

Local Development Framework

CATFORD

Catford TOWN CENTRE
Area Action Plan

Issues and Options Report

HOUSING RENEWABLE ENERGY
PUBLIC REALM
RETAIL PROVISION
EMPLOYMENT USES

IMPORTANT INFORMATION...

WHY HAS THIS REPORT BEEN PREPARED?

The Council has decided to prepare a planning strategy for Catford Town Centre. This strategy will be called the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan. The strategy will guide where and how development should take place over the next 5-10 years and it will be used by the Council when making planning decisions about Catford Town Centre.

In order to give full effect to the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan as a basis for the Council to make planning decisions, it must be prepared according to a set process (which is defined by law). The Issues and Options Report forms a part of the set process.

WHAT DOES THIS REPORT CONTAIN?

The Issues and Options Report contains issues, ideas and possible directions for the types of policies and proposals which should be contained in the Area Action Plan. These are grouped into themes (e.g. shopping, transport) and background and other relevant information is also provided to make it easier to understand the range of information presented.

WHY DOES THE ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT CONTAIN A LOT OF MAPS AND DIAGRAMS?

Because a map/diagram can explain a lot of information briefly and in a visual form which is easily understandable, they are used throughout the Issues and Options Report. It is important to note however that the maps and diagrams are indicative only and are intended to give a general overview. Accurate information about current policies can be found in the adopted Unitary Development Plan.

WHAT WORK HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN DONE?

Many in the community would be aware of, and possibly participated in, the Catford Design Framework and Development Strategy Project. This project was commissioned by the Council in 2003 to provide guidance on how a number of development opportunity sites in Catford Town Centre should be developed. Following changes to the planning system by the Government, the Catford Design Framework and Development Strategy Project will now be taken forward as part of the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY?

Before the Council decides which ideas and proposals should be taken forward as Council policy, the community have the opportunity to tell the Council what it thinks and what it wants for the future of Catford Town Centre. To help make this easier a series of questions are asked throughout the report and the community is encouraged to respond to these questions and provide the Council with its views. The community does not have to respond to every question, and those who may have an interest in only some areas are encouraged to respond to the questions of interest to them rather than respond to questions which may not interest them.

WHO CAN COMMENT ON THE REPORT?

Everyone can comment on the Issues and Options Report. Copies of the report can be:-

- viewed on the Councils website (www.lewisham.gov.uk);
- inspected at all borough libraries;
- inspected at the Planning Information Office, 5th Floor, Laurence House, Catford, SE64RU;
- obtained by contacting the Planning Policy Unit on 020 8314 7400.

If you would like to speak to the Planning Policy Team about the report, you can telephone us on 020 8314 7400

HOW AND WHEN SHOULD COMMENTS BE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL?

If you would like to comment on the Issues and Options Report you can: -

- Send written comments to the Planning Policy Unit, London Borough of Lewisham, 5th Floor, Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, Catford, SE64RU; or
- E-mail your comments to: planning@lewisham.gov.uk.

The consultation period for the Issues and Options Report ends on Friday 3rd February, 2006. It is important that all those in the community who wish to provide the Council with their views do so before this date. This is to ensure the Council has plenty of time to consider what everyone has said and to move forward to the next stage.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once the Council has reviewed what the community have said, it will consider what should be the preferred options for how Catford Town Centre should be developed. The Council will then re-consult the community on the preferred options. This consultation will take place in mid 2006. Anyone who provides the Council with comments on the Issues and Options Report will automatically be re-consulted on the preferred options.

PLEASE REMEMBER – ALL COMMENTS AND RESPONSES SHOULD BE RECEIVED BY THE COUNCIL NO LATER THAN FRIDAY 3rd FEBRUARY, 2006.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan will provide a comprehensive range of policies and proposals for improving Catford Town Centre and supporting its regeneration. It will set out policies and proposals for how the issues facing the town centre should be addressed and where new development should occur. The key aim is to maximise and enhance the good things about Catford Town Centre whilst addressing the things which the community want to see changed or improved.

This Issues and Options Report has been prepared as an early stage of consultation on what policies and proposals should be contained in the Area Action Plan. The Council is seeking the community's views and opinions on the range of options presented, as well as other ideas and proposals which they would like the Council to consider.

1.2 Catford Town Centre in context

Catford Town Centre is an important location in the London Borough of Lewisham in a number of ways, including its setting on the road, bus and rail networks, its role as the civic heart of the borough, its densely populated residential hinterland, as well as being the second largest town centre in the borough.

1.3 Future Aspirations¹

- Catford Town Centre will offer a variety of shops and a thriving street market that caters for the needs of the local community (including a mix of convenience and comparison shopping), as well as offering a number of speciality shops that draw in visitors from further afield.
- Catford Town Centre will have established itself as a popular evening destination, building on the success of the Broadway Theatre and accommodating a range of cultural and leisure facilities that appeal to a wide variety of people.
- Catford Town Centre will have strengthened its role as the civic centre of the borough, with a high concentration of council services and employees providing a key anchor for the town centre economy.
- Catford Town Centre will contain an attractive, safe and animated public realm, including new public spaces and the introduction of high quality design and public art throughout.
- Catford Town Centre will have attracted a series of new developments that embrace the highest standards in architecture and urban design that raise the image and profile of the area.
- Catford Town Centre will have increased its accessibility by the creation of safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle links and through the dramatic improvement to the waiting environment, interchange facilities and pedestrian links to and at bus stops and railway stations.

¹These aspirations were developed in consultation with the community and stakeholders as part of the Catford Design Framework and Development Strategy Project (see Important Information section on Page i).

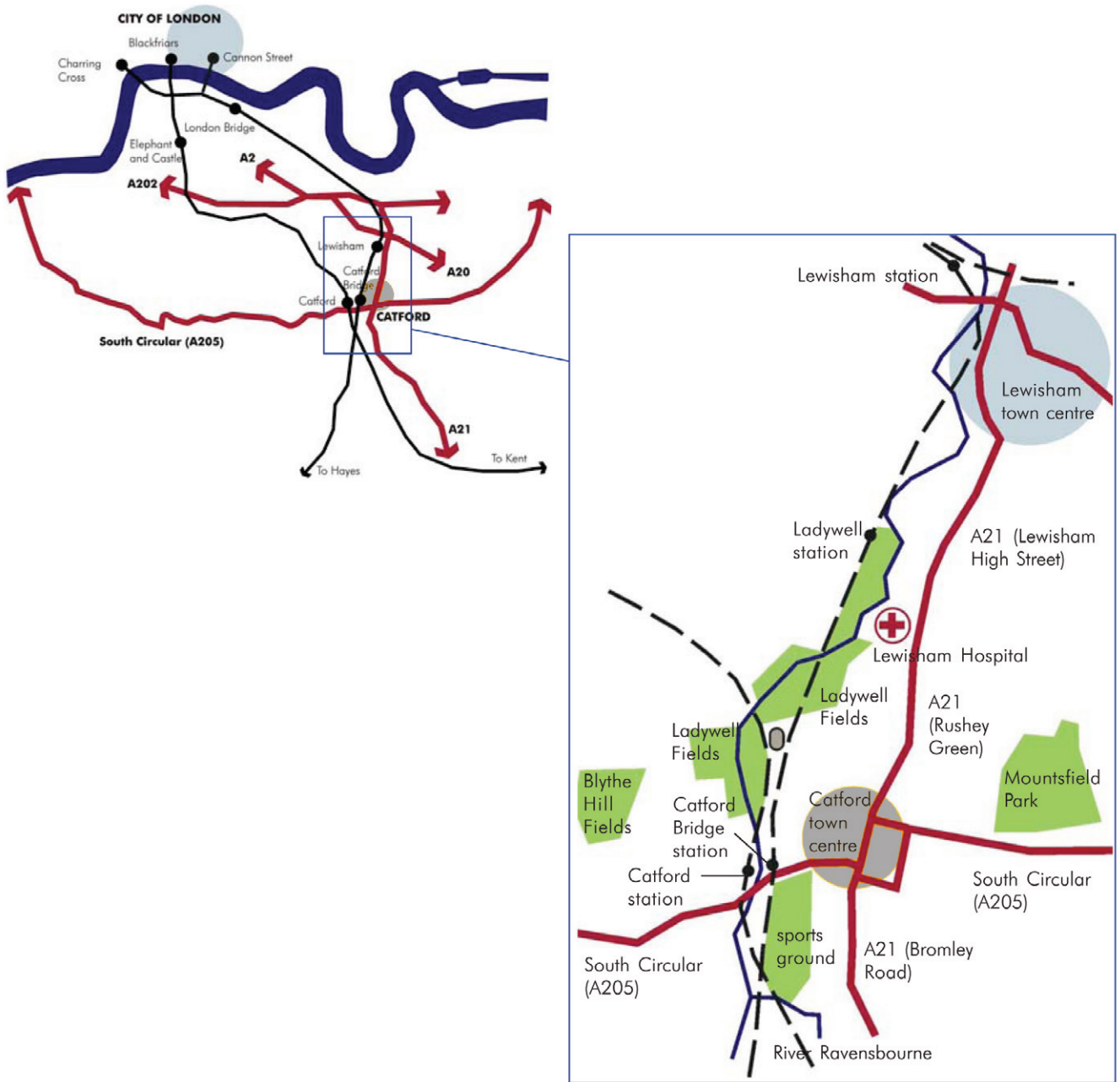


Figure 1 - Catford Town Centre in context

1.4 What the community have said so far¹..

In summary, the community and stakeholders have said the following: -

- There is a strong desire for radical change and to see this take place as soon as possible;
- The directions outlined for Catford Town Centre (see aspirations above) have strong public support;
- In general, people think Catford as a whole is an attractive, green, accessible place to live, but that the town centre is unattractive and not reflective of the wider area;
- The town centre is seen to disproportionately drag down the overall impression of Catford.

TOP 5 – The best things about Catford

- Transport (good services and links to other areas).
- Arts / entertainment / leisure (Broadway Theatre, athletics track, children's play areas, variety of / specific restaurants).
- Shops (convenient, local, variety, in small area, easily accessible, lively, markets).
- Environment (parks, green spaces, tree lined streets, front gardens, flower beds, Rushey Green, the river, conservation area, spacious).
- Community (friendly neighbours, community feeling, multicultural, community support officers, relaxed atmosphere, fun days, schools, church, consulting residents).

TOP 5 – The worst things about Catford

- Environmental issues (cleansing, maintenance, rubbish).§ Shops (scruffy, limited choice, too many budget shops, limited night or Sunday hours).
- Traffic (South Circular (A205), congestion, rat runs, highway safety).
- Visual appearance (concrete, the Cat, overall impression, Catford Mews, shop shutters).
- Anti-social behaviour

The Catford Town Centre Area Action will seek to protect and enhance the things the community like about Catford Town Centre and change the things people want to see changed.

¹These views were expressed by the community and stakeholders as part of the Catford Design Framework and Development Strategy Project (see Important Information section on Page i).

2.0 KEY ISSUES

2.1 Key issues in Catford Town Centre

The following diagram presents the key issues facing Catford Town Centre. These have been derived from the review of the evidence base, the outcomes of the Catford Design Framework and Development Strategy Project, and what the community have told the Council so far.

-  What uses would you like to see in the high street?
-  How could the street market be improved?
-  Would you like to see more employment uses in the town centre?
-  What would you like to see happen with the Development Opportunity Sites?
-  How can we make better use of the available land?
-  What can be done to improve the rail station area?
-  How can the bus waiting environment be improved?
-  Can changes to the road network improve access for all?
-  How can walking routes be improved?
-  What should possible future public squares be like?
-  How can the first impression of Catford at these gateways be improved?
-  Can improvements to these landmark buildings be made?
-  How can the river environment be improved and flood risk minimised?
-  How do we make the most of the existing parks and open spaces?



Figure 2 - Issues, opportunity and constraints

- ① Cattford Shopping Centre and Milford Towers
- ② The Civic Quarter
- ③ The Greyhound Stadium Area
- ④ The Plassy Road Area
- ⑤ Wickes site

3.0 SETTING THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

3.1 Strategic policy directions for Catford Town Centre

The Council's emerging policy directions¹ for Catford Town Centre are: -

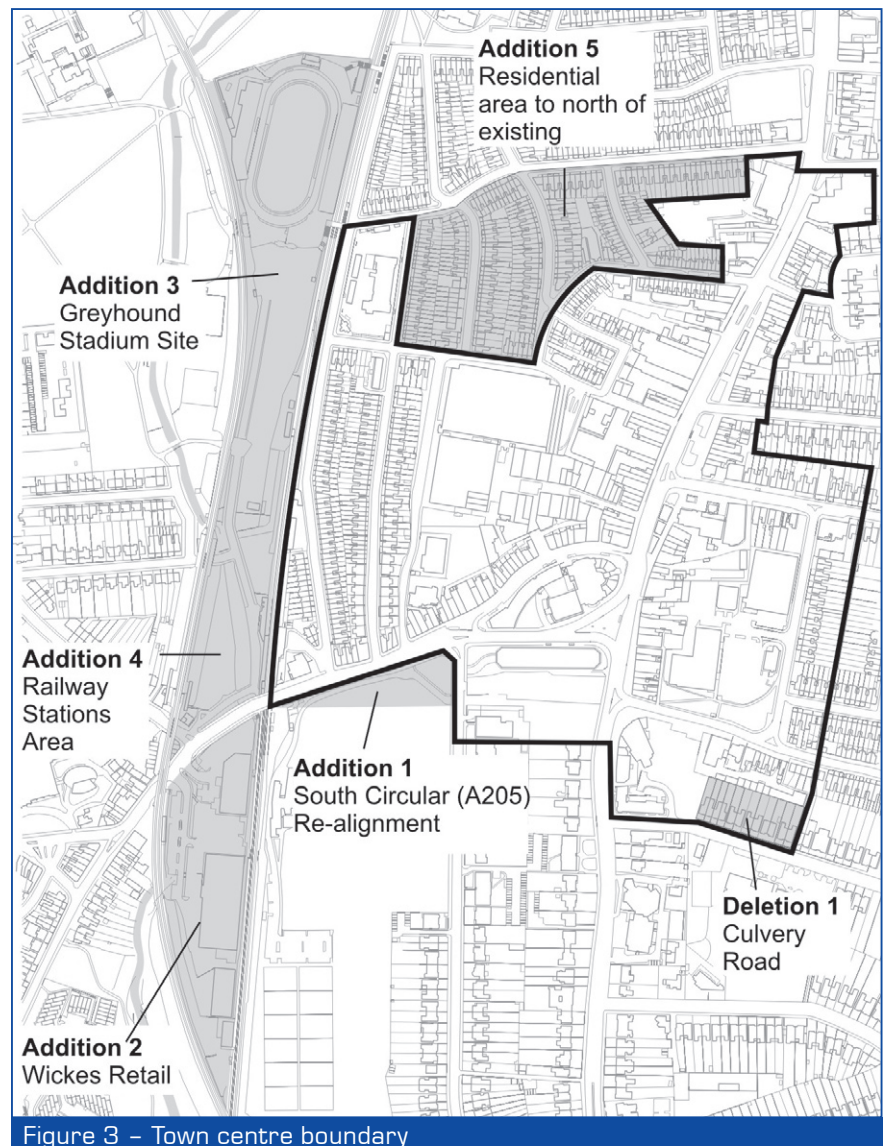
- To protect and enhance Catford Town Centre's status as a major centre in London's retail hierarchy by supporting and expanding retail, service and employment uses, supporting the civic function of the town centre, and promoting a wide range of other activities, including leisure and entertainment uses.
- To secure the regeneration of Catford Town Centre by promoting high quality design in the built and natural environments, securing the redeveloped of underutilised sites and maximising their benefit to the wider town centre, and seeking to create a town centre which is a safe, accessible and desirable place to shop and visit.

