

# 3

Task Two: Key objectives and priorities



### 3.0 Task Two: Key objectives and priorities

Since the Links Strategy was completed in 2007, Priority Route One improvements have been implemented, a number of development sites have gained planning permission, and the extension of the East London Line through Bridge House Meadows has been completed. This provides a greater degree of certainty over the future of the area, however there remains a degree of uncertainty about the timing of some of the proposed developments, and until they become committed with secured funding, their specific relevance in terms of the delivery or timing of new links and routes will remain fluid. Given this situation, it is considered important to develop a flexible approach to the prioritisation, scoping, timing and funding of new projects.

#### 3.1 Assessment criteria

The original Links Strategy identified a series of routes that were then prioritised, based on an assessment of their capacity to address local needs, their strategic importance, delivery prospects and 'strategic fit'. Without giving undue significance to the relationship of projects to the major development sites, this approach addressed many of the fundamental needs and issues within the area and provided a transparent basis on which to assess individual routes and projects. This approach remains valid and these principles have been maintained in the current Links 2012 Update.

The assessment criteria are:

##### 1) Local needs:

based on local neighbourhood scale access issues such as key routes (e.g. to schools, health facilities and local centres) and the concerns of local people (e.g. perceived public safety).

##### 2) Strategic importance:

connectivity (e.g. links to and between public transport routes and nodes, to open space, and to local centres) and gaps in provision (e.g. missing links in the cycle network). This criterion has been combined with 'strategic fit', which takes account of related investments and synergy between projects.

##### 3) Relationship with strategic development sites:

important links and projects with a relationship to development sites where opportunities to create new improved permeability and connectivity exist, and there is an increased deliverability opportunity through s.106 funding.

In addition to these assessment criteria, reference has also been made to the principles and vision of the Green Grid (South East London Green Chain and Green Grid Area) to inform the identification and prioritisation of projects for future phases of the Links Strategy. For example, the Green Grid mapping identifies north Lewisham as an area deficient in a District Park and with a deficiency of Wildlife Sites and Access to Nature. There are also strategic routes within the area such as the Thames Path, Green Chain Walk and Waterlink Way that are important local assets connecting Deptford, New Cross and its river frontage to adjoining Boroughs and the wider Thames Gateway. Whilst providing a new District Park is not currently a realistic prospect for this area, projects that link and improve access to existing open spaces and the river can go some way to addressing identified deficiencies as well as simultaneously improving connectivity across the area.

#### 3.2 Preliminary review of priority routes and projects

Using the assessment criteria set out above, and informed by the issues, projects and priorities identified in the previous studies, a preliminary review of routes and projects has been undertaken to identify potential projects for Phase 2 of the Links Strategy.

Recent views of completed projects along the Priority Route One (NLL 2007)



18 **3.3 Local needs** (see Figure 3.1):

The priority links based on local scale access issues highlight two principal areas: the western part of the Deptford and New Cross area and connections to Deptford High Street.

Whilst the construction of the East London Line Extension via Surrey Canal Road has improved north-south connections, east-west links to local centres, public transport and key services remain difficult. The public realm on key routes remains poor, there is severance caused by railways, and limited permeability and legibility exists through residential estates. Surrey Canal Road is the primary east-west route and will be used by significantly more people when the Surrey Canal Triangle (SCT) development becomes realised. Although the SCT scheme will improve the public realm immediately around the site, improvements to the public realm further east (Trundleys/ Grinstead Road railway bridge) and local access to Bridge House Meadows from the south (Avonley Road and John Williams Close) are needed but are currently unfunded. The poor quality link under the railway through to Deptford Park and Sir Francis Drake School will remain a significant problem until the Neptune Wharf site is developed and therefore this is identified as a key priority for addressing local needs.

The north-south route through Bridge House Meadows to Surrey Quays is identified as an important link as this provides a local (and strategic) link into the area at a point where there is the greatest distance between Evelyn Street and New Cross Road. Much of the route has a low environmental rating with large tracts of open space or undeveloped land where natural surveillance and a sense of safety are poor. This makes this area isolated and difficult to understand in terms of wayfinding and orientation. Whilst, as noted above, the quality of the routes through the area has been improved as part of the East London Line Extension, there is still a need for further improvements to make this a successful high quality route and accessible area of public open space, including for instance, local connections to Bridge House Meadows via John Williams Close.

