

# Erith Vision for the future



Framework Plan and Regeneration Strategy  
2006

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# Executive Summary

The Erith Area Framework report has provided an exciting opportunity to influence the sustainable and comprehensive regeneration of one of few historic riverside towns within the East London sub-region and Thames Gateway. The framework strategy covers a range of areas including future development and land use, regeneration initiatives, transport improvements and environmental improvements. The overall objectives of the study as set out in the brief were to:

- Develop a detailed understanding of the dynamics of Erith and its context
- To evaluate options for the regeneration and intensification of Erith
- To develop a coherent spatial strategy, which enables high density and enables sustainable development integrated with good public space and transport

At a strategic level, Erith is positioned within the heart of an important zone of change, where both public and private sector partners are being encouraged by various tiers of Government to invest in housing, infrastructure and services. Erith's role as a service centre and key employment location within the sub-region is due to grow and it has been identified as one of twelve zones of change in the Thames Gateway; as an Opportunity Area within the Mayor's London Plan; and as a focal point for targeted action in the London Development Agency's Economic Development Strategy.

This regeneration framework has sought to build upon various successful local projects and initiatives that have been undertaken in Erith in the recent past. These initiatives, most importantly the building of the Morrison's supermarket (opened 1998) on the former Erith Deep Wharf site, have triggered a process of regeneration in the town and have led to a marked increase in visits to the town as well as improvements in access for the public to the riverside. This framework therefore presents a coherent approach, which considers previous and current regeneration efforts in a holistic framework document.

The overall aim of this study is to produce a framework plan and regeneration strategy, which guides Erith into becoming a more sustainable, mixed and inclusive community, offering a better

quality of life for existing and future residents, visitors and businesses. The clients requested that the framework builds on current plans, which have been drawn up for parts of Erith, and to pay particular attention to Erith's uniqueness and identity as a Thames riverside town. The diagram overleaf summarises the Key issues within the study area today.

The framework strategy that we have devised seeks to address these issues, through implementation of a series of initiatives, projects and programmes, which spans a period of up to 20 years. The development proposals have a distinctive time dimension to them, i.e. short, medium and long-term interventions. The key interventions brought forward as part of this framework are set out in the Framework Strategy pages overleaf and include:

- the creation of a new public space and civic heart in Erith Town Centre:
- new leisure facilities at Erith Riverside
- improved linkages of Erith Town Centre with Erith Station and the Europa Trading Estate
- improved traffic flow/capacity at Bexley Road
- the creation of a new centre in Slade Green including a new secondary school and community resource centre
- a new residential community at Erith Quarry and an enhanced public open space at the centre of the site.
- the reorganization of Europa as a mix-use development
- potential extension to Erith Town Centre

Clearly, if all of these opportunities are to be taken forward, then further dialogue will need to take place between delivery agents in both local and regional government, so that an overall, detailed action plan may be devised. In addition, it will be important to fully involve the business sector in future development of options, so that local benefits can be maximised.

The aspiration is that this framework can act as the principal catalyst for change in Erith and make a genuine difference to those

who live and work there.

# Introduction

In November 2004 the London Development Agency (LDA) with London Borough of Bexley (LBB) and the GLA's Architecture and Urbanism Unit (AUU) commissioned URS Corporation together with Meadowcroft Griffin Architects, Knight Frank, Steer Davies Gleave, Latz und Partner Landscape Architects, and Clarus Consulting to draw up a framework plan and regeneration strategy for Erith.

The need for this framework can be seen in the context of developments at both the regional as well as local level.

With continued population growth in London and the South East and the need for a substantial increase in the stock of housing, the Thames Gateway features as the main opportunity area for growth in London and the South East. The overall objective for the development of the Thames Gateway is to maximise the area's potential for housing growth while at the same time ensuring the delivery of sustainable communities and the aspirations of the Mayor's London Plan.

In the Thames Gateway context Erith is of strategic importance in contributing to these aspirations. The area's importance is expressed through its designation as:

- Part of one of the 12 Thames Gateway Zones of Change together with Woolwich, Thamesmead and Belvedere in the London Thames Gateway Development and Investment Framework,
- An Opportunity Area within the Mayor's London Plan,
- A focal point for targeted action in the London Development Agency's Economic Development Strategy.

On a local level, various regeneration initiatives have been undertaken in Erith in the recent past. These initiatives, most importantly the building of the Morrison's supermarket (opened 1998) on the former Erith Deep Wharf site, have triggered a process of regeneration in Erith and have led to a marked increase in visits to the town as well as improvements in access for the public to the riverside. A need has been identified for a coherent approach, which integrates previous and current regeneration efforts in a framework document.

## Aim

The overall aim of this work is to produce a framework plan which guides Erith into becoming a more sustainable, mixed and inclusive community offering a better quality of life for existing and future residents, visitors and businesses.

Taking both the regional and local context, the framework's aims are:

- To support the delivery of sustainable communities in the London Thames Gateway,
- To build upon existing work,
- To bring local and regional policy agendas and initiatives together,
- To use the momentum of recent/current regeneration efforts in Erith, and thereby
- To maximise the regeneration benefits in a way which builds a strong identity and cohesive urban structure.

Furthermore, the framework aims to identify short, medium and longer-term improvements that will contribute to the development and regeneration of Erith as well as discrete projects, which form part of an Action Plan and enable LB Bexley to secure funding more easily.

As outlined in the brief, detailed objectives of the Erith Area Framework are to address the need to sustain:

- A flourishing local economy,
- A mixed and balanced community ensuring social cohesion,
- A better-integrated town centre,
- A safe and healthy local environment,
- Good public transport and other transport infrastructure,
- A well-integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures,
- Good quality local public services,
- A diverse, vibrant and creative local culture,
- A sense of place,
- High density and high quality physical development and public spaces.

The framework is asked to pay particular attention to Erith's

uniqueness and identity as a Thames Riverside town.

The work will inform the future Local Development Framework (LDF).

## Timeframe

The framework puts forward a strategy which spans a period of up to 20 years. As such the framework aims to bring forward a balanced mix of subtle and ambitious changes in Erith, which contains blue sky thinking rooted in realistic potential. The development proposals have a distinctive time dimension to them, i.e. short (1-5 years), medium (6-10 years), and long-term (11-15 years) interventions.

## Status

The commissioning partners are looking for a spatial development strategy which can form the basis of an Area Action Plan, due to replace existing Supplementary Planning Guidelines (SPGs) drawn up for Erith in the past. In addition this document should form the basis of the Opportunity Area Planning Framework for Belvedere and Erith.

The development options brought forward in this document have been derived in a systematic and transparent way with detailed and supporting data and information attached in an appendix.

## Consultations and documents

This framework has been drawn up in consultation with key stakeholders both at the local and regional level. These included:

- Local people, businesses and organisations, including the Erith and Slade Green Forum
- Landowners and developers,
- Bexley Council,
- London Development Agency,
- Greater London Authority,
- Transport for London, and
- Environment Agency.

(See appendix for details of consultees)

A range of documents and data sources has been used to inform this study: These are listed in the reference section.

## Structure

The Framework is structured as follows:

The first part of the Framework introduces Erith as it is today. It analyses current problems, opportunities and strengths in the economic, social, transport and urban design sphere and conceptualises Erith's urban fabric.

The second part builds upon the first section by envisioning Erith in the future. Objectives are drawn up for Erith's future development, key proposals are brought forward and prioritised. This section also identifies key projects and interventions.

