



Councillor Paul Scott (Job Share)
Lead for Planning and Regeneration

**Environment, Transport
and Regeneration
July 2020**



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Lead for Environment and Transport



- The introduction of a 1.2km long light segregated cycle lane along London Road. This will provide a safe cycling route along a busy congested corridor, and is expected to be completed by the end of July 2020.
- The introduction of a 20mph speed limit on the section of London Road covered by the abovementioned cycle lane, as well as around the Crystal Palace triangle on those roads maintained by Croydon.

The Council has a programme to install further measures between now and October subject to funding from TFL and Government being released. Contact Officer: Tabrez Hussain, Team Leader - Highway Improvements, Highways Service. Email: tabrez.hussain@croydon.gov.uk & telephone number: 020 8726 5475

Parking update

The return of traffic over the last month has created a need for all London Boroughs to resume a normalisation of parking management that was relaxed over the lockdown. We therefore restarted parking charges on 26th May and enforcement on 8th June, issuing warning notices for bay contraventions in the first week. Some resident permit renewals have lapsed during the lockdown and further allowances are currently maintained, while the applications backlog catches up. Our approach to restarting parking enforcement (including the timing of it) has been consistent with the approach employed by other London boroughs, all of whom have been working to the same guidance notes that have been issued.

The new emission-based parking charges, which were first introduced for Resident Permits in October 2019, is now applied to all permit types, including Businesses, Community Workers and Members. The scheme rewards drivers of the least polluting cars with low parking charges. This completes the 2nd phase of the emissions scheme. Preparation for the final phase (for pay and display bay parking) is now under way.

A special Key Worker Parking Dispensation for critical health and social care staff was introduced on 23rd March, to support essential access to care facilities and vulnerable residents. The Dispensation is also associated with reserved parking bays in London Road at the Croydon University Hospital (CUH). The scheme was originally designed to operate until 30th June, subject to a review of its ongoing demand. The good news is that the Covid-19 crisis point has largely passed at CUH and the scheme might not need extending. We continue to support parking access for voluntary sector organisations that will distribute food and other supplies to vulnerable and isolated residents for some time to come.

Under 18s travel concessions

Local Authorities (LAs) are required to provide free transport for all pupils of compulsory school age if their nearest suitable school is for example:

- beyond 2 miles for under-8s
- beyond 3 miles for those aged between 8 and 16

In addition, children aged 5 to 16 must be given free transport if they go to their nearest suitable school and there's no safe walking route.

Since 2006 children's travel concessions in London have been provided by Transport for London (TfL) who made bus and tram travel free for children under the age of 18. Alongside this TfL's rail and Tube services were made free for children under the age of 11. TfL also provide free off-peak travel for visits to educational, sporting and cultural venues in London for school groups

As a result of the Government's emergency funding deal for TfL, the Government instructed TfL to suspend free travel for children and young people under the age of 18 from the start of the new academic year - September 2020. It is not clear how long the suspension of free travel will remain in place and one influential Government adviser has indicated he thinks it should be permanent.

This is a hugely regressive step and will have a significant and adverse impact on all our young people, in particular those from poorer and more disadvantaged households. Current estimates suggest that as many as 70% of pupils will no longer be entitled to free travel – creating a financial pressure on households at a time when many are struggling.

Croydon has the largest population of 0-17 year olds in London (almost 95,000). For the 2020/21 academic year (Reception to Year 11) the school population is 55,730 pupils, so the impact of this measure is considerable and far reaching.

Launch of the 404 Bus Service to Tollers Lane and Cane Hill

After calls over many years to bring a bus service to the Toller's Lane Estate, and council officers and contractor working to make necessary changes to the estate roads, the 404 bus began operating within the Estate on 21st March. As London was going into lockdown, the 404 route was:

- extended from Coulsdon Library to Cane Hill Drive, providing the Cane Hill residential development with a bus service; and
- changed to serve the Tollers Lane Estate in Old Coulsdon.

It has been operating as a Sunday service. A new timetable will be introduced when London comes more strongly out of lockdown. The frequency will increase to a bus every 30 minutes.

The new service has offered improved transport options for critical workers making essential journey during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Croydon Council and local residents' groups have campaigned for many years for a bus to serve the Tollers Lane Estate. I am confident that this new service will make a huge difference to many people living in the area.

Launch of climate commission

After a unanimous decision at July Cabinet 2019, Croydon declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency. Working with the Campaign Company and the New Economics Foundation respectively, the Council held a Citizen's Assembly on Climate Change and launched the Croydon Climate Crisis Commission to make Croydon carbon neutral by 2030.

On the 12th March 2020, climate change action groups, residents, pupils and businesses came to Croydon College to hear from Miatta Fahnbulleh, CEO of New Economics Foundation, who was appointed as the commission's independent chair at the beginning of this year. She was joined by speakers Caireen Mitchell, principal of Croydon College, Councillor Tony Newman, leader of Croydon Council, and Lucy Hill, from Croydon's newly-established Citizens' Assembly.

