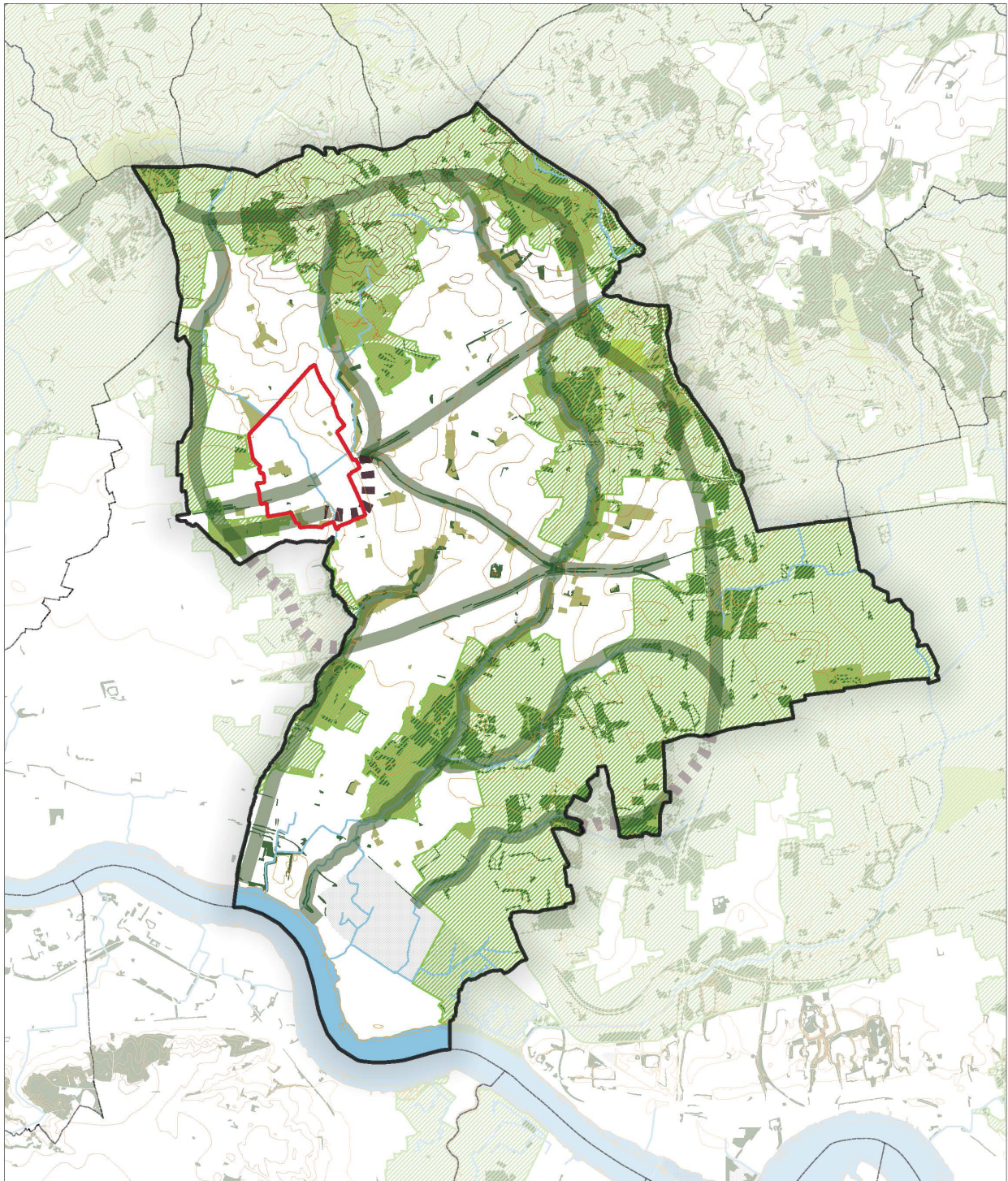


Fig. 54. Havering Wildlife & Ecology Map

## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>.

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.<sup>5</sup> 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.