*The river context: view looking east along the Thames towards Erith.*



## Location

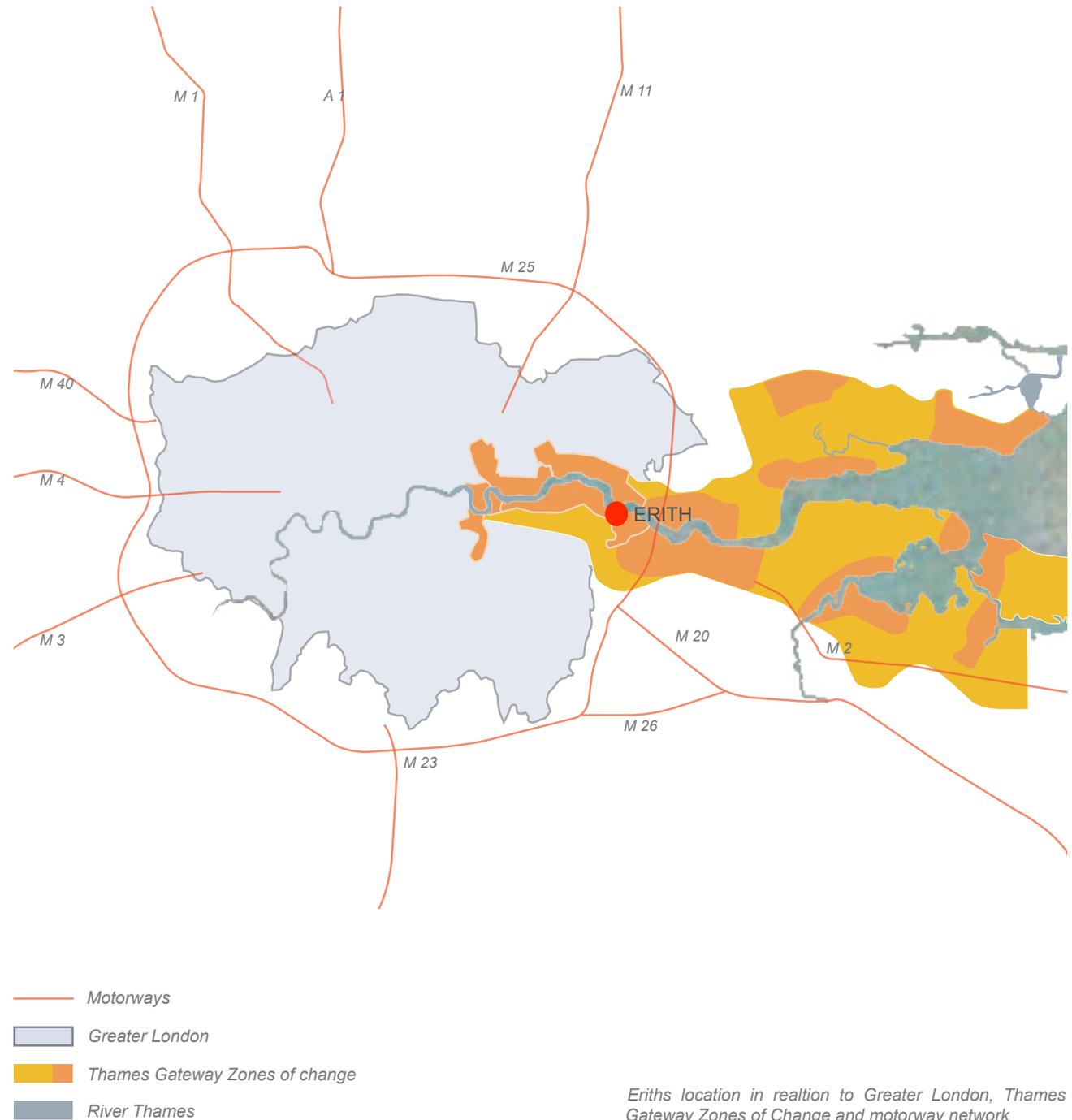
Erith is located on the south bank of the Thames, on the eastern edge of Greater London. Its position is one of major importance for 'Zones of Change' in Thames Gateway.

Erith has many assets to develop as a new centre. It is located in close proximity to the M25 ring road with direct access to the river and major road and rail links to east and west.

Throughout history its river location has given Erith an importance and prosperity. With the expansion of London throughout the 19th and 20th centuries Erith today lies on the edge of the urban conurbation. This now gives it a particular identity and character. It is both part of London and apart from it.

Erith is a riverside town which gives it a strong character and distinguishes it from other east London centres. The river is the largest public open space within the Zones of Change connecting the new centres currently undergoing rapid development. Revitalisation of the river and its edges will be a vital factor in redefining Erith's role and identity as a riverside town. Proposed changes to Rainham Marshes and future changes to public, commercial and recreational uses of the river may provide benefits to Erith.

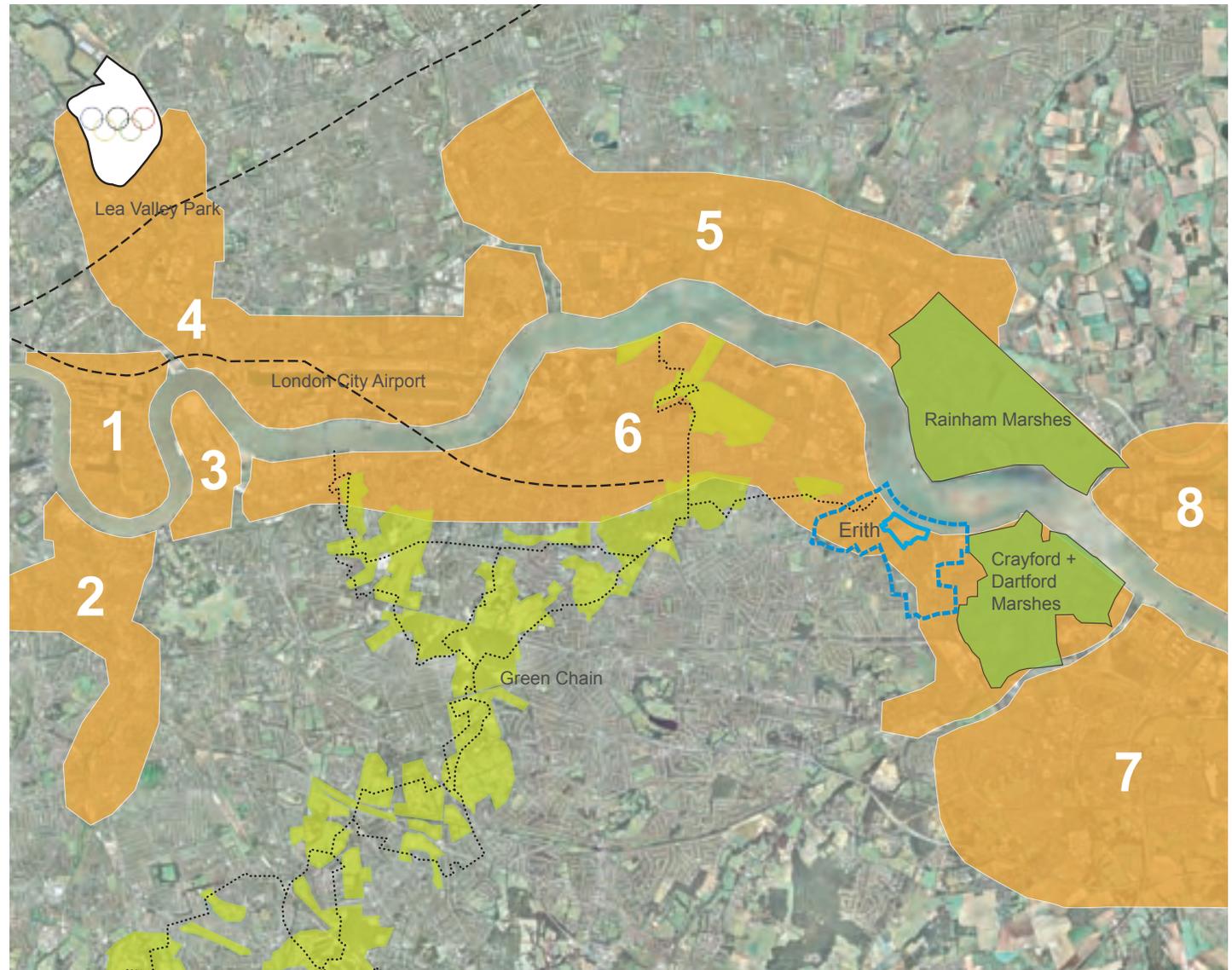
New infrastructure of Thames Gateway Bridge and Crossrail could offer new connections to the north of the river and to the centre of London. Possible river transport may provide access across and along the river to other key centres. London's 2012 Olympics will be sited in the Lower Lea to the west of Erith and the town should ensure that it is in a position to benefit, at the least indirectly, from the Olympics.



Thames Gateway Zones of Change

- 1 Isle of Dogs
- 2 Deptford and Lewisham
- 3 Greenwich Peninsula
- 4 Stratford, Lower Lea and Royal Docks
- 5 London Riverside and Barking
- 6 Woolwich, Thamesmead and Erith
- 7 Kent Thameside
- 8 Medway

-  Thames Gateway zones of change
-  The Green Chain
-  Marshes
-  Erith Town Centre
-  Core study area
-  Route of green chain walk
-  Proposed route of Crossrail track
-  Site of London 2012 olympics



Location of the study area in the context of Thames Gateway.

## Context - zone of change 6

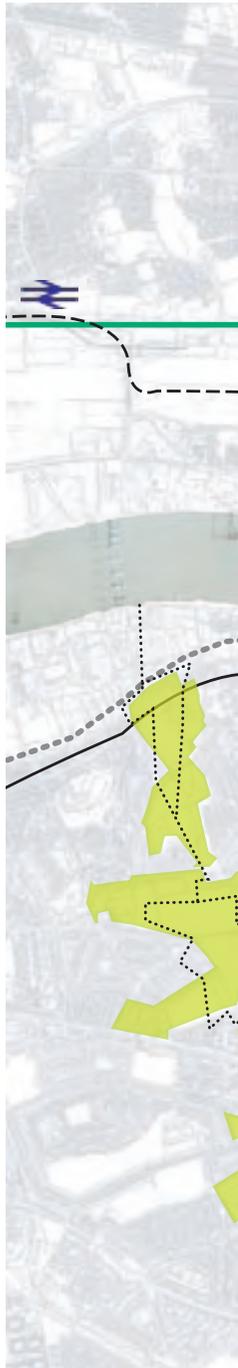
The context of change within Zone of Change 6 may offer new opportunities for growth.

