



CROYDON

OPPORTUNITY AREA PLANNING FRAMEWORK

ADOPTED JANUARY 2013

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CROYDON

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SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS

These supplementary documents are available for review on the GLA website

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

Provides further detailed evidence to justify the proposed guidance set out in the OAPF

TRANSPORT STUDY

Sets out the results and analysis of a detailed transport modelling exercise carried out by TfL to assess the impact of the proposed level of growth on the transport network in the Town Centre.

INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Includes the detailed Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Impact Assessment.

FOREWORD



COUNCILLOR JASON PERRY
LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

In setting out proposals and options for action in this planning framework, we have seized some of the opportunities offered by the government's localism agenda.

We are working with local residents and businesses of the Croydon Opportunity Area (COA). Their experiences and responses are essential, in guiding and directing those with the planning and design skills to create the foundations for new and exciting places. Their views and concerns expressed, will supplement and balance more established business interests. By genuinely involving and empowering people, we have been able to shape a flexible framework that will enable the creation of the kind of physical environment needed to attract upwards of 17,000 people to move into the Croydon Opportunity Area.

The COA has lost much of its former economic strength and the desire to reverse this is a critical premise of this framework. Bringing substantial economic and housing growth back to central Croydon and restoring its historic regional significance is at least a twenty year project. We need to plan now if we are to succeed in achieving this ambition. There is a considerable amount to do and the long-term strategic objectives are concentrated on investment that can be effectively attracted and directed.

Response to the riots in August 2011 has demonstrated that most people living and working in the COA have great attachment and care for their local community.

The aspirations of local residents and businesses that have been expressed over the last two years to me are largely passionate and are seeking positive change that can happen quickly. Through the OAPF (Opportunity Area Planning Framework) we intend that the many past visions will be expressed in a call to action and development. This will be supported by an investment plan for public realm and infrastructure improvements, including the establishment of new representative forums of private and public interests to enable delivery on the ground



BORIS JOHNSON
MAYOR OF LONDON

Croydon Metropolitan Centre (CMC) is set for major transformation. Its success is crucial to the economy of south London. Croydon has suffered economic decline in relation to its competitors, and has not benefitted significantly from the two development booms over the same period. The scale and range of possible sites for redevelopment show enormous potential for transformation and improvement. In doing so, it would meet a number of Mayoral and Council planning and regeneration objectives. We have prepared this ambitious framework for the commercial and retail heart of Croydon, called the Croydon Opportunity Area. The intention is to build a new community of thousands of new homes and jobs, and the framework sets out in more detail how to achieve this.

Localism needs to find particular expression in the Croydon Opportunity Area particularly if a new community of 7,300 homes (17,000 people) is to be established over the next 20 years where very few homes currently exist. Exploring and delivering an improved central Croydon is both a huge challenge and a great opportunity. The civil unrest of August 2011 makes it more vital than ever that we create an economic, social and physical legacy for future generations to take pride in. The best way to do this is to build upon the creativity and skills of local people, supported over time by sensitive and effective public investment.

The Council, with the GLA family, is in a unique position to bring these specific interests together, despite the current economic difficulties. The

need to address issues and challenges, including environmental changes confronting central Croydon and for restructuring the local economy make it more urgent than ever to create a new planning framework for CMC and its environs.

This document sets out some of the practical steps the Council and GLA intend to take over the next 20 years to establish a new community. These include working closely with local residents, businesses, retailers, landowners and developers and an emerging new community to develop the local economy, re-interpret the town centre and provide the essential enabling infrastructure. The current financial climate requires a careful assessment of what is achievable but, by preparing a flexible and responsive planning framework that supports and allows the future development market to deliver, as well as having faith in the creative energies of local people, there is every possibility that Croydon town centre will be transformed into a leading 21st Century destination.

There is an exciting opportunity in the Croydon Town Centre. I look forward to the transformation of the area over the next few years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Boris Johnson', written in a cursive style.

PREPARING THE PLAN

This is the adopted Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) for the Croydon Town Centre. It provides guidance for future development in the Croydon Opportunity Area (COA) over the next 20 years until 2031.

PRE-PUBLIC CONSULTATION WORK

In March 2011, a project team was set up to prepare an OAPF for the Croydon Opportunity Area (COA). The team consisted of officers from the Greater London Authority, Croydon Council and Transport for London.

In April 2011, the project team organised and held a public consultation event to better understand the existing situation in the COA. It gave the project team the opportunity to meet and discuss the COA with local residents, businesses, developers, service providers and politicians.

This event informed the preparation of a draft OAPF for public consultation.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A full public consultation event was run from 20 July 2012 to 8 October 2012. The extended time-frame was agreed to take account of the London 2012 Olympics.

Local residents, businesses, land owners, stakeholders and politicians were notified of the consultation. A public exhibition event was also held on 6 September 2012 in the Queens Gardens.

Throughout the course of the public consultation a range of comments were received from statutory consultees, local landowners and members of the public. The comments received at public consultation stage can be reviewed in the set of OAPF appendices.

Following public consultation, there was a detailed review of the comments received and the OAPF was amended accordingly. The OAPF was finalised between October and December 2012.

CONTACTING THE GLA AND/OR CROYDON COUNCIL

If you would like to contact either the GLA or Croydon Council regarding the Croydon OAPF please;

Visit:

www.croydon.gov.uk/oapf

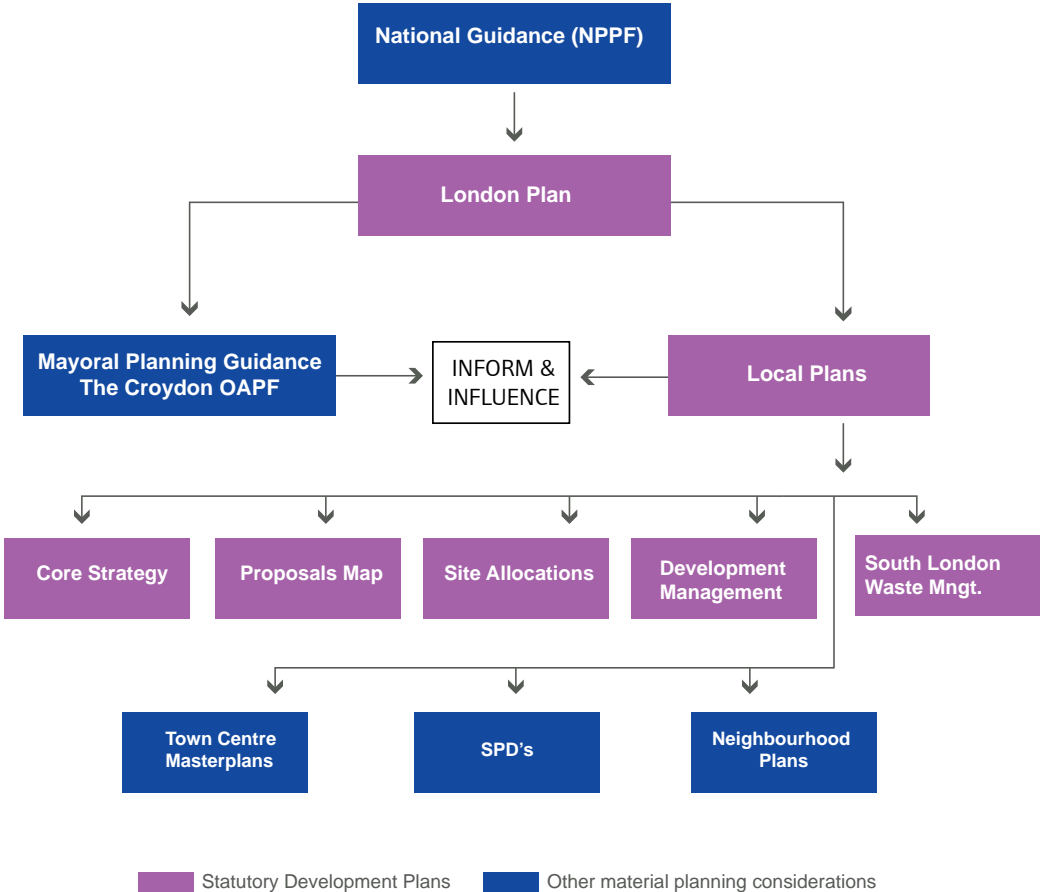
www.london.gov.uk/planning/oapf

MATERIAL WEIGHT OF THIS FRAMEWORK

Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks (OAPF) set out planning, regeneration and design guidance for major growth centres in London, called Opportunity Areas. The London Plan identifies 33 Opportunity Areas one of which is the Croydon Metropolitan Centre and its environs. The OAPF has been prepared jointly by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and London Borough of Croydon (LBC) in partnership with Transport for London (TfL).