Question 1

Which of the specific additions and deletions shown on Figure 3 do you agree / not agree with?

3.2 Town centre boundary

The policy directions outlined above continues the long-standing direction that Catford Town Centre should be a focus for new development. In order to target this focus correctly, it is necessary to define a town centre boundary as part of the Area Action Plan. The figure below identifies the existing town centre boundary and also shows various areas which could be added / removed from the existing boundary.



— Existing (UDP) Town Centre Boundary

¹ These emerging directions are derived from the Retail and Town Centres Issues and Options Paper which was available for public comment in October 2005.



Catford Square: as it could be?



3.3 Creating new public spaces in Catford Town Centre

A central part of the future plans for Catford Town Centre involves the creation of new spaces in the area between Laurence House and Catford Broadway. These spaces would be created by the realignment of the South Circular (A205) to the rear of Laurence House and by other supporting changes to traffic management in Catford Town Centre. This change will have a dramatic effect on Catford Town Centre and will improve the environment for pedestrians, create new open spaces, and free up land for new development which will advance the overall regeneration of the town centre.

The realignment of the South Circular has for some years been a project which the Council has pursued, and subject to funding and support from Council's key partners (including Transport for London who are responsible for the South Circular), it is expected that the project will be a reality within the timescale of the Area Action Plan. Throughout this report options to support this project and the outcomes it seeks to facilitate are presented, with a review of the possible future uses of the new development sites created by the project outlined in Section 12.

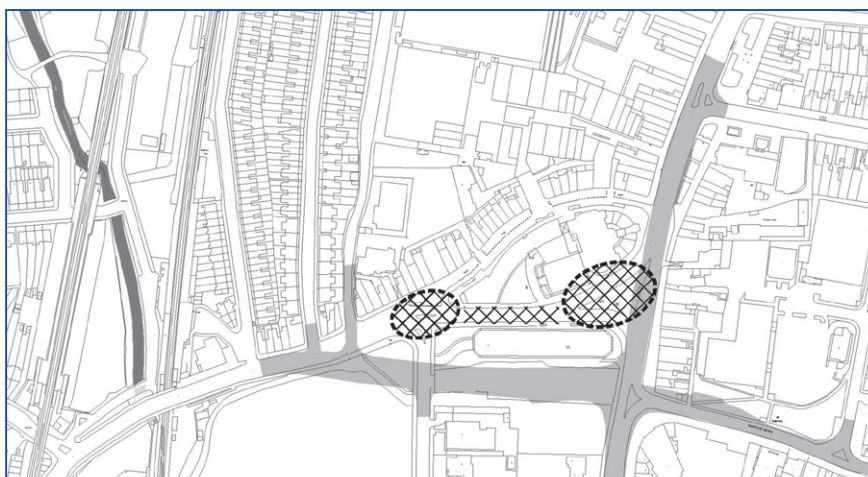


Figure 4 – Proposals to realign the South Circular (A205) and the opportunities created by it

4.0 Catford TOWN CENTRE RETAIL USES

4.1 Introduction

Shopping and retailing will continue to be the dominant uses in Catford Town Centre and the Area Action Plan will need to set out policies which provide directions on the range and distribution of retail and shopping uses found throughout the town centre. In reviewing the range and distribution of retail and shopping uses in Catford Town Centre, the following issues need to be considered: -

- The need for a variety of shops that cater for the basic needs of the local community;
- The aspiration that Catford Town Centre will provide speciality shops which draw in visitors from further;
- Consideration of the range of convenience retailing (everyday essential items like food) and comparison retailing (sale of items not obtained on a frequent basis such as clothes and household goods);
- The need for any additional retail floorspace or places where retail uses should be converted to other uses.

A summary of the retail and shopping evidence base is included in Appendix 3. This information has been used to inform the options presented below. Appendix 3 also provides an overview of the Use Classes Order which are the detailed regulations establishing what uses and developments require planning approval.

¹ The Unitary Development Plan is the current planning document setting out the policies applying to the whole borough, including Catford Town Centre. The Area Action Plan will replace the Unitary Development Plan in relation to matters on Catford Town Centre.

² See Planning Policy Statement 6 – Planning for Town Centres

4.2 Core shopping area

The existing Unitary Development Plan¹ designates a Core Shopping Area within Catford Town Centre. In this area, at least 70% of the outlets should be shop (A1) uses. The purpose of designating a Core Shopping Area is to ensure that a supply of shops is maintained in the town centre to meet the shopping needs of the community. The existing Core Shopping Area is outlined in Figure 5.

The evidence base - The 2004 Catford Town Centre Health Check identified that 70% of uses in the Core Shopping Area were in fact used for shop (A1) uses demonstrating that the existing policy has been achieving what it set out to do. The Core Shopping Area had 4% vacancies.

In line with Government guidance² and existing policy, it is proposed that the Area Action Plan will identify a Core Shopping Area and that its current boundary will be maintained (see Figure 5). Further, it is necessary to consider an appropriate threshold for the level of shop uses within the Core Shopping Area.

Question 2

Should the Area Action Plan designate part of the town centre as a Core Shopping Area where shop (A1) uses will be encouraged and other uses will be discouraged?

Question 3

If there is to be a Core Shopping Area, is the existing area appropriate in the future (Figure 5 identifies the existing extent of the Core Shopping Area)?

Question 4

Within the Core Shopping Area, is setting a target for no less than 70% of uses to be shop (A1) uses appropriate?



The core shopping area

Beyond maintaining a supply of shop (A1) uses in Catford Town Centre to meet the shopping needs of the community, there is also a desire to attract people to the town centre from further afield and a key aspiration is for the town centre to contain a mix of convenience and comparison retailing. Convenience shopping refers to outlets which provide everyday items for the community, such as food, drinks and newspapers (e.g. supermarkets, grocery store, butchers). Comparison shopping refers to outlets which provide items not obtained on a frequent basis by the community, such as clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

In the context of the Core Shopping Area the key existing supply of larger outlets in Catford (excluding the retail parks) is located within this area (e.g. Peacocks, Argos, Boots, Poundsaver). Protecting these for comparison shopping is important as the size of the outlet is often a key factor in whether comparison retailing is suitable in a given location (particularly with nationally branded stores). There may also be the opportunity to create additional larger outlets as part of the redevelopment of Catford Shopping Centre.

Question 5

Should the Area Action Plan protect existing larger retail outlets in the core shopping area from being divided into smaller outlets?

Question 6

Should the redevelopment of Catford Shopping Centre include the provision of larger outlets suitable for comparison shopping which require a larger floor area?

4.3 Non-core shopping areas

The existing Unitary Development Plan designates a non-core shopping area within Catford Town Centre. In this area, development or change of use from shops (A1 uses) is permitted provided it is to a financial and professional services uses (A2 uses), a restaurant / café (A3 uses), community use or amusement centre. This allows for a more mixed use area to be facilitated. The existing non-core shopping areas is outlined in Figure 5.

Within the non-core shopping Areas, the number of shops (A1 uses) has declined since 1993 whilst the number of restaurants and cafes (A3 uses) have increased. This reflects the growing and increasing importance of the café & restaurant culture as part of Catford Town Centre and its further development (particular to support the leisure economy) is a key aspiration for Catford Town Centre. The non-core shopping area also currently contains an important range of outlets which serve the community, including the bulk of the financial and professional services (e.g. banks, real estate agents) found in Catford Town Centre.

The evidence base - The 2004 Catford Town Centre Health Check identified that 45% of uses in the Non-Core Shopping Areas were used for shop (A1) uses, 22% for A3 uses (restaurants/cafes/drinking establishment/take-aways), 15% for A2 uses (financial and professional services) and 7% for other uses¹. The Non-Core Shopping Areas had 11% vacancies.

The future of non-core areas is a central policy question for the Area Action Plan as there are competing uses which could be focussed in non-core areas. Further, recent changes to the planning regulations now mean that the Area Action Plan can separately control restaurants/cafes, drinking establishments and hot-food takeaways.

PLEASE NOTE - Other sections of this report relating to employment land and leisure uses also address potential uses in non-core shopping areas. Following consultation on this report the various policy influences relating to Non-Core Shopping Areas will need to be brought together into a single comprehensive policy framework.

Question 7

Within the non-core shopping areas, is there any need to protect the number / range of shop uses and financial and professional service uses from encroachment from restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments and hot-food takeaways?

¹ Note that prior to 2005, restaurants/cafes/drinking establishments/takeaways all formed part of the same use class.



High street shopping



Catford Island Retail Park

4.4 Other Shopping Areas

In addition to the Core and Non-Core Shopping Areas, the Unitary Development Plan outlines that those outlets which are not designated as a core or non-core shopping area are designated as Other Shopping Areas. These areas are generally on the periphery of the town centre and uses other than shops (A1) is deemed to be acceptable and a more flexible approach is generally seen as suitable. The existing other shopping areas is outlined in Figure 5.

The evidence base - The 2004 Catford Town Centre Health Check identified that 45% of uses in the Other Shopping Areas were used for shop (A1) uses, 16% for A3 uses (restaurants/cafes/drinking establishment/take-aways), 11% for A2 uses (financial and professional services) and 10% for other uses¹. The Other Shopping Areas had 18% vacancies.

The key concern with the other shopping areas is the high levels of vacancies (almost 1 in 5). Being on the periphery of the town centre many of these sites may have marginal shopping potential. However, with the possible increase in restaurant/cafes and drinking establishments in parts of the non-core shopping areas there may be more spill-over in demand for these premises as a result of greater competition for uses more centrally located in the Core Shopping Areas and Non-Core Shopping Areas. It is also important to note that the Other Shopping Areas may in-fact function more to serve the immediate local community rather than the wider catchment areas which the more central parts and functions of the town centre serve.

Question 8

What uses should be permitted in the Other Shopping Areas?

Question 9

Is the conversion of shop and business premises to residential uses (including on the ground floor) suitable in the Other Shopping Areas?

¹ Note that prior to 2005, restaurants/cafes/drinking establishments/takeaways all formed part of the same use class.

4.5 Retail parks

Catford Island Retail Park contains five premises made up of Lidl Supermarket, JD Sports, Dreams, McDonalds and the Bingo centre. Its retail outlets offer comparison shopping across larger floor areas. Catford Island is currently designated in the Unitary Development Plan as a 'non-core' area which allows development or change of use from a shop (A1) use provided it is to an A2, A3, community use or amusement centre.

However, the retail component of any future use is an important consideration and as the site does not have a strong relationship with the high street. The same is true of the Wickes retail area which is also made up of larger format comparison retail outlets, including Wickes, Halfords and Majestic Wine Warehouse. This site is not currently within the town centre boundary as contained in Unitary Development Plan and therefore there is no specific designation as to its preferred use. The future development potential of these sites (particularly the air-space above them) is addressed in more detail in Part 2 of this report.

Question 10

Should the retail parks continue to have a focus on comparison shopping, particularly if they are the subject of redevelopment involving new and additional retail provision?

4.6 The street market

The Catford Town Centre street market is currently operating well below both its capacity and potential. It currently comprises a number of stalls located along the entrance to Catford Shopping Centre from Catford Broadway, as well as some stalls in the shopping centre outside Tesco supermarket. The Catford street market is open on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Section 12 outlines possible options to improve the role of the market in Catford Town Centre.

Question 11

How could the street market be improved and made more attractive to both stall holders and the community?

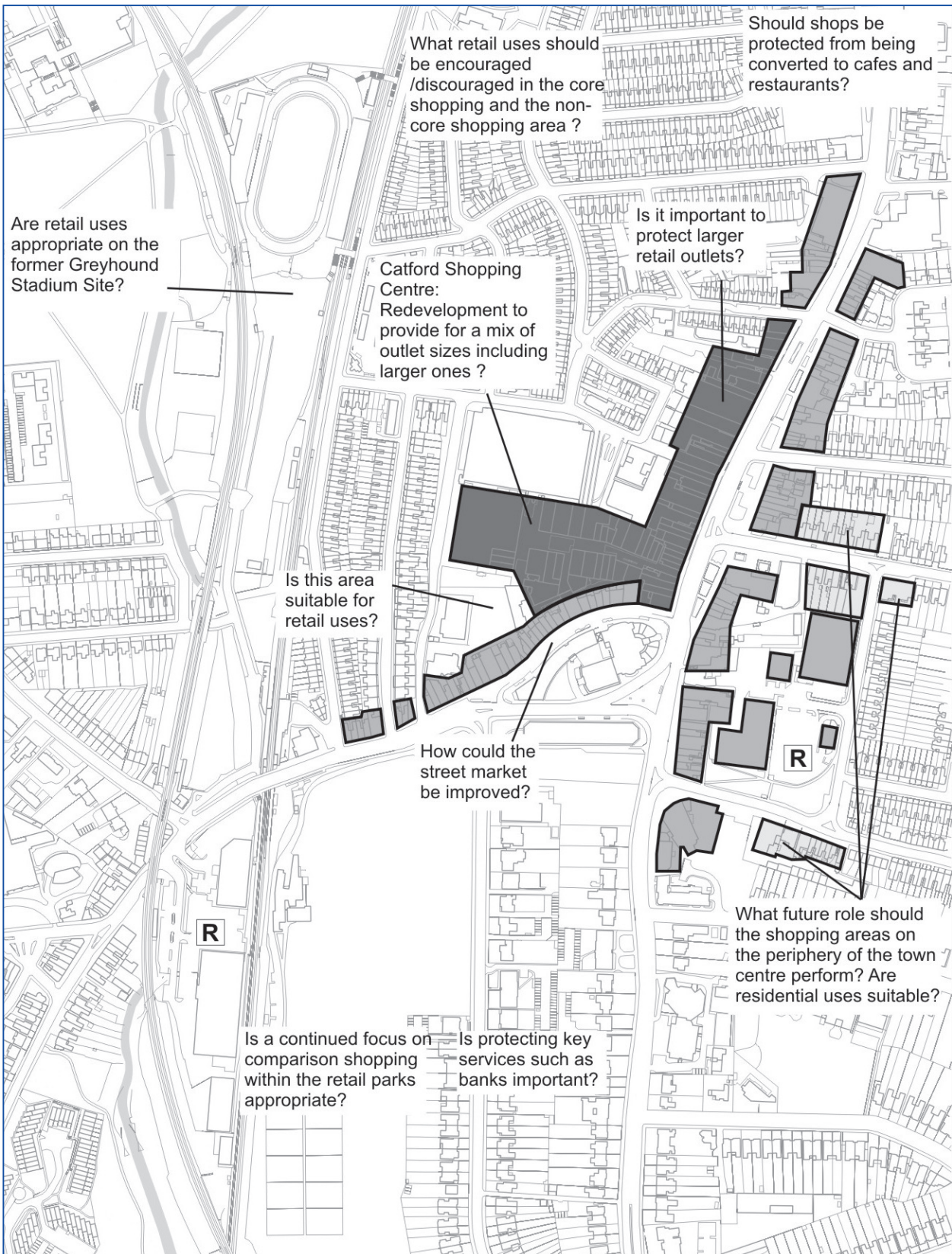


Figure 5 - Retail and shopping issues and options

- Core Shopping Area
- Non-core Shopping Area
- Other Shopping Area's
- R Retail Park

5.0 Catford TOWN CENTRE LEISURE USES

Key aspirations for Catford Town Centre include the desire to see it establish itself as a popular evening destination, to build on the success of the Broadway Theatre and to accommodate a range of cultural and leisure facilities. This section presents options for how these can be achieved.