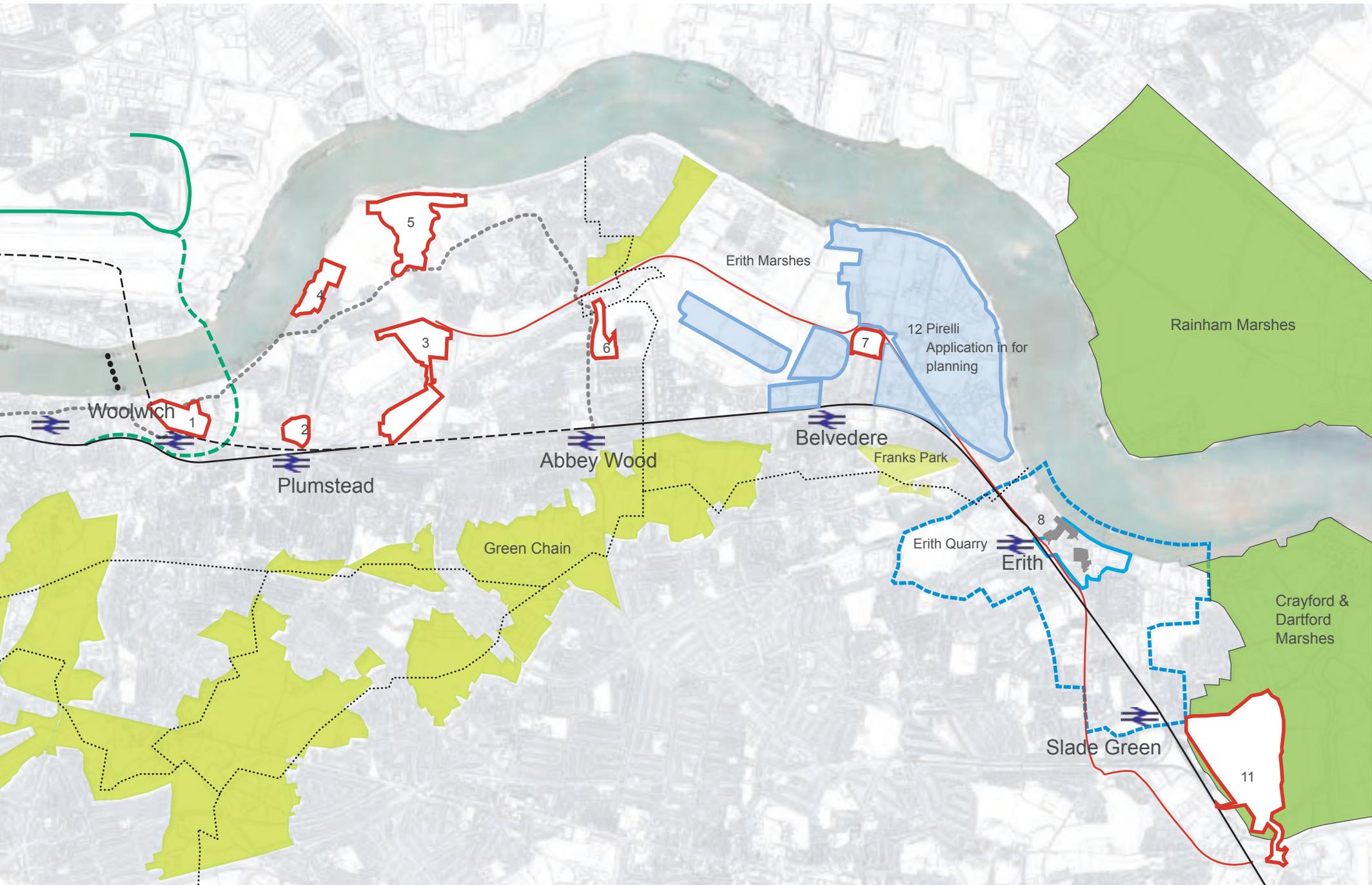
New connections will bring Erith closer to other local and regional centres within the Zone of Change and more accessible to the centre of London. It is important to consider Erith within this overall context and to take account of new conditions and opportunities offered by the surrounding area.

This drawing shows Erith in relation to the significant development proposals within the Thames Gateway Zone of Change 6, transport links and main areas of open green space.

- 1 *Royal Arsenal: Masterplan for mixed use developments.*
- 2 *Pettman Crescent: Possible housing/hotel/retail development. Pre-planning stage.*
- 3 *White Hart Triangle Industrial/employment uses. Under Construction*
- 4 *Gallions Village and Thames Walk Housing development under construction.*
- 5 *Tripcock Point Housing: Mixed use development. Planning consent.*
- 6 *Tavy Bridge Housing redevelopment. Planning consent.*
- 7 *Norman Park Site Possible retail/leisure/hotel uses. In pre planning stage.*
- 8 *Erith Western Gateway Planning Brief for housing development.*
- 9 *Erith Shopping Centre Redevelopment and expansion of retail uses. Under construction.*
- 10 *Erith Library and mixed use development.*
- 11 *Railway Freight Train Depot Possible interchange/distribution. Planning stage.*
- 12 *Pirelli site. Planning stage.*

-  Marshes
-  Green Chain
-  Proposed major development sites
-  Core study area
-  Erith town centre
-  'Green Chain Walk' Route
-  Belvedere Employment Area
-  Bronze Age Way (A2016)
-  Existing train route
-  Proposed Crossrail alignment
-  Existing Docklands Light Railway
-  Proposed Docklands Light Railway
-  Proposed Greenwich Waterfront Transport
-  Woolwich ferry crossing
-  Existing train stations





## Context - core study area

The core study area is focussed on Erith town centre and extends to include key adjacent areas which define Erith's character: the river edge to the north, Manor Road industrial areas to the east, residential districts to the south, Europa and Atlas employment areas to the west as far as the disused quarry. The wider study area extends to include Belvedere, Slade Green and Howbury. The Framework is not limited to these areas but also takes into account the influence of key areas within the wider context: Belvedere Employment Area, Crayford and Dartford Marshes, Crayford Ness Industrial Area, the river, and Rainham Marshes. Erith is well positioned as a local centre to serve the wider residential and business communities.

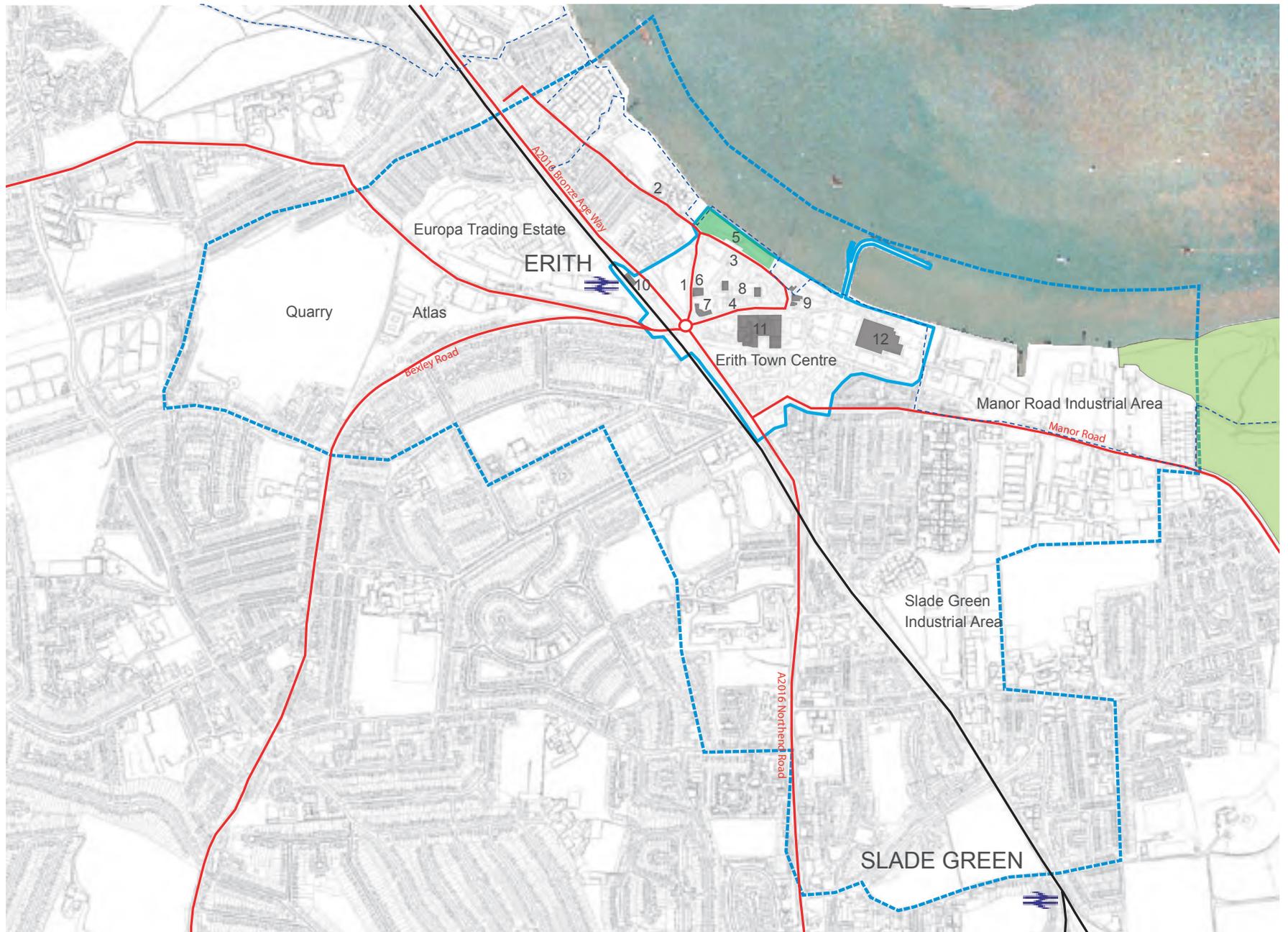
Three Wards meet close to Erith town centre - Erith, North End and Colyers. Belvedere Employment Area lies within Erith Ward. Northumberland Heath Ward lies uphill to the west.