This OAPF is supplementary guidance to the London Plan and sets out the Mayor’s strategic priorities for the area over the next 20 years. The OAPF is informed by policy and guidance from national to local level. It is not a simple amalgamation of policies but the culmination of a comprehensive analysis and review of local context. Croydon Council will adopt the OAPF as a Supplementary Planning Document to their Core Strategy (local plan) in April 2013.

The government published its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012. This takes over from previous guidance set out in GOL circular 1/2008 and the PPS/PPGs. The NPPF provides the over arching policy guidance for authorities to apply when developing plans and determining planning applications. It ensures that planning decisions reflect national objectives, whilst encouraging authorities and local communities to produce their own plans to reflect the needs and priorities for individual areas. The main focus of the document is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Councils are to be proactive in seeking development opportunities where there is a demonstrable need during the plan-making process, and also to assess applications without delay and to grant permission unless the application would have adverse impact that would outweigh benefits. The NPPF also introduces the ability of local groups to prepare new local neighbourhood plans.



THE RELATIONSHIP OF THIS OAPF TO THE TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLANS

The OAPF is not the only planning and design document for the COA. Page ix of the OAPF shows the detailed hierarchy of planning documents, from national, regional and local level. These planning documents will still be applicable in the COA.

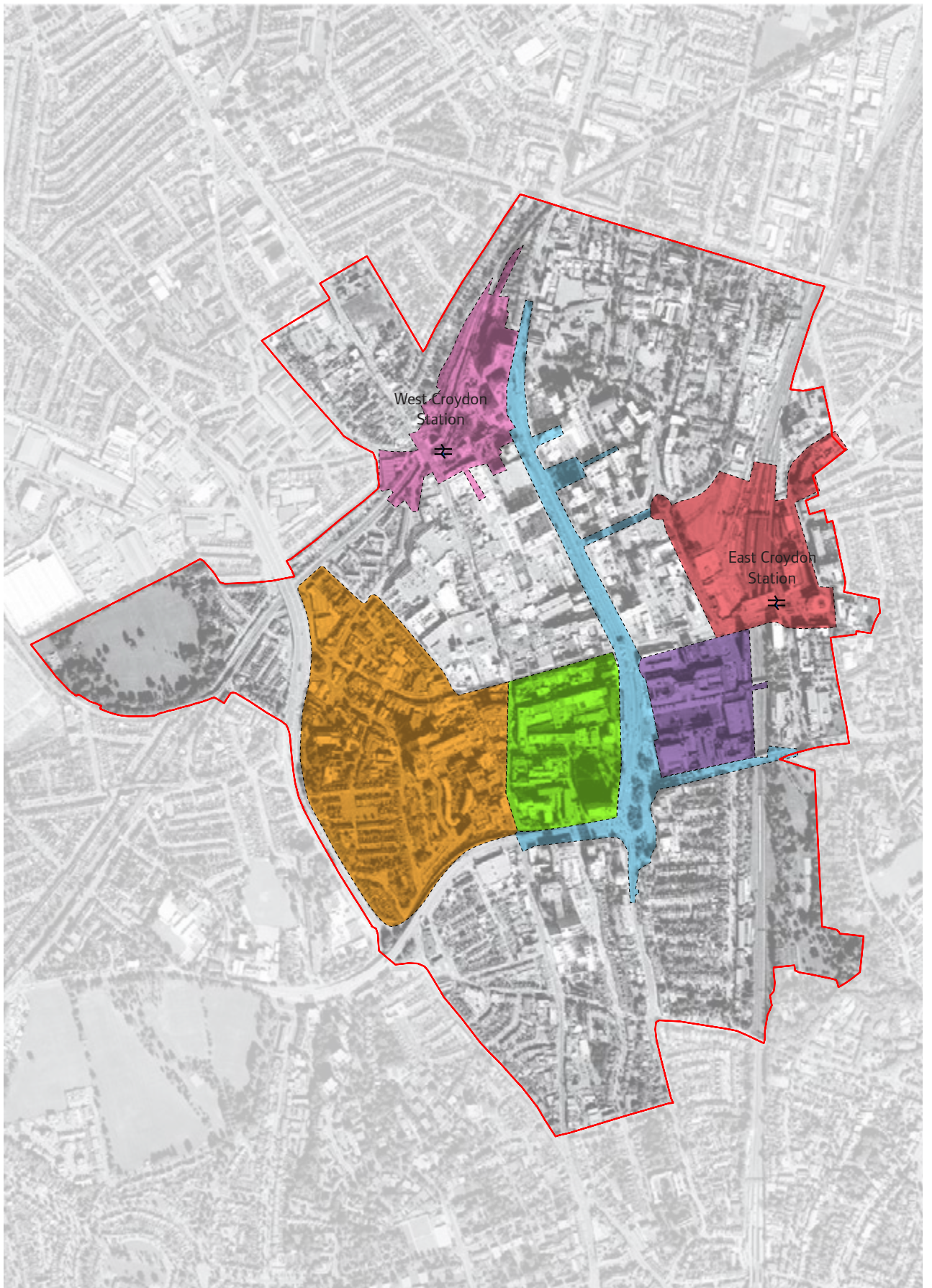
In addition, there is also a suite of town centre masterplans that provide guidance for specific areas of the COA. The map on page xi shows the location of these town centre masterplans.







As of 2012 each of the masterplans are at different stages of preparation. Croydon Council has been working closely with GLA, TfL, stakeholders, community groups and landowners to prepare these masterplans. The masterplans are focused on the delivery of new development and their associated improvements to the public realm, built environment, amenity space, and transport infrastructure.

This OAPF and these masterplans have been prepared in tandem and are complementary. A planning application within the boundary of a masterplan will need to demonstrate how it delivers the principles and objectives of both the OAPF and the relevant masterplan. The masterplans include;

- East Croydon masterplan (adopted 2011)
- West Croydon masterplan (adopted 2011)
- Mid Croydon masterplan (adopted 2012)
- Fairfield masterplan: is currently in preparation, consultation ended in September 2012 and the masterplan is due for adoption in early 2013
- Wellesley Road 'flexible end state': The Council and the Mayor have an aspiration to change the character of Wellesley Road and to improve its physical environment so that it can perform the function of an important urban space within the COA. To this effect the OAPF includes high level principles which will guide this aspiration. The Council and the GLA family are continuing to work corroboratively to advance and test these principles. Delivering change on Wellesley Road could be achieved in a variety of ways and may involve a number of different developments and different authorities. Given the complexities associated with this project, it is important that the detailed design and delivery remains flexible, so long as the broad approach is in line with the high level strategic principles for Wellesley Road included in this OAPF.
- Old Town masterplan: a masterplan for Old Town (including, Surrey Street, Church Street and Croydon Minster area) is currently being prepared. A draft will be issued for public consultation in Summer 2013 with adoption in early 2014.