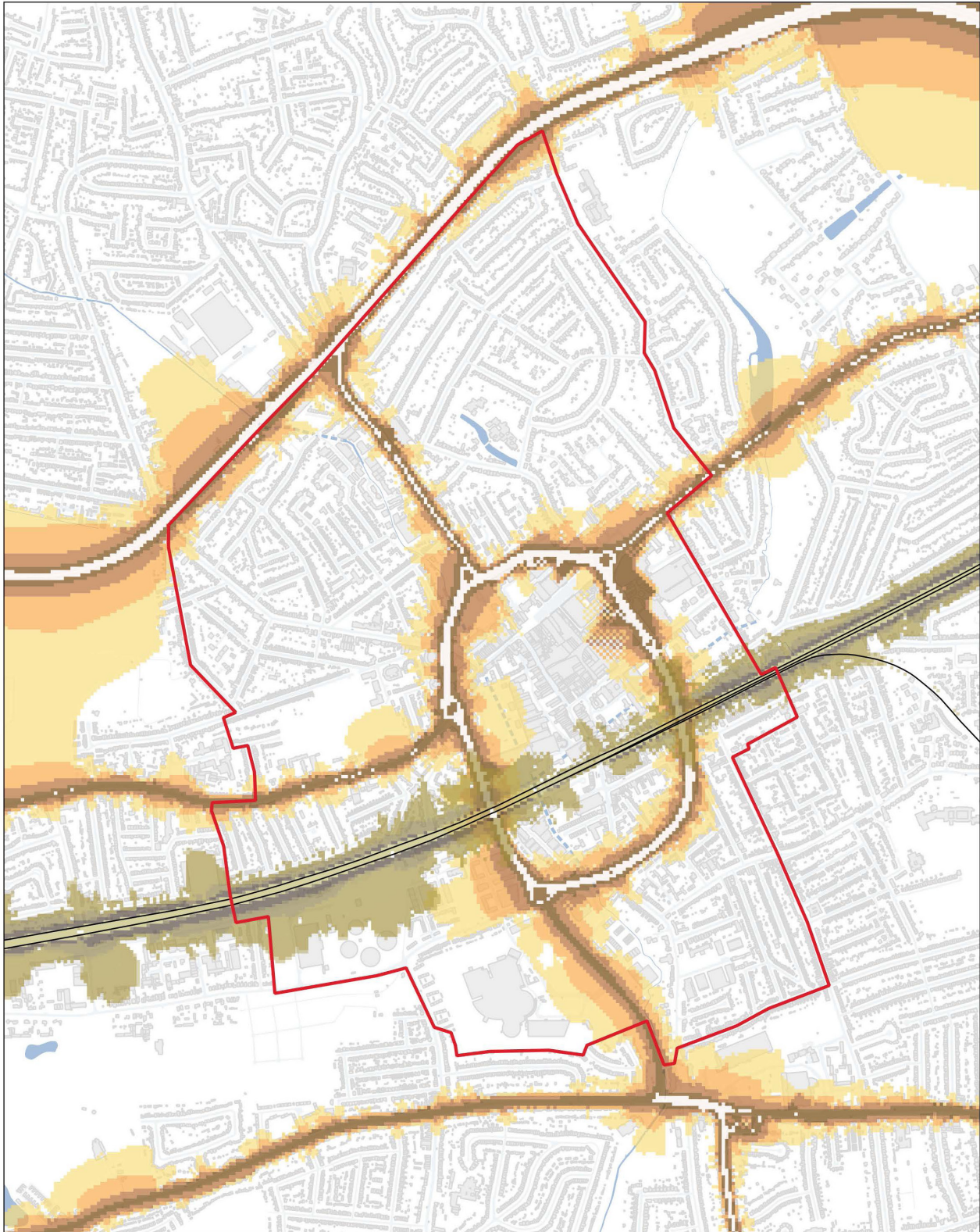
### 9.2.3 Social Sustainability

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



**Transport**

— Railway Lines

**Noise Pollution**

Rail Noise - dB 24 hrs

>=70.0

50.0-54.9

55.0-59.9

60.0-64.9

65.0-69.9

Road Noise - dB 24 hrs

>=75.0

55.0-59.9

60.0-64.9

65.0-69.9

70.0-74.9

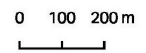


Fig. 55. Romford Noise Pollution Map

## 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<sup>1</sup>, 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.<sup>2</sup>

Substantial housing development planned in Romford will require new primary schools and new secondary schools. A new 3FE primary school (Free School) is currently proposed as part of the Bridge Close development due to open school year 2029- 2030. A further 6FE will be needed to provide for additional homes up to 2041. 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 proposed Bridge Close scheme (P1765.23), submitted in November 2023, includes a community centre and health centre of 2,768 m<sup>2</sup> combined.

---

<sup>1</sup> This is Havering: A demographic and socio-economic profile, 2019)

<sup>2</sup> This is Havering: A demographic and socio-economic profile, 2019)



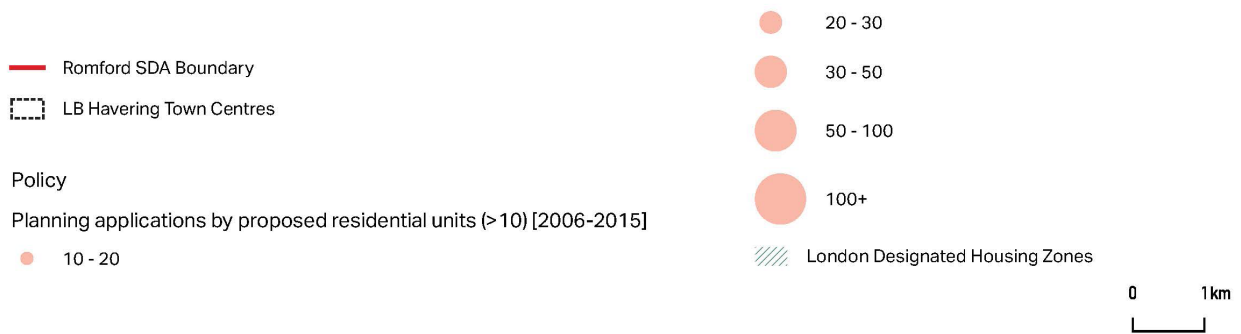
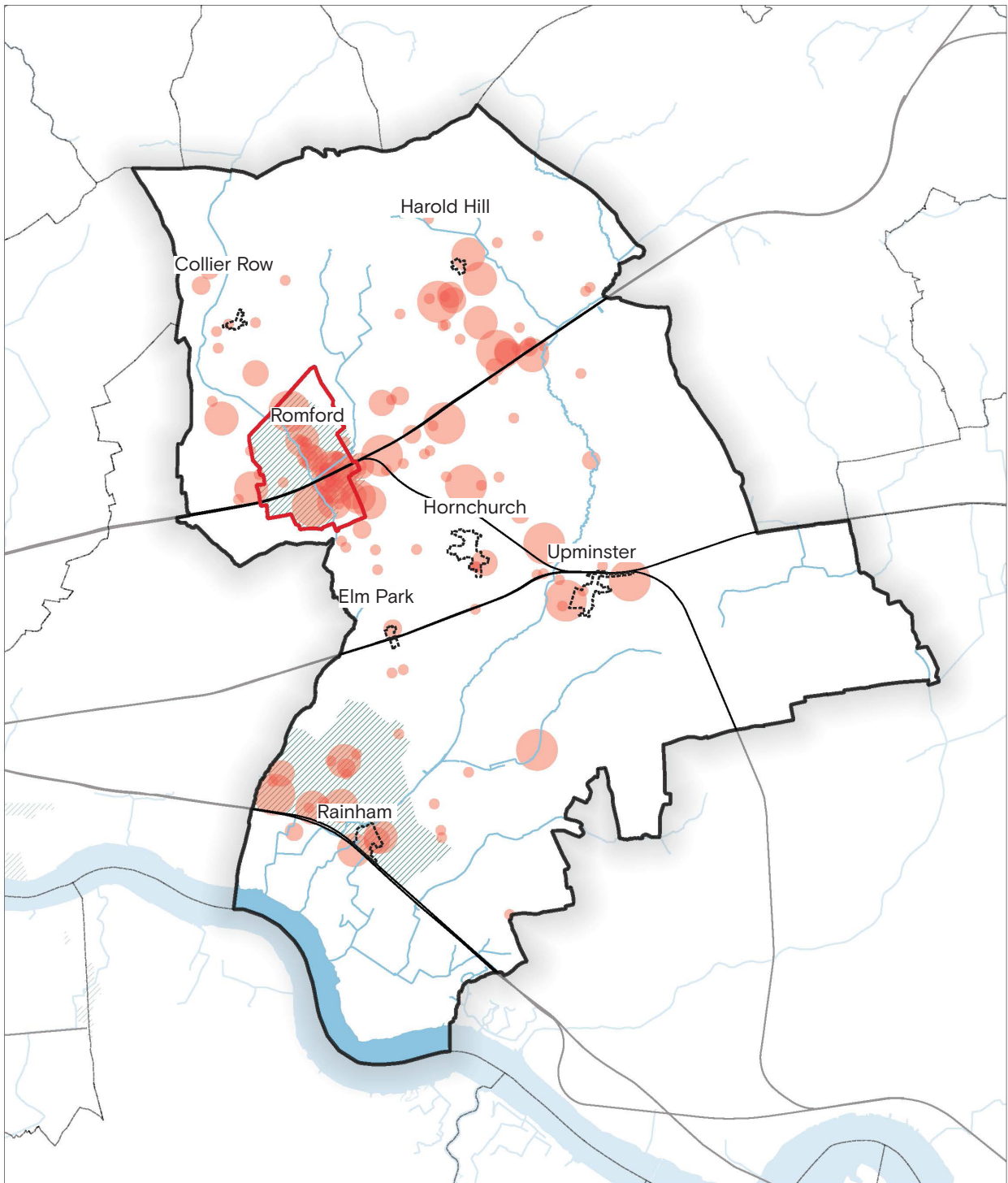