Erith station lies close to the town centre and provides good connections to other centres and to London Bridge.

The map shows major routes and buildings of importance within Erith town centre. The A2106/Bexley Road roundabout is a key point where routes meet and marks the entry into the town centre.

The town centre is contained by the river to the north and the railway/A2106 to the south. The recent dualling of the A2106 has created a barrier which separates the town centre from surrounding areas to the west.

- |    |   |   |                        |
|----|---|---|------------------------|
| 1  | <i>Walnut Tree Road</i>                                       |  | Marshes                |
| 2  | <i>West Street</i>  |  | Core study boundary    |
| 3  | <i>The High Street</i>  |  | Railway line           |
| 4  | <i>Bexley Road</i>  |  | Important roads        |
| 5  | <i>Riverside Gardens</i>                                      |  | Thames walk            |
| 6  | <i>Erith Library</i>  |  | Town centre boundaries |
| 7  | <i>Erith Town Hall</i>  |  | Train station          |
| 8  | <i>Residential Tower blocks</i>                               |   |                        |
| 9  | <i>The Cross Keys pub, White Hart pub and Erith Playhouse</i> |   |                        |
| 10 | <i>Erith train station</i>                                    |   |                        |
| 11 | <i>Shopping Centre</i>  |   |                        |
| 12 | <i>Morrisons Supermarket</i>                                  |   |                        |



Erith town centre and the core study area

## Context - core study area

The photographs on the right show some of the key areas which will be focussed on this Framework. They also highlight the varied character and topography of Erith - the river frontage, steep inclines, historic centre, industry, dramatic hillside landscape and buildings of a wide range of uses and scales.



A The High Street looking south-west  
 B Residential towers at Salford Close  
 C Bexley Road looking west  
 D The old library

E The pier looking east  
 F Riverside Gardens towards south-east  
 G Europa Trading Estate  
 H Erith station

I Manor Road Industry waterfront  
 J Morrisons car park and supermarket  
 K Larner Road estate  
 L Crayford marshes and yacht club



Street map showing viewpoints for photographs opposite

## Policy Context

The framework plan has been developed taking into consideration relevant policy documents and initiatives at the national, regional and local level. Key policy documents are outlined below.

On a national and regional level the framework and strategy has been developed in the context of:

- The Government objectives under the Sustainable Communities Plan.
- The Mayor's objectives under the London Plan
- The Thames Gateway London Partnerships Development and Investment Framework

On a local level, London Borough of Bexley's UDP represents the main policy context of this study.

### ODPM Sustainable Communities

The Sustainable Communities Plan sets out a long-term programme for delivering sustainable communities in both urban and rural areas. It aims to tackle housing supply issues in the South East, low demand in other parts of the country, and the quality of our public spaces. The Plan addresses issues such as:

- Accelerating the provision of housing and affordable housing,
- Providing decent homes and ensuring that social housing is brought up to a decent standard by 2010, and
- Improving the local environment of all communities, including cleaner streets, improved parks and better public spaces.

### The London Plan

The London Plan is the spatial strategy for Greater London and has development plan status. All development proposals should

demonstrate how they meet the objectives and policies set out in the London Plan.

The London Plan identifies Erith as part of an Opportunity Area with Belvedere. The riverside section of Erith is also designated as a Strategic Employment Location. The general policy direction derived from Policy 5C.2 states that the Erith/Belvedere Opportunity Area has substantial potential for employment generating development. This policy states that the Mayor will work with partners to draw up planning frameworks, which should build on the strengths of the area as a self contained area of specialised industrial uses.

In addition, London Plan policy 4C.1 sets out the need for the Boroughs to recognise the strategic importance of the Blue Ribbon Network including the Thames, when forming strategies and plans. Furthermore, policy 4C.15 refers to the importance of safeguarding wharves on the Blue Ribbon Network for cargo-handling uses".

### Draft SPG on Industrial Land Supply

The Mayor of London has also produced draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on industrial capacity, which provides more detail on how the wider policies in the London Plan bear on employment land. The draft SPG emphasises the importance of regional and local assessments of supply and demand for industrial land as part of the process to plan, monitor and manage the stock of employment land, and the transfer of surplus land to other uses. It provides specific advice on the Strategic Employment Locations (SEL) framework, locally significant industrial sites and other (non-designated) industrial sites.

The SPG sets the policy context for the release of 33 hectares of surplus employment land in the East London region between 2001 and 2016. The SPG also sets out three indicative groupings of boroughs: 'Restricted transfer', where boroughs are encouraged to adopt a particularly restrictive approach to the release of industrial sites to other uses; 'Managed transfer' where a more permissive approach to transfer should be taken and a third category ' Limited transfer' which is an intermediate category between the other two. Most of the boroughs in East London, including Bexley lie within either the 'Managed' or 'Limited' transfer

categories.

### Draft Sub Regional Development Framework for East London

The Draft SRF for East London sets out the following key space issues for the Belvedere and Erith Opportunity area:

- Need for realism in local ambitions for strategically significant office development. Strategic evidence does not support these ambitions and policy to retain land for this use would be likely to sterilise it for other business activities.
- Need to respond to strategic requirements for logistics provision within the Opportunity Area, linking this to the trunk road network.
- Seek to develop this Area as an exemplary, sustainable industrial zone with an emphasis on high quality design and infrastructure and good public transport access.
- Careful designation of SELs, Locally Significant Industrial Sites and other retained industrial areas so that their industrial integrity and robustness is not compromised by conflicting land uses, while taking into account the scope for consolidation, intensification and mixed use development in appropriate accessible locations (see SPG).
- Better pedestrian connections required from North Kent line stations to the industrial area and town centre.
- Minimise potential for east-west road traffic through the area and to capitalise on public transport improvements in Dartford and Kent Thameside.
- Support extension of Greenwich Waterfront Transit to link up with Dartford Fast Track.
- Maximise links between industrial areas and the residential hinterland as well as Erith Riverside Town.
- Support and reinforce Erith's strategic importance as being one of only two riverside towns in the London Thames Gate-

way

- To incorporate the principles of the Green Grid by providing an interlinked network of good quality, multifunctional open space.

This Framework outlines instances where industrial land use may potentially be released. The SRDF supports this in principle. In the light of revisions to PPG3, however, each instance should be properly justified.

### Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on Housing Provision

The draft SPG on Housing Provision gives guidance on the application and implementation of the policies on housing provision in the London Plan. Of particular relevance to this study, the document sets out the need to establish a mix of land uses that will best meet London's competing demand for land and premises. Mixed use developments can accommodate different land uses on the same site or in the same neighbourhood, and hence can reduce the need to travel between different activities (such as living and working or shopping and healthcare), and can make the best use of scarce land. Promoting and requiring mixed-use developments that include housing is a key theme of the London Plan, which contains a number of policies to this effect.

### The Thames Gateway Development and Investment Framework (TGDIF)

The TGDIF represents a framework for delivering sustainable communities in the London Thames Gateway. The framework sets out a vision for a revitalised Thames Gateway, and the context for detailed discussions on investment priorities, land use planning and other interventions.

The TGDIF builds on the policies set out in the Mayor's London Plan and the Government's Sustainable Communities Action Plan.

The London Thames Gateway is divided into six 'Zones of Change'. The study area falls into Zone 6: 'Thamesmead, Wool-

wich, Belvedere and Erith'. The TGDIF envisages a potential for at least 91,000 dwellings overall, of which 8,110 are estimated to be achieved in Zone 6, 1,100 in the Belvedere/Erith area. Within the Framework Erith is specifically highlighted as a 'focus for development around hubs'.

### LB Bexley Unitary Development Plan

Within Bexley UDP Erith has the status of a 'Major District Centre', which primary function is the 'provision of convenience shopping, as well as comparison shopping to a more confined catchment area'. It is further noted that 'these centres often fulfil a significant service, social and community role and may have a notable employment function'. Office uses in these centres are generally encouraged and UDP policies seek to promote these centres for enhancement and growth.