In the future, other areas of the COA may be identified as requiring more detailed masterplans. The benefits of following the masterplan approach is that it ensures collaboration between all interested parties and delivers high quality design, and planning that benefits the whole of the COA. The identification and preparation of future masterplans will be dependent on need, timing and resources.



- | | |
|---|--|
|  West Croydon masterplan |  Fairfield masterplan |
|  Wellesley Road 'flexible end state' |  Mid-Croydon masterplan |
|  East Croydon masterplan |  Old Town masterplan |

Town Centre Masterplans



Croydon Minster

01

Executive summary

CHAPTER CONTENTS

- The objectives of the OAPF

CHAPTER OUTCOMES

- Ensure a flexible plan that encourages a mix of uses across the whole of the Opportunity Area
- A plan that supports the COA's status as a London Metropolitan Centre

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE OAPF

1.1 The Croydon Opportunity Area (COA) has excellent transport connections and presents great opportunities for growth. It has a distinctive local characteristic and includes a variety of building styles and architectural approaches which add to the areas uniqueness.

1.2 Between the 1950's and 1980's the COA underwent significant change, which led to the establishment of the COA as a leading London Metropolitan Centre offering a large commercial, retail and civic function on a London scale.

1.3 Over the last 30 years, however, the COA's prominence has declined. This decline is largely as a result of a decrease in demand for 'back-of-house' office space in the area and the emergence of Canary Wharf as an alternative office location. This has led to an increase in vacant office space and a related fall in the numbers of people working, and travelling into, the COA.

1.4 During this time there has also been limited investment in the COA. There has been little or no change to the physical make-up of the area. Evidence of this can be seen in the limited improvement in the quality of public realm, which was badly damaged during rapid modernist development.

1.5 This lack of improvement continues to damage peoples perception of the area. The COA has been slow to present itself in an alternative light, which it must do if it is attract the development and investment that is necessary to bring change.

1.6 Regeneration of the COA has never been more important. There is no single solution, but rather a mixture of increased economic, retail, residential, cultural and social activities all set within a pleasant urban environment. Action and carefully guided development is needed to generate the energy and dynamism required to stem this decline.

1.7 An objective of the OAPF is to put in place a flexible plan that will support the growth of the COA as a successful London Metropolitan Centre over the next 20 years.

1.8 The main objectives of the OAPF are to;

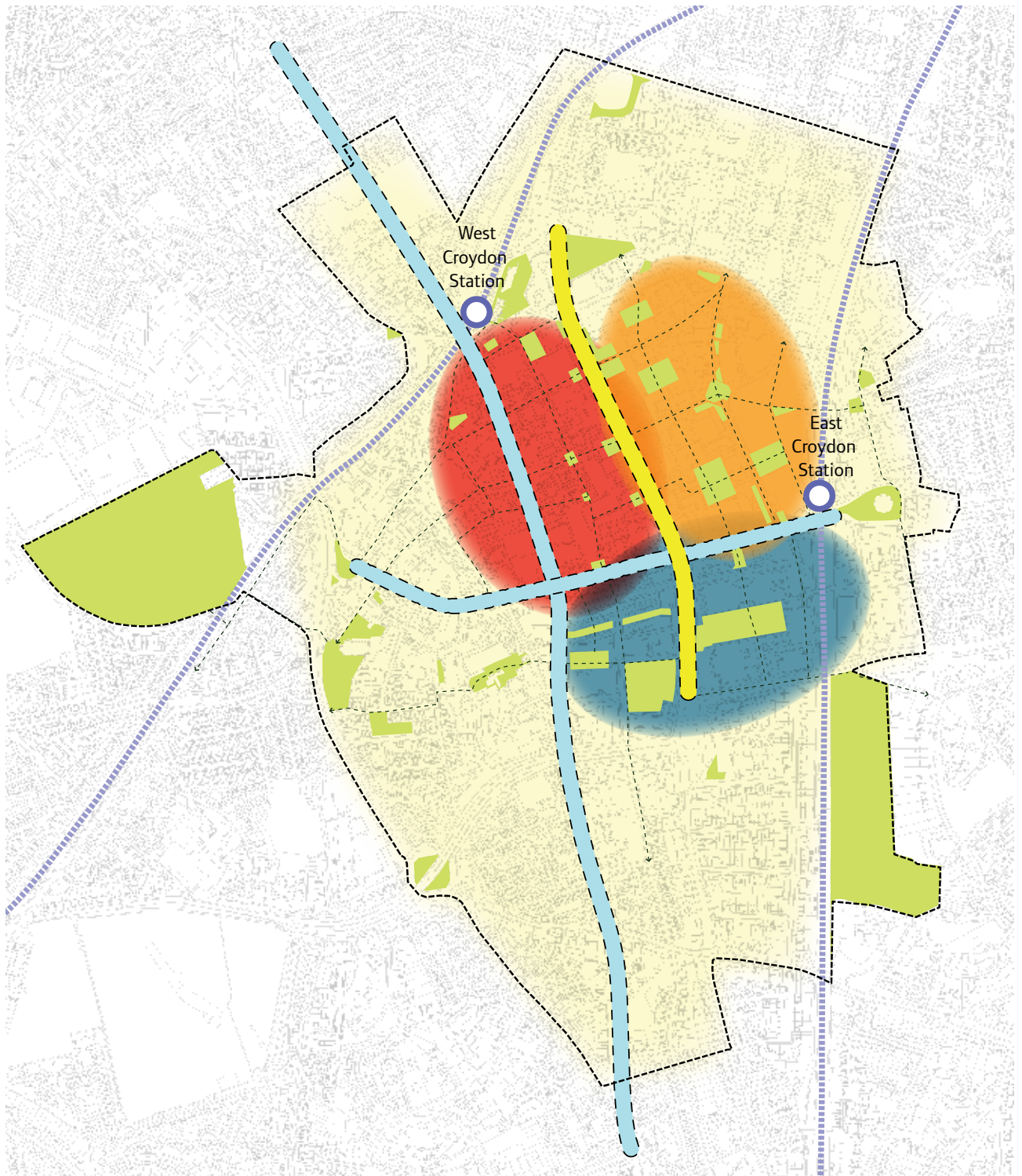
- Support the development of 7,300 homes
- Plan the delivery of the social infrastructure necessary to accommodate 17,000 new residents
- Promote the redevelopment and renewal of the Retail core
- Plan for the revival of prominent high streets
- Encourage the location of new office/commercial space around New Town and East Croydon
- Plan for, and enable the, delivery of new and improved streets and amenity spaces
- Promote high quality architecture and built form
- Ensure enhanced transport and parking capacity

1.9 One of the most notable aspects in the OAPF is the promotion of new housing across all areas of the COA. The OAPF supports the development of 7,300 new homes. Bringing new housing and people into the COA is necessary to help create a new community. New residents will be instrumental in generating activity and demand. Residents will live in a mix of high quality private and affordable homes designed to cater for a diversity of people. Hotels and student accommodation will provide specialised housing.

1.10 The OAPF strongly supports the potential for a renewed and improved retail offer. In particular, a comprehensive redevelopment and renewal approach to much of the Retail core would offer residents, visitors, shoppers and employees a significant retail destination for both south London and the south-east of England. In addition, the COA's high streets perform an important social, cultural and economic role for the local community and the OAPF supports enhancement.

1.11 The OAPF will support new and refurbished commercial space, particularly in New Town and East Croydon. The character of the commercial sector in other parts of the COA will change. Outdated offices will be refurbished, converted and redeveloped to embrace new ways of working and living.

1.12 It is important that new development is set within a quality public realm so that both can create an overall positive built environment. High quality streets and spaces, good quality buildings and an enhanced and preserved heritage setting will help create a physical environment to attract private sector investment. Creating a more pleasant urban environment is critical to the future success of the COA.