5.1 Cafés and restaurants and eating out in Catford

Since 1993, there has been an increase in the number of cafes and restaurants in Catford Town Centre. This reflects a growing trend for people to consume more meals and food away from the home. A vibrant café and restaurant presence is vital for the future of Catford Town Centre. It can draw more people into the centre, using local businesses and making the place feel safer. It can support uses such as the Broadway Theatre and help to make Catford Town Centre a leisure destination. Cafes, restaurants and eating out venues do however take facilities out of retail use, and striking a balance between the two is a key policy question the Area Action Plan should address.

Question 11

Should Catford Town Centre promote itself as café and restaurant destination?

Question 12

Where should the Area Action Plan encourage café and restaurant facilities to establish?

5.2 Drinking in Catford Town Centre

There are 9 pubs and other drinking establishments in Catford Town Centre, and a consideration in enhancing Catford Town Centre as a destination is the extent to which drinking establishments (pubs, bars, nightclubs) are further encouraged and promoted. For many of the same reasons as cafes and restaurants, drinking establishments can bring people into the town centre, particularly at non-shopping times, but many town centres across England are now seen as less desirable places of an evening / night time because of perceived and actual anti-social behaviour associated with drinking. The operating hours of drinking venues are also an important issue, having regard to recent changes to licensing laws as well as practicalities such as public transport.

Question 13

Should pubs, bars and nightclubs be promoted in Catford Town Centre?

Question 14

Where should the Area Action Plan encourage drinking establishments in Catford Town Centre?



Are more pavement cafes desirable?

5.3 The theatre and the cinema in Catford Town Centre

The Broadway Theatre is an important cultural and leisure asset for the town centre. A recent refurbishment has physically improved the theatre and it offers a variety of theatre and music productions, art exhibitions and other events, drawing people into the town centre. No specific proposals have been presented here for the Broadway Theatre as its on-going presence in the town centre is assured from a planning perspective. Rather, ways for the Area Action Plan to improve the appeal of the theatre are contained in other places within this report (e.g. urban design, conservation).

Question 15

Should the Area Action Plan designate the Catford Cinema for on-going cinema uses (if the approved conversion does not proceed)?

In contrast, the Catford cinema which sits opposite the Broadway Theatre across Rushey Green, is now disused. Whilst only a smaller cinema (compared to the nationally branded multiplex's), the Council believes that Catford cinema has considerable architectural and design merit and tremendous on-going potential to be used as an operating independent cinema working alongside the Broadway Theatre to bring people, activity and liveliness to the town centre. It is however noted that a recent decision by a Planning Inspector has granted planning approval for the Cinema to be converted into a church amongst other uses.



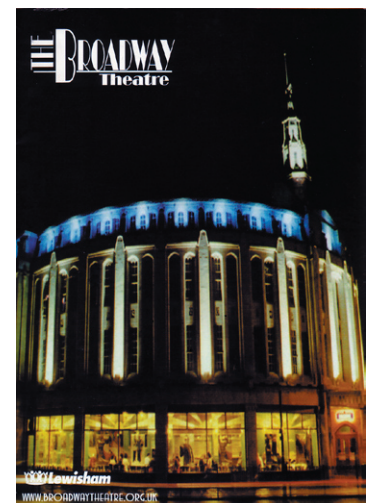
Catford cinema

5.4 Other leisure uses

There are also a wide range of other leisure pursuits and activities which can and do take place in town centres (including the existing amusement centres and bingo hall) and many of these may be suitable and desirable for Catford Town Centre into the future.

Question 16

Are there any other leisure activities which should be encouraged?



Broadway Theatre

6.0 Catford TOWN CENTRE EMPLOYMENT USES

6.1 Introduction

This section reviews the potential for additional employment in Catford Town Centre. Increasing employment opportunities throughout the borough is a key aim of the Council and town centres are key locations for additional employment. In looking at employment uses, the key issues to consider are the scope for additional employment uses, the role of the town centre as the civic centre of the borough, as well as the role of small and medium sized premises.

Catford Town Centre is located in an area with more limited employment prospects for the community than the London average. More particularly, Rushey Green Ward and the borough as a whole has a higher unemployment, long-term unemployment and youth unemployment rate than the London average.

6.2 Office / work space employment

The Council is the biggest employer in Catford Town Centre and accommodates staff across a number of buildings. A key aspiration for Catford Town Centre is that the civic role be enhanced and that the Council's operations in the town centre be a key anchor for its wider development and regeneration.

The outlook more generally with regard to office space is quite restrictive, with the London Office Policy Review 2004 (Greater London Authority) concluding that for the borough as a whole there is currently no market for offices and that the viability of speculative office development is 'very unlikely' in the foreseeable future (up until 2016). Given this, it would not be appropriate for the Area Action Plan to safeguard any part of the town centre for office space.

There has been a large emphasis in the borough on the creative industries as a key driver of economic regeneration. The creative industries include advertising, architecture, arts, publishing, and the media. These industries, which are often smaller owner-operator businesses, require work spaces of varying types and sizes, from artist's studios through to sales outlets, traditional office spaces and sometimes even railway arches. The demand for such space is difficult to quantify but scope may exist to incorporate spaces catering to the creative industries into Catford Town Centre.

Key Employment Indicators (Source – Census 2001)

INDICATOR	RUSHEY GREEN WARD	LEWISHAM	LONDON
Full-time employment rate	46%	43.50%	42.60%
Unemployment rate	6.00%	5.60%	4.40%
Long-term unemployment rate	2.30%	1.90%	1.40%
Youth unemployment rate	6.50%	7.30%	5.70%

Question 18

Should large developments in Catford Town Centre set aside space for employment uses as part of the proposal?

Question 19

Are there any specific measures the Area Action Plan should be implementing to support the creative industries in Catford Town Centre?



The Council is the biggest employer in Catford Town Centre

6.3 Hotel / visitors accommodation

The report Demand and Capacity for Hotels and Conference Facilities in London 2002 (Greater London Authority) reviewed the potential for London to accommodate additional hotel facilities. For the borough as a whole, the report points out the reality that there has been little to no growth in hotel capacity over the past 15 years. The report also highlights that for a location to be attractive to a hotel developer the following five criteria should be met:-

- High product visibility;
- Major source of demand generation (office, factory or transport node);
- Fast convenient access by whatever transport links exist;
- Low levels of competitive supply provision;
- Positive planning attitude and minimal restrictions and conditions.

The report suggests that branded budget hotels, bed and breakfasts and backpacker lodges would be most likely to locate in a borough such as Lewisham. The report also points out that it is 'vital that the focus is on the longer term and the potential that each borough offers rather than being blinkered by what boroughs currently have to offer'. In reviewing the above points, it would seem that Catford Town Centre into the future may be a potentially attractive location for the provision of hotel / tourist accommodation.

Question 20

Should the Area Action Plan encourage hotel / visitor accommodation within Catford Town Centre?

Beyond accommodation, tourism is a key driver of the London economy and for the borough, tourism provides the opportunity to diversify the local economy and to generate new job opportunities for the local community. Promoting tourism in Lewisham will also help improve the overall image of the borough.

Question 21

How can the Area Action Plan promote tourism in Catford Town Centre?

7.0 URBAN DESIGN

7.1 Introduction

To make a real change to Catford Town Centre a new direction must be set for how Catford Town Centre should look and feel. The appearance of the town centre is constantly raised as a priority area for improvement by the community. This section outlines options for what policies and proposals could be implemented to make the town centre a more desirable place to visit and spend time.

7.2 New development design principles

The design of new development will have a significant impact on the way Catford Town Centre evolves over the coming years. New development provides the opportunity to substantially alter people's perceptions of the town centre in a short space of time. The table on the opposite page includes some design principles which may be appropriate for inclusion into the Area Action Plan.

Question 22

Are the opposite design principles appropriate for Catford Town Centre and will they produce a more appealing environment?

7.3 Gateway locations

(improving first impressions)

Figure 6 identifies key views within Catford Town Centre that are the first impressions people get when they arrive in the town centre. Currently, many of these locations are dominated by unattractive buildings, dead or undefined frontages, under-developed land or poorly maintained areas. There are however also excellent places which should become more of a focus, such as the Broadway Theatre and Rushey Green high street. Making a better first impression on people as they arrive in the town centre can have a significant impact on their perception of it and their willingness to consider it as a desirable place to visit.

There are many ways of achieving this, including the promotion of better design as outlined above. More specific measures however could include the following: -

- Art such as sculptures and murals could be used to mark the entrances to the town centre creating visual interest and enhancing the sense of arrival into the town centre.
- Landscaping, where trees and vegetation can be used to soften the effects of solid walls or unattractive design. Landscaping can also reduce the visual impact of the high traffic moving through the town centre.

- Lighting can be used to enhance the night-time appearance of buildings at the entrances to the town centre (e.g. Laurence House).
- Redeveloping underutilised or poorly maintained sites (Section 12 addresses possible options for redeveloping a number of specific sites).

Question 23

Do you think the measures outlined will make a difference to the first impressions people get when they arrive in Catford Town Centre?

Question 24

Are there any other ways first impressions of the town centre can be improved?



How to improve first impression at gateway locations?



How to make the most of Catford's landmark buildings

Concept	Discussion and possible design principles
Orientation	Creating active frontages and ensuring that development fronts and addresses the street / public realm will create more interesting spaces and facades, improve passive surveillance over public spaces, and minimise undefined or non-active building facades.
Maximise Use	Every site which may come forward for development / redevelopment represents an opportunity to improve the town centre in some way and maximising the potential of each site is important to ensure that no opportunity is lost to effect change. There is a need however to consider the surrounding context and infrastructure capacity, as well as the potential to redevelop sites with a mix of uses.
Taller Buildings	Catford Town Centre already contains a number of taller buildings (Laurence House, Milford Towers) and through the regeneration of the town centre, there will be the potential and a need for new taller buildings in order to accommodate new uses in the town centre and to capitalise on air spaces. Taller buildings should be of an outstanding architectural quality when compared to both existing development in Catford and also when compared to the best new buildings in London. Particular attention should be made to view lines to any new tall building.
Crime Prevention	The way a space feels and functions can be a key factor in the level of crime which takes place in the space and in the fear of crime experienced by people using that space. Creating spaces that minimise crime and make people feel safe should be a key aim of any development in Catford Town Centre. A key means of doing this is to ensure safer-by-design principles have been considered in the design of new development.
Landscaping	Landscaping is an important in creating appealing spaces. Landscaping involving trees, grass, seats and lighting can soften structures, encourage people to stop and enjoy the space, and create habitats for birds. The regeneration of Catford Town Centre should ensure that landscaping is given significant importance as part of new development.
Relationship with Nature	Development adjoining or near natural assets like open spaces and the Ravensbourne River deserve particular attention to how they are designed so that the natural elements of the area are protected and enhanced. The natural feel of the area should be continued through the development (through landscaping and perhaps even water features).
Heritage	Catford Town Centre includes a number of heritage assets, the most important being the Broadway Theatre. New development in proximity to any identified heritage asset should aim to protect and enhance that feature of the town centre whilst being a distinctively designed proposal in its own right. New development should not seek to copy heritage features of nearby buildings, but should rather take forward important heritage features in a contemporary manner.



How to make the most of existing pedestrian spaces?



How to improve walking in Catford

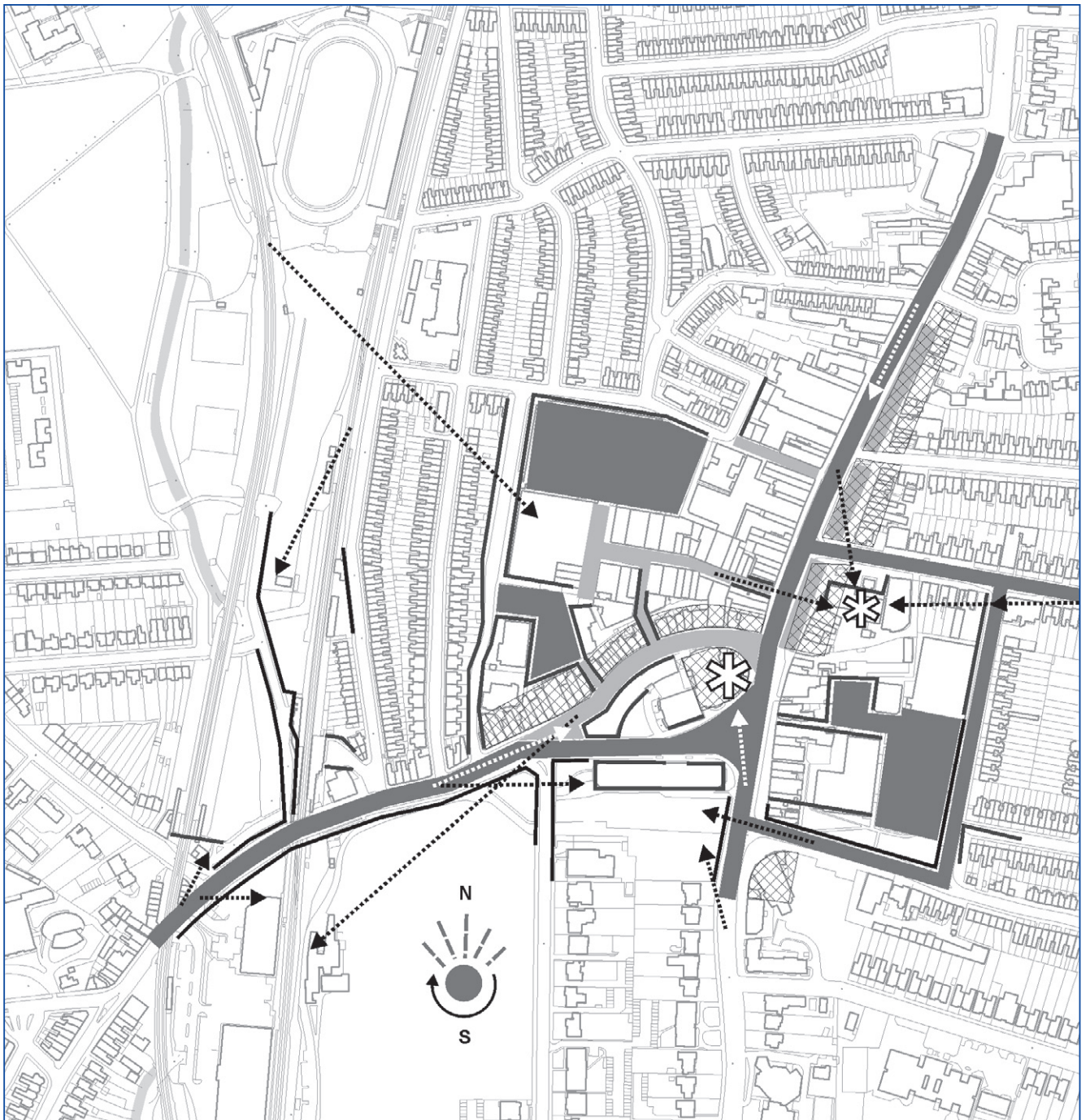


Figure 6 - Design, spaces and the public realm

- Spaces dominated by vehicles
- Spaces dominated by pedestrians
- Dead / undefined frontages
- Area with high quality architecture / unique features
- Landmark building
- Key views

7.4 Walking in Catford town centre

Walking is the main form of transport used by people once they are in Catford Town Centre. Due mainly to the significant impact of roads bisecting the town centre, the walking environment needs considerable improvement. Moving the South Circular to the south of Laurence House will serve to make a big difference on walking in the town centre. Other supporting measures are also required to provide a comprehensive system of safe and comfortable walking routes, including supporting the Waterway Link which is proposed to run along the Ravensbourne which will be suitable for cycling also.