Launched at the start of the year, the Citizens' Assembly is a representative group of 40 people from across the borough. The Commission will be picking up the recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly, driving practical 'decarbonisation' action, and providing independent scrutiny to ensure Croydon reaches its goal of becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2030.

At the launch, the audience had the opportunity to question a panel which included commission Chair Ms Fahnbulleh and fellow commissioners Dr Candice Howarth, Policy Fellow at the London School of Economics; Councillor Muhammad Ali, deputy cabinet member for environment, transport and regeneration, and Peter Underwood, Chair of Croydon Friends of the Earth.

Topics for discussion ranged from food consumption and recycling to a sustainable economy and zero-carbon homes.

School Streets

Facilitating walking and cycling to school is an essential element of the national strategy for Covid-19 recovery. Its rationale says that exercise builds resilience to ill-

health, including being good for mental health. Exercise is therefore an important protective measure against Covid-19, just as distancing and sanitation are.

Although government asks parents and children who return to school not to crowd public transport, it has specifically also asked us all to walk and cycle wherever and whenever possible. A car-based approach to phasing in the post-Covid school attendance would result in air pollution and inactivity. It should be remembered that prior to the Covid situation, Croydon had the highest level of childhood (0-9 years) hospital admissions for asthma in London and air pollution resulted in 205 premature deaths in the borough each year. This is not a situation to which our communities would want to return.

The Traffic Management Advisory Committee on 8th July will consider the outcomes of resident engagements that took place in February 2020. Subject to its recommendations, we are looking to introduce up to 10 new School Streets for the 1st September – in time for the start of the new school year.

The 10 proposed locations are:

School	Post code	Ward
Christ Church CofE Primary School	CR8 2QE	Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown
Downsview Primary School	SE19 3XE	Norbury Park
Ecclesbourne Primary School	CR7 7FA	Bensham Manor
Harris Primary Academy Hailing Park	CR2 6HS	South Croydon
Keston Primary School	CR5 1HP	Old Coulsdon
Kingsley Primary Academy	CR0 3JT	Broad Green
Oasis Academy Rylands	SE25 4XG	Woodside
Ridgeway Primary School	CR2 0EQ	Sanderstead
St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary	SE25 5BN	Woodside
St Joseph's Catholic Junior School	SE19 3NU	Crystal Palace & Upper Norwood

In locations where time and resources do not allow us to consider a School Street in advance of the new school year, we are continuing to support the schools with active travel and alternative distancing measures. Parents who must drive their child should always be advised to park at least 2-minute walk from the school entrance, to support air quality and road safety and to avoid encroaching on space needed to secure pedestrian distancing.

Network Rail CARS consultation

Network Rail is asking residents and commuters to give their views on plans to greatly improve the Brighton Main Line and to transform East Croydon Station. The proposals are intended to significantly increase the frequency, speed and reliability of trains through East Croydon, Norwood Junction, Selhurst and beyond. The project involves rebuilding East Croydon Station, with a large concourse and two more platforms. Networks Rail's online consultation began 1 June and ends 20 September 2020. The proposals can be viewed online [here](#). During the consultation Network Rail's project

team will be available to 'speak' with, using a live online chat facility. Those wishing to phone can do so using the consultation hotline 020 7118 0684.

This is a once in a generation opportunity to transform Croydon Town Centre and its connectivity. The principle of the scheme is most welcome, but there is also a lot that Cabinet colleagues and I feel that Network Rail need to do to improve the proposals further. The scheme would represent a huge investment and vote of confidence in Croydon. I urge all residents, passengers and businesses to participate in the consultation and have their say on the scheme. Together we need to ensure a much better, not just much bigger East Croydon.

Place Regeneration Update

Over the last three months, we have been reviewing our programme of work in the 'places' of Croydon and looking to ensure we maximise the opportunity to support the economic renewal of each place through the projects, programmes and resources we have available to us.

Critically, we have been working to support our district centres to open safely as shops and other non-essential retail outlets were given the green light to open on the 15th June. We are now supporting the hospitality sector to re-open safely, in line with government guidance.

Through the existing **South Norwood** Good Growth Fund programme, we are continuing to programme investment in the high street and support local businesses and community groups to take a lead in the renewal of the area. We also still await to hear if we have been successful in our application to Historic England for £1.1m of external funding from their High Street Heritage Action Zone.

In **Kenley**, we are delighted to have been awarded c.£900k of funding from the Mayor of London through the Good Growth Fund and we are currently working with local community partners and ward councillors to focus that resource in the best way possible to support the good growth of the area and deliver against some of the priorities coming out of the Community Plan consultation. The results of that consultation will feed into the final version of the Kenley Community Plan which we hope to publish shortly:

(<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/regeneration/places/kenley/kenley-community-plan>).

Ward members in **Selsdon** have also taken a lead in developing a Community Plan for the area, supported by the Council. Following a number of engagement events and online submissions, over 400 responses were received which are now being analysed in order to publish a draft Community Plan shortly. More information is available here: <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/regeneration/places/selsdon-regeneration/selsdon-community-plan-2020-2025>

Regeneration Frameworks are currently in development for both **Purley** and **Thornton Heath**. Each of these Frameworks will take a holistic view of the growth happening in each area and will be rooted in a strong programme of community engagement to ensure such growth meets the needs and aspirations of the local community and feeds into the Local Plan review currently underway. Creative engagement techniques are being deployed to ensure community voices can feed into the shaping of these frameworks despite the current restrictions in place around group gatherings.