Fig. 56. Romford Future Growth Map

### 9.3.3 Healthcare

The responsibility for healthcare provision is fragmented across a number of organisations and is complex. The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (March 2018)<sup>1</sup> 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 4,500 m<sup>2</sup>.

In line with Havering Local Plan Policy 1, the proposed Bridge Close scheme (P1765.23), submitted in November 2023, includes a community centre and health centre of 2,768 m<sup>2</sup> combined.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.havering.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1951/lbhlp31\\_havering\\_infrastructure\\_delivery\\_plan\\_2018.pdf](https://www.havering.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1951/lbhlp31_havering_infrastructure_delivery_plan_2018.pdf)

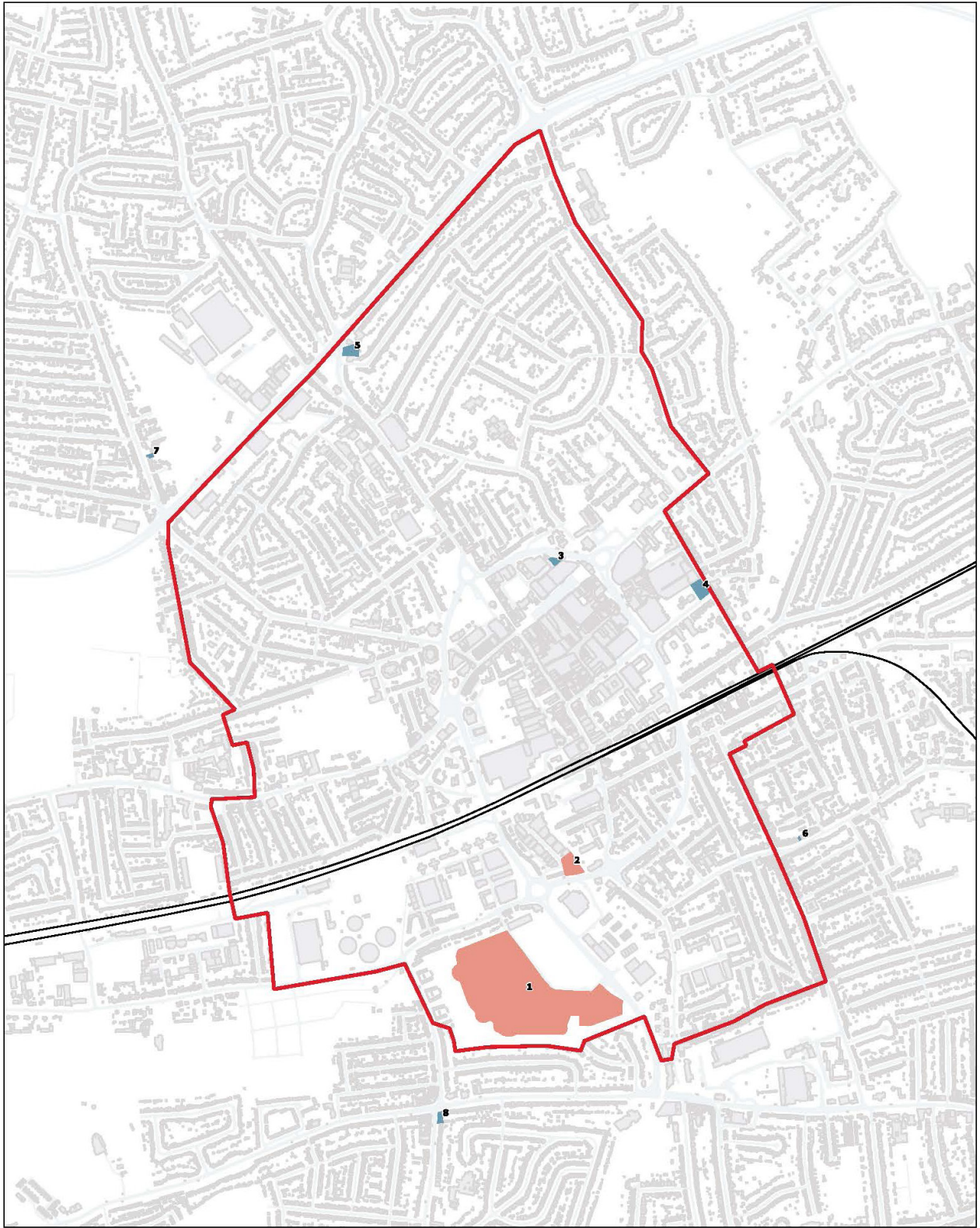
It is not clear whether the proposed scheme affects the existing Ambulance Station. Further investigation is required to identify opportunities to improve connections with existing primary health / GP facilities and the areas they serve, including opportunities for additional facilities, as the western 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 OAD.

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 OPX.