The UDP highlights Erith town centre as requiring major enhancements if it is to continue to fulfil its role. The Council states that it will 'promote and enhance Erith town centre as an attractive and viable town centre' [policy SHO(ERI)1] and 'enhance the relationship between the town centre and the river' [policy SHO(ERI)2].

This Framework also builds on existing local plans and strategies, which have been drawn up for Erith or parts of Erith in the past:

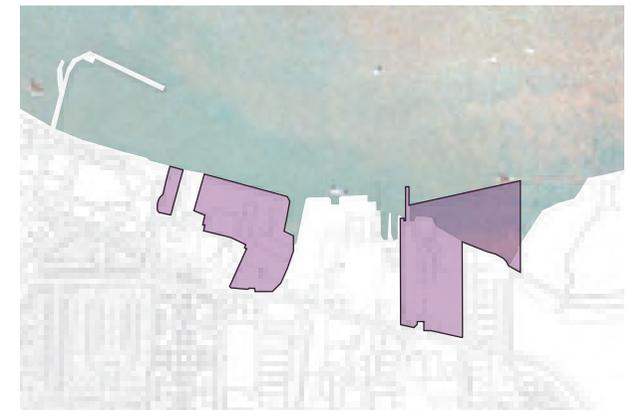
- SPG: Erith Riverside Public Realm Design Guidelines.
- SPG: Erith Riverside Urban Design Framework.
- SPG: Erith Western Gateway Renaissance Strategy and Planning Brief, and
- Erith Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan.

### Safeguarded Wharves

There are three wharves safeguarded in the study area: Mayer Parry Recycling, Standard wharf and RMC Railway. All of these wharves are in the manor road industrial area.

Location of protected wharves

- A RMC Railway
- B Mayer Parry Recycling (EMR Erith)
- C Standard Wharf





# Erith Today

# Socio-Economic Baseline

## Introduction

This section summarises social and economic information about Erith.

A more detailed and fully referenced socio-economic baseline was prepared as part of this framework; this can be found in the Appendices.

## Population

- Erith has a population of about 20,300 (2001).
- Erith has a relatively young population with a high share of 20 to 29 year olds and a low share of older people above 60 years old.
- Bexley's population is forecasted to decline by about 1,400 people by 2016
- Household numbers are expected to increase at the same time due to fewer households with married couples and more one- person households (+4,234 by 2016)
- Population changes are expected to vary within the Borough with the North being the main area of growth
- Erith's population and households are expected to increase by more than 10% by 2011

## Housing

- Erith has a low share of owner-occupied and Council-rented dwellings and a high share of dwellings rented from housing associations
- A large share of Erith's population lives in flats rather than houses
- Erith's housing stock is comparatively new with the majority of it built after 1945
- Property values in Erith are lower than the Borough average
- A high proportion of the population of North Bexley lives in unsuitable housing
- A shortfall of about 600 housing units was identified in North Bexley in 2004; this was caused by in-migration from

outside the Borough rather than from other parts of the Borough

- The greatest mismatch of demand and supply in future is expected to occur within the subsidised housing sector

## School

- The study area is served by seven primary schools and one secondary school
- Overall, children attending primary schools in the study area are under performing compared with the Local Education Authority and national averages.
- Erith's primary schools are currently not running at their full capacity indicating low demand at present.
- Demand for primary school places is forecast to fall for the next four years, while demand for secondary education is currently peaking and due to fall in the coming years.
- These projections are likely to change in the light of major new housing developments brought forward in this study

## Leisure

- Erith has a limited number of entertainment/cultural facilities; the Playhouse is regarded as a particular asset.
- Likewise, Erith offers a range of sport facilities and river-related activities such as rowing and yachting.
- Especially in the light of the high share of young people Erith has little to offer in terms of restaurants/bars and pubs; the area lacks decent restaurants, cafes, or family pubs.
- A refurbished and extended leisure centre has recently opened to the south of the town

## Crime

- Bexley as a whole ranked 4th safest borough out of the total 32 London boroughs in 2003/04.
- Crime in the Borough is concentrated in a few hotspots.
- North End ward shows the highest levels of crime in the whole of the Borough.
- Erith ward shows a greater prevalence of crime and disorder than other wards in Bexley.

## Retail

- Erith has comparatively little to offer in terms of shopping.
- Bexley's other major centres Bexleyheath, Sidcup, Crayford and Welling, or other nearby shopping centres such as Bluewater, are the major shopping destination for Erith residents.
- Over the last two decades retail activity has been on the decline in Erith Town Centre.
- Retail vacancy is highest in Erith when compared to Bexley's major town centres.
- The retail offer in Erith is now beginning to change with the Erith Riverside scheme, which just opened in Spring 2005, and regeneration initiatives beginning to become effective.

## Workforce

- Erith and North End ward have a below average economic activity rate.
- The unemployment rate of Erith and North End ward is above the Bexley average.
- Erith and North End Ward has a workforce of about 9,000 people

## Workforce occupation and employment

- The occupational structure of Erith and North End's workforce varies considerably from the London average
- Erith has a high share of workers in administrative and secretarial occupations, skilled trade occupations, process, plant and machine operatives and elementary occupations

	Erith		North End		Bexley	
	No	in%	No	in%	No	in%
Economically active	4,871	72.2	4,719	75	108,000	80.5
In Employment	4,574	73.5	4,370	69.4	104,000	77.2
Unemployment (% of economic active)	297	6.1	349	7.4	4,000	4.1

- The biggest sectors in which Erith residents are employed are:
  - Wholesale and retail trade (about 19%)
  - Real estate, renting and business activities (13%)
  - Manufacturing (about 12%), and
  - Transport, storage and communication (10.5%)
- There is a higher share of Erith residents working in these sectors than the Borough average (except real estate).

### Local employment

- The overall share of local employment (workers coming from within a three-kilometre radius of Erith's main industrial areas) is 20%
- Manor Road North draws upon local employment most; followed by Manor Road South and Europa, Crayford Ness has the smallest share of local employment
- Crayford Ness industrial area provides most jobs when compared to the other main industrial areas within the study area (809), followed by Europa (633), Manor Road South (538) and Manor Road North (201)

### Skills

- LB Bexley is amongst the London boroughs with the lowest skills levels
- In terms of qualification levels Erith residents are below the Borough average
- Differences are discernible within the study area with North End ward showing a markedly higher share of people without qualifications (36.2%) than Erith ward (28%) (England/Wales average 29.1%)
- Given the projected quantity and quality of employment growth in the London Thames Gateway, Erith residents will not be able to fully reap the benefit without intervention, i.e. more skills training and support

### Business

- The study area is estimated to comprise of

- about 715 businesses (ABI 2003)
- Biggest sectors are:
  - Business activities,
  - Construction,
  - Transport,
  - Retail, and
  - Education, health and recreation.

### Industrial Decline

- Industrial businesses in Erith and North End have been declining in the past
- This reflects wider London trends of a successively declining manufacturing industry
- It is estimated that Erith lost 25 industrial businesses overall (-8%) between 1998 and 2003
- In the same period of time LB Bexley as a whole had a net gain of 141 industrial businesses (or +7%)
- The greatest loss of industrial businesses (nominally) in Erith was in the metals, machinery & equipment and motor vehicles sales & repair sectors.

### Industrial businesses

- Industrial businesses are the greatest employers within the study area: 44% of all people employed in the study area (27% for Bexley)
- Almost 40% of all businesses (or 295) can be classified as industrial; this compares to 34% for Bexley
- The highest share of industrial businesses are found in the following sectors:
  - Construction,
  - Wholesale,
  - Motor vehicles sales and repair, and
  - Metals, machinery and equipment.
- Businesses in these sectors are relatively more concentrated in Erith than in Bexley as a whole; this also applies to businesses in the refuse and recycling sector (about 15 businesses)

### Summary

The socio-economic profile for Erith and North End wards demonstrates that the study area is in need of comprehensive regeneration, not only in terms of the physical environment, but also in terms of economic development, which should include initiatives to tackle the higher than average levels of unemployment and economic inactivity, low skills and educational attainment, lack of formal training and lack of diversity in the employment base. Whilst this study addresses issues associated with the built environment, proposals will have direct impact upon planning for economic development in the study area by influencing the numbers of jobs located there.

# Urban design review - historical development, identity and urban structure

## History

Erith is an ancient settlement on the Thames. Its name is thought to mean 'muddy harbour' or 'gravelly place'. The identity and historical development of the town has been based upon its relationship to the river and its privileged position on the river edge. It has been a key crossing point, destination, resort, wealthy industrial town and port. Until recently its identity has been inseparable from the river and the active life of the river edge. Over the last half century the relationship has been eroded to the point, today, where Erith is struggling to rediscover its connection to the river.

## Industrial topography

Erith's position as a riverside town between London and the open sea allowed it to develop into a port and part of one of the most important industrial areas in the south-east of England.

Loam quarries created the landscape topography now occupied by Europa Trading estate, Atlas, and the Quarry. Brick fields and other heavy industries developed in the area of Manor Road and Slade Green defining the present industrial quarter. Rail and tramways serving the industries remain imprinted on the existing town structure.