Improvements to routes such as Cold Blow Lane, which suffers from poor quality public realm and legibility, are also identified as a priority. This is the only east-west route between New Cross Road (to the south) and Surrey Canal Road (to the north), and is therefore an important priority to reconnect communities and provide access to services and public transport. Whilst the scale of the railway infrastructure means that opportunities for major physical improvements such as pavement widening are likely to be unviable due to engineering constraints or prohibitive costs, there are improvements that could be made in terms of lighting and surface treatments that could make this route more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists.

Improvements in connections to Deptford and Greenwich rail stations will provide safer and more legible routes to local services, and improved routes through the Milton Court Estate and along Edward Street would provide better links to local facilities, such as schools and health centres, and through existing residential areas.

The priority links based on local neighbourhood scale access issues, such as key routes (eg. to schools, health centres and other community facilities) and identified concerns of local people (e.g. public safety and perception), focuses on the central belt between Deptford and South Bermondsey where existing links and routes have been identified as poor quality public realm, with severance caused by railways and poor permeability and legibility through existing residential estates. Creating new links are particularly important in this portion of the study area (approximately half way between New Cross Road and Evelyn Street) where the distances from local centres, public transport and key roads are at their greatest.

Surrey Canal Road is a primary east-west route, which will serve increased local needs when the proposed Surrey Canal Triangle development is implemented. The poor quality link to Grinstead Road and Deptford Park, beneath a narrow railway arch, is identified as a key priority for addressing local needs, particularly in relation to pedestrian and cycle movements.

Bridge House Meadows and its link to Surrey Quays has been partially upgraded following the recent work to extend the East London Line. There are opportunities now to provide improved links to the Meadows from the south and east via John Williams Close and Avonley Road, and through the Cold Blow Lane tunnels, which suffer from poor quality public realm and legibility. Currently this area is isolated and difficult to understand in terms of wayfinding and orientation.