In Thornton Heath, the plans to reactivate Ambassador House forecourt continue. Whilst events planned with Timberland for the April had to be cancelled due to

lockdown, we are working with Timberland to establish a new programme of activation and greening that works with the current social distancing guidance.

A multi-disciplinary design team, led by Avanti Architects, was appointed in February to lead on the plans to develop a Wellbeing Centre for **New Addington**. The team of architects, urban designers, landscape architects and planners have just completed the first stage of establishing the brief for the new building and will now be working to develop up the designs. Newman Francis has been commissioned alongside to support resident engagement in developing the designs and they are currently working with the Council team to establish a programme that will enable resident's voices to be heard at a time when community events are not possible.

Partial review of the Local Plan update

The Local Plan review is progressing following the issues and options consultation undertaken between November 2019 and January 2020. There were a number of ways and platforms to respond, which were designed to get a broad set of views from as many people and organisations as possible. This successfully achieved over 1000 responses, providing a wide range of thoughts on the topics. These responses were all able to be processed and were ready for analysis before the Covid 19 lockdown occurred. As a consequence no pace in the programme has been lost and the work has been able to progress. However, the Local Plan review will look to support and facilitate the Council's Covid 19 response, particularly linked to economic renewal, the importance of quality housing and sustainable growth.

During the lockdown, how we live in our homes, use our townscape and green spaces has changed. There have been huge impacts and challenges, but changes to the environment such as the dramatic reduction in traffic and as a result, the welcome reduction in air pollution. As we start to get back to a new normal this experience will be used to inform and help the development of the revised local plan alongside the renewal response. As far as possible, these experiences will help to inform the spatial vision for the future that the Local Plan review will frame over the next 20 years.

The Local Plan review is necessary to reflect the changes in the emerging London Plan, which was expected to be adopted by this stage. The Secretary of State, who has the final say, has requested some changes of which the most significant for the borough are the reduction in the housing target, confirming a small housing site target and challenging the employment land policy. The reduction in the housing target does not remove the need to plan for housing growth as there is a housing crisis. However, it does mean that there is no longer the basis to consider housing in the Green Belt, an option considered in the Issues and Options consultation. The employment changes require some additional evidence gathering, which will be used to inform the final Local Plan review. There will be another round of consultation again in the autumn on the revised Local Plan. The consultation may not be able to be undertaken in the form that it was before and how this may be undertaken is being explored to ensure that this is effective and safe. This said, I look forward to your continued engagement in the Local Plan Review.

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In June I released an 'interim bulletin' giving an update on our delivery targets for much needed new homes and our likely direction of travel on some key aspects of our updated local plan. These reports are copied below.

Housing delivery in the Croydon Local Plan review

When considering 'housing targets' we need to remember that they are being set to help everyone in our society to have a decent home they can afford.

The draft London Plan following Secretary of State direction to amend

The Secretary of State has directed the Mayor of London to amend his London Plan before it can be adopted. Two of the changes have a particular impact on how the Croydon Local Plan review evolves in terms of housing targets and delivery.

1. Change 1 affects paragraph 0.0.21 of the draft London Plan. The Secretary of State has amended it so that it says *"The Plan provides an appropriate spatial strategy that plans for London's growth in a sustainable way. The housing targets set out for each London Borough are the basis for planning for housing in London. Therefore, boroughs do not need to revisit these figures as part of their local plan development, unless they have additional evidence that suggests they can achieve delivery of housing above these figures whilst remaining in line with the strategic policies established in this plan."*
2. Change 2 affects Policy D3 of the draft London Plan. The Secretary of State has added three new clauses to the policy that say:
 - a. *"The design of the development must optimise site capacity. Optimising site capacity means ensuring that development takes the most appropriate form for the site. Higher density developments should be promoted in areas that are well connected to jobs, services, infrastructure and amenities by public transport, walking and cycling."*
 - b. *Where there are existing clusters of high density buildings, expansion of the clusters should be positively considered by Boroughs. This could also include expanding Opportunity Area boundaries where appropriate.*
 - c. *Gentle densification should be actively encouraged by Boroughs in low- and mid- density locations to achieve a change in densities in the most appropriate way. This should be interpreted in the context of Policy H2."*

These changes, coupled with the fact that Policy H2(A)(5) of the draft London Plan sets out minimum targets for development on small sites (sites of less than 0.25ha) for each borough, mean the following for Croydon and the Local Plan review.

Our housing target for the Croydon Local Plan review

It is thought by officers that a housing target for the period 2019 to 2039 would look as follows:

Component	Total
Intend to Publish housing target 2019 – 2029	20,790
Small sites allowance rolled forward 2029 – 2039	6,410
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment – total Constrained Capacity	6,296
TOTAL housing required 2019 – 2039	33,496

However, the change to paragraph 0.0.21 means that that the housing target in Policy H1 of the new London Plan should now be seen as a minimum target. So a minimum of 33,496 homes should be built in Croydon between 2019 and 2039.