— Romford SDA Boundary

■ Primary Care Facilities

■ Acute Care Facilities

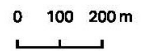


Fig. 57. Romford Healthcare Services

### 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 4,500 m<sup>2</sup> (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 m <sup>2</sup>	FTE GPs	Primary Care m <sup>2</sup>	FTE GPs	Primary Care m <sup>2</sup>
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: 426 m<sup>2</sup> + 735 m<sup>2</sup> = 1,161 m<sup>2</sup> (not 1,196 m<sup>2</sup>)

### 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.

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.

### 9.3.3.3 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.

### 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 2,768 m<sup>2</sup> combined.

## 9.3.4 Childcare and Education

### 9.3.4.1 Childcare Future Needs

Current population projections show that there are 13,229 children aged 1 to 4 living in our Local Authority as of 2023 / 24. 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
2023 / 24	13,229
2024 / 25	12,996
2025 / 26	12,897
2026 / 27	12,891
2027 / 28	12,955
2028 / 29	13,078

Data source: Havering Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023-27.

The Council's Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023-2027 goes on to note that based on current projections, there are sufficient funded 2, 3 and 4 year old places in Havering. However, these projections only relate to the projected need for funded 3 & 4 year places and low income 2 year old places. With the launch of the expanded entitlement which will see children from working families aged 9 months upwards entitled to a 30 hour child care place from September 2025, this will see a further increase in demand with the need for additional provision expected. This will be regularly monitored as more data becomes available.

The populations in Beam Park and Hacton wards are expected to increase the most over the next 10 – 15 years<sup>1</sup>.

### 9.3.4.2 School Places Need

The Council's Children and Young People Education Place Planning Plan 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.

#### Havering's school age demographic trends

In Havering, there has been 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. However, since the birth rate peaked in 2016, there has been seen a year on year reduction in the birth rate in Havering, with the birth rate decreasing by 11% between 2016 to 2021. Meanwhile, there is some early evidence that the birth rate in Havering may be starting to plateau.

The number of primary age pupils (reception-year 6) in Havering schools is expected to rise significantly from 23,955 in 2023-24 to 24,957 in 2028-29. By 2033-34, pupil numbers are forecast to be 25,733.

The number of secondary age pupils (years 7-11) in Havering schools is expected to rise significantly from 15,623 in 2023-24 to 18,296 in 2030-31 (the end of the standard forecasting period).

However, these long-term strategic forecasts are heavily influenced by new housing development – which has been taken account of based on forecasting methodology, which is set out in the London Borough of Havering School Data Pack.

<sup>1</sup> Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2024

## **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 are sufficient places for the existing 30 hour offer for 3 and 4 year olds from working families and 2 year olds from low income families. With the launch of the expanded entitlement which will see children from working families aged 9 months upwards entitled to a 30 hour child care place from September 2025, this will see a further increase in demand with the need for additional provision expected. This will be regularly monitored as more data becomes available.

Havering 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.

## **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 – Current and Forecast Reception Pupils in Havering Mainstream Schools by Planning Area (2028–29)**

Planning Area	Total Reception places 2023–24	Pupil roll 2023–24	Surplus places 2023–24	Surplus capacity 2023–24 (%)	Reception places 2028–29	Pupil roll 2028–29	Surplus places 2028–29	Surplus capacity 2028–29 (%)
Collier Row	525	509	16	3%	525	536	-11	-2%
Elm Park & South Hornchurch	567	531	36	6%	567	562	5	1%
Harold Hill	630	596	34	5%	660	591	69	10%
Hornchurch	510	501	9	2%	510	519	-9	-2%
Rainham	300	298	2	1%	300	392	-92	-31%
Romford	570	566	4	1%	570	647	-77	-13%
Upminster & Cranham	330	311	19	6%	360	361	-1	0%

\*FE = Form of entry or 30 children.

The Children and Young People Education Place Planning Plan takes account of the above tables and notes that due to the housing growth, a 3 form entry primary school will be needed to open school year 2029-2030. Further primary places are expected to be needed beyond this period.

Expansion of a secondary school in the Central planning area if needed to meet the need up to 2030 / 31. After this time a new 6 / 8FE secondary school will be needed. See below:

**Table 18 – Current and Forecast Year 7 Pupils in Havering Mainstream Schools by Planning Area (2030–31)**

Planning Area	Year 7 places 2023–24	Pupil roll 2023–24	Surplus places 2023–24	Surplus capacity 2023–24 (%)	Year 7 places 2030–31	Pupil roll 2030–31	Surplus places 2030–31	Surplus capacity 2030–31 (%)
North	420	422	-2	0%	420	476	-56	-13%
Central	1590	1544	46	3%	1590	1697	-107	-7%
East	732	659	73	10%	732	709	23	3%
South	740	649	91	12%	690	716	-26	-4%



#### 9.3.4.4 Policy 1 (Romford SDA)

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 The Children and Young People Education Place Planning Plan. 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):

- Additional school places in line with the Council's Children and Young People Education Place Planning Plan and Schools Expansion Programme over the Plan period;
- 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;
- A new 6 / 8FE secondary school will be needed in the long-term.

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

Education provision is particularly challenging in Romford. Existing schools within the area are already at full capacity and whilst the Council's School Capital 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 a new 3FE primary school (Free School) is currently proposed as part of the Bridge Close development due to open school year 2029-2030. A further 6FE will be needed to provide for additional homes up to 2041. This will need to be delivered by new schools. New primary schools will include nursery and SEND provision and new secondary schools will include SEND provision. 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. Expansion of a secondary school in the Central planning area if needed to meet the need up to 2030 / 31. After this time a new 6 / 8FE secondary school will be needed. The Council will seek to identify sites suitable for additional education provision through the Romford Masterplan and Site Specific Allocations Local Plan.

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.

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 27 pupils per one hundred homes (0.268 per dwelling). For secondary schools the yield is 13 pupils per 100 qualifying homes (0.13 per dwelling).

210 primary aged pupils represent one form of entry, across seven-year groups, and this number is likely to be generated by approximately 800 new homes. However, this is dependent on the type and size of homes proposed and consequently sites delivering under 800 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 (2023-27) identifies a number of measures to ensure that it meets its commissioning obligations. These include:

- Continue to work with Schools to provide the wrap-around childcare offer for working families from 8am-6pm.
- 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 proposed Bridge Close scheme (P1765.23), submitted in November 2023, includes a 3FE primary school with associated nursery and SEND unit.