-  COA boundary
- Public realm improvements**
-  High Street- London Road to South End
-  High Street- Church Street to George Street
-  Wellesley Road
-  New and improved streets
-  Station improvements
-  New and improved amenity spaces
-  **New Town and East Croydon area**
Mixed-use area - commercial (office / hotel) and residential
-  **Retail Core area**
Retail-led area with a strong mix of other uses including residential, hotel and leisure
-  **Mid Croydon and Fairfield**
Mixed-use area including residential, civic uses community, leisure with small-scale retail and commercial uses
-  **Residential led area**

Figure 1.1 Indicative illustration of the OAPF objectives

**Residential
led area**

**New Town and
East Crodyon area**
Commercial and
high density residential

East Crodyon
Station

Park
Hill



Figure 1.2 Where we want to be

Civic and Cultural area (Mid Croydon and Fairfield)

A mixed use area including civic uses, residential, community, leisure with small-scale retail and commercial uses

Retail Core

Retail and high density residential and leisure uses

West Croydon
Station





Looking south-west over Croydon Town Centre

02

Introduction to: The Croydon Opportunity Area

CHAPTER CONTENT

- Location
- Relationship of the COA to Purley Way
- The COA and the CMC
- Six character areas

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- Showing the prominent location of the COA in the wider London and the south east of England
- Explaining the relationship between the COA and Purley Way and the need for these to be complementary places
- Explaining the differences in the boundaries between the CMC and the COA
- Introduction to six COA character areas, and highlights the importance of these areas in informing the design process

LOCATION OF THE COA

2.1 The COA is located in south London, in the London borough of Croydon. The COA is a prominent south London location and functions as a regional centre for the whole of London and the south-east of England.

2.2 The COA is an important transport interchange, offering excellent transport connections both north and south. The majority of the COA has a public transport accessibility level of 6b.

2.3 By rail, the COA is 15 minutes from central London, 20 minutes from Gatwick and 40 minutes from Brighton.

2.4 The COA has excellent road connections to south London and the south-east, with access to both the M25 and the M23 within 15 minutes. To central London, road connections (A23) are busy and this creates a sense of distance, which contrasts strongly with the area's excellent rail connections.

2.5 The London Plan identifies the Croydon Town Centre as a Metropolitan Centre, Opportunity Area and as a Strategic Outer London Development Centre.

2.6 Fig 2.2 shows the COA's proximity to central London, the Wandle Valley Development Corridor, Gatwick airport and the south-east of England.

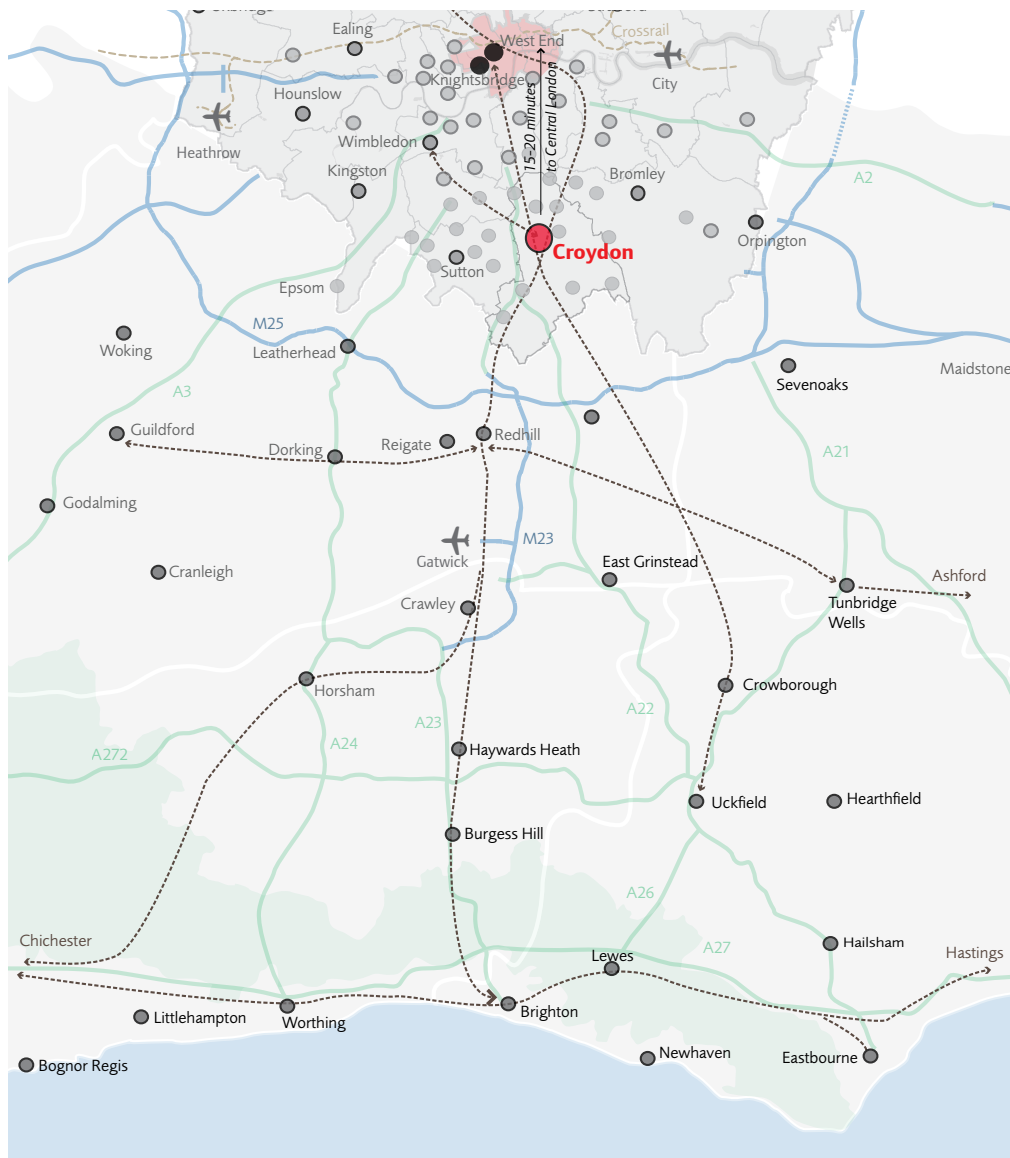


Figure 2.1 Croydon Opportunity Area: South East regional context

2.7 The COA is London's third largest office location, behind the City of London and Canary Wharf, and is also south London's largest shopping centre. In addition to these, the COA also includes a mix of residential, educational and cultural facilities.

2.8 These positive attributes are enhanced by the COA's significant capacity for future development and growth. This potential is supported politically by both the Mayor of London and Croydon Council. Both are keen to see a change and growth in the COA that will bring about the regeneration that is necessary and that will help change people's perception of the area.

2.9 These factors combine to make the COA an attractive location for future investment.

2.10 This strong political support is demonstrated across all of the OAPF objectives. These objectives seek to attract significant numbers of new homes into the area, to promote the reinvigoration of the retail core and to show on-going support for the COA's commercial sector.

2.11 This support is evident in the significant level of public sector funding that has now been committed to the COA. This funding will help create a new and attractive platform that will attract new development and investment into the area.

2.12 This OAPF has been prepared in light of this and with a clear understanding of the COA's location in its London context. The policy guidance included in this framework should help guide and inform the delivery of investment and future developments so as to take best advantage of the COA's strong opportunities.