This compares to the current Croydon Local Plan 2018 which sets a target of a minimum of 32,700 homes between 2016 and 2036, of which (as of 31/03/2019) 6,109 have already been built (leaving a residual of 26,591 left to be built).

In terms of average annual housing delivery figures (to make it directly comparable) it means the following:

Croydon Local Plan 2018 (original minimum annual rate of housing delivery required for whole plan period 2016-2036)	Draft London Plan (minimum annual rate of housing delivery required 2019-2039)
1,635	1,675

As such the draft London Plan represents an increase of just 40 homes a year over the current Croydon Local Plan 2018. In terms of development on small sites (commonly either through converting a house to flats, or demolishing an existing house(s) and building a block of flats), over the 20 year plan period, Policy H2 of the draft London Plan says a minimum of 12,820 homes should be built on small (windfall) sites (less than 0.25ha). This is a minimum target. It works out at 641 homes a year on small sites. In comparison the current Croydon Local Plan sets a target of 591 homes a year on small sites.

The different sources of new homes in Croydon from 2019-2039 (under Option 2 of the Issues and Options consultation)

Under option 2 of the Issues and Options consultation a total of over 46,000 homes were proposed as follows:

Component of housing supply	Total homes from housing supply (2019-2039)
Homes already under construction	5,372
Unimplemented planning permissions	5,482
Large sites outside of Purley Way and Croydon Opportunity Area	4,113
Sites in Croydon Opportunity Area	9,799
Small sites (windfall)	12,069
Total (excluding Purley Way)	36,835
Sites on Purley Way	A minimum of 3,685, up to 9,000
Total (with Purley Way)	At least 40,519, up to 45,835

Summary of implications for the Croydon Local Plan review

As can be seen, even without any development on the Purley Way (including that already proposed in the Croydon Local Plan 2018), it is likely that the new London Plan's housing requirement would be met in Croydon. This is also with a small sites rate that is actually slightly lower than the new London Plan's.

Furthermore, the effect of the change to paragraph 0.0.21 makes the overall borough target in Policy H1 a minimum as well. This means that the small sites element of our housing target cannot be substituted by an increase in development on larger sites in the borough. It is a fixed minimum that we will have to plan for in the Croydon Local Plan review. Hence, we cannot use increased housing delivery in the town centre and along Purley Way to reduce the amount of development in the suburbs.

However, the small sites target is not substantially different from what we already have in the Croydon Local Plan 2018, the delivery of which is supported by SPD2 – Suburban Design Guide. The ethos of SPD2 is essentially to support the evolution of the suburbs. This is essentially the same as the change directed by the Secretary of State on the new London Plan that “***Gentle densification should be actively encouraged by Boroughs in low- and mid- density locations to achieve a change in densities in the most appropriate way.***” As such SPD2 can continue to support the future Local Plan review in Croydon to help meet the new London Plan's target for development on small sites without a substantial change in approach.

The Secretary of State's direction to amend the new London Plan to encourage the expansion of existing clusters of high-density buildings may also be applicable in Croydon. The approach could be particularly applicable in some locations which

typically have homes on larger plots immediately adjacent to a higher density location (as can be found in some of the borough's town centres, and along some main roads in the borough).

Adherence to the evolution of the suburbs approach set out in SPD2 coupled with the application of the Secretary of State's directed change to expand clusters of existing high-density buildings should mean that the draft London Plan small sites target is met. At the same time some of the pressure on the borough's suburbs might be reduced, particularly those areas which have very poor public transport accessibility, and there would be no need to support significant 'intensification' away from District and local Centres.

As the overall borough target is in effect a minimum, we can look to explore further the capacity of the borough's existing infrastructure to service growth. It would make a powerful case if we could say that we can deliver the new London Plan housing target, but if you (The Mayor) invest in our infrastructure we can deliver a third more homes. This is being explored through the Purley Way Masterplan commission, and a Corridors Transport study.

Summary

In conclusion, it is likely that we will need to plan for a minimum of circa 33,500 new homes over the next 20 years, with around 12,000 of those delivered through the "gentle densification" of the suburbs. The transformation of the Purley Way industrial and retail parks could not be included within this minimum target and would not allow for reductions elsewhere. Given the opportunities for 'good growth' providing many benefits to the local residents and the borough as a whole we should though include these additional, much needed, homes.

Currently Proposed Direction of Travel for the Partial Review of Croydon's Local Plan

In response to the consultation on the issues and options, and given the directions on the new London Plan from the Government we can identify the following significant 'directions of travel'. These will help inform a series of cross-party workshops that will help to develop our 'preferences and options' for the next stage of the CLP consultation.