In addition to improving pathways for walking, it may also be possible to use design features to help define key pathways within the town centre. Building on the success of similar schemes elsewhere (including in Southwark where orange light poles define the route between the Tate Modern and Southwark Underground Station), these design features could direct people through the town centre from places like the stations through the civic quarter and Catford Broadway onto the Catford Shopping Centre and through to Rushey Green high street. Previous work undertaken by the Council raised the idea that cat footprints & lights set into the pavement could help define the route.

7.5 Reducing the impact of traffic

Traffic is a significant barrier to improving the environment of Catford Town Centre. Whilst the realignment of the South Circular will make a dramatic improvement, other measures may need to be implemented to mitigate the effects of traffic. These may include a need to increase vegetation in the town centre which can soften the impact of roads and cars. Vegetation (and built up planting areas) can also be used to create more natural barriers discouraging people from crossing at inappropriate places and may make the use of black metal railings which dominant currently less necessary. Many other options presented throughout this report also deal with reducing the impact of traffic.

Question 25	Question 27	Question 29
Do you think the walking routes identified on Figure 7 as needing improvement cover the main paths in the town centre?	Do you think design features would be useful to help define key walking paths through the town centre?	What ways do you think the Area Action Plan can reduce the impact of traffic on Catford Town Centre?
Question 26	Question 28	
Are there any other ways walking in the town centre can be improved?	Do you have any ideas for what feature would be appropriate?	

8.0 TRANSPORT

8.1 Introduction

This section will present options for how access to, through and within Catford Town Centre can be better managed and improved. Section 5.3 has already outlined that the realignment of the South Circular (A205) to the south of Laurence House is a key project the Council is committed to. Other transport measures outlined here, along with those mentioned throughout this report, will help make Catford better connect and easier to get around.

8.2 Catford railway stations

Catford Town Centre and its surrounds are served by two National Rail stations, Catford and Catford Bridge. Both of these stations are operated by South Eastern Trains and provide excellent connections into central London. A clear message from the community when preliminary consultation was being undertaken was the need to improve the station environment as a priority for the town centre. Figure 7 brings together a number of ideas for the station area which could be taken forward as part of the Area Action Plan.

Question 30

Do you think the ideas for redeveloping the stations will achieve the improvements you would like to see to this area of the town centre?

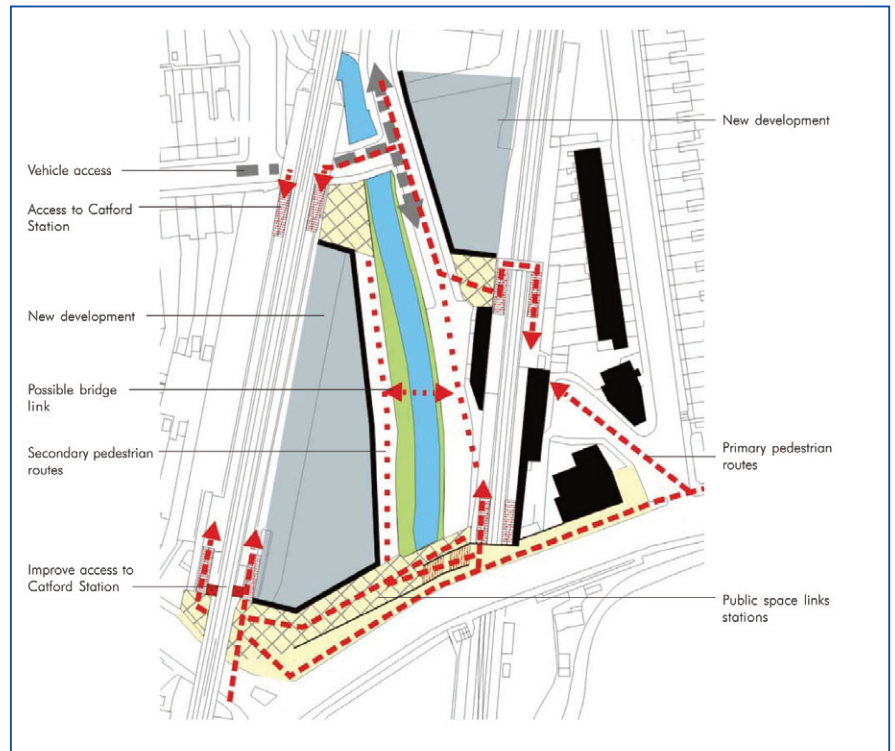


Figure 7 – ideas for improving the Catford railway stations

8.3 Road changes

Section 3.3 has already outlined that the realignment of the South Circular (A205) to the south of Laurence House is a key project the Council is committed to. Other measures which support this project could potentially include the reintroduction of the right turn south into Bromley Road, which will enable the South Circular (A205)/ Canadian Avenue junction to be closed, and the provision for two-way working on Thomas Lane, to facilitate access to the redeveloped Catford Shopping Centre (subject to further detailed feasibility work).

8.4 Public transport projects

Opportunities will arise over the timescale of the Area Action Plan to improve transport to Catford Town Centre and it would be appropriate that the Area Action Plan highlights the potential for these projects. Such projects could include further enhancement of buses in Lewisham (real-time displays and waiting environment improvements), additional National Rail Services, and perhaps even the extension of the Docklands Light Rail to Catford. In order for a project to be given policy support in the Area Action Plan it has to have a realistic expectation of being implemented.

Question 31

Do you think these road changes will make an improvement to Catford Town Centre?

Question 32

Are there any transport projects that should be given policy support in the Area Action Plan?

9.0 RENEWABLE ENERGY AND WASTE

9.1 Introduction

Many parts of this report have addressed issues relating to the environment. This section addressed areas which can improve the environmental sustainability of Catford Town Centre. The key issues which need to be addressed are renewable energy and waste management.

9.2 Creating a more sustainable town centre

Renewable Energy	Given the built-up nature of Catford Town Centre, it is not considered that there is potential for a large renewable energy scheme to be developed (e.g. biomass plants, large scale wind turbines) within the area covered by the Area Action Plan. However, there is considerable potential for smaller scale schemes to be integrated into new developments such as solar power, solar hot water and building mounted wind turbines.
Waste Management	Increasing the amount of waste that is recycled is a key priority and it is important that Catford Town Centre as it is regenerated makes provision for waste facilities, including recycling. There is no potential for the town centre to contain any scale of recycling facility or waste processing facility. However, there is still potential for the town centre to support better management of the waste supply and this may be through means such as ensuring new development makes space for recycling facilities within a development and perhaps introducing recycling bins throughout the public parts of the town centre alongside normal waste bins.

Question 33	Question 34	Question 35
How can the Area Action Plan support the introduction of renewable energy schemes into Catford Town Centre?	How can the Area Action Plan support the increased recycling of waste in Catford Town Centre?	Are there any other measures which should be considered to make Catford Town Centre more sustainable?



Introducing high quality housing in Catford



10.0 HOUSING

10.1 Introduction

Housing will be integral to the regeneration of Catford Town Centre for the following reasons: -

- Increased levels of new residents will bring more activity and vibrancy to the town centre, particular at off-peak times (e.g. evenings).
- The sustainability of our communities can be improved where new housing is provided in locations with good public transport and accessible services such as town centres.

10.2 Housing options

New housing in Catford Town Centre	<p>Promote housing above ground floor shops (shop-top housing).</p> <p>Support taller buildings and more intense development so that more housing can be provided.</p> <p>Promote housing as part of the development of Development Opportunity Sites.</p>
Existing housing in Catford Town Centre	<p>Encourage the redevelopment of underutilised and/or inappropriate buildings, including existing housing, for new housing.</p> <p>Ensure that the redevelopment of existing housing results in the overall provision of the same or more housing on the site.</p>

Key housing issues

- Catford Town Centre will need to contribute to the requirement to accommodate new housing throughout the borough (870 new houses per year).
- Need to determine what locations are suitable for additional housing.
- Need to consider if Catford Town Centre requires any specific policies on housing which differ from the generic development control policies.
- The need for the Council to meet the Government's Decent Home Standard which is about improving the condition and quality of Council owned houses (e.g. Milford Towers).
- National planning policy and regional planning policy (see Appendix 2 – Policy Framework) provides strong encouragement for housing in town centres.

11.0 COMMUNITY

11.1 Introduction

Community is a broad subject and for the purpose of this report include the following types of facilities and infrastructure: -

- Community centres;
- Libraries;
- Churches;
- Hospitals;
- Medical facilities;
- Emergency services;
- Leisure / fitness centres.

The provision of these services and the infrastructure associated with them is vital to the successful regeneration of Catford Town Centre. Many different groups are involved in this area, including government, private and community sector service providers. The key issues developed from the scoping process were:-

- The improved provision of facilities / services;
- Improved accessibility to facilities / services;
- Improve health and well being;
- Raise the skill levels of the population.

11.2 Options for community services

Most policies relating to community services will be contained in other planning documents which apply to Catford Town Centre, with the Area Action Plan focussing more on the things which only apply to Catford Town Centre. The following gives an overview of some of the things which will be included in the policy framework for Catford Town Centre.

Question 36

Are there any other ways community services and uses can be addressed in the Area Action Plan?

Question 37

Are there any community uses which should be located in Catford Town Centre?



What community facilities are needed in Catford?

<p>Existing Community Uses</p>	<p>As new development happens in Catford Town Centre pressure may arise to change existing community service uses to more intense or profitable uses. Consistent with ensuring the town centre continues to meet the needs of the community, services should be afforded some protection from redevelopment for other uses in the Area Action Plan. Obviously if a community service use is no longer required or the service provider is using other ways of delivering the service to the community then exceptions will need to exist.</p>
<p>New Community Uses</p>	<p>It may also be the case that existing facilities have a need to upgrade their premises to meet the changing needs of the community and the Area Action Plan should support such improvements.</p> <p>It is important that health, education and community service needs arising from a development are provided for. This will require close working with service providers (both public and private) and may also require the Council to request a contribution from a developer towards funding new infrastructure and/or services to meet the need arising out of the development. It would not set a prescriptive framework but would allow these matters to be considered on a case-by-case basis having regard to the proposal and its surrounds.</p>
<p>Major Developments</p>	<p>It may be necessary for major new developments in Catford to prepare a social impact report which would help everyone better understand the community service needs arising from a proposal. Major new development may also be able to contribute to education and training by incorporating schemes as part of their construction and on-going operations. This may involve one or more of the following: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment opportunities and training schemes for local people in construction related industries associated with the development; • Employment of local people in the on-going enterprise; • The development of training programmes (from small-scale work-experience type activities through to formal educational programmes) associated with the on-going enterprise. <p>The type of development proposed would impact on any education and training associated with the on-going operations (e.g. a housing development would have limited on-going operations whereas a hotel development would offer a wide range of on-going options for incorporating education and training). The intention of this option would be to look for an outcome that increases the skill levels of the local community in a manner consistent with the needs of the developer.</p>

12.0 INTRODUCTION TO DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES

12.1 Key Development Opportunity Sites

Chapters 13 to 17 review the future potential and uses of key development opportunity sites located within Catford Town Centre as identified in Figure 8. The successful regeneration of these sites will play a significant part in changing the town centre for the better over the next 5-10 years. A number of these sites, including Development Opportunity Sites 1, 2 and 3, were reviewed as part of the Catford Design Framework and Development Strategy Project and are more advanced in their evolution than others. This is reflected in the range of options presented and where a site has been the subject of previous consultation this is highlighted in the text.

The key purpose of the following chapters is to seek community input into the challenges faced when contemplating redeveloping these sites and how their redevelopment can link into and build upon the success of the town centre as a whole.

12.2 Other development opportunities

Development Opportunity Sites 1 to 5 comprise the larger sites where regeneration is considered to be desirable and/or achievable within the timeframe of the Area Action Plan. As part of gathering information and views from the community at this Issues and Options stage, the Council would be interested to hear from any land-owner, occupier or other interested party (private and public) who may wish to bring forward ideas, proposals and options for other specific developments and land uses within Catford Town Centre. In bringing forward these ideas, proposals or options now, interested parties will be able to ensure that the Council considers them fully prior to moving forward to the next stage.

Are there any ideas, proposals or options for the future use and/or development of specific parcels of land or areas within Catford Town Centre which you think the Council should consider in preparing the Area Action Plan?

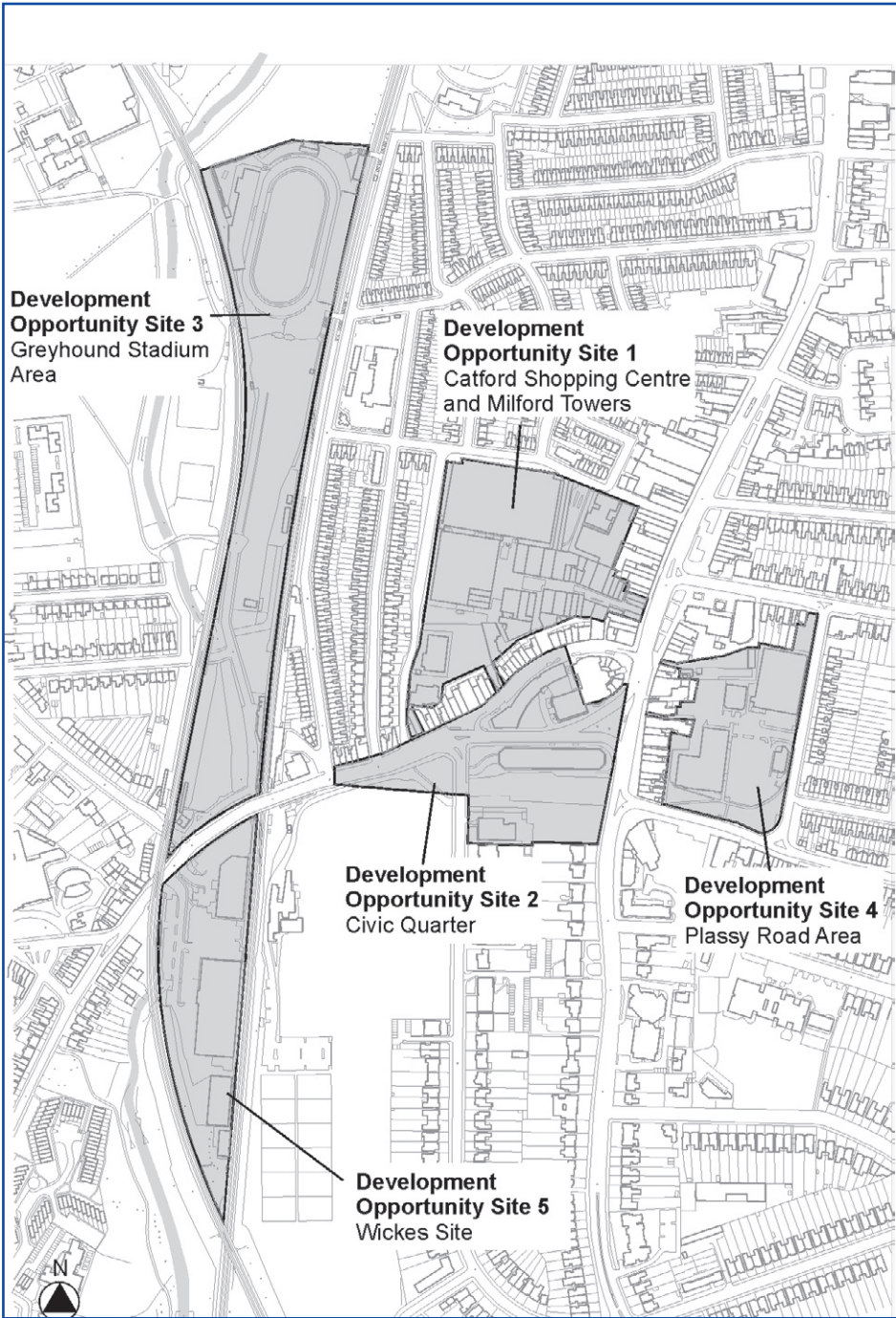


Figure 8 - Development Opportunity Sites in Catford Town Centre

13.0 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

SITE 1 - Catford SHOPPING CENTRE AND MILFORD TOWERS

13.1 Introduction

Catford Shopping Centre and Milford Towers includes approximately 3.3 hectares of land to the rear of Rushey Green high street and Catford Broadway and is bounded to the north and west by Holbeach Road and Thomas Lane. At ground level, it comprises the Catford Shopping Centre (including a Tesco supermarket), a multi-storey car park, a surface level car park, a derelict workshop, the Holbeach Road Job Centre, an indoor market (Catford Mews) and a number of properties on Catford Broadway and Rushey Green. Above the Shopping Centre are a service deck and a residential estate "Milford Towers" that consist of four five-storey blocks totalling 276 flats.