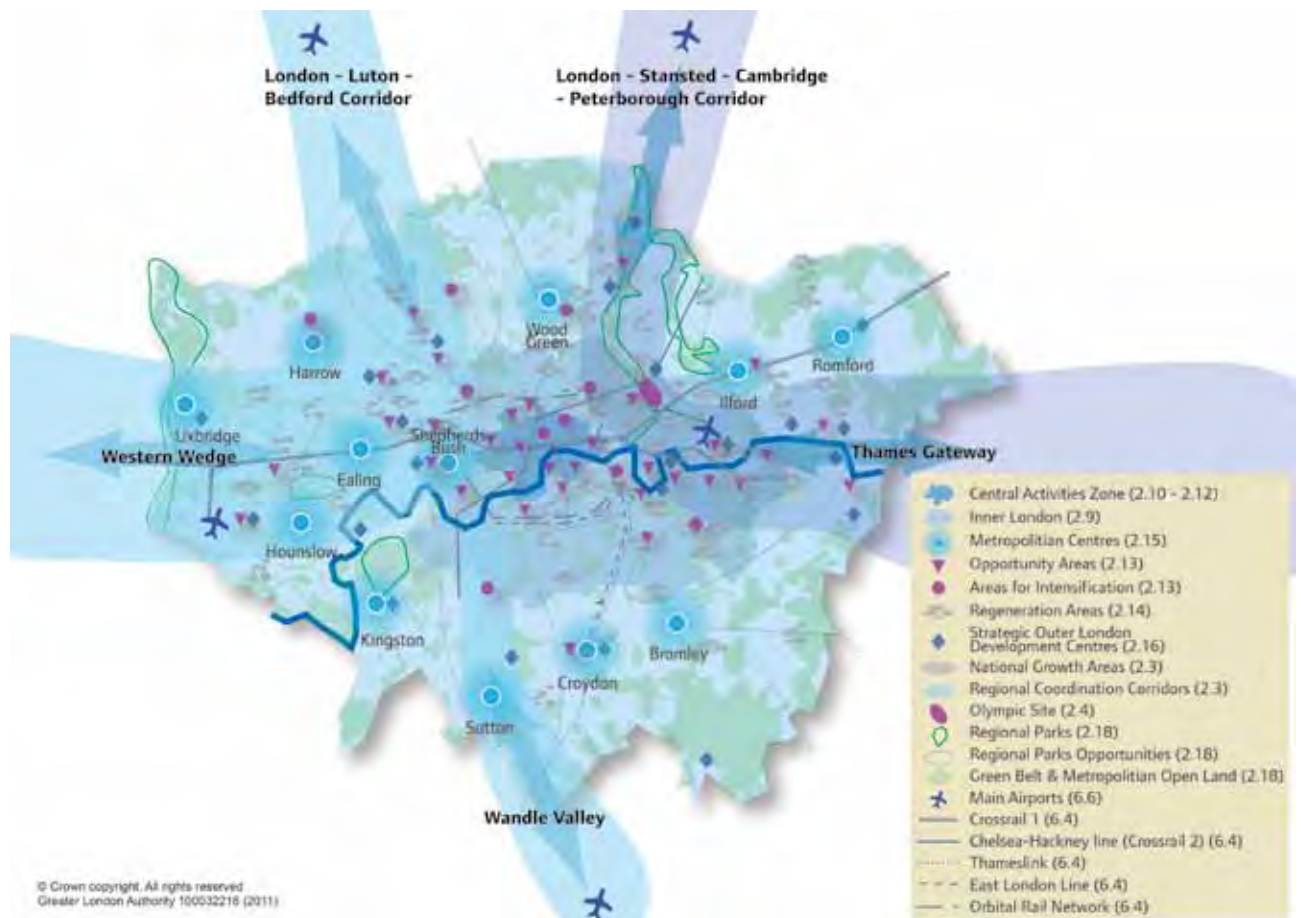


Figure 2.2 London Plan (2011) Key Diagram

RELATIONSHIP WITH PURLEY WAY

2.13 Immediately adjacent the COA is Purley Way. Purley Way is an out of centre, car-based, retail and industrial park as shown in Fig 2.3.

2.14 The early growth of Purley Way is linked to Croydon Airport and its related industrial warehouses. Following the closure of the airport, the area retained its industrial function and later began to attract larger 'out-of-centre' retail warehouses e.g. IKEA and John Lewis, along with large areas of free parking. The Purley Way retail offer is not concentrated in one place, but rather is spread over an area of 2 to 3 kilometres.

2.15 The proximity of Purley Way to the COA presents challenges and opportunities for both.

2.16 Today, the retail offer at Purley Way does not complement that of the COA. The operation of Purley Way raises land use planning issues around out-of-centre retail development.

2.17 The Council's Core Strategy provides a clear policy position, which recognises the need to stem future inappropriate 'out-of-centre' development.

2.18 This policy position is supported in the OAPF. The OAPF is focussed on the COA and so does not include any additional guidance on the future of Purley Way.

2.19 In the future, the Council will carry out further work to help guide land uses and parking (provision and management) around Purley Way.

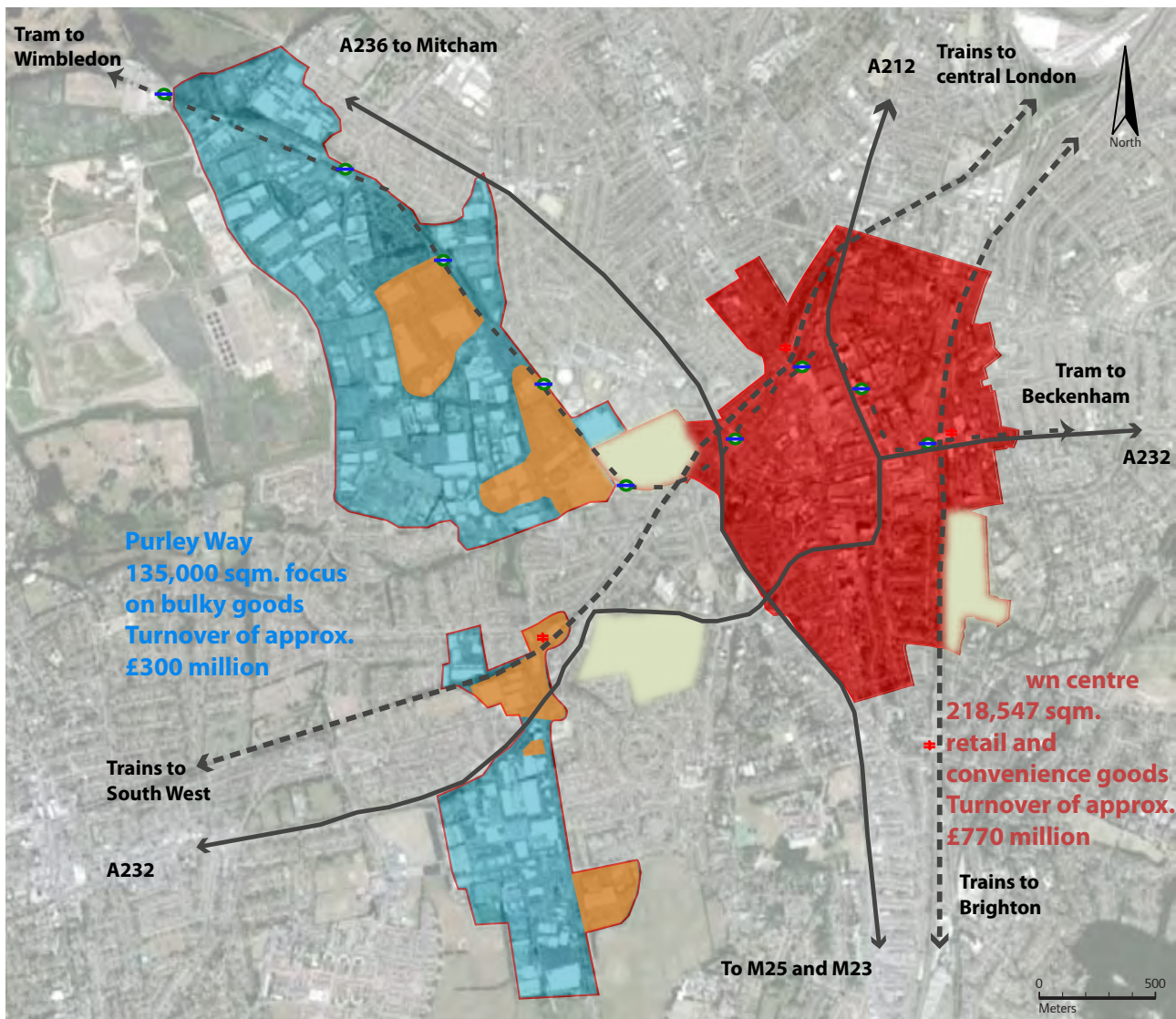


Figure 2.3 Croydon Opportunity Area and Purley Way

THE CMC AND THE COA

2.20 The London Plan and Core Strategy (local plan) refer to both the Croydon Metropolitan Centre (CMC) and the Croydon Opportunity Area (COA).