We are considering:

- Recognising that following the Government's intervention it is anticipated that the new London Plan will increase our housing targets by an equivalent of c.6,900 new homes overall and will require a significant proportion of those to be delivered through the intensification of our suburbs.
- Accepting that we cannot meet the full housing need for the borough over the next 20 years which would require circa 70,000 new homes. This would be unachievable without substantial transformation (demolition and redevelopment) and expansion of the built area. We can though exceed the new London Plan target through the transformation of the Purley Way industrial and retail parks with limited impact on existing residents.
- Supporting a Specific Strategic Spatial Option – we proposed 3 strategic options for accommodating 46,000 new homes. These were:
 - Option 1 – Growth distributed across all neighbourhoods in the borough requiring quite significant change in some suburban areas (a lot more than is currently being delivered)
 - Option 2 – Transformation of the Purley Way industrial and retail parks into a high density, mixed use new 'quarter' well connected into the town centre. This approach would take the pressure off the suburbs, although still assumes approximately 600 new homes in these areas per year.
 - Option 3 – Release of a limited amount of green belt for new homes. This approach would also reduce the impact on suburban neighbourhoods.

We will be moving forward with a variant of Option 2. This was our preferred approach although we could not express this in the consultation, and it was clearly the most strongly supported by local residents.

The situation with the new London Plan does alter the scenario somewhat. Option 1 falls away as we anticipate having to deliver a minimum of 33,500 homes excluding those along Purley Way. The Government will not allow development along Purley Way to offset their "gentle densification" in the suburbs.

There was a clear preference against releasing green belt as way of reducing the amount of intensification in existing residential neighbourhood.

Our preferred option going forward would be meeting the new London Plan housing target plus an additional 4,000 to 9,000 homes on the Purley Way, creating a range of 37,500 to 42,500.

- Building New Homes in the Suburbs (Suburban intensification on 'Windfall' sites) - as directed by the government we are required to plan for the "gentle densification" of the suburbs with an average 641 new homes per year.
 - Confirmation that no residential development is proposed on any of our Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land (essentially the same thing). Only important public social infrastructure will be considered for location on green belt land where there is no suitable alternative sites. This in particular relates to schools where a lot of open space is needed to provide play grounds and sports pitches.
 - Confirmation that all our parks and designated public spaces will remain protected from development.
 - Definition of the very misleading government designation of 'local green space' (LGS) as 'very special community local green space' to help avoid further confusion. (Note: Local green space designation allows local communities to protect green spaces of local importance for reasons including setting and nature conservation. Local communities can identify green spaces through their local and neighbourhood plans, which will then receive protection equivalent to green belt land.)
 - Identify whether the circa 40 'very special community local green spaces' which the council are working with local communities to determine whether they meet the very demanding government criteria to achieve formal Local Green Space designation.
 - Publish maps illustrating all of the protected open land in the borough.
- Focused Intensification Areas (FIA): Reconsidering the current Intensification Areas and the introduction of additional areas including the following potential options.
 - Omitting the Shirley FIA as it looks increasingly unlikely that significant improvements to the public transport capacity in the Shirley area will be delivered over the period covered by the local plan and hence the area only has capacity for limited future growth. The limited development potential significantly reduces the

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strength of the argument for major transport investment, although improvements are needed from a sustainability perspective.

- Reducing the size of the Kenley FIA to just the area immediately around the railway station. This is in response to the findings of the Kenley transportation study carried out by the Council.
- Introducing carefully considered urban extension areas around parts of Purley and Coulsdon town centres, and link them with a new FIA running along parts of the Brighton Road A23 corridor. These areas have good public transport provision. This approach is encouraged by the Government's response to the new London Plan.
- Explore the level of development potential of all existing suburban residential areas in the categories to include:
 - Very low levels of development – conservation and local heritage areas, existing medium density areas such as those with predominantly terraced or modest sized semi-detached houses, modern housing estates with small plots, and areas with poor access to public transport and limited capacity for parking.
 - Moderate levels of development – low density areas that are close to public transport and/or other local amenities (typically within 800m of a district centre or railway station).
 - High levels of development and transformation to be limited to the main town centres, Purley Way retail and industrial areas, and areas very close to good levels of public transport and/or other local amenities.
- Develop a strongly defined and protected 'green grid' across the borough linking the countryside to south through to the parks, allotments and gardens in the north.

My Scrap Book

As I walk around the borough I often visit recently approved development sites to see how the delivery of new homes is progressing. Below are some of the schemes that I have seen recently:



1. Brick by Brick's Kindred House tower on the former Wandle Road Car Park is rising rapidly



2. Demolition has started on the 5-9 Surrey Street site



3. L&Q have commenced piling on their site on Addiscombe Road



4. Works are nearing completion on 101 George Street

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5. 3 of the 4 new buildings on the former Taberner House site have been topped out, whilst the 35 storey tower has reach 2/3rd of its final height



6. An attractive 'contemporary reinterpretation' scheme replacing a single house with a small block of flats on Woodcote Grove Road



7. A new apartment block on Brighton Road near Coulsdon town centre



8. A striking new building on the corner of Brighton Road and Stoats Nest Road



9. A dramatic roof on these new homes on Brighton Road



10. The scale of these new homes along Old Lodge Lane is reduced by glazed links between the brick blocks



11. This new small block of flats in the East India Estate Conservation Area nestles in well between two older, less sympathetic buildings



12. These new homes on Grasmere Road have been designed to blend in well with their neighbours



13. A new mews with a terrace of modern styled houses off Warren Road



14. A new apartment block in Shirley reflects the design of its neighbours



15. A pair of new small blocks of flats fits in well along The Glade



16. This block of flats blends into the street-scene on Orchard Way



17. Dramatic clouds over the new skyline along Cairo New Road

Update on major development

Edridge Road A resolution to grant planning permission was made by the Planning Committee on 21st May for the erection of a part 33 storey, part 11 storey and part single storey building providing 230 residential units, communal roof terraces and amenity spaces. 43 affordable rented and 3 intermediate (shared ownership) homes were secured as affordable housing.