Catford Shopping Centre and Milford Towers formed part of the Catford Urban Design Framework and Development Strategy. The issues and options identified for the area have been based on the outcomes of the consultation that formed part of that study.

13.2 Planning policies

Catford Shopping Centre is located within the town centre boundary and forms the bulk of the 'core shopping area' in Catford. In this area, existing planning policies seek to ensure that at least 70% of retail uses are shop (A1) uses, a level which is currently being achieved in the core shopping area. More generally, existing planning policy in relation to the shopping uses on the site seek to enhance their appeal to the community and to increase their vitality and viability.

In relation to Milford Towers, existing planning policies seek to prevent the loss of housing, seeking to ensure that the existing number of dwellings is not reduced by refurbishment or redevelopment. This is important in the context of the Council review of Milford Towers in relation to achieving the Decent Homes Standards. Existing policies also recognise the need to provide more housing across the borough, with town centre locations being a suitable (and desirable) location.

More specific policies relate to the old market site which is now used as a public car park. Existing policies propose that this land be redeveloped for shopping uses and for a pedestrian connection between Winslade Way and Catford Broadway.

National Planning Policy and the London Plan both seek to promote the maximum

use of development opportunity sites such as the Catford Shopping Centre Area given its location within a town centre and the excellent public transport available.

13.3 Issues

Figure 9 outlines the Catford Shopping Centre and Milford Towers' key opportunities and constraints that will need to be considered as part of the Area Action Plan and the designation of future uses in this area. It is considered that the Catford Area Action Plan should seek to address the following key issues:-

- The future land uses and intensity of development to be part of any redevelopment proposals. Catford Shopping Centre and Milford Towers is central to the regeneration of the town centre and future uses will be an important element of how successful the regeneration of the area is.
- Options to improve the design of the development opportunity sites, in particular to create a more appealing shopping environment, to make the shopping centre more attractive to existing and potentially new retailers, and to bring Milford Towers up to 2010 Decent Homes Standards.

Question 38

Are there any other issues which should be addressed for the Catford Shopping Centre and Milford Towers Site which are not shown on Figure 9?

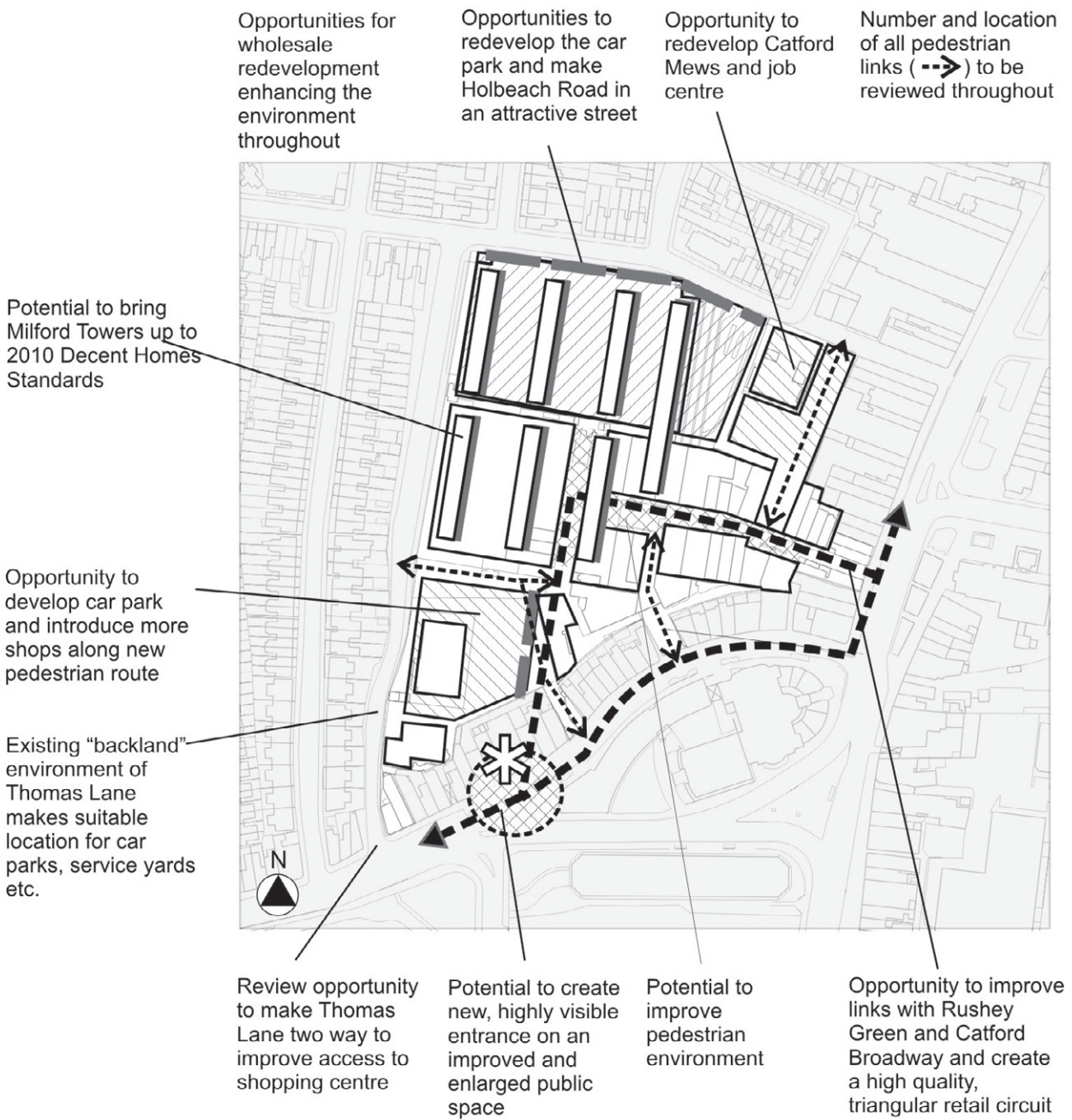


Figure 9 - Opportunities and constraints

13.4 Options for the Catford Shopping Centre and Milford Towers Site

Future land uses

Section 4 of this report has already discussed the possible future uses in the core shopping area and it is considered that at ground floor level shopping and retailing will continue to be the dominant use. It is also considered that the old market site represents a logical location to introduce additional retail floorspace into the centre if demand exists. This may involve a possible extension of the existing supermarket located to the north but may also involve a new separate use.

In relation to Milford Towers and the space above Catford Shopping Centre, the need for the Council to take measures to meet the Decent Homes Standards is an important consideration for its future. Preliminary research indicates that considerable works will be needed to bring the estate up to the standard and this has resulting in the Council considering the merits of comprehensively redeveloping the estate with new housing.

Regardless of whether Milford Towers is refurbished or redeveloped, it is considered that housing is the only on-going use suitable for the space above Catford Shopping Area. This is owing to the need to ensure that the number of houses is not reduced as part of any redevelopment (an important existing planning policy as well as a London Plan direction) and the reality that the site is an excellent location for housing and can assist the borough in meeting the housing needs of the community.

Design options and ideas

Ways to improve the design of the development opportunity site could include:

- Widening and possibly relocating the pedestrian entrances to the Shopping Centre on Rushey Green and Catford Broadway and creating a retail circuit linking Winslade Way with other shops, facilities and spaces in the town centre
- “Designing out crime” by introducing an animated street frontage on the main pedestrian routes to and through the site
- Partly or wholly redeveloping the Shopping Centre, introducing buildings of a high quality design
- Introducing a number of tall buildings to emphasise key views into the development
- Making Holbeach Road an attractive street by redeveloping the multi-storey car park and the Job Centre
- Bringing Milford Towers up to 2010 Decent Homes Standards
- Making changes to the layout of the site to create clear distinction between places for people and places for cars, bins and service vehicles
- Making Thomas Lane two-way to improve vehicle access to the site and direct cars away from residential streets

Question 39

What do you think about the proposed land uses for the Development Opportunity Site?

Question 40

What do you think of the above ideas for addressing the key design issues affecting Catford Shopping Centre Area and Milford Towers?

Question 41

Are there any other ideas and proposals for the Catford Shopping Centre and Milford Towers you want the Council to consider?

14.0 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

SITE 2 - THE CIVIC QUARTER

14.1 Introduction

The Civic Quarter includes areas of land to the north and south of Laurence House. The area is affected by Transport for London's long-standing plans to realign the South Circular to the south of Laurence House.

The Civic Quarter therefore includes two potential development opportunity sites:

- Land to the north of Laurence House. This includes the space currently occupied by the South Circular and/or the area cleared if the Town Hall and Civic Suite were to be demolished. The Grade II listed Broadway Theatre abuts this site
- Land to the south of Laurence House. Currently, this comprises a (temporary) surface car park for Council employees, a lorry park and telephone exchange building. The site is bounded to the south by the Culverley Green Conservation Area

The Civic Quarter formed part of the Catford Urban Design Framework and Development Strategy. The issues and options identified for the area have been based on the outcomes of the consultation that formed part of that study.

14.2 Planning policies

The Civic Quarter is a real development opportunity for Catford Town Centre given that the realignment of the South Circular (A205) has the potential to create new spaces and sites within the town centre. In this regard, the existing planning framework is somewhat a blank canvas. In general, existing policies would seek to ensure that whatever uses are planned for these sites enhance the appeal of Catford Town Centre in terms of physical appearance as well as a shopping/leisure destination. Beyond general directions, a key part of the Area Action Plan will be to set a direction for these sites.

14.3 Issues

Figure 10 outlines the Civic Quarter's key opportunities and constraints that will need to be considered as part of the Area Action Plan and the designation of future uses in this area.

It is considered that the Catford Area Action Plan should seek to address the following key issues:

Land to the north of Laurence House

- The future uses of the sites as part of any redevelopment. This area has the potential to become the new people orientated focus of Catford Town Centre and land uses in this area should seek to support this aspiration. Most of the opportunities provided in this area are dependant on the realignment of the South Circular.
- Options to improve the design of the area, and in particular to create people-orientated streets and spaces

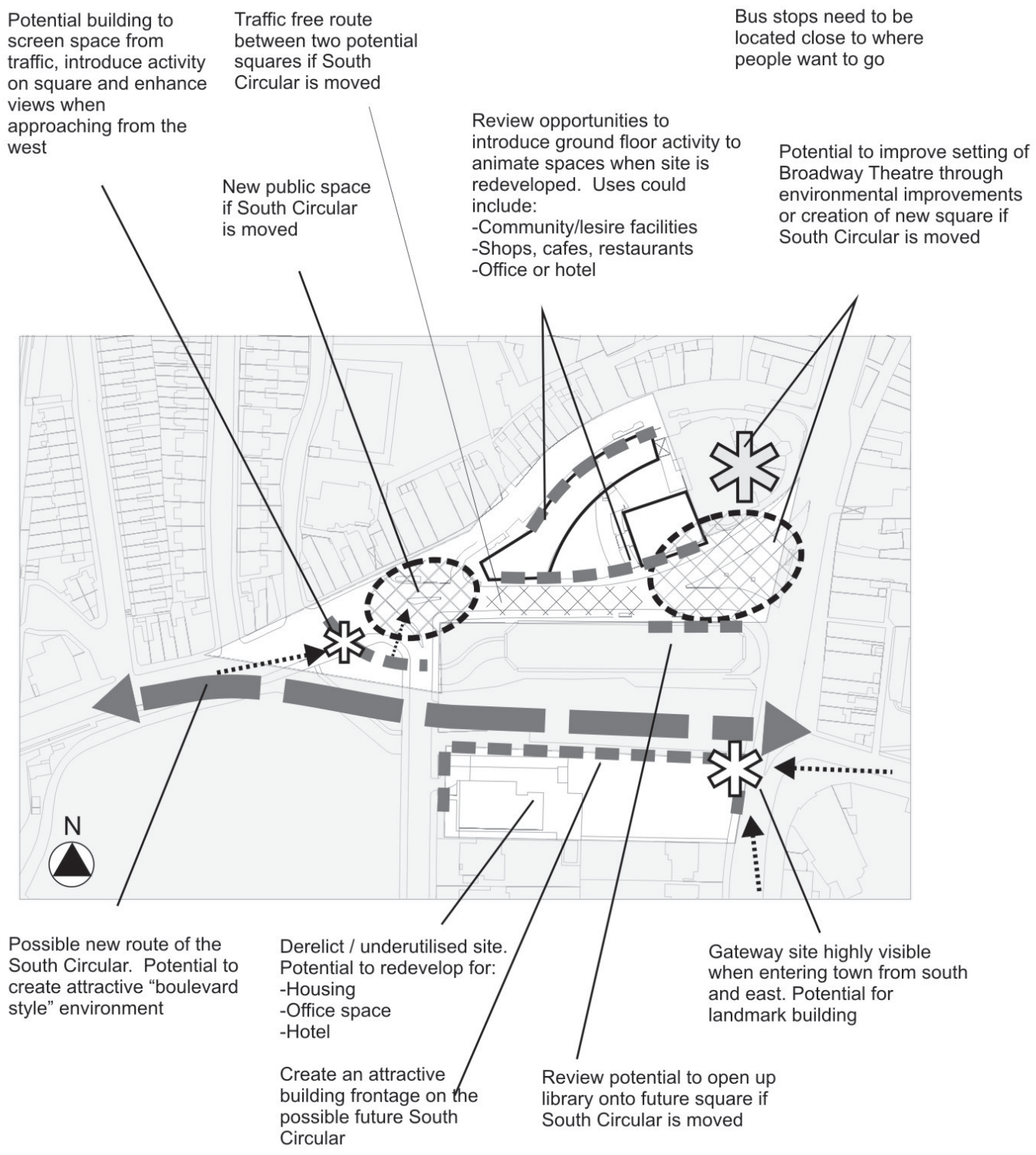


Figure 10 - Opportunities and constraints of Development Opportunity Site 2 - Civic Quarter

Land to the south of Laurence House

- The future uses of the site as part of any redevelopment. Site 2B is current 'at the back' of Catford Town Centre but the realignment of the South Circular has the potential to give this site a much larger profile and resolve the planning issues relating to this area so that a beneficial development can proceed. In pursuing any redevelopment of the site, issues relating to the future of the lorry park and the residential areas abutting the site to the south are important considerations.
- Options to improve the design of the area, and in particular ways to enhance the image of Catford Town Centre considering the high visibility of the site, especially if the South Circular to be realigned.