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 refers to the need for a new school. 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 Primary Schools Provision**

Romford Primary School Planning Area		
P1.	Concordia Academy, Union Road, RM7 OHG	Opened in September 2016. 3FE. 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	Nursery & Primary. 3FE. PAN = 90
P5.	St Edward's Church of England Primary, Havering Drive, RM1 4BH	Voluntary aided Nursery & Primary. 3FE. PAN = 90.
P6.	St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Dorset Avenue, RM1 4JA	Primary. 2FE. PAN = 60.
P7.	The Mawney Primary School, 29 Mawney Road, RM7 7HL	Foundation Nursery and Primary. 3FE school. PAN = 90

Collier Row School Planning Area		
P8 & P9	Parklands Primary School, 48 Havering Road, RM1 4QU	Nursery & primary. 4FE. PAN = 120

Hornchurch Primary School Planning Area		
P10.	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Hornchurch Road, RM12 4TL	Primary. 2FE. PAN = 60

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham		
P11.	Rush Green Primary School, Dagenham Road, RM7 ORL	4FE. PAN = 120

**Table 20 – Existing Secondary Schools Provision**

Secondary Schools		
S1.	Marshall's Park Academy, Pet-tits Lane, RM1 4EH	PAN = 240
S2.	St Edwards Church of England Academy, London Road, RM7 9NX	PAN = 210, with a sixth form.
S3.	The Frances Bardsley Academy for Girls, Brentwood Road, RM1 2RR	PAN = 240, with a sixth form.

**Table 21 – Further Education**

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham		
FE1.	Barking & Dagenham College, Dagenham Road, RM7 OXU	16-18-years-old. Approx. 12,500 students

<https://www.havering.gov.uk/downloads/download/594/school-planning-data-pack>

<https://www.havering.gov.uk/downloads/download/396/infant-and-primary-school-statistics>