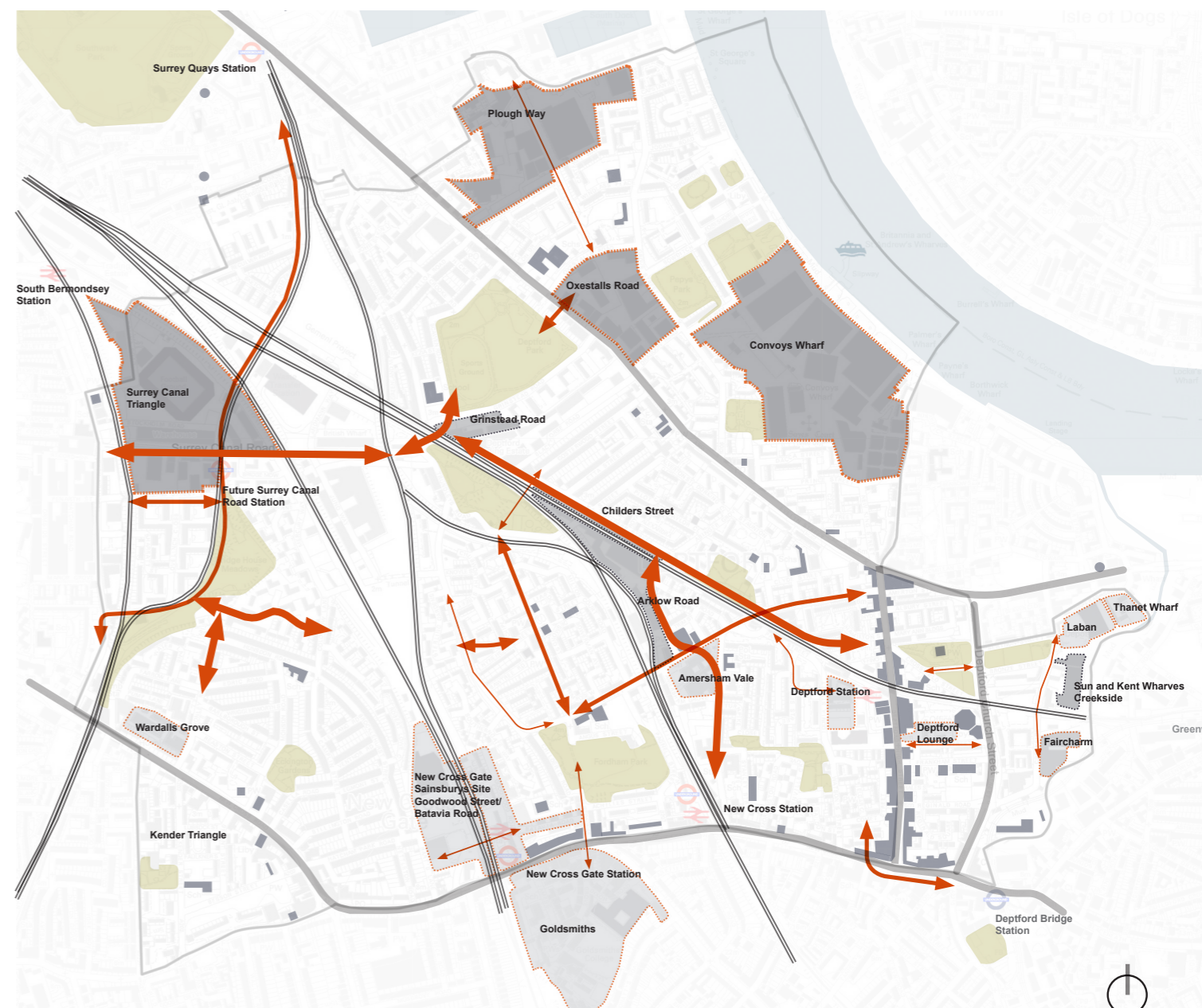


Figure 3.1 Links related to local needs

- Priority links A (rating 3)
- Priority links B (rating 2)
- Priority links C (rating 1)
- Strategic Sites
- Mixed Use Employment Locations
- Other Sites of Relevance



### 3.4 Strategic importance (Figure 3.2):

The priority routes identified on the basis of strategic importance focus on providing north-south and east-west connections through the area, particularly where there are currently gaps in urban fabric, such as between the primary bus routes of New Cross Road and Evelyn Street, to railway stations and links to Deptford Park, the River Thames and Bridge House Meadows, as well as to Deptford High Street. The extension to the Thames Path through the Convoys Wharf development site would complete an important missing section of the strategic riverside walk.

The Bridge House Meadows north-south route is identified as a key priority and provides an important link within a large 'gap' in the urban fabric between New Cross, Kender and Surrey Quays. Associated to this is the prioritisation of the east-west link along Surrey Canal Road linking to the Trundleys/Grinstead Road railway bridge, and linking Bridge House Meadows to the residential areas to the south along Avonley Road and John Williams Close.

Also identified as a priority is the provision of more direct and better connections between Deptford Park and Deptford High Street and rail station (and on towards Creekside and Greenwich) and the potential to connect New Cross rail station through the new Arklow Road development to Folkestone Gardens. The former would provide a valuable new link between Deptford and Trundleys Road, mid-way between two major roads and an alternative for pedestrians and cyclists using Evelyn Street.

Similarly, the short route linking a series of open spaces from Fordham Park through the Milton Court Estate, Folkestone Gardens, Grinstead Road and Deptford Park would provide an alternative north-south route in a strategic location within north Lewisham. Improvements to the crossing of Evelyn Street to Oxestalls Road and on through the Pepys Estate to the River Thames would connect this route with the Thames Path. At the southern end of Convoys Wharf, improvements to New King Street and the junction with Evelyn Street/ Deptford High Street would complete this 'loop'.