Question 42

Are there any other issues which should be addressed for the Civic Quarter Sites which are not shown on Figure 10?

14.4 Options for the Civic Quarter Development Opportunity Site

Land uses for the area north of Laurence House

Most of the land use opportunities opened up in this area would have an open space use (public square, outdoor dining, environmental improvements). To support the regeneration of Catford Broadway as well as land between Catford Broadway and Laurence House, active uses on ground floor levels would be necessary and this may involve restaurant and other leisure orientated uses. On-going Council office uses above the ground / lower levels could be appropriate but consideration of the potential for housing and other uses which will bring people into the area during the evenings / weekends would also be desirable uses to support the people orientated focus of this area.

Design options and ideas for the area north of Laurence House

Ways to improve the design of the development opportunity site could include:

- Introducing environmental improvements around the Broadway Theatre to improve the setting of this landmark building

- Making improvements to Catford Broadway and the street market, including the triangular space to the west of the Town Hall
- Introducing buildings of high design standard if the Town Hall and Civic Suite are redeveloped. The buildings should take account of the scale and character of surrounding buildings, including the listed Broadway Theatre and the two-storey development on Catford Broadway
- Moving traffic to the south of Laurence House and create a pedestrian friendly, public space at the heart of the town centre ("Catford Square")
- Increasing the size of the existing space to the west of the Town Hall to create a spacious square outside the (potential) redeveloped Catford Shopping Centre
- Animating existing and newly created spaces by "opening up" existing buildings (Catford Library, Council Access Point, Civic Suite) or introducing new buildings that address the street
- Locating bus stops in easy reach of places where people want to go

Future land uses for the area south of Laurence House

Future land uses that may be appropriate on this site include housing given the need for new housing in the borough. It may also be possible to introduce commercial development at the ground / lower floor levels. This could ideally include new office development to compliment and build on the office function of Laurence House but as mentioned in Section 6, there is limited private sector demand for office space in the town centre. Other commercial uses could include leisure uses (restaurants and bars) or even some limited retailing floorspace that can compliment the other parts of the town centre. Section 6 of this report also highlighted the key criteria required to support a hotel / visitor's accommodation enterprise and this site, given its future high visibility, may be a suitable location to encourage such facilities.

Design options and ideas for the area south of Laurence House

Ways to improve the design of the development opportunity site could include:

- Introducing buildings of good design to transform the "blighted" look of the development opportunity site
- Facilitating the development of a landmark building on Rushey Green. This could serve to enhance the arrival experience for those entering the town centre from the south and east
- Creating a sympathetic transition between Catford Town Centre and the Culverley Green Conservation Area
- Defining and enhancing site boundaries by introducing vegetation (trees and shrubs) if the site can not (yet) be developed
- Designing the new South Circular to become a spacious and attractive boulevard

Question 43

What do you think about the proposed land uses for the Development Opportunity Sites?

Question 44

What do you think of the above ideas for addressing the key design issues affecting the Civic Quarter?

Question 45

Are there any other ideas and proposals for the Civic Quarter you want the Council to consider?

15.0 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

SITE 3 - THE GREYHOUND STADIUM AREA

15.1 Introduction

The Greyhound Stadium Area includes approximately 4.7 hectares of land located between the Catford and Catford Bridge railway lines, north of the South Circular. Prior to its demolition, Catford's Greyhound Stadium was located here. Currently it comprises large areas of vacant and under-utilised land as well as some light industrial uses. In the southern part of the site are Catford and Catford Bridge railway stations. Vehicles access is via Westbourne Road, a residential street. The River Ravensbourne runs in a concrete channel diagonally through the site.

The Greyhound Stadium Area formed part of the Catford Urban Design Framework and Development Strategy. The issues and options identified for the area have been based on the outcomes of the consultation that formed part of that study.

15.2 Planning policy

The Greyhound Stadium Site is physically separated from the rest of the town centre by the railway line and as such is not currently within the Catford Town Centre boundary. Section 3 of this report has already outlined the option of including this site within the town centre boundary. The site is also designated as being within a Sustainable Living Area, meaning more intense uses are appropriate. Other existing policy directions for this site include a specific policy seeking the redevelopment of this site for a mix of recreation, leisure, housing, the Waterway Link, business uses, station improvements and better pedestrian linkages. The Area Action Plan will seek to provide a more detailed strategic direction for the future of this site.

National Planning Policy and the London Plan both seek to promote the maximum use of development areas such as the Greyhound Stadium given its location in close proximity of the town centre and the excellent public transport facilities available.

15.3 Issues

Figure 11 outlines the Greyhound Stadium Area's key opportunity and constraints which will need to be considered as part of the Area Action Plan and the designation of future uses in this area. It is considered that the Catford Area Action Plan should seek to address the following key issues:

- The future uses and intensity of development of the site in particular considering the access constraints of the site
- Options to improve the design of the development opportunity site. In particular this should consider opportunities to improve the appearance of the site from the South Circular and the physical and visual links between the town centre, the site and Ladywell Fields
- The need to improve the railway station environment as set out in Section 8 of this report

Question 46

Are there any other issues which should be addressed for the Greyhound Stadium Area Development Opportunity Site which are not shown on Figure 11?

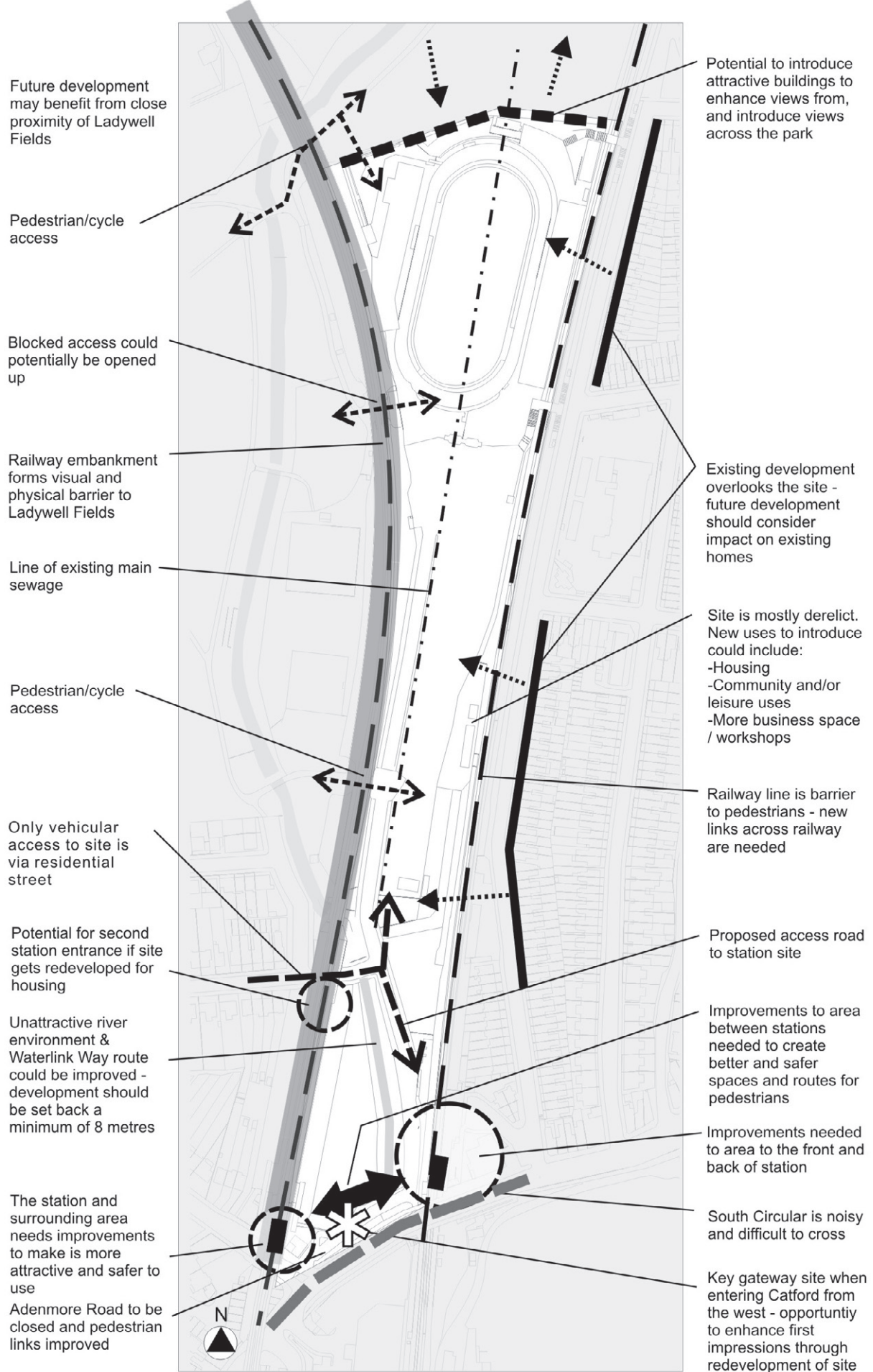


Figure 11 - Development opportunities and constraints

15.4 Options for the Greyhound Stadium Area Development Opportunity Site

Future land uses

Figure 8 of this report has already identified concepts and proposals for the future improvement and use of the land between the railway lines. In considering the future uses for the disused and now demolished Greyhound Stadium the first consideration to be made is whether, given its location, retail and shopping uses are appropriate on the site. The evidence base for the Area Action Plan offers some potential for new retail development however it is not considered that sufficient growth in retailing in the town centre exists to consider such uses on this site. It may also be difficult to physically accommodate such uses on the site given the limited range of accesses to the site (particularly for vehicles) and the proposal to close the Adenmore Road / Ravensbourne Park / South Circular intersection.

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the site would be most appropriate for a housing-led regeneration scheme and such a proposal is currently in the preliminary stages of planning by English Partnerships, the owner of the land. Such a use would support the delivery of new houses in the borough as required to meet housing need.

It is increasingly recognised however that a mix of uses can bring additional benefits to a housing led proposal and provide facilities and services to the new residents as well as to existing surrounding residents. Whilst a significant level of retail development is not considered to be appropriate, there may be scope on the site to incorporate a mixture of community and small-scale commercial uses, particularly associated with the area around the stations.

Design options and ideas

Ways to improve the design of the development opportunity site could include:

- Facilitating the development of a gateway building on the South Circular, making a clear and bold design statement to mark the entrance to Catford Town Centre. This could improve the arrival experience for those entering the town from the west.
- Introducing development of high design quality, in particular at highly visible locations such as the area overlooking Ladywell Fields and on the South Circular
- Introducing buildings that are sympathetic to the scale and character of adjacent development, in particular the properties on Dogget Road that overlook the site
- Introducing improvements to the River Ravensbourne to “soften” the concrete channel and make the river more visible
- Clearing away overgrown vegetation on the site

- Creating new pedestrian routes through the site linking Catford Town Centre and Ladywell Fields with new and existing residential areas to the east and west of the railway lines
- Introducing buildings to overlook pedestrian routes and public spaces to help prevent crime
- Improving Waterlink Way cycle and pedestrian route
- Facilitating the redevelopment of Catford Station ticket office, possible combining the facility with a new gateway building (see also Section 8)
- Improving the area between Catford Bridge and Catford Stations and strengthening the links between the two (see also Section 8)
- Enhancing station and ticketing facilities, making the stations easier to use (see also Section 8)

Question 47

What do you think about the proposed land uses for the Development Opportunity Site?

Question 48

What do you think of the above ideas for addressing the key design issues affecting the Greyhound Stadium Area?

Question 49

Are there any other ideas and proposals for the Greyhound Stadium Area you want the Council to consider?

16.0 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

SITE 4 – THE PLASSY ROAD AREA

16.1 Introduction

The Plassy Road Area comprises approximately 1.9 hectares of land located to the rear of the Rushey Green high street and bounded by the Catford gyrator system. It comprises the Catford Island Retail Park (Lidl, JB Sports, Mecca Bingo, Dreams & McDonalds), a timber yard, some individual shop units fronting Brownhill Road, and the existing walk-through access to Rushey Green. A large part of this area is currently made up of surface level car parking, with vehicle access to the area directly from Plassy Road and a second vehicle access to the timber yard from Rushey Green. This site adjoins to the south land which has been set aside for the realignment of the South Circular.

16.2 Planning policies

Planning policies for this area show the entire development opportunity site being located within the existing Catford Town Centre boundary, with the units comprising Catford Island Retail Park being defined as a 'non-core' shopping areas meaning commercial uses other than shops are generally acceptable.

National Planning Policy and the London Plan both seek to promote the maximum use of development opportunity sites such as the Plassy Road area given its location within a town centre and the excellent public transport available.

16.3 Issues

Figure 12 below outlines the Plassy Road area's key opportunity and constraints which will need to be considered as part of the Area Action Plan and the designation of future uses in this area. Following this review, it is considered that the following are the key issues which the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan should seek to address:

- The future land uses and intensity of development as part of any redevelopment of the site. From a land use perspective the Plassy Road Site is currently underutilised. The extent of the surface level car park and the lack of uses above ground floor represent the failure to capitalise fully on the sites location in relation to Catford Town Centre and access to the wider area provided by the public transport network available.
- Options to improve the design of the development opportunity site. In particular, this should consider the way in which the site may contribute to an improved image of Catford Town Centre, and the way in which the need of people and pedestrians are considered in the design process.

Question 50

Are there any other issues which should be addressed for the Plassy Road Development Opportunity Site which are not shown on Figure 12.