The construction of the North Kent railway line saw a rapid increase in population from 2082 (1841) to 25,256 (1901). During the late 19th and early 20th centuries Erith developed either side of the railway. Industry and workers to the east, new residential areas to the west.

Decline in industry, bomb damage and planning policy led to major redevelopment of the town centre in the 1960s. Some of the original townscape remains, from the White Hart on the High Street through to St. John's Church in West Street.

Erith remains an industrial town with an active industrial community along Manor Road and further afield in Crayford Ness and Belvedere Industrial Estate. Industry remains a vital part of the active life and identity of Erith.



## River recreation

Erith has a history of river related sport and pleasure activities through yachting, rowing and barge races. There was a significant boat building industry. In the mid 19thC Erith was a resort with hotel, arboretum and cross river steamer.

These traditions continue through the yacht club, rowing club, the riverside festival and pier.

## Town centre-river identity

The growth of large scale industry along the river edge severed the connection of the town centre to the river. The library (1902) and Town Hall face away from the river.

The reconstruction of Riverside Gardens in the 1970s radically redefined this relationship by creating a new public space to connect Erith town centre to the river edge and introduced a new shift in emphasis from industrial to civic. The clearing of the town centre made way for construction of the precinct which cemented this shift. Following the orientation of Bexley Road it superimposed for the first time the dominant grain of the residential hinterland over river industrial. The clearing of buildings along the High Street and to Bexley Road now give this area a distinctly different character to that of its historic past. It is more garden in character than dense urban, and gives a direct visual connection

between the town centre and the river.

## Residential landmark topography

Within extensive areas of 2/3 storey 'villasque' housing there are a number of high rise 60's residential developments which are distinctive landmarks within Erith - the two towers around Salford Close which is a visual gateway between the town centre and the river; the Larner Road and Boundary Street estates are significant landmarks along the A2016.

## Erith today: recent developments - Morrisons, shopping centre, Bronze Age Way.

Erith's recent development has resulted in a fragmented urban topography.

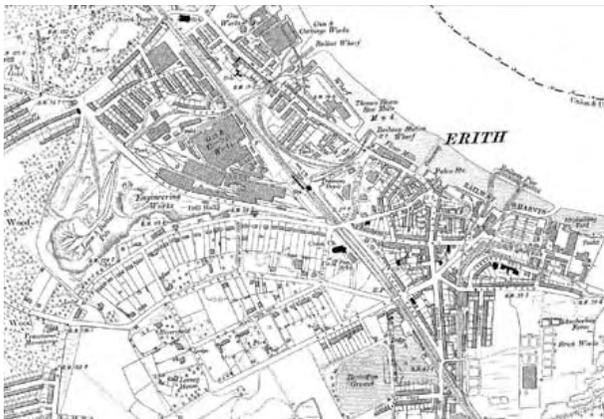
The separation of the town centre from the residential hinterland has been reinforced by the construction of Bronze Age Way (A2016). Morrisons supermarket (built 1998) has been a major catalyst in the revitalisation of Erith but it is separated from the precinct. Along with the refurbished shopping centre and the renovation of the pier there is a new impetus to growth and a shift in the centre of gravity of the town centre towards the east centred on the new library development and the open space in front of it.

Erith's current identity is a result of continuity and disjuncture of the past and present. It is a townscape of fragments and is undergoing rapid change. Its relationship to the river is based upon visual connection rather industrial activity. The industrial past is still present within areas of Erith. Industrial plot sizes and boundaries have conditioned the scale and character of recent developments. The topography of large scale buildings within low rise settings - the precinct, Morrisons, Arjo Wiggins, residential towers etc. - is a strong feature of Erith's identity, consistent with the scale of buildings from its industrial past. The grain of Erith's industry and historical growth remains strongly evident as a visible layer beneath the existing town. The interplay between the two represents Erith's 'latent structure' upon which the Framework seeks to build.



**Erith 1864**

*Erith is a prominent industrial port and tourist resort. East Kent Railway connection to London. Rail link to the pier. Denser buildings on historic street pattern. Pleasure gardens east of the pier. Pier hotel. Erith Gardens stretch east from the pier and Pier Hotel. Quarry evident. Large villas along Bexley Road.*



**Erith 1896**

*Erith is a thriving industrial town with railways, shipyards, wharves, coal depots, brick works and timber yard. Europa industrial Estate. Development of suburban housing.*



**Erith 1933**

*Erith is a significant industrial port. Growth in population. Beginning of decline in industry.*

**1853**

*Pier hotel, pier and steamer.*



**1882**

*View along West Road to Erith town centre.*



**1924**

*View towards east. Erith industrial town. Major industries thriving.*



**1951**

*Decline in industry enables a new public space to be created in the location of present day Riverside Gardens. A new visual and physical connection is established between the town centre and the river*



# Urban design review - historical development, identity and urban structure

## Observations

- rapid growth and decline in river related industry caused great changes to Erith's character and layout.
- connection and dependency on the river have been diminished.
- Erith's identity as a riverside town has been weakened.
- the town centre consists of fragments which lack cohesive relationships.
- the grain of the town centre has changed from dense streets to buildings within open spaces (the 'hill of bits').
- new developments have shifted historic street patterns and have made changes to grain and orientation. There is a strong east west orientation developing.
- industry remains an active part of Erith but is separate and undervalued.



1924



1970

The photographs left (1924) and above (1970) show the major change which has taken place within Erith's town centre. In 1924 Erith was a thriving industrial town with an active river frontage and a dense two sided High Street. By 1970 Erith is undergoing a major transition. A high proportion of buildings within the town centre have been demolished leaving large areas of open space. The shopping precinct and residential towers of Salford Close define a new direction for Erith which is visible today.

## Conclusions:

- new connections to the river should be found.
- support Erith's new grain, character and orientation without losing its historic (latent) identity.
- Erith today has a wide mix of uses. These should be integrated rather than displaced. Industry is a vital part of the mix and an important part of the character of Erith, past present and future.

Key to building uses opposite

	community
	residential
	industrial
	retail
	Council
	bars and restaurants



Erith Today - Figure-ground plan showing current building footprints and their uses.  
Of particular note is the high proportion of open space to buildings within the town centre

# Urban design review - topography, landscape and green chain

## Topography

Erith is located at the point where Abbey Ridge meets the Thames and has a unique topography for a riverside town. Surrounded by marshland within the floodplain the ground at the town centre steps back steeply from the river rising 40m at Northumberland Heath. The meeting of high ground and deep water gave Erith the conditions to develop as a successful port.

There have been three major influences related to landscape topography:

- Growth along the river to serve and support river trade (High Street/West Road)
- growth toward high ground along the ridge (town centre expansion and suburbs); and
- growth into the marshland (industry) and preservation of open space (Riverside Gardens, Crayford Marsh).

The meeting of ridge and river is evident in the densely wooded areas around Riverside Gardens and the street patterns of the town centre. The shift between the orientations of river and ridge can be seen in the relationship of West Road/ High Street to Bexley Road. The west-east ridge orientation provides the natural 'grain' for the town centre. This has been reinforced by recent developments. Constraints of the river, the quarries, railway and A2016 confine the town centre, create distinct boundaries and separation of the centre from surrounding areas. The excavations to the North of Bexley Road reinforce the ridgeline with dramatic changes in level and some of Erith's most striking landscape currently obscured.

Erith has a varied topography and range of natural features - the river, river edge, mud flats, marshes, hillside, horizon and woodland. These define its sense of place. There is a high level of accessibility to green open spaces. However, in general, these natural assets are undervalued and under used.

Erith currently consists of distinct 'islands' of landscape and built fabric, which are lacking in cohesion and connectivity.

## Flood Plain and Flood Risk

The diagram opposite shows the flood plain around Erith, with the town centre forming a dent in the plain and the industrial and marsh areas to the north-west and south-east largely in the flood plain. Any development in these areas will need to take account

of PPG24 Development and Flood Risk and the East London Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). In particular the Environment Agency has highlighted the need to consider residual flood risk to people and property that exists despite the presence of the River Thames flood defences.

## The Green Chain

The diagrams on the opposite and following pages show Erith's relation to the green space network within the region and the immediate area. The Green Chain currently extends eastwards as far as Fraser Park and does not engage the river.

## The River

As one of two designated town centres on the Thames in East London, the river provides a unique and currently underutilised resource for Erith in terms of public realm. The connection between the town centre and the river edge has been eroded and needs to be redefined.

## The Corridor and Links of the Green Grid

The Eltham-Erith corridor approaches Erith from the west, culminating in Franks Park. To the east, Crayford Marshes, of great importance in terms of nature conservation, lie adjacent to the river and link back via green spaces distributed along the Cray river way.