Fairfield Homes A resolution to grant planning permission was made by the Planning Committee on 23rd April for the erection of five buildings ranging in height from 7 to 29 storeys to provide 421 residential flats, flexible commercial space at ground floor of Building A, C and E. 20% affordable housing was secured, offset against the Fairfield Halls refurbishment costs.

103-111 High Street This pre-application scheme was presented to Planning Committee on 23rd April and officers continue to work with the applicant on the erection of a 29 storey building to provide 121 residential homes, with flexible commercial space at ground and mezzanine. Officers anticipate an application being made soon.



The Fair Field This pre-application scheme was presented to Planning Committee on 21st May and officers continue to work with the applicant on Public Realm scheme to transform the Fair Field (also known as College Green and Fairfield Gardens) into a world class public Space. Officers anticipate an application being made soon.

Update on major commissions

Growth Zone Update

Croydon town centre continues to see rapid change with new buildings under construction and plans for further developments in the pipeline.

The Growth Zone programme consists of a range of transport, public realm, and social infrastructure and technology projects. They are deemed essential to mitigate the impact and maximise the opportunities of the growth planned for the Croydon town centre area, (as detailed in the Croydon Local Plan 2018, Croydon Opportunity Area Planning Framework 2013 and the London Plan), for the benefit of existing and future residents, businesses and visitors.

Place and Public Realm

The **Minster Green** has been developed to Stage 3 designs. Designs have been informed by stakeholders, Diocese, landowners and the Council's Place Review Panel. Public engagement on the Stage 2 designs was undertaken in March 2019. The Stage 3 designs have been submitted to the diocese as part of the diocese consent process. Scheme delivery will follow diocese approval.

Projects likely to be progressed in 2020/21 will focus on the **Old Town** and **Mid Croydon** area and all to follow commencement of delivery of Minster Green.

The proposals for **the Fair Field** public space are now progressing at pace. Following a public consultation in February /March 2020, the design was then presented to Planning Committee as part of the pre planning application process in May and to a second Place Review Panel in June.

The proposals embody the balance of Croydon's dynamic past and exciting future, juxtaposing history and modernity, natural and manmade, in a fun, playful, open and inclusive spirit which embraces the myriad of possibilities and opportunities for the future of Croydon.

The current opportunities include extended lawns and soft landscaping, a central water feature that can be drained and used for various events, and three kiosks, playful interpretation of Croydon landmarks, which offer both vantage points and may host a variety of uses when they open. The designs will be submitted for planning permission in July 2020.

Corridors

Three roads have been identified as the key 'movement corridors' serving the Growth Zone these are; **London Road, Brighton Road & Mitcham Road/Roman Way**, it is essential that their design, and the priority afforded to each transport mode, responds appropriately to the future needs of Croydon Town Centre. The nature of interventions will be determined by the design process and engagement with residents and

businesses in the area, and the council's objectives for these key routes align with the Mayor's Transport Strategy focus on prioritising walking, cycling and public transport. Croydon Council are working with TfL to prepare and model improvements to **Lombard roundabout, Thornton Heath Ponds gyratory and the Purley gyratory**, which form part of the broader corridor programme. Healthy Streets assessment and projects list for London Road Corridor has been completed.

Transport, Walking and Cycling, Parking

Key schemes include:

- approval to commission the **West Croydon Station** development project next design stage;
- initiation of key **bus priority** projects and movement into the 'delivery pipeline';
- ongoing work in relation to Network Rail's Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme (**CARS**), as the project moves towards public consultation mid-2020.
- In relation to CARS, working with **London Continental Railways** to take forward a Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the East Croydon Station Area;
- completion of **GZ Controlled Parking Zone** review;
- officers are also working with TfL on the development of a **multi-modal transport corridors improvement study**, including looking at the potential for **tram extensions**, supporting housing growth, reducing traffic pollution, promoting healthier, greener lifestyles and helping tackle the climate emergency etc

Social Infrastructure

We are at feasibility stage for the **Clocktower** and **Town Hall** building refurbishment, working with the various services in the building to improve the public offer and access to this valued community hub.

Building on the masterplan developed in 2017 for **Park Hill Recreation Ground**, we are planning phased improvements to this site, principally focusing on creating spaces for young people and children's play alongside other changes to the park landscape and infrastructure. There are a series of public workshops and activities in March focused upon improving the signage, entrances and navigation around the park, and we are planning a series of pop up play events starting from Easter.

We are undertaking an analysis of **community space in central Croydon**, to map and understand the existing availability, quality and accessibility of community space for use and hire, alongside an assessment of the pipeline of new community facilities being delivered as part of new development within the Town Centre. This work aligns with the council's recently published Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy.