2.21 The boundary of the CMC was identified in the Council's UDP. The boundary of the COA is now set out in the Core Strategy (local plan) and this OAPF. Fig 2.4 shows the difference between the CMC and the COA. The COA area is a larger area than the CMC area.



■ Croydon Opportunity Area ■ Croydon Metropolitan Centre

Figure 2.4 Croydon Opportunity Area (COA) and Croydon Metropolitan Centre (CMC) boundaries

SIX CHARACTER AREAS

2.22 The COA is a complex arrangement of places, each with its own character, built form and land uses. To help better describe the existing character, the COA is subdivided into six character areas. The following provides further detail on these six character areas.

2.23 Local character is not solely about land use and built form. It is also about people and behaviour. Today the COA is primarily used as a place to shop, work and interchange. The majority of activity is focussed at East and West Croydon stations, the Retail Core, parts of Old Town, and around the main commercial buildings. Once these commercial and retail buildings close, the level of footfall and street life falls considerably. New development should seek to attract a mix of uses, more residents, improved streets and spaces all of which will help support a stronger offer across the whole of the day.

2.24 New development proposals should use these character areas as the starting point when proposing new scheme designs. Applicants should provide a clear understanding of how the proposed scheme relates to the character, built form, and land uses of the surrounding character area. New development should improve connections between these areas to ensure easy movement across the whole of the COA.

RETAIL CORE

2.25 This is the main comparison shopping area, with some underused office space above. The area includes the pedestrianised North End, with a mix of fine grain, heritage buildings and conservation areas. Behind North End are the two large shopping centres of Whitgift and Centrale that were built in the 1960's and 1970's.

NEW TOWN AND EAST CROYDON

2.26 This area forms the eastern edge of the COA. This area underwent significant redevelopment between the 1950's and 1980's. The majority of buildings are broad shouldered and modernist in style. The primary land use is office and hotel space. The area includes East Croydon station (national rail, tram and bus) which generates high levels of footfall to and from the station. The area has some small-scale retail buildings along George Street and some new mid-rise residential / hostel buildings on Dingwall Road. The area has a large amount of surface level car parking.

WEST CROYDON

2.27 Centred at the busy junction of London Road and North End. The area contains; West Croydon station (national rail, London overground, tram and bus); a mix of traditional high street uses (Station Road, London Road, Poplar Walk); large 1980's office buildings on Wellesley Road; and a Grade I listed church. Around London Road and close to the retail core the built character is comprised of small scale, fine grain buildings. However along Wellesley Road there are a number of larger office buildings. A West Croydon masterplan has been adopted by Croydon Council and new proposals should deliver this plan.

MID CROYDON AND FAIRFIELD

2.28 The area includes Mid Croydon and Fairfield along with some land on the eastern side of the East Croydon train line. Today the area is mostly comprised of civic and cultural facilities along with some office space. The area includes some large pieces of heavy infrastructure including Wellesley Road, the railway line and the Flyover, all of which serve to reduce permeability to and from the area, which gives a disjointed feel to the area. Building styles and heights vary from the historic town hall, to the modernist Fairfield Halls and the contemporary Altitude 25.

NORTHERN AREA

2.29 To the north of the commercial core and West Croydon, the northern fringe is primarily residential with some community uses, and London Road high street contains small scale retail and business units. The street pattern is well defined and buildings are predominantly Edwardian and Victorian of 2 to 5-storeys along with some modernist insertions. There are also some other tall buildings dotted around, that are ad hoc and generally out of context (e.g. lylo).

SOUTHERN AND OLD TOWN

2.30 The area is located to the south of the flyover and west of the retail core. It contains a large amount of the COA's historic assets. Church Street, Surrey Street, High Street and South End have retained their historic street pattern, built form and high street uses with buildings tending to be between 2 and 5-storeys. Albeit to the south of the flyover (on High Street) there is a grouping of tall modernist and contemporary office buildings. Around these streets, there is a mix of Edwardian and Victorian urban/suburban housing. In addition, it should also be noted that there are some other tall buildings dotted around the area that are ad hoc and out of place (e.g. Ryland House).



CHARACTER AREAS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Retail core | 4 Mid Croydon and Fairfield |
| 2 New Town and East Croydon | 5 Northern area |
| 3 West Croydon | 6 Southern and Old Town |

Figure 2.5 Six character areas



Church of St Michael and All Angels and BT Delta Point

03

Local context

CHAPTER CONTENTS

- Expansion of an historic market town
- Growth of a 1960's edge city
- The COA's modernist built environment
- Heritage assets

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- Establish a local context that new development must recognise, integrate with, and enhance
- Ensure new development respects and/or enhances the COA's heritage assets
- New development should acknowledge that the COA's modernist built environment has some positive impacts on the creation of a distinctive local character

EXPANSION OF AN HISTORIC TOWN

3.1 The COA's built environment is diverse and multi-layered. It is full of architectural contrasts. It contains buildings and infrastructure that dates to a wide range of periods in history. The COA's built history is one of short bursts of rapid growth, interspersed by periods of change, or decline, echoed in shifts in built style and character.

3.2 Central to the early growth of the COA was its location on the Roman Road, which connected central London to the south. The COA emerged on the low lying banks of the River Wandle and early evidence of this growth is the former medieval Archbishop's Palace, now the Grade I listed Old Palace School, which can be traced back to the 12th Century.

3.3 The area around the Palace and the late medieval Minster was largely rebuilt in the 19th century following a major fire. This area was the old centre of the medieval market town and has the earliest retailing records in the Town Centre, which date from 1276. This was when a grant for a market was first obtained and this market now operates from Surrey Street.

3.4 Following this early development, the COA then began to spread up Crown Hill and into the higher level area of the Retail Core. In the 16th century Archbishop John Whitgift established the now Grade I listed Almshouses signalling a shift in the focus from the area around the Minster further east along Church Street to the area around Surrey Street and the junction of George Street, North End and the High Street. This area expanded during the 17th and 18th

centuries; the Grade II* listed Wrencote House is an excellent architectural example from this period.

3.5 The building of the innovative Surrey Iron Railway (1801-3) and the Croydon Canal (1802-9) indicate the commercial prosperity Croydon was beginning to enjoy at the start of the 19th century. The COA experienced major Victorian expansion, encouraged by the arrival of the railways in 1839 and 1841. Shortly after Croydon became a borough in 1883 there was a major rebuilding of the area bounded by Surrey Street, Crown Hill and the High Street, which had become neglected through widespread deprivation. Municipal pride was displayed through the building of the Town Hall and civic complex built in the 1890s.

3.6 The historic buildings and streets around this central market area were typically fine grain. Buildings were 2 to 5-storeys in height and the main land uses were focussed on supporting the area's retail and market function. In the early 1900's, the area around the market became more intensely developed and the Whitgift School was re-built on North End, set in large grounds. Beyond this, the area was comprised of larger urban and suburban Victorian and Edwardian housing with gardens, many of which still exist today.