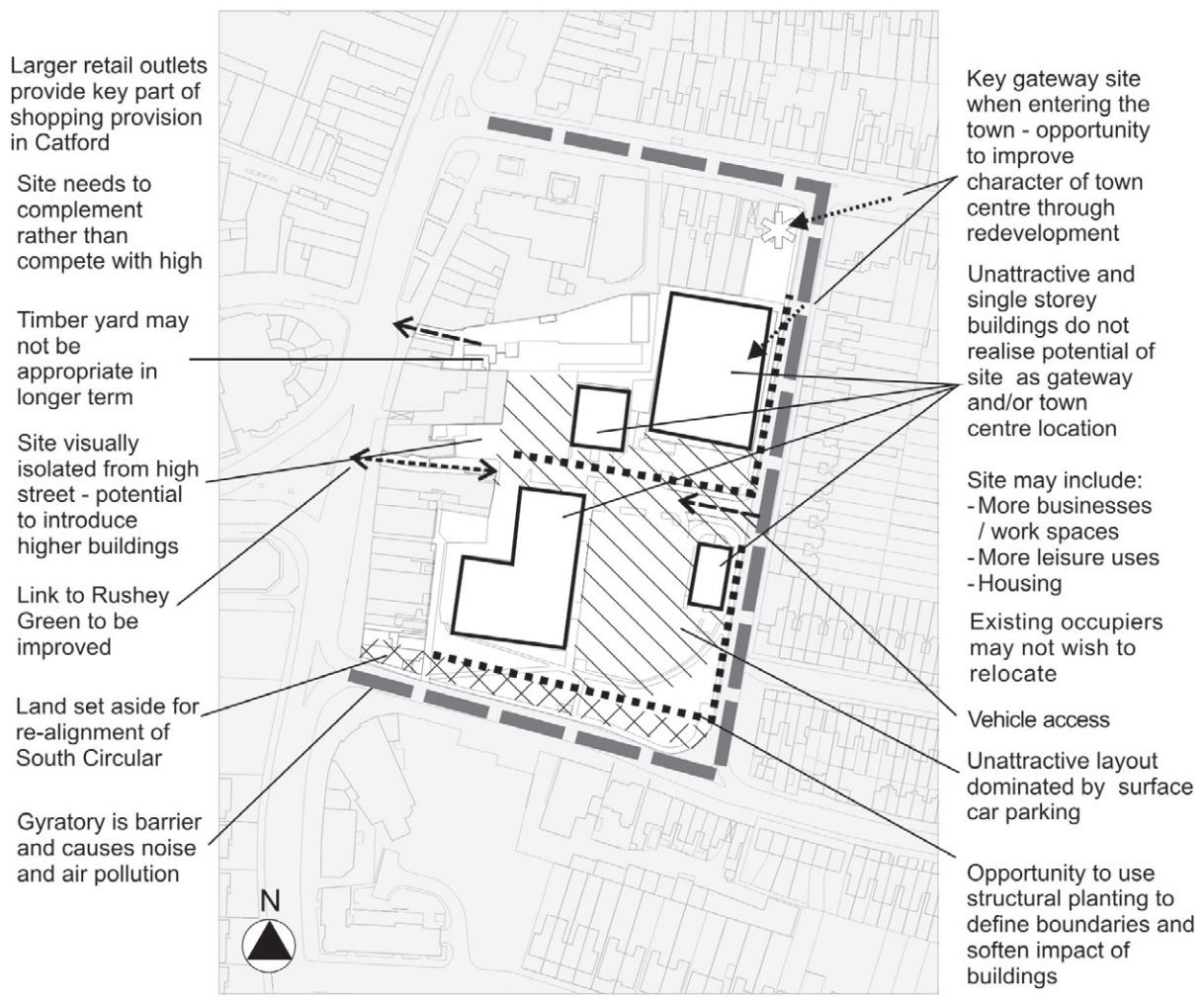


Figure 12 - Development opportunities and constraints

16.4 Options for the Plassy Road Area Development Opportunity Site

Future land uses

Section 4 has already discussed the future retail uses on the Plassy Road Site and it is considered that retail uses will continue to form a key part of the uses on the site.

The real potential for the site's regeneration is better utilising the space above ground / lower level retail uses, and to this end it is considered that like many development opportunity sites in Catford Town Centre residential development would represent the best use of the land. Given the prominence of the site a hotel or visitors accommodation use, where possible, may also be a desirable use. Leisure uses (restaurants/bars) may also be appropriate and contribute to the vitality of the town centre. It is not considered that office accommodation would be viable on the site.

Design options and ideas

Ways to improve the design of the development opportunity site could include:

- Facilitating the development of a new gateway feature on the corner of Plassy Road and Brownhill. This may be either a new building making a clear and bold design statement to mark the entrance to Catford Town Centre and/or public art such as a sculpture in this area. This could improve the arrival experience for those entering the town centre from the east.
- Introducing more vegetation (trees and shrubs) into the development, including the boundaries, to help define the site and to soften and improve its appearance.
- Improving the interface between Catford Town Centre and the residential area to the immediate east by considering and responding to the scale and character of this area.
- Creating a road corridor environment that is more pedestrian friendly, easier to cross and where the domination of the motorcar is reduced

- Reviewing the need for, and location of, existing surface level car parking on the site.
- Enhancing pedestrian links from the site to Rushey Green, the rest of the town centre and east of Plassy Road.

Question 51

What do you think of the proposed land uses for the Plassy Road Area?

Question 52

What do you think of the above design ideas and proposals for addressing the key issues affecting the Site?

Question 53

Are there any other ideas and proposals for the Plassy Road Area that you want the Council to consider?

17.0 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

SITE 5 - WICKES SITE

17.1 Introduction

The Wickes site is located between the Catford and Catford Bridge Railway lines to the south of the South Circular. The site is approximately 2 hectares and accommodates several large retail outlets and some light industrial uses. A large part of the site is taken up by two surface level car parks, each with their own separate access directly from the South Circular. The River Ravensbourne cuts diagonally through the site, but is covered and invisible. The Waterway Link cycle route runs across the site and provides a direct link with the Greyhound Stadium Area and the Catford and Catford Bridge railway stations.

17.2 Planning policies

Like the former Greyhound Stadium site, the Wickes site is also physically separated from the rest of the town centre by the railway line and as such is not currently within the Catford Town Centre boundary. Section 3 of this report outlines the option of including this site within the town centre boundary. The site is not currently designated for any specific use, although the Waterway Link is shown passing through the site.

National and the London Plan seek to promote maximum use of development sites such as the Wickes site given its location close to a town centre and the excellent public transport available.

17.3 Issues

Figure 13 outlines the Wickes Site's key opportunities and constraints that will need to be considered as part of the Area Action Plan and the designation of future uses in this area.

In summary, it is considered that the Catford Town Centre Action Area Plan should seek to address the following key issues:

- The future land uses and intensity of development as part of any redevelopment of the site. Like the Plassy Road Site, from a land use perspective the Wickes site is currently underutilised. The extent of the surface level car park and the lack of uses above ground floor represent the failure to capitalise fully on the sites location in relation to Catford Town Centre as well as the access to the wider area provided by the railway stations opposite.
- Options to improve the design of the development opportunity site. In particular, this should consider the way in which the site may contribute to an improved image of Catford Town Centre, the role of the River Ravensbourne, and the way people and pedestrians are catered for.

Question 54

Are there any other issues which should be addressed for the Wickes Development Opportunity Site which are not shown on Figure 13?

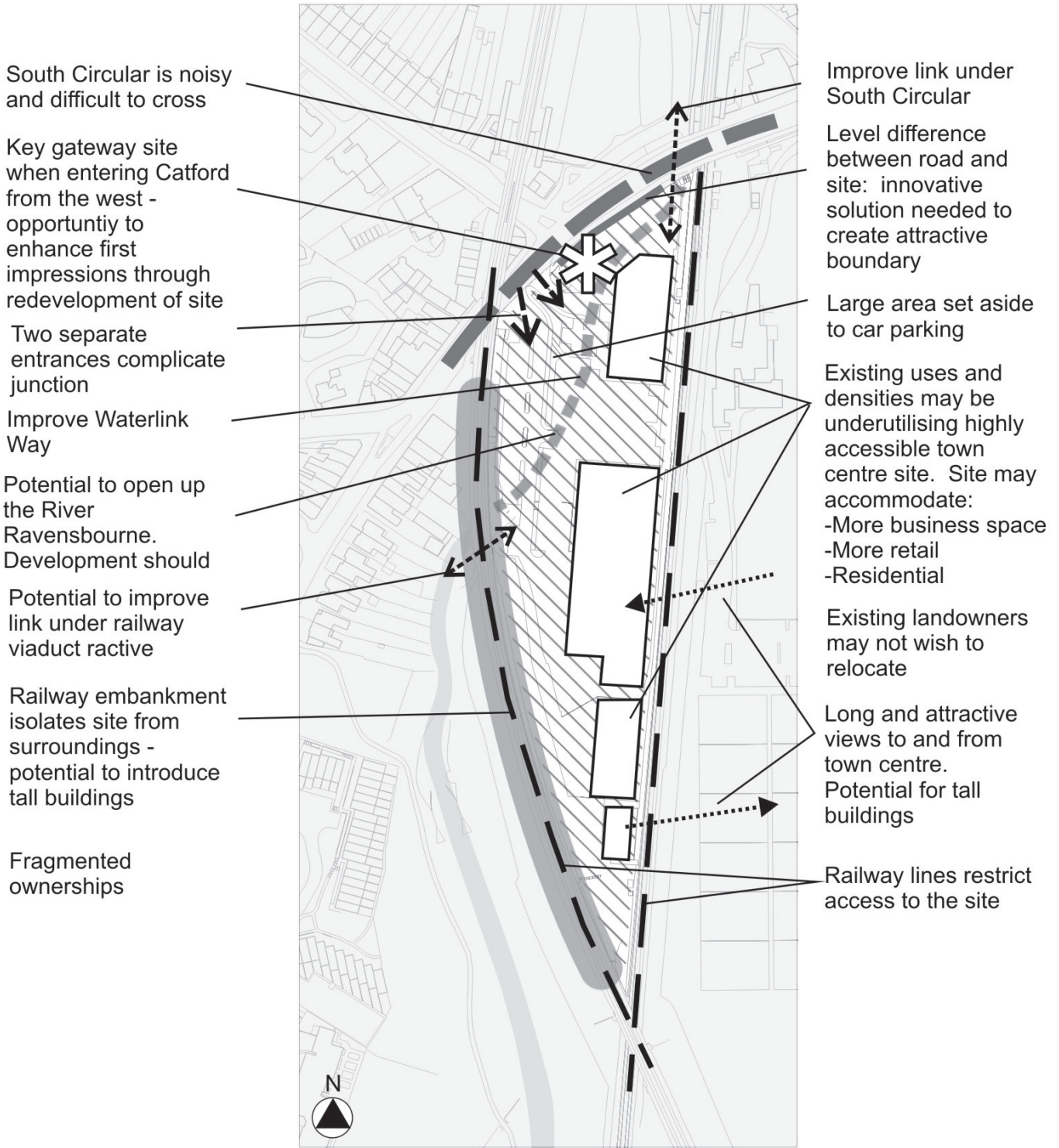


Figure 13 - Development opportunities and constraints

17.4 Options for the Wickes Development Opportunity Site

Future land uses

Section 4 has already discussed the future retail uses on the Wickes Site and it is considered that retail uses will continue to form a key part of the uses on the site.

The real potential for the site's regeneration is better utilising the space above ground / lower level retail uses, and to this end it is considered that like many development opportunity sites in Catford Town Centre residential development would represent the best use of the land. Given the prominence of the site a hotel or visitors accommodation use, where possible, may also be a desirable use. It is not considered that office accommodation would be viable on the site and focusing leisure uses (restaurants/bars) in locations more central to the town centre may mean the site is not ideal for such uses either.

Design options and ideas

Ways to improve the design of the site could include:

- Facilitating the development of a gateway feature on the South Circular. This could include a new, possibly tall building making a clear and bold design statement to mark the entrance to Catford Town Centre and/or public art such as a sculpture or colourful lighting at this location. This could improve the arrival experience for those entering the town from the west
- Improving the definition of the boundaries of the site. This may include vegetation to soften the impact of buildings and car parks or attractive new buildings with activity on the ground floor
- Facilitating the development of tall buildings that overlook the sport fields and form an attractive backdrop to Catford Town Centre to the east
- Reviewing the potential to open up the river Ravensbourne thus creating an attractive feature for the site
- Making the junction with the South Circular and Ravenbourne Park easier to cross by combining the two vehicle access routes into the site and introducing pedestrian crossing facilities
- Enhancing pedestrian and cycle links under the South Circular and Catford railway line and across the site
- Facilitating the development of buildings that define and overlook pedestrian routes through and adjacent to the site, including the South Circular

Question 55

What do you think of the proposed land uses for the Wickes Site?

Question 56

What do you think of the above ideas and proposals for addressing the design issues affecting the Wickes site?

Question 57

Are there any other ideas and proposals for the Wickes site you want the Council to consider?

18.0 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CONSIDERATIONS

The Development Policies document currently being prepared by the Council will set out a series of generic development control policies that will be used to help make decisions on planning applications, including applications for development within Catford Town Centre. The policies in the Development Policies document will be general in nature as they will apply across the borough and must therefore be capable of being adapted to a range of circumstances.

The Council considers that the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan should set the strategic direction for the town centre but that the general development control policies applying to the rest of the borough can equally apply to Catford Town Centre. The emerging directions of the Development Policies document can be seen in the Core Strategy / Development Policies Issues and Options Papers prepared and consulted on by the Council in between July and November 2005.

The type of matters proposed to be included in the Development Policies document include matters relating to parking rates, density, amenity policies, open space policies and many others.

Question 58

Are there any planning matters (not previously discussed in this report) which require a specific policy response in Catford Town Centre that would not apply elsewhere in the borough?

It would be most helpful if those suggesting matters in response to the above could provide details as to what special features they believe exist in Catford Town Centre which warrant a separate policy approach to development control matters from the rest of the borough.

19.0 CONCLUSION

This report has sought to provide an overview of the issues Catford Town Centre needs to address and some of the ways forward to creating the type of place reflected in the aspirations outlined in Section 1. The Council wants to hear from the community and stakeholders about how they think Catford Town Centre should move forward.

More particularly, feedback on what the community think of the ideas presented in this report, what improvements could be made, which are preferred, and what options haven't yet been considered that the community would like considered, are the types of things the Council wants to hear. In thinking about the information presented, it must be remembered that the preferred options arising out of this report may not be a single discreet idea or proposal as presented but rather may be a combination of a range of directions taking the best parts of each.

Future stages will involve the Council considering what the community have told us and developing a series of draft preferred options which will be the subject of further consultation. Consideration of implementation and how the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan will be monitored will also form part of future stages.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1 – STATUTORY CONTEXT

A1 local development framework

The Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan, when adopted, will be a Development Plan Document forming part of the Lewisham Local Development Framework. The Local Development Framework is a series of planning documents which collectively provide the planning strategy and policies for the London Borough of Lewisham. Being a part of the Local Development Framework will give the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan a firm statutory basis upon which decisions on planning applications can be made.

More information about the Lewisham Local Development Framework can be obtained in the Council publication 'A Guide to the New Planning System – Introducing Lewisham's Local Development Framework'.

A2 planning policy statement 12 – local development frameworks

Planning Policy Statement 12 (Government planning guidance) provides an outline of when an area action plan could be prepared. The Council has considered these in determining the suitability of Catford Town Centre for an area action plan. Planning Policy Statement 12 states the following:-

Area action plans should be used to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. A key feature of area action plans will be the focus on implementation. They should:

- deliver planned growth areas;
- stimulate regeneration;
- protect areas particularly sensitive to change;
- resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures; or
- focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiatives.

In areas of change, area action plans should identify the distribution of uses and their inter-relationships, including specific site allocations, and set the timetable for the implementation of the proposals. Further guidance, such as the layout of uses within these allocations and design requirements etc, may be provided in the relevant area action plan or in one or more supplementary planning documents in the form of a master plan. In areas of conservation, area action plans should set out the policies and proposals for action to preserve or enhance the area, including defining areas where specific conservation measures are proposed and areas which will be subject to specific controls over development.

A3 relationships with national and regional planning policy

Planning policy originates from all levels of government and the Council must ensure that its planning policies, like the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan, are consistent with National Planning Policy and in general conformity with the London Plan. The statutory process for preparing the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan involves an independent examination, one of the purposes of which is to assess whether the plan meets the above requirements. Appendix 2 provides an overview of the main directions arising out of National Planning Policy and the London Plan.

A4 relationship with other documents in the local development framework

The Local Development Framework is a series of planning documents. The following explains the relationships between the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan and the other relevant documents which are to be contained in the Lewisham Local Development Framework.

- Spatial (Core) Strategy is the main planning document for the whole of Lewisham and it will set out the overall strategic direction for Catford Town Centre along with the rest of the borough.
- The Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan will provide the detailed policies and implementation mechanisms needed to advance the strategic directions set out in the Spatial (Core) Strategy.
- The Development Policies Document will contain a series of generic development control policies. The Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan will provide its own development control policies where they are required in order to respond to local circumstances. Where the generic development control policies are appropriate, the Area Action Plan will identify them as applying to Catford Town Centre.