## Links and identity. Key issues

- Redefine Erith's identity as a riverside town
- Create new links between the Erith town centre, Howbury, Slade Green and the river.
- Create a cohesive landscape topography; reinforce links and identity between key landscape areas of Erith quarry, Atlas, Europa, Riverside gardens and the river to re-establish connection of the ridge to the river.
- Reinforce the natural grain of Erith - alignment with the ridge, meeting of ridge and river.
- Recognise and strengthen the natural attributes of Erith: hillside topography, river, horizon, mud flats, gravelly place, marshes, open landscape.
- Improve the identity of green open spaces and accessibility.
- Reinforce the 'hill of bits' (Riverside gardens, Saltford close) as the point where the ridge meets the river.
- Reinforce distinctions between town and landscape/garden. Bexley Road is already a significant 'edge' between the two.



Mud Flats



View to Rainham marshes



View west along the river



# Urban design review - public open spaces and key connections

## Key Landscape Connections

Erith lies at the eastern end of the Green Grid network of green public open spaces which extends across South East London and are connected by the Green Chain Walk. Key connections are being established between town centres, residential areas and key open spaces with primary links to the river at strategic points. These links are being created through corridors of open green space. The diagram (left) shows potential connections to the river. Erith has been identified as one of the strategic connections between the Green Chain and the river.

The diagram (opposite page) identifies green open spaces within the area of Erith. Many of these are currently inaccessible to the public. The 'Green Chain' currently ends at Franks Park. The 'Green Chain' walk could be extended to incorporate green spaces within Erith to create a green corridor to the Thames through Erith town centre. Inaccessibility of the quarry currently obstructs this.

## The River and the marshes as a continuous space

Rainham Marshes, the river and Crayford Marshes can be seen as a continuous open space. In the past a ferry from Erith pier to Coldharbour Point created a physical connection between these spaces.

## Extending the Eltham to Erith corridor to meet the River and the Town Centre

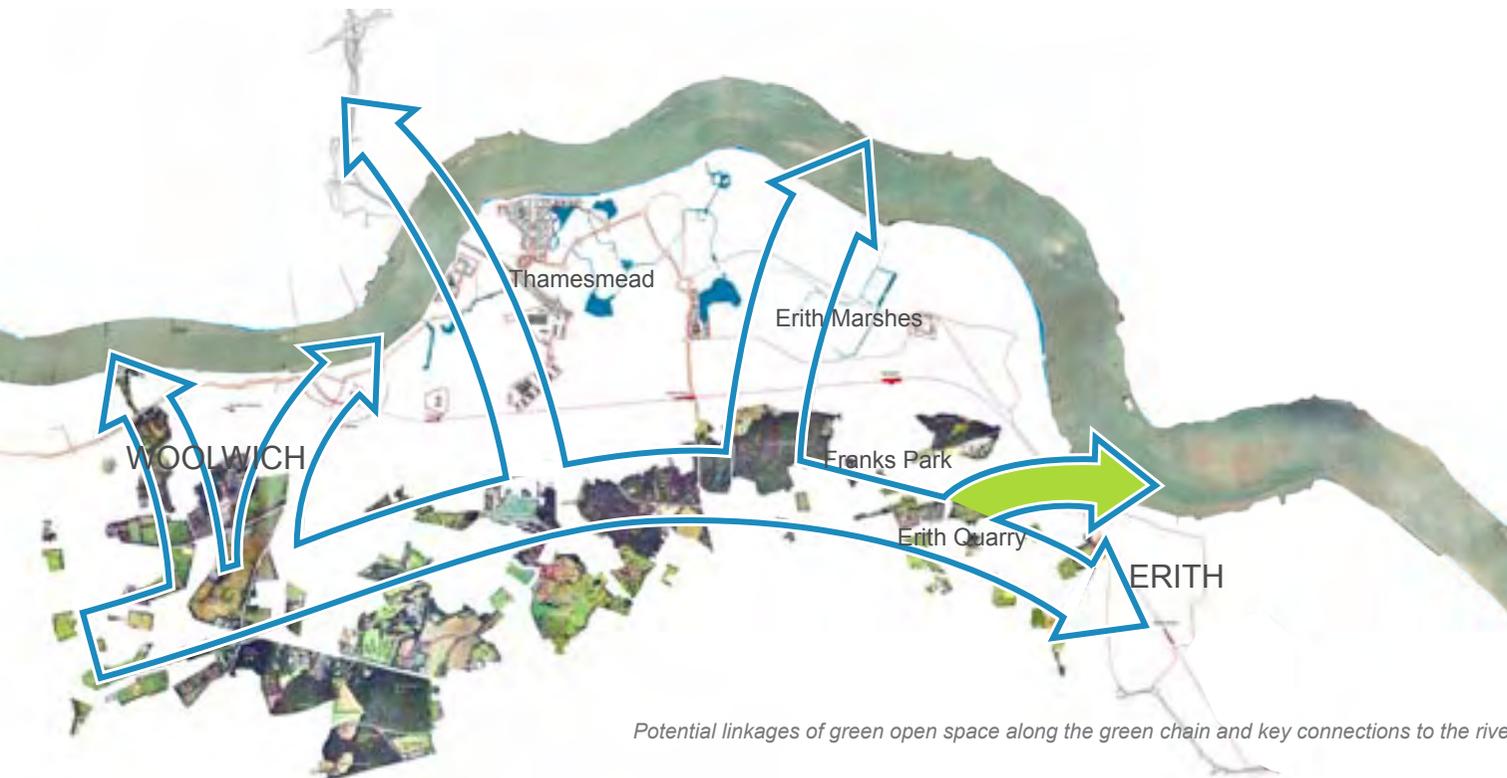
To the West, the Green Grid is currently disconnected from the river and from the marshes.

Crayford marshes and Franks Park are linked through Erith town centre via the Thames Path and national cycle network. These routes do not provide continuous access to the river due to industrial uses at Manor Road and residential development in the town centre.

Riverside Gardens is a valued but underutilised public space. The flood defence wall and landscaping creates a barrier to the river. Riverside Gardens is a logical link in a new Green Chain path that incorporates Erith town centre and should provide the most direct connection to the river.

Erith quarry is currently inaccessible and unused. It is a key open space which could become an important link in the Green Chain and also a significant open green space for Erith and the surrounding areas.

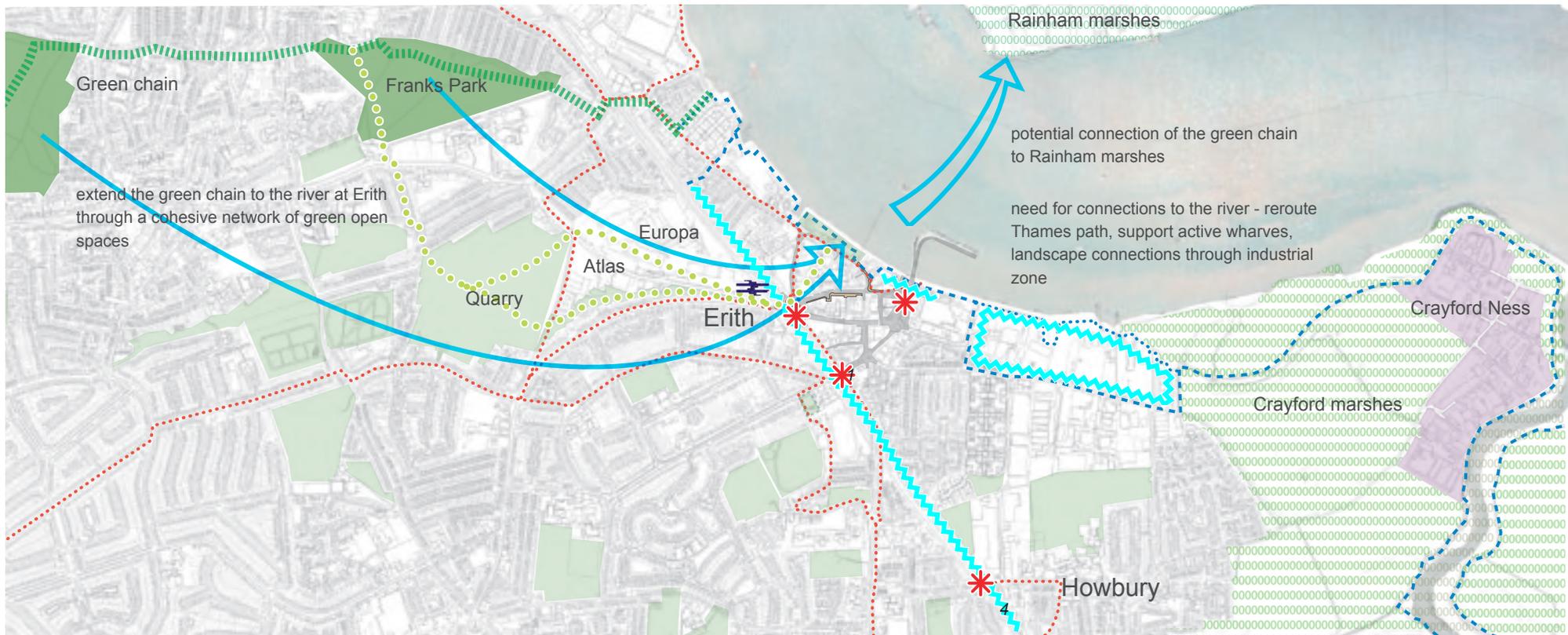
The dramatic landscape of the historic quarries within Europa nad Atlas areas is currently obscured and inaccessible. This made landscape is an undervalued asset.