3.7 Fig 3.1 shows how the growth of the COA moved up a series of steep level changes from the low lying area around the Wandle to the higher land at New Town. This level change is a distinctive characteristic of the COA and new development should seek to recognise this physical feature.

CROYDON OLD TOWN

CROYDON RETAIL CORE

NEW TOWN / EAST CROYDON



Figure 3.1 The expansion of the Croydon Town Centre from Old Town to New Town (image provided by TerryFarrells 2012)

GROWTH OF A 1960'S EDGE CITY

3.8 As early as the 1930s the Croydon Corporation had great ambitions for the COA. The Corporation purchased Southern Railway's Fairfield holdings in 1934. The Electricity Showrooms (Electric House) and the Segas House offices were constructed soon after on the newly widened Wellesley Road. In 1943 the Fairfield Committee prepared a plan for the COA. The plan formed the basis of the 1947 Croydon Reconstruction Plan and 1951 Development Plan. The Croydon Corporation Act of 1956 secured the local planning and compulsory purchase powers.

3.9 In the 1950s Croydon was identified as a new 'out-of-centre' office location as part of the decentralisation of office space from central London. Between 1963-73, 20% of offices and 30% of jobs which moved out of central London went to Croydon.

3.10 These actions saw the development of 550,000 sq.m. of new commercial space; a range of civic buildings; two large retail centres; several multi-storey car parks; and a series of large infrastructure projects e.g. Wellesley Road, Croydon Flyover and Roman Way.

3.11 These large projects followed the post war modernist ideals of architecture and urban planning. This resulted in a unique local character and an impressive 'mini-Manhattan' skyline. However, it has also resulted in a poor quality public realm dominated by car parks with poorly defined streets and spaces.

3.12 Today commercial buildings are dotted across the COA, but are mainly focussed in the New Town area. They were built as large mono-use buildings and many still exist today. Some of the most recognisable post-war changes are in the Figs 3.2 and 3.3;

- New commercial space was focussed around the previous low-density residential blocks at East Croydon and New Town.
- The railway sidings and storage area at Ruskin Square were cleared but still remain vacant today.
- Fairfield railway sidings were removed and replaced with civic buildings and a green square.
- The two lane Wellesley Road has been replaced with a six lane carriageway.
- The Whitgift school and amenity space was redeveloped as a large shopping centre



Figure 3.2 Figure ground of COA in 1938



Figure 3.3 Figure ground of COA in 2012

COA'S MODERNIST BUILT ENVIRONMENT

3.13 Post-war modernist architecture and urban planning (1950's to late 1970's) is a key feature of the COA's built character. It has played an important role in shaping the area's built environment. The COA contains the largest concentration of post-war modernist buildings and infrastructure in the UK and this concentration contributes to one of the COA's most distinctive local characteristics.

3.14 This large collection of modernist buildings can be viewed either as a positive or a negative feature. It is important to gain a robust understanding of those features that typify modernist architecture in the COA. This understanding will help inform what elements should be celebrated and what elements could be removed for the overall enhancement of the area.

3.15 Some of the over-riding design principles of modernist architecture in the COA, include;

- the majority of modernist buildings are large single-use commercial buildings;
- these buildings are generally broad slab-like buildings that in turn have given rise to a unique 'mini Manhattan' style skyline;
- buildings tend to have strong horizontal external treatments;
- there are typically large areas of open space around the base of these buildings. These areas were originally designed to allow light and air flow around them but are now primarily used as surface level car parks
- the car was given priority in the COA and this has resulted in a large number of surface level car parks and a new urban motorway running directly through the COA.
- Another significant feature is the separation of uses. Croydon Old Town area is characterised by its historic market function and street form. New Town and East Croydon have larger mono-use commercial buildings; Mid Croydon and Fairfield Hall have buildings with a civic function; and beyond this are areas of urban and suburban (Victorian and Edwardian) housing

3.16 This separation of uses is still evident today and results in places that are only busy at specific times of the day. New development should achieve a more vibrant mix of uses across the whole of the day.

3.17 The following are those modernist buildings that have already been identified as making a positive contribution to the built character of the COA.

Statutorily listed

- Electric House
- 20 Katharine Street

Locally listed

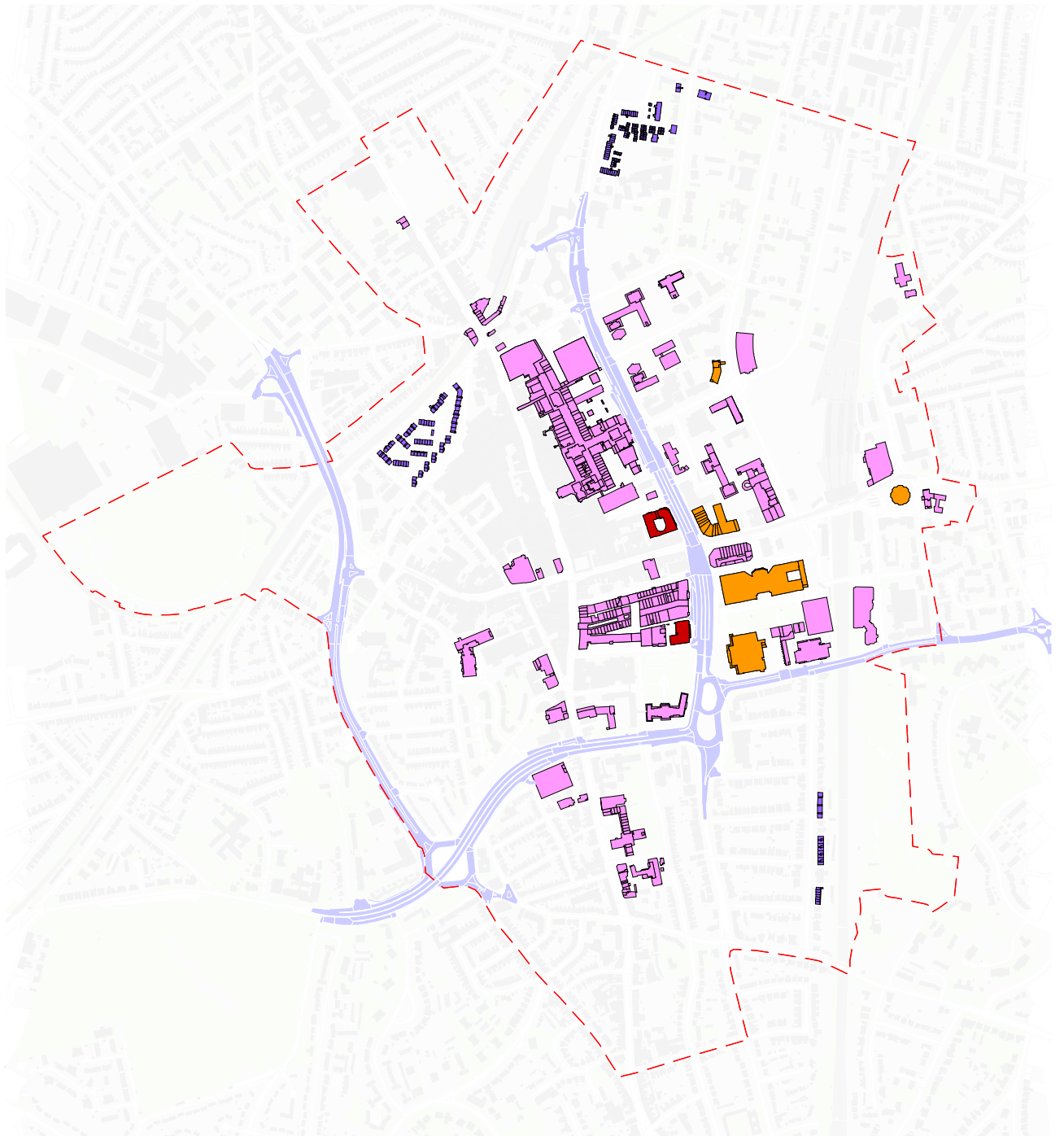
- NLA Tower (No.1 Croydon)
- Corinthian House
- Fairfield Halls
- Croydon College
- Norfolk House

3.18 Following consultation with the Twentieth Century Society, it is considered that there may be potential to put forward some of the COA's locally listed buildings for statutory listing, in particular the NLA Tower and Corinthian House.