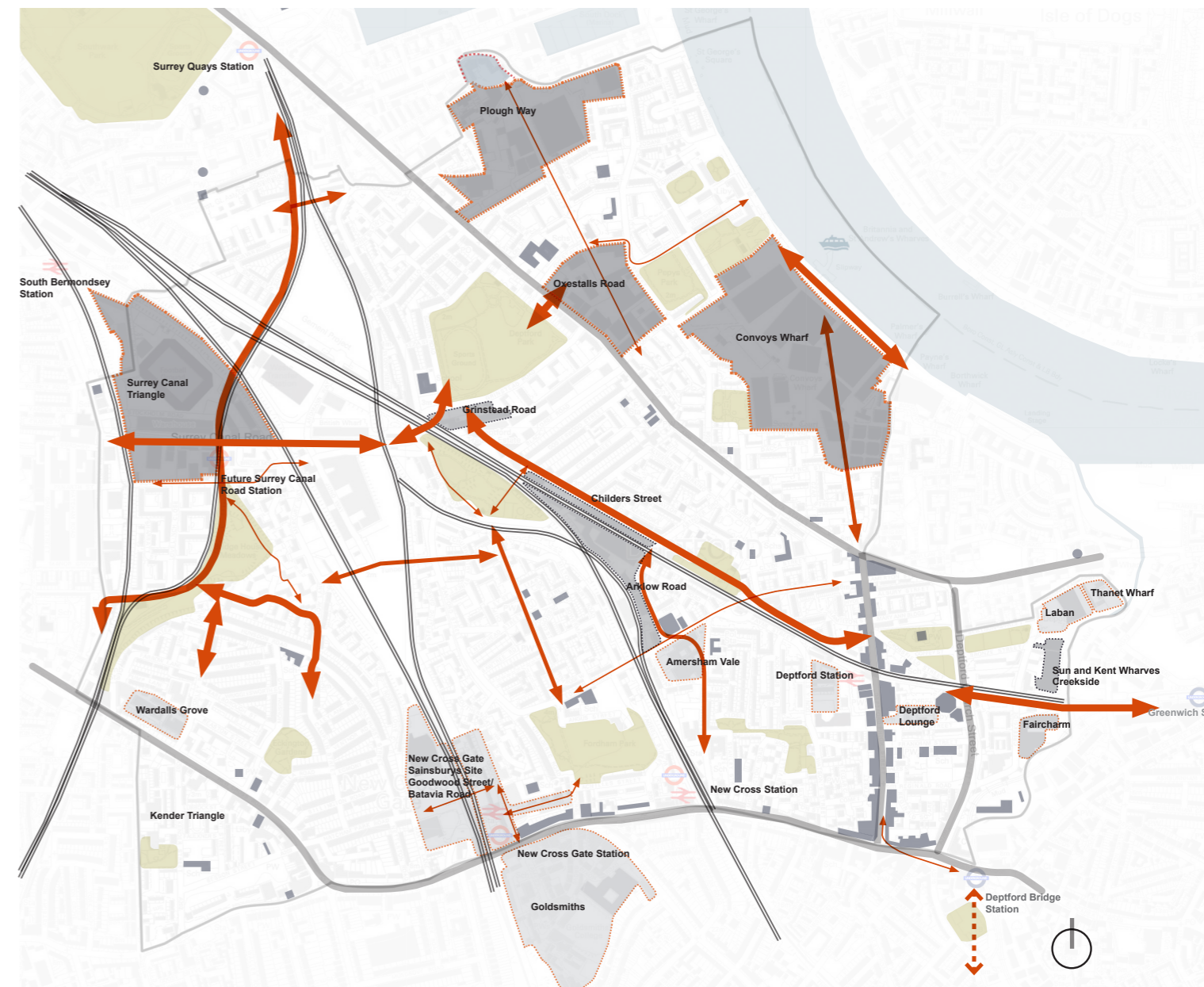


Figure 3.2 Links related to strategic importance

- Priority links A (rating 3)
- Priority links B (rating 2)
- Priority links C (rating 1)
- Strategic Sites
- Mixed Use Employment Locations
- Other Sites of Relevance

### 3.5 Relationship with strategic development sites (Figure 3.3):

The priority routes identified on the basis of their relationship to development sites (where opportunities to create new improved permeability and connectivity exist and there is an increased deliverability opportunity though potential funding) focus on Surrey Canal Road and its connection under the railway bridge to Grinstead Road, the north-south route of the former Grand Surrey Canal and connections east to the Thames, the Thames Path through Convoys Wharf and the connection from Convoys Wharf to Deptford High Street.

Each of these routes will support the integration of major development sites with adjoining areas, whilst other routes will connect smaller scale important sites such as schools and open space. These create a connected network of valuable north-south and east-west links in an area lacking good quality and safe routes. All these routes provide the opportunity for linking new development and open space to create new or improved routes as part of a “connected green and grey infrastructure”.