<https://www.havering.gov.uk/downloads/download/398/secondary-school-statistics>

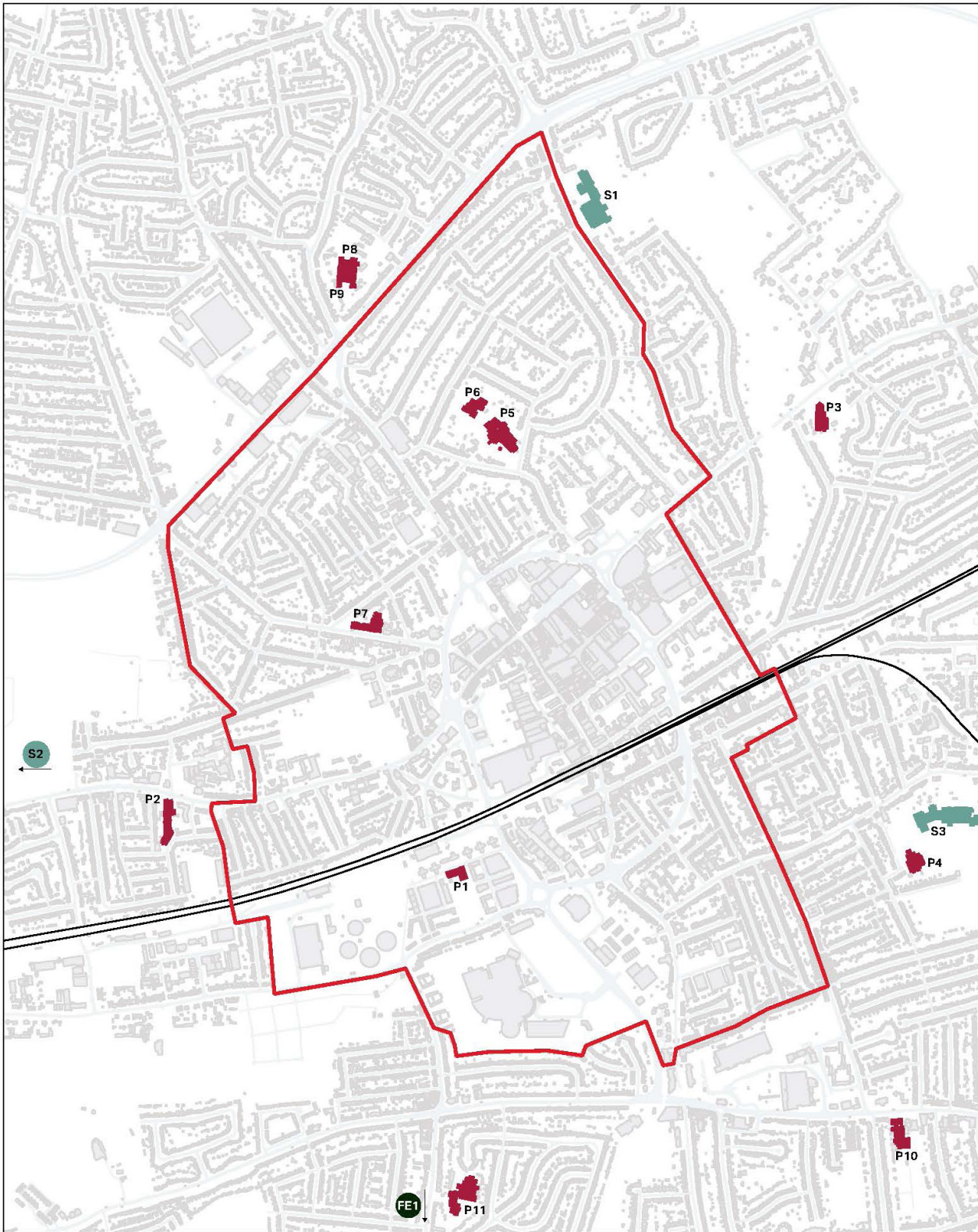


Fig. 58. Romford Primary, Secondary and FE facilities in and around Romford SDA

## 9.3.5 Community & Cultural Infrastructure

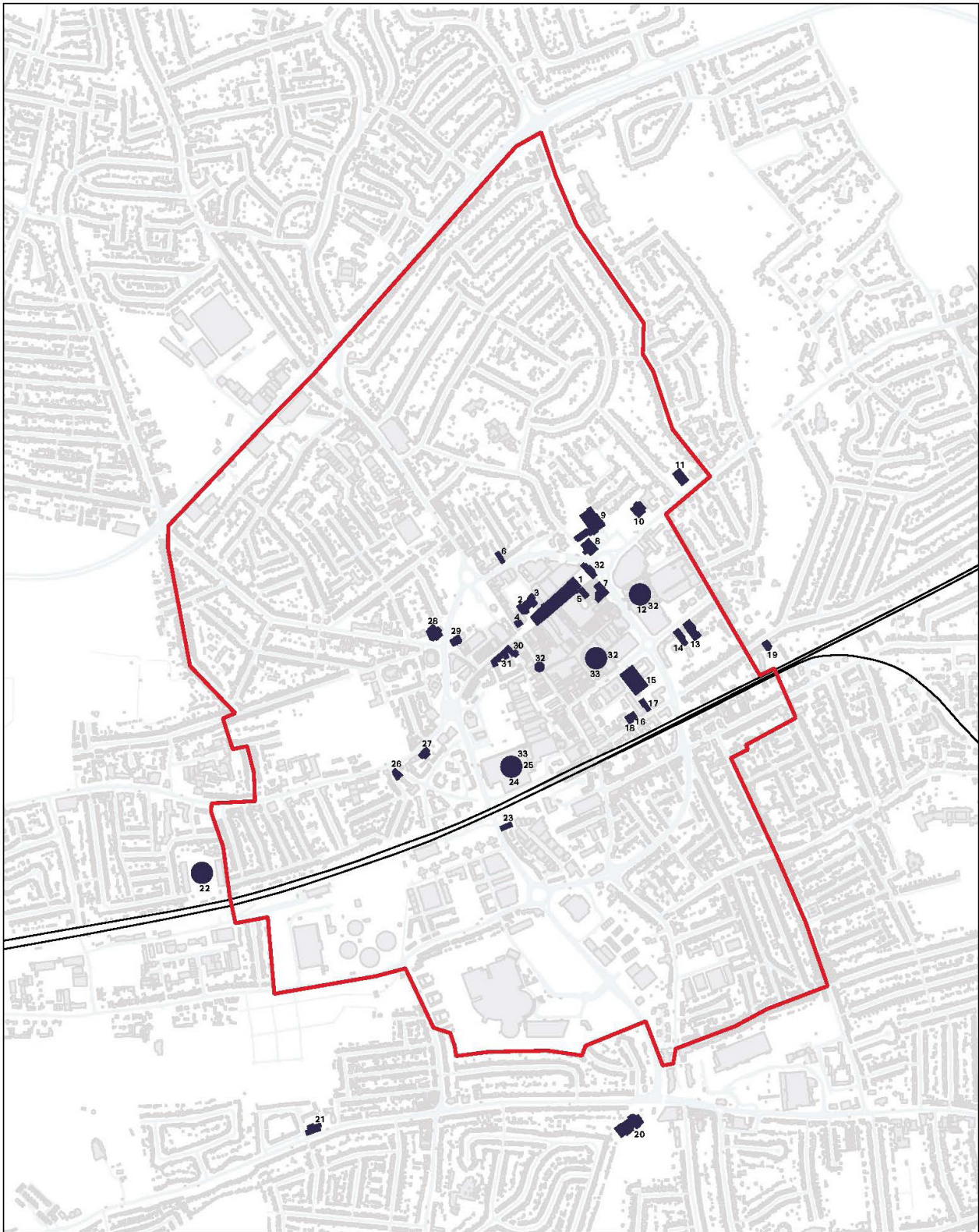
The following community-cultural-leisure uses are in and around Romford Town Centre. Please note – this area of search is more restricted than in and around the SDA (used for Childcare and Education and Health).

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 22 - 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 OPH
CCL21.	Rush Green Social Club	Rush Green Road, RM7 OLB
CCL22.	Romford Greyhound Stadium	London Road, RM7 9DU
CCL23.	Havering Islamic Cultural Centre	91 Waterloo Road, RM7 OAA
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



- Romford SDA Boundary
- Community - Culture - Leisure

0 100 200 m

Fig. 59. Romford Community-Culture-Leisure infrastructure

# 10 PREVIOUS STUDIES

---



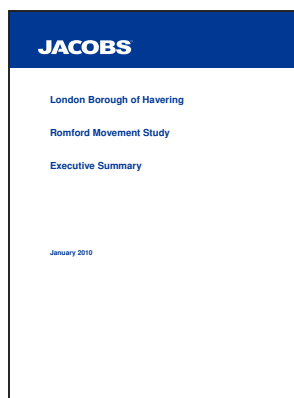




# 10.1 EXISTING VISIONS & OBJECTIVES

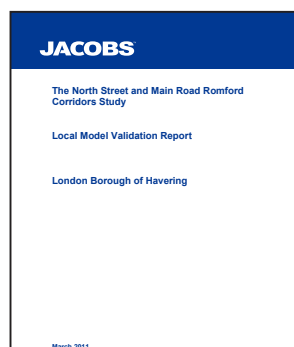
## 10.1.1 Review of Existing Documents

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)

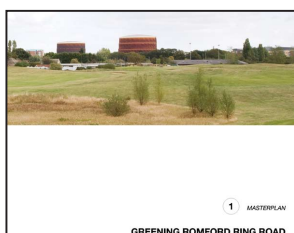
- “Contribute to the sustainable regeneration of Romford Town Centre” (Page 4)
- “To manage growth and achieve the optimum balance between the needs of different road users to maintain the free movement of motor vehicles as far as possible whilst making it more convenient to walk, cycle and use buses” (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)

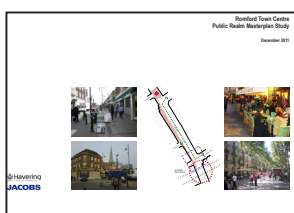
- “Contribute to the sustainable regeneration and economic prosperity of the Romford Town Centre in the context of increasing volumes of traffic and pressures from existing and new neighbouring retail centres such as Westfield and Lakeside” (Page 10)
- “Manage growth and achieve the optimum balance between 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)



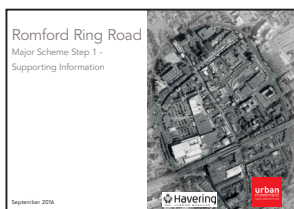
### Greening Romford Ring Road (Dec. 2011)