3.19 Beyond the above established list, there may be other modernist buildings in the COA that have some heritage significance. To help advance this thinking, Croydon Council and the GLA are in discussions with English Heritage and the Twentieth Century Society to carry out a more detailed review of the existing modernist buildings in the COA to gain a further understanding on these modernist buildings and structures.

3.20 Future development and design of buildings and sites in the COA should respect and enhance the setting of these buildings, thereby ensuring these buildings play an even more important role in setting the built character of the COA.

3.21 In general, the design and planning of future developments should be aware of the role of modernist buildings in generating the COA's distinctive local character. This place specific character could be recognised and enhanced through new development.



St. Georges House



Corinthan House



Apollo House



NLA Tower

Figure 3.4 Modernist buildings

HERITAGE ASSETS

3.22 The COA contains 35 statutorily listed buildings, locally listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments, and 5 conservation areas. These heritage assets span a wide range of ages and styles, from the medieval through to the modernist periods. In addition, the whole of the COA is an Archaeological Priority Zone. Fig 3.5 shows the locations of these heritage assets in the COA.

3.23 There is a clustering of conservation areas and listed buildings along the main high streets in Old Town and the Retail core. This coincides with the growth of the Town Centre around the former Archbishop's Palace and its expansion along Church Street to Surrey Street, North End, the High Street and George Street between the 16th to 19th Centuries. Whilst a significant portion of the COA's heritage assets are focussed in the Old Town and the Retail core area, there are also heritage assets in other areas of the COA as well as in the immediate surrounds outside the COA's red line boundary.

3.24 It is this historic pattern of development that has resulted in one of the COA's most defining characteristics, which is the dramatic juxtaposition of scale, character and appearance. This juxtaposition adds to the COA's rich and dynamic character and results in some interesting visual contrasts – tall beside small, and old beside new. In the future this

design characteristic can be supported where it achieves a high quality design, see image below.

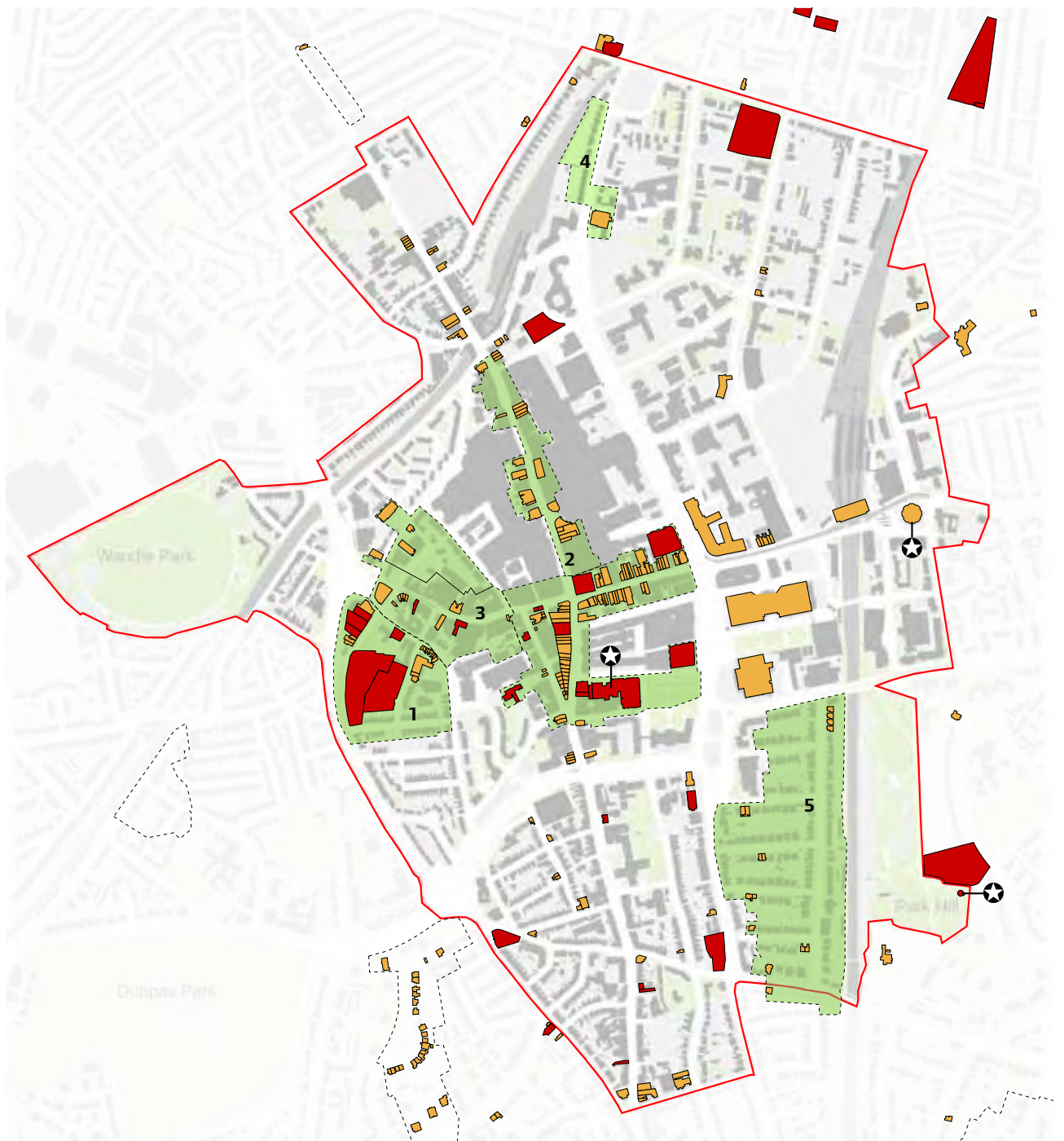
3.25 There is an opportunity for new development to improve the relationship of the New Town with nearby historic areas. Where relevant, new development should help to mend problematic juxtapositions and celebrate successful ones. It is important that future development integrates successfully with the existing environment. This will help ground new development within an established context and ensure that both new and old sit more comfortably alongside each other.

3.26 However, not all examples of juxtaposition in the COA are positive and in some cases significantly over-scaled buildings sit uncomfortably alongside small scale heritage buildings and amenity spaces.

3.27 It is recognised that the COA will not return to its market town days. Nonetheless, the COA's existing heritage assets play an important role in defining the built character of the area and creating a sense of place. The development of, and building in the setting of, heritage assets must respect and/or enhance or better reveal these assets in line with local and national planning policies. New development should celebrate the interplay and relationship between the old and new.



An example of juxtaposition of scale and style in the Southern character area of the COA



- FIVE COA CONSERVATION AREAS**
- 1 Parish Church
 - 2 Central Croydon
 - 3 Church Street
 - 4 Wellesley Road (North)
 - 5 Chatsworth Road

- LISTED BUILDINGS**
- Statutory listed
 - Locally listed
 - ★ Local landmarks



Croydon Minster



Almshouse



Town Hall



Water Tower

Figure 3.5 Heritage assets



Figure 3.6 Aerial photo of the COA from 1946



East Croydon Station
1920



North End, Whitgift School and
Playing Fields, 1955



View looking north towards
retail core and New Town along
Wellesley Road, 1965



Figure 3.7 Aerial photo of the COA from 2010



East Croydon Station, 2012



North End, 2012



Wellesley Road, 2012