APPENDIX 2 – NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

A1 national planning policy

Planning Policy Statement 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) provides an overview of the Governments key policies for the planning system. In preparing development plans (such as the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan), PPS1 advises planning authorities to:-

(i) Promote national, regional, sub-regional and local economies by providing, in support of the Regional Economic Strategy, a positive planning framework for sustainable economic growth to support efficient, competitive and innovative business, commercial and industrial sectors.

(ii) Promote urban and rural regeneration to improve the well being of communities, improve facilities, promote high quality and safe development and create new opportunities for the people living in those communities. Policies should promote mixed use developments for locations that allow the creation of linkages between different uses and can thereby create more vibrant places.

(iii) Promote communities which are inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free, whilst respecting the diverse needs of communities and the special needs of particular sectors of the community.

(iv) Bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing, for industrial development, for the exploitation of raw materials such as minerals, for retail and commercial development, and for leisure and recreation - taking into account issues such as accessibility and sustainable transport needs, the provision of essential infrastructure, including for sustainable waste management, and the need to avoid flood risk and other natural hazards.

(v) Provide improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car, while recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas.

(vi) Focus developments that attract a large number of people, especially retail, leisure and office development, in existing centres to promote their vitality and viability, social inclusion and more sustainable patterns of development.

(vii) Reduce the need to travel and encourage accessible public transport provision to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development. Planning should actively manage patterns of urban growth to make the fullest use of public transport and focus development in existing centres and near to major public transport interchanges.

(viii) Promote the more efficient use of land through higher density, mixed use development and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings. Planning should seek actively to bring vacant and underused previously developed land and buildings back into beneficial use to achieve the targets the Government has set for development on previously developed land.

(ix) Enhance as well as protect biodiversity, natural habitats, the historic environment and landscape and townscape character.

(x) Address, on the basis of sound science, the causes and impacts of climate change, the management of pollution and natural hazards, the safeguarding of natural resources, and the minimisation of impacts from the management and use of resources.

In relation to design, PPS1 sets out that planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design. It continues to outline the following: -

High quality and inclusive design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process. High quality and inclusive design should create well-mixed and integrated developments which avoid segregation and have well-planned public spaces that bring people together and provide opportunities for physical activity and recreation. It means ensuring a place will function well and add to the overall character and quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. This requires carefully planned, high quality buildings and spaces that support the efficient use of resources. Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are clearly factors in achieving these objectives, securing high quality and inclusive design goes far beyond aesthetic considerations. Good design should:

- address the connections between people and places by considering the needs of people to access jobs and key services;
- be integrated into the existing urban form and the natural and built environments;
- be an integral part of the processes for ensuring successful, safe and inclusive villages, towns and cities;

- create an environment where everyone can access and benefit from the full range of opportunities available to members of society; and,
- consider the direct and indirect impacts on the natural environment.

Town centres are the spatial expression for a range of national planning policies, including Planning Policy Statement 6 – Town Centres. These policies identify town centres and their surrounds being principle locations for development and change. This is being driven by the following policy directions: -

- Capitalising on accessibility of town centres (particular non-car based transport);
- Locating high trip generating activities in town centres;
- Encouraging mixed use developments in town centres;
- Encouraging housing in and around town centres;
- Altering standard requirements in town centres to encourage new development (e.g. less car parking, higher densities);

- Requiring town centres to be the first preference for the location of new retail and leisure developments;
- Providing locations for businesses and employment;
- Developing the evening and night time economy;
- Meeting the needs of the community for goods and services.

A2 the London plan

The London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London) 2004 was prepared by the Mayor of London. It only deals with matters of strategic importance in accordance with the Greater London Authority Act 1999. The following is a brief overview of what the London Plan says about Catford Town Centre.

Key themes

The Mayor of London identifies sustainable development as a key theme driving the policies of the London Plan. In accordance with this, the London Plan supports the following: -

- Optimising the use of previously developed land;
- Using a design led approach to optimise the potential of sites;
- Ensuring that development occurs in locations that are currently, or are planned to be, accessible by walking, public transport and cycling;
- Ensuring that development occurs in locations that are accessible to town centres, employment, housing, shops and services.

Town centres

The London Plan identifies a network of town centres which are encouraged to be location for a full range of functions including retail, leisure, employment services and community facilities. It seeks to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres through high density, mixed use development and environmental improvement (Policy 2A.5).

The suburbs

The London Plan promotes policies for suburban London, encouraging spatial strategies that promote change and enhance the quality of life of suburban London. In particular, it encourages retail, leisure, key commercial activity and services to be focused on town centres and to promote areas around town centres with good access (public transport, walking) as appropriate for higher density and mixed use development (Policy 2A.6).

Housing

The London Plan has a strong focus on increasing London's supply of housing, with a housing target for each borough being established. The Local Development Framework will need to accommodate the London Plans housing target and in doing so, will need to carefully manage increased densities whilst balancing the existing valued qualities of the boroughs housing areas.

In addition to increasing the overall supply of housing, the London Plan also seeks to increase the supply of affordable housing. The Mayor of London has a strategic direction for 50% of all new housing (from all sources) to be affordable. The London Plan encourages local authorities to set an affordable housing target having regard to the Mayor of London's target and local conditions.

Transport & transport infrastructure

The London Plan encourages the integration of transport and development by encouraging patterns and forms of development that reduce the need to travel (especially by car) and by supporting high trip generating development only at locations with high public transport accessibility and capacity (Policy 3C.1). The London Plan also requires that bus priority measures should be assisted by Local Development Frameworks (Policy 3C.13) and it identifies strategic walking routes, with the Thames Path and the South East London Green Chain crossing Lewisham (Policy 3C.20).

Waste

The London Plan aims to meet National policy in terms of waste being treated or disposed of within the region in which it is produced. In addition to this, requirements for recycling and composting need to be met. To support this the London Plan encourages: -

- The safeguarding of existing waste management sites;
- Identification of new sites for waste management;
- Promote waste facilities that have good access to river or rail transport;

The London Plan also encourages the recycling of aggregates, and the development and protection of sites and facilities to support aggregate recycling facilities (Policy 4A.1-4)

Energy & efficient use of water

The London Plan encourages energy efficiency and renewable energy (Policy 4A.7-13). It encourages: -

- The use of energy assessments in major developments;
- The generation of a proportion of major developments electricity and heating needs to come from renewables;
- The identification of sites for wind turbines;
- Maximising rain harvesting opportunities and using grey water recycling systems.

Design

The London Plan has a collection of policies grouped under the design theme. These include policies on achieving good design within developments but also in the public realm, encouraging sustainable design and construction, and protecting and conserving built heritage. View protection is contained in these policies, with two view lines from Greenwich Park to St Pauls Cathedral crossing Lewisham (Policy 4B.1-17).

The London Plan also encourages maximising the potential of sites in terms of intensity of use, seeking the highest

intensity of use compatible with the local context. To advance this the London Plan identifies residential density ranges for different contexts.

The blue ribbon network

The London Plan identifies the Blue Ribbon Network, which includes the Thames, the canal network, the other tributaries, rivers and streams within London and London's open water spaces such as docks. In Lewisham the London Plan identifies the Ravensbourne River as being part of this network. The effect of these policies in the London Plan is to protect the network, ensure the sustainable use of the network, consider flooding risk, protect land adjoining the network for river related uses, and to consider appropriate design and built form adjoining the network.

The London Plan also encourages the designation by local authorities of a Thames Policy Area, within which detailed appraisals should be prepared to provide a detailed planning framework for the River Thames.

APPENDIX 3 – RETAIL AND SHOPPING EVIDENCE BASE

This appendix provides a brief overview of the evidence base which the Council has considered in developing the options for retail and shopping outlined in Section 5.

A1 use classes – background information

The way the planning system controls uses is through what is called the use class order. These are regulations which set out uses into various groups which then determine whether planning approval is required for a use to commence or for a change of use. Where planning approval is not required, there is nothing the Council can do to influence changes. However, where the use class order requires planning approval for a change of use, the Council is able to consider that change against its planning policies such as the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan. To assist in explaining this section, the following overview summarises the use class order as it relates to shopping and retailing: -

CLASS	TYPE OF USES / DEVELOPMENTS	CHANGES ALLOWED BETWEEN DIFFERENT USE CLASSES
A1 SHOPS	Retail sales of goods to the public – Shops, post offices, travel agents, internet cafes.	No change to another use without planning approval.
A2 FINANCIAL & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	Banks, estate agents, betting shops.	An A2 use can only change to an A1 use where there is a ground floor display window. All other changes require planning approval.
A3 RESTAURANTS & CAFE	Restaurants and cafes – use for the sale of food for consumption on the premises.	An A3 use can change to an A1 or A2 use. All other changes require planning approval.
A4 DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS	Use as a public house, wine bar or other drinking establishment.	An A4 use can change to an A1, A2 or A3 use. All other changes require planning approval.
A5 HOT FOOD TAKAWAY	Use for the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.	An A5 use can change to an A1, A2 or A3 use. All other changes require planning approval.

NOTE 1 - A use can change to another use within the same class without planning permission (e.g. an A1 butchers can change to an A1 bakers without requiring planning permission).

NOTE 2 - The above relates to use only. Any buildings or works associated with a change in use may also require planning approval.

NOTE 3 - Prior to 2005, class A3, A4 and A5 were all incorporated into a single use class called A3.

Retail uses – existing situation (the evidence base)

Existing Uses

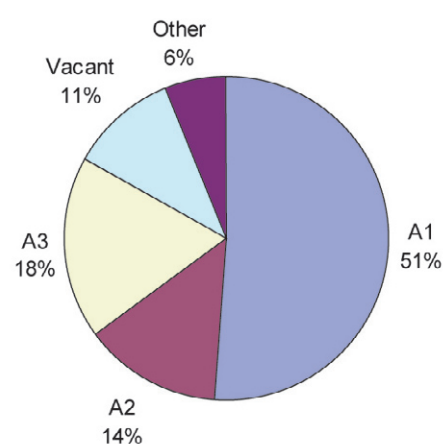
The Council regularly (every 1-2 years) undertakes surveys of all the boroughs major and district town centres to monitor changes and to ensure that planning policies are operating effectively. The last health check was undertaken in 2004 and for Catford Town Centre it found that there were 208 units overall within the town centre (note the health check does not include the Wickes Development Opportunity Site).

Historical Analysis

Historically, the town centre has seen the number of shops (A1 uses) decline since 1993 whilst the number of restaurants and cafes (A3 uses) have increased. This reflects the growing and increasing importance of the café & restaurant culture as part of Catford Town Centre and its further development (particular to support the leisure economy) is a key aspiration for Catford Town Centre. The existence of financial and professional services (A2 uses) in the town centre has remained fairly constant since 1993, whilst vacancies (which are currently quite low historically) have risen and fallen quite sharply since 1993.

Uses in Catford town centre (by use class) – 1993 – 2004

YEAR	A1	A2	A3	VACANT	OTHER	TOTAL
1993	55%	13%	11%	13%	8%	100%
1994	54%	13%	11%	13%	8%	100%
1995	56%	12%	12%	14%	7%	100%
1996	52%	12%	12%	17%	7%	100%
1997	54%	11%	12%	17%	6%	100%
1998	50%	12%	14%	18%	6%	100%
1999	50%	12%	12%	20%	6%	100%
2000	51%	13%	17%	11%	8%	100%
2001	50%	14%	17%	12%	7%	100%
2002	49%	14%	18%	12%	7%	100%
2004	51%	14%	18%	11%	6%	100%



Catford Town Centre uses – 2004

Core / Non-Core / Other Shopping Areas

The Unitary Development Plan currently contains policies for Catford Town Centre which divides the shopping areas into three different categories, each having different policy directions. These categories are:-

- Core shopping areas which encourage the units to be primarily used for shops (A1 uses), although exceptions to this exist which could allow up to 30% of the centre to be used for other uses (such as for services). Core shopping areas are intended to ensure that a main part of the town centre continues to provide for the shopping needs of the community.
- Non-core shopping areas which allow development or change of use from shops (A1 uses) provided it is to an financial and professional services uses (A2 uses), a restaurant / café (A3 uses), community use or amusement centre. This allows for a more mixed use area to be facilitated.
- Other shopping areas (those not categorised as core or non-core) where uses other than shops (A1) is deemed to be acceptable. These other areas tend to be on the periphery of the town centre and a more flexible approach is generally seen as suitable.

Figure 5 outlines the uses found in each of the categories in 2004 and it shows that in core areas, the policy would appear to be achieving what is intended as 70% of the uses are shops (A1 uses). In non-core areas, there is roughly an even split between shops (A1 uses) and other uses which demonstrates that a mix of uses is being facilitated. The other shopping areas have a mix of uses similar to the non-core areas, but the sometimes marginal nature of these periphery shopping areas is reflected in the fact that 18% (nearly 1 in 5) of the units were vacant at the time of the survey.

Uses in core / non-core areas in Catford town centre (by use class) – 2004 % by use class

Use Class	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	D1	D2	S/G	Vacant	Total
Core	70%	13%	9%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	4%	100%
Non Core	45%	15%	22%	3%	0%	1%	1%	2%	11%	100%
Other	45%	11%	16%	5%	0%	5%	0%	0%	18%	100%
Total	51%	14%	18%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%	11%	100%

Convenience / Comparison Shopping

Convenience shopping refers to units which provide everyday items for the community, such as food, drinks and newspapers (e.g. supermarkets, grocery store and butchers). Comparison shopping refers to units which provide items not obtained on a frequent basis by the community, such as clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods. The distinction between convenience shopping and comparison shopping is important as it is essential that Catford Town Centre continue into the future to meet the convenience shopping needs of the community whilst further developing its comparison shopping facilities which can attract people from further afield to the centre.

London Borough of Lewisham Retail Capacity Assessment (2004)

This study undertook a review of the future retail needs of the borough, including an assessment of a number of sites and their ability to contain new/expanded retail provision into the future. In summary, the study concluded that there is a need for additional retailing in the borough and that the minimum objective of the boroughs retail strategy should be to safeguard the borough's (and each centres) existing shopping role and market share within the sub-region.

In more detail, the Retail Capacity Assessment (2004) concluded that there is surplus expenditure on convenience goods at 2006 of £32.62 million and at 2011 of £62.82 million (which at 2011 could support additional convenience goods floorspace of between 5,710sq.m and 6,281sq.m). With regard to comparison goods, the study concluded that there is significant scope for additional development in the borough with surplus expenditure at 2006 of £52.06 rising to £281.86 in 2011 (which at 2011 could support additional comparison goods floorspace of 52,620sq.m).

Type of uses in core / non-core areas in Catford town centre – 2004

Type	Count				%			
	Core	Non Core	Other	Total	Core	Non Core	Other	Total
Vacant	2	13	7	22	4%	11%	18%	11%
Convenience	6	16	2	24	11%	14%	5%	12%
Comparison	24	14	7	45	45%	12%	18%	22%
Charity	2	3	0	5	4%	3%	0%	2%
Catering	5	26	6	37	9%	22%	16%	18%
Services/ Other	14	45	16	75	26%	38%	42%	36%

The above conclusions need to be considered in the context of strong competition from centres outside of the borough (in particular Bromley and Croydon) and the reality that the Council is committed to the development of Lewisham Town Centre from a major centre to a metropolitan centre. Lewisham Town Centre will therefore take up a large part of the increased floorspace to be provided in the borough.

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