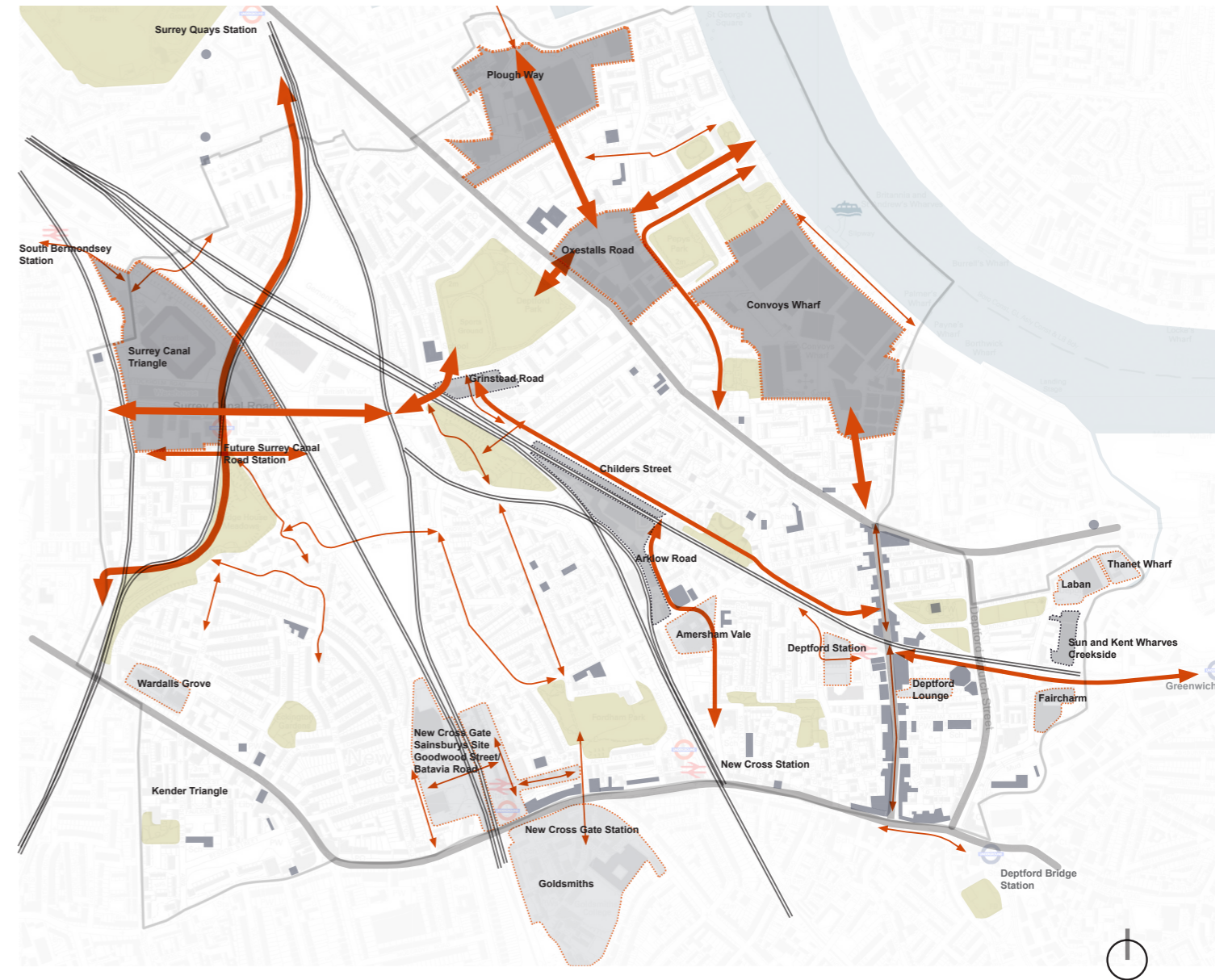


Figure 3.3 Links related to strategic development sites





### 3.6 Conclusion:

Drawing these three themes together a number of priority routes and projects emerge [see Figure 3.4]. The priority routes indicate a need to enhance the north-south connections from Surrey Quays to Bridge House Meadows but also to create links from east to west, from Surrey Canal through Folkstone Gardens and Deptford Park across Evelyn Street to the River Thames. A further strong link emerges from Deptford High Street to Folkestone Gardens and Deptford Park. These routes relate to the initial conceptual diagrams (Figure 2.9) that illustrate the gaps in the urban fabric and highlight the larger scale priorities to achieve better connectivity in Deptford and New Cross.



Figure 3.4 Summary task 2

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