We have commissioned a research partner, **Social Life**, working with academic support from UCL, to develop a framework to gauge and monitor the social impact of the town centre regeneration programme. The first stage survey work and report should conclude this Autumn.

Smart City

SLP INNOVATE IoT project; Croydon will be taking forward a Digital Town Centre Hub project to help local businesses and residents engage on a digital platform. Businesses will be able to promote their business and share current offers with the local community. Supported by footfall sensors, businesses, residents and the council will be able to access real time information about the high street and target public messaging as well as news and events. The hub will help businesses to directly with customers and the local community and support economic renewal in the borough. We are currently identifying high street/district centres to launch the platform.

- 4G Small Cells - the first 4G small cells have been installed by iWireless near Croydon University Hospital and West Valley Hospital in East Croydon. Other sites in the town centre will also brought forward be for the end of July boosting 4G connectivity for residents, businesses and visitors.
- Full Fibre Broadband - Croydon has been allocated £1 million funding by the GLA Connected London team to bring Full Fibre broadband. We have put forward a prioritised list of Public assets and developing plans to deploy later in the year.
- Full Fibre to Social Housing - rollout by Community Fibre and Openreach is progressing well despite delays during the lockdown period

Construction Logistics

The Construction Logistics efforts in the Growth Zone continue to progress effectively with traffic levels remain relatively unaffected by construction traffic due to measures undertaken to manage HGV's, overall vehicle speed has actually increased and journey time decreased on the major routes to and from the Town Centre during peak periods which is an improvement over the 2016 baseline figures.

Sites continue to undertake loading/unloading in protected areas and holding areas are being provided to reduce the number of on-street HGV's. There is a significant uptick in the use of the holding areas due to the additional restrictions on the Town Centre highway network as a result of COVID-19 and the increase in construction traffic. It is anticipated that the existing holding area will need to undergo its pre-planned Phase 2 expansion over the summer. Implementation of permitted construction routes and prescribed delivery hours in particular, limits the HGVs in the peak periods with ongoing efforts to enforce these where breaches are detected, albeit that some of the restricted delivery times have been relaxed on a case by case basis during the COVID-19 crisis in line with government guidance due to the lack of school and rush hour traffic. However it has been made clear to sites that these relaxations are temporary and will end when traffic levels rise to a point that congestion is experienced again and/or when schools return. Our efforts in this regard were shortlisted for over a dozen national awards this year of which we have won three, with several more ceremonies in abeyance awaiting a safe time to host them. A key

headline remains that there continue to be no construction-related HGV accidents for the entire duration of our efforts so far, a figure that is significantly less than the statistical average.

During the COVID-19 crisis there was a significant decrease in construction traffic for some time due to shortages of materials and the need to reconfigure sites for staff safety. Whilst this has delayed many projects, the level of activity in construction logistics has recovered relatively rapidly and is now approaching normal levels again.

Fairfield





Purley Way

Architects and urban design teams from We Made That and Hawkins Brown have been leading a team of specialists to develop a strategic masterplan for the Purley Way, to shape how transformational change should come forward in this area. The high level masterplan is informed by an in depth evidence base, which includes a detailed survey of local businesses, analysis of local demographics and economy, an urban design study of the environment and character of Purley Way, an assessment of infrastructure and an assessment of the current property market sector.

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The strategic masterplan provides high level principles for where mixed use development growth should be focused, structured around the establishment of new local centres that provide space for housing, along with community and commercial uses. The masterplan also explores the opportunity for expansion and intensification of employment space in the areas designated Strategic Industrial Locations that respond to both local and regional demand. The strategic masterplan will set out the required physical and social infrastructure improvements to facilitate this growth, providing a phased approach to ensure new housing and employment space are sufficiently supported. It will directly inform the Purley Way transformation area chapter as part of the Local Plan Review.

Design collective Resolve, who are also part of the wider consultant team, have delivered an online digital platform - www.purleywayfinders.com - to enable the public to engage with the project and provide thoughts and ideas about Purley Way, whilst COVID-19 restrictions are in place. I would encourage all those interested in the future of the Purley Way to participate. The team have also engaged with the commercially focussed Purley Way Forum.

Landmarks & local features



Homes that are Accessible to Everyone

The Council would ideally like to see lifts suitable for use by people who use wheelchairs installed into all blocks of flats, along with level access to the front door and shared amenities such as gardens and stores. We do though need to follow the relevant planning policy and building regulations requirements which are set out below. A key issue is the installation and maintenance costs of lifts in small blocks of flats where there are only a few homes on each floor, where the costs are likely to be prohibitive for the future occupiers. This particularly relates to 'minor applications' where there are less than 10 homes proposed. The policies and regulations do make provision for this viability concern. The hilly terrain in some parts of the borough unfortunately can also make it impractical to provide access for people in wheelchairs on some sites.