- “... 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)



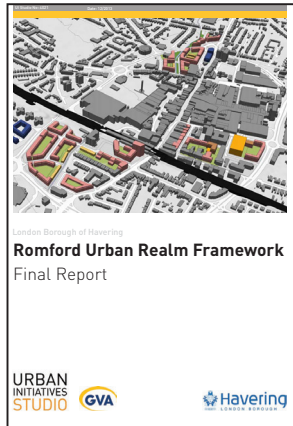
### Public Realm Romford Masterplan Report (Dec. 2011)

- “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)



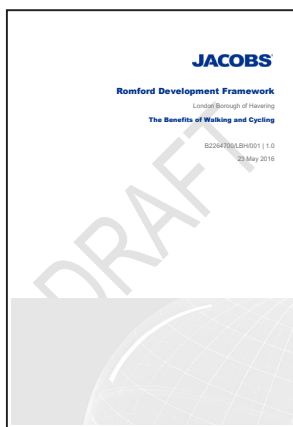
### Urban Realm Framework Final Report (Dec. 2013)

- “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 popular 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)



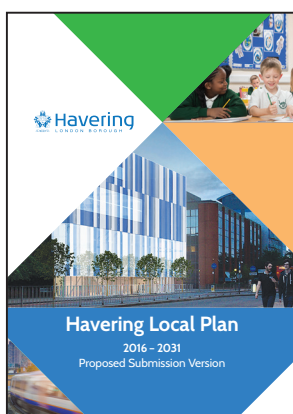
### Romford–Development–Framework–Launch (Nov. 2015)

- “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 socio-economic 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

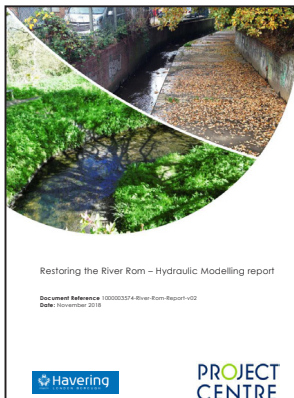
- “To enable vibrant, inclusive, healthy and happy communities” (Page 10)
- “To provide opportunities for businesses and local people to thrive” (Page 10)
- “To create successful, high quality places where people choose to live, work and spend time” (Page 10)
- “Romford will have benefited from Crossrail 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.



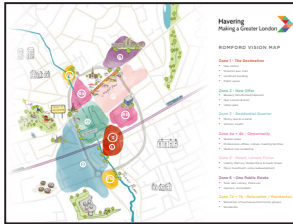
### Liveable Neighbourhood Submission Draft (Oct. 2017)

- “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)



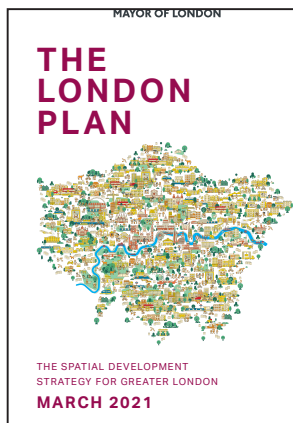
### Romford Vision Map\_C&P\_060218 (Feb. 2018)

- “New station” “Quieter areas” “Medium rise residential” “Landmark building” “Improve Public Space” “New leisure & retail”



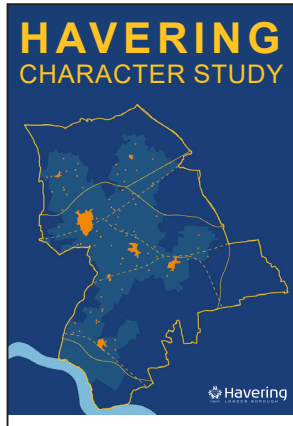
### Romford Business Improvement District Business Plan (2018)

- “...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)



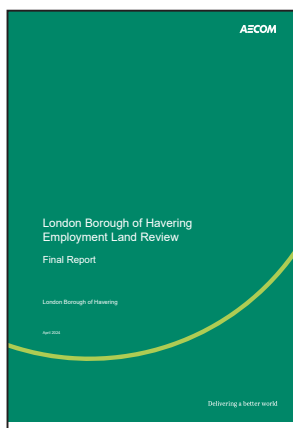
### The London Plan (March 2021)

- “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)

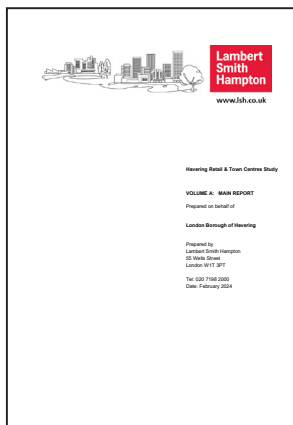
- “Central Romford and the Rom Valley will be the most significant area of change in the borough.” (Page 50)
- “Romford is the borough’s Metropolitan Centre - important for its role in retail, leisure and entertainment uses. Tall buildings in Romford would support a local economy and bring investment 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 m<sup>2</sup> office floorspace in Havering. However, the projected demand for office floorspace up to 2041 is in balance (-32 m<sup>2</sup>).
- In Romford specifically, the existing office stock should be retained where feasible and refurbished to meet modern requirements.