From a Planning Perspective

Policy 3.8 of the current London Plan seeks to ensure that Londoners should have a "genuine choice of homes that they can afford and which meet their requirements for different sizes and types of dwellings in the highest quality environments. There are a number of subsections to this policy and subsection C states

"C. ninety percent of new housing¹ meets Building Regulation requirement M4 (2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' and ten per cent of new housing² meets Building Regulation requirement M4 (3) 'wheelchair user dwellings', i.e. is designed to be wheelchair accessible, or easily adaptable for residents who are wheelchair users"

The supporting text to this policy goes on to say:

"The application of requirement M4 (2) has particular implications for blocks of four storeys or less, where historically the London Plan has not required lifts. Boroughs should seek to ensure that dwellings accessed above or below the entrance storey in buildings of four storeys or less have step-free access. However, for these types of buildings this requirement may be subject to development-specific viability assessments and consideration should be given to the implication of ongoing maintenance costs on the affordability of service charges for residents. Where such assessments demonstrate that the inclusion of a lift would make the scheme unviable or mean that service charges are not affordable for intended residents, the units above or below the ground floor that cannot provide step free access would only need to satisfy the requirements of M4(1) of the Building Regulations".

Further advice on this point is set out in the GLA's Housing SPG. It states

"Analysis of the viability and affordability impacts of M4(2) may require 'bespoke' assessments of site-specific circumstances. Where necessary, for developments of four stories or less, the requirements of Policy 3.8Bc should be applied flexibly to ensure that residential or mixed use development is deliverable".

Therefore whilst the current plan seeks to provide step free access to flats within blocks of up to 4 storeys. The policy and the supporting guidance recognise the difficulties this can create in relation to maintenance cost, affordability and viability of a scheme. Therefore there is not an absolute policy requirement for the provision of flats in blocks of flats of 4 storey or less.

It should also be noted that the Mayor of London is in the process of producing a new London Plan for adoption. A review of this document indicate the GLA's proposed direction of travel in relation to this point. Again a policy is proposed which deals with Accessibility. Policy D7 of the emerging London Plan requires that a suitable choice of housing is provided. As with the existing London Plan the Policy requires 10% of new dwelling dwellings to be Part M4(3) (wheelchair Accessible) compliant and the remainder to be Part M4(2) **Accessible and adaptable dwellings** compliant.

The justification for the Policy does however recognise that there are some exceptions where some flexibility to this Policy may be required. One of those exceptions is in relation to small scale infill sites. In relation to Small infill sites it is stated that "Homes located on the ground floor on minor developments should meet the requirements of Policy D7 Accessible Housing. Homes that are not on the ground floor on minor developments can comply with the M4(1) standard, which does not require step-free access, where provision of step-free access would be unfeasible".

Whilst the emerging London Plan has not yet been adopted it does hold some weight in planning decision and it does indicate the direction of travel in terms of Policy.

Therefore whilst at present there is a policy which seeks to provide step free access in blocks of up to 4 storey, the policy allows for flexibility so that in some case potentially unachievable requirements do not have a negative impact on the delivery of homes. The emerging policy in response to the difficulties of providing a lift in blocks of 4 storeys or less will only require step free access to homes on the ground floors of blocks of 4 storeys and under if it is unfeasible to provide step free access to the upper floors.

It is necessary for planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan which includes the Policies within the London Plan

From a Building Regulations perspective:

1. The Building Regulations 2010 make requirements in relation to the provision of lifts
 - a. Schedule 1 parts B5 (Access and facilities for the fire service) and M4 (Access to and use of dwellings) make requirements
 - b. Guidance is given in Approved Documents B Volume 1 and M Volume
2. This is based on the advice of the Approved Documents as to what is considered, in common building situations to be an acceptable level of performance.

- a. The guidance to Part B5 in Approved Document B Volume 1 advises that a fire fighting shaft will be necessary where there is an occupiable floor situated more than 18m above ground level.
 - i. This would necessitate the provision of a fire fighting lift.
 - ii. This requirement would likely come into effect if there are 6 or more floors (7 stories) in the building, depending on the height of the stories.
- b. The application of Part M4 is dependent on the level of performance implemented as a condition of the planning permission
 - i. The basic requirement under the regulations is M4(1)
 1. At this level the advice does not suggest that a lift *should* be provided but considers what would be appropriate in terms of size and appointment *if* one is.
 - ii. If the planning permission makes optional requirements M4(2) or M4(3) applicable to any flats above or below the access level to the building the Approved Document advises that access to this accommodation should be step free.
 1. This effectively requires the provision of a suitable lift and this would be the case no matter how many floors the building contains.
 - a. If the building is two storey and accommodation of the first floor is deemed to be M4(2) or M4(3) by the planning approval, a lift will likely be necessary in order to comply.
 2. Where planning permission is granted requiring M4(2) or M4(3) accommodation above or below access level and no provision is made in the design approved under Planning Permission, Building regulations would consider these levels of performance unreasonable and likely implement M4(1) unless the design of the building were to be changed to incorporate a lift.
 3. If the building were of 4 stories and the optional requirements M4(2) and M4(3) were either not implemented or were incorrectly implemented by the planning approval then there would be no requirement to provide a lift under Building Regulations.

(With thanks to Cllr Canning for prompting this article through a council question)