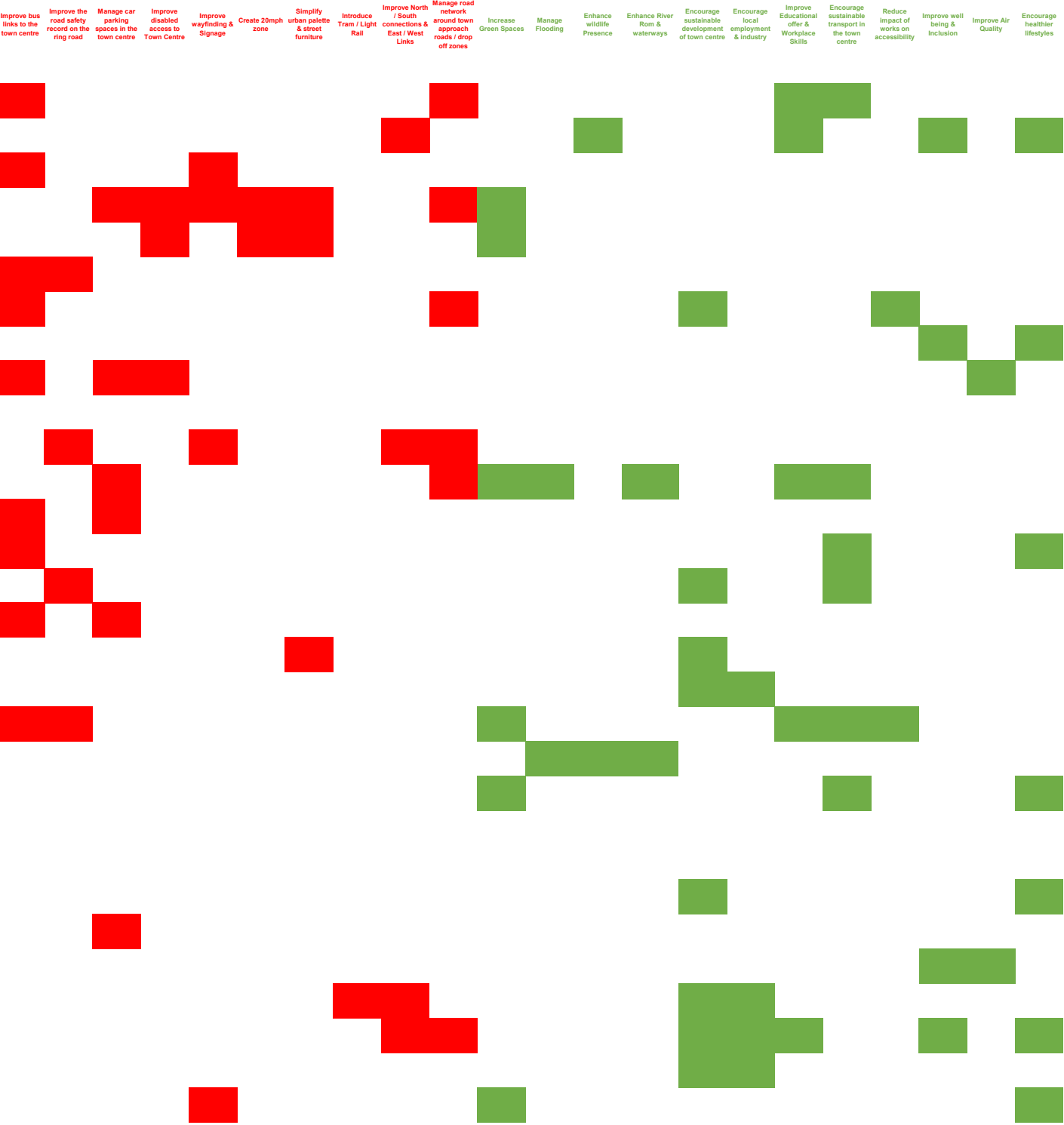
## Havering Retail and Town Centres Study 2024

- 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

Principle Objective Categories	Character & Identity						Planning & Policy				Public Realm & Transport					
	Redefine Romford's identity	Build on character and heritage in town centre	Enhance and protect conservation area	Promote the town as a prime destination for locals	Add landmarks to the town centre	Create buffer zones around the Ring Road	Create quieter areas in town centre	Maximise value for money	Increase the footfall and spending in the town centre	Add new leisure and retail units to the town centre	Improve business offer	Intensify residential uses in the town centre	Create/improve public realm in the town centre	New train station/public realm	Improve pedestrian access to the town centre	Improve cycling access to the town centre
<b>Extracted Principles</b>																
Romford Conservation Audit full document (Dec 2009)		█														
Romford Movement Study Executive Summary 2010 (Jan. 2010)															█	█
Havering LEAD Diagnostic Report (March 2010)															█	█
North Street Main Road Corridors Study - Final with Appendices (March 2011)															█	█
Public Realm 2011 Romford Masterplan Report@ A3 High Quality (Nov 2011)	█	█	█	█	█	█							█	█	█	█
<a href="#">Public Realm 2011 Romford Masterplan Report@ A3 High Quality.pdf</a>				█												
<a href="#">Greening Romford Ring Road.pdf</a>													█		█	█
North Street Main Road Corridors Study – Final with Appendices (Mar. 2011)			█						█						█	█
Shopfront Design SPD Adopted (June 2013)		█	█		█					█			█	█	█	█
TfL town centres report bus services (Jun 2013)									█				█		█	█
<a href="#">Urban Realm Framework Final Report vs? incl appendices LR.pdf</a>	█	█		█												
TfL bid 2016 Cycle Romford V2 (Jan 2015)	█	█		█											█	█
Regenerating Romford Market Stage 1 Report (Nov. 2015)															█	█
<a href="#">Romford-Development-Framework-Launch.pdf</a>	█			█	█				█		█				█	█
<a href="#">160601_Benefits of walking and cycling - Report - Final Draft.pdf</a>									█						█	█
<a href="#">Ring Road - Public Realm Strategy 2016.pdf</a>		█							█	█	█					
Romford Survey Final Report (Oct 2016)				█					█	█	█		█			
Clockwork City: Romford Town Centre Survey Review (Nov. 2016)		█							█	█	█		█			
Proposed_Submission_Local_Plan_2016_2031 (2016)																
<a href="#">Liveable Neighbourhood Submission Draft V10.pdf</a>							█	█							█	█
<a href="#">River Rom Design Guide.pdf</a>													█			
<a href="#">Ring Road Major Scheme - Supporting Information.pdf</a>									█							
Romford Vision Map_C&P_060218 (Feb. 2018)					█				█		█		█	█	█	█
<a href="#">Romford Business Improvement District Business Plan 2018.pdf</a>									█							
Economic Development Evidence Base Long Sliddeck for LBH v13 (Feb. 2018)									█							
2020_Market Stage (2018)					█				█						█	█
Appendix_1_Havering Air Quality Action Plan_V8_Post_Consultation (April 2018)																
Draft Economic Development Strategy Sept 18draft (2018)									█	█	█				█	█
Havering Employment Land Review 2024									█	█	█					
Havering Retail and Town Centres Study 2024									█	█	█					
Havering Draft Character Study 2024	█	█		█									█		█	█

**Movement & Public Realm** **Sustainability**



# 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