Potential linkages of green open space along the green chain and key connections to the river.



View west



Public open space, access and barriers



View east

-  Green public open spaces. These open spaces are part of the Green Chain Walk.
-  Other green open spaces, not part of the Green Chain
-  Marshes
-  Existing route of green chain walk
-  Proposed route of Green Chain Walk
-  Existing cycle routes
-  Existing pedestrian paths
-  Proposed pedestrian paths
-  Poor connections
-  Lines of poor connectivity
-  connecting areas of open green space.

# Transport and Accessibility

## Public Transport Network

Bus services terminating at Erith Town Centre include the 99; B12; 428 and N89. Buses 229; 469 and 938 serve the town centre. R99 runs from Woolwich to Erith; B12 - Bexleyheath to Erith; R428 - Bluewater shopping to Erith; N89 - Trafalgar Square to Erith; 229 - Thamesmead through Erith to Sidcup (Queen Mary's Hospital); 469 - Woolwich through Erith to Bexleyheath; and 938 - Abbeywood station through Erith to Bexleyheath, Townley Road. The total number of running bus services during peak times adds up to about 22 buses per hour. This means that at any point in time during peak period in Erith there are 2 to 3 active bus services running every minute. This clearly demonstrates the crucial and important role of bus services and the need to further encourage public transport use as a preferred means of travel. Encouragement tips such as improving reliability and reducing journey time delays will increase bus service patronage and ultimately reduce the need to use the car to travel in Erith.

Bexley is committed to encouraging non car modes of transport. However it is recognised that there is a need to strike a fair but dynamic balance in addressing the immediate needs of all road users particular at local strategic centres such as Bexleyheath and Erith.

Bus stop accessibility in Erith is generally within acceptable levels. Bus services generally stop at or near the town centre.

With regards to rail services, Erith is on the North Kent Lines and well served by Southeast trains. It currently enjoys up to 6 peak trains per hour into Central London with a journey time of approximately 35 minutes, and 3 peak trains an hour to Dartford with a journey time of under 10 minutes.

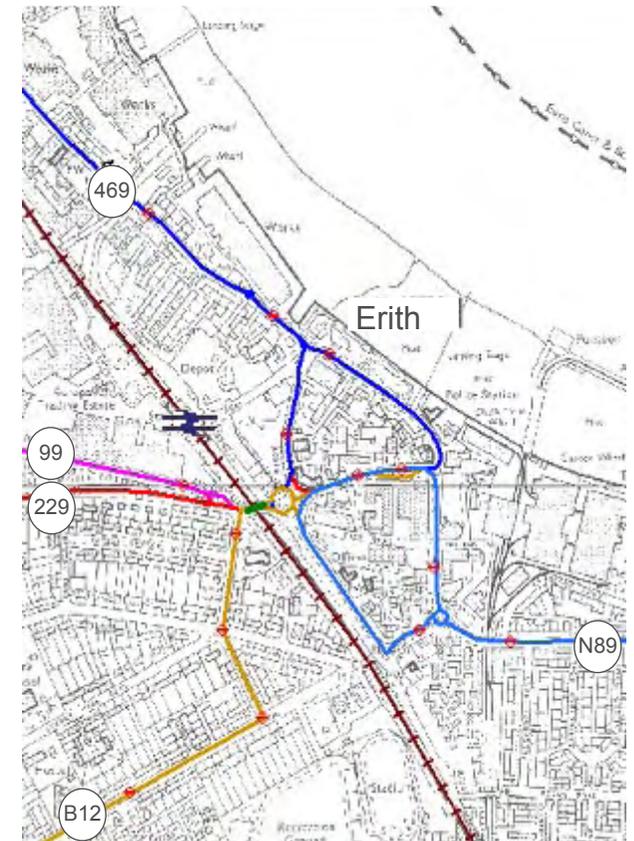
## Local road network

Erith is sited in the north eastern section of Bexley's Borough boundary, well served by main arteries - A2016 & A206 which provides linkage with the M25.

Various sections of Erith are to benefit from transport improvements, some of which are currently underway, this includes;

- Erith High Street improvements - which aims to strengthen and attract links to Riverside Gardens from Erith Town Centre through the creation of a pedestrian biased environment, the scheme will also address accessibility issues for the disabled;
- Bexley Road Streetscape Improvements - this involves narrowing of Bexley Road to provide chevron on-street parking, paving and planting creating a more pedestrian friendly environment;
- Erith Town Centre Controlled Parking Zone - this scheme aims to manage commuter and shopper parking habits;
- Bexley Road junction with Bronze Age Way roundabout ,an important and sensitive node for Erith, the junctions poor operation suffers from congestion on most approach arms during peak periods and inadequate crossing facilities. Improvements will include short and long term upgrades following a comprehensive study. Options being considered include a new signalled junction with at grade crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists whilst long term aspirations look at separating local and through traffic via means of an underpass or overhead bridge.

The A2016 is planned to be converted to dual carriageway between Perry St. and University Way (now Bob Dunn Way),



Local bus routes



Dead end at Wheatley Terrace



Underpass at Sandcliff Road



Ramp to station underpass\_

with new signals at Perry St. roundabout. The dualling will allow greater capacity, relieve congestion and deter rat runners using Crayford High Street (A2000) as a diversion to the M25. Development traffic from the Thames Gateway Bridge will also contribute to yearly increasing traffic counts on A206 & A2016. Mitigation measures will therefore address problems envisaged from an Environmental Impact Assessment study and other Borough concerns.

Traffic schemes are therefore needed in Erith particularly to mitigate against traffic growth from new and future developments but also general traffic increment. Traffic calming measures, new junction designs and reviews, travel awareness etc. coupled with other non car measures which will help reduce the road-attraction for through-road drivers but measures adopted will also encourage usage of other modes of transport.

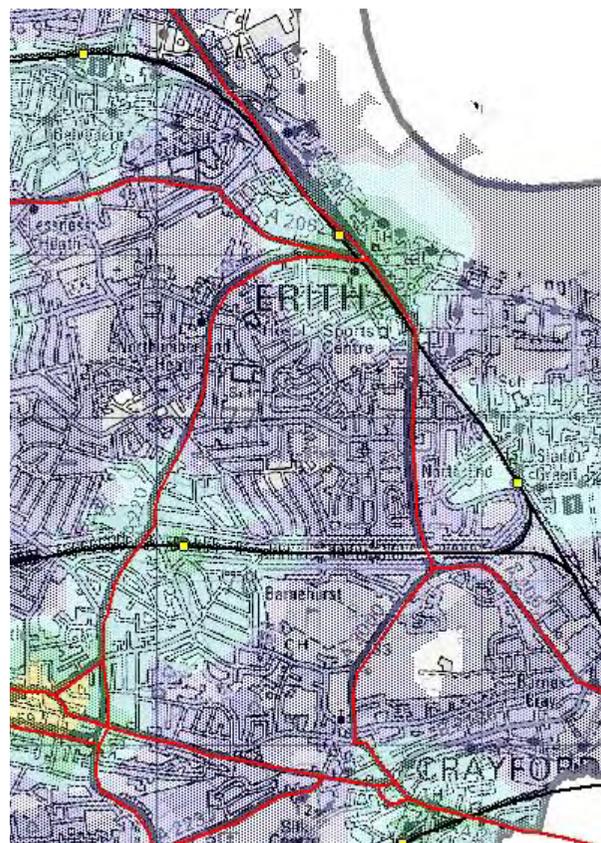
### Pedestrian network

While Erith enjoys good strategic transport links, current transport infrastructure also create significant barriers to more localised movements, particularly pedestrian and cycle.

The A2016 presents a major barrier for pedestrians. Existing crossings are few and unattractive, with the notable exception of the underpass that links Erith Station to Stonewood Rd and the old swimming pool area. This barrier effect is likely to worsen if traffic volumes increase with the introduction of a new Thames Gateway River crossing. The low permeability of these barriers needs to be addressed in order to reconnect the town with its inhabitants and provide opportunity for Erith's future growth.

It is important to note that the design and functionality of the transport infrastructure in Erith reflects a priority of private over public transport (junctions with no pedestrian signals, few crossings, etc.) The possibility of an off-grade junction at the Bronze Age Way – Bexley Road roundabout confirms this view.

We believe the emphasis should be shifted from private transport in order to create a more pedestrian/cyclist friendly environment in Erith, which would benefit local developments and the local community. Highway improvements, such as the off-grade junction



PTAL map of Erith and Bexley

tion would mainly benefit through traffic and affect local mobility negatively by creating an additional barrier.

### Current travel patterns

Inspection of existing journey to work travel patterns shows the following characteristics:

- Strong focus on Central London for rail commuting
- Car based work access is more locally dispersed with a significant proportion driving to Dartford, Belvedere and Woolwich
- Bus based commuting tends to be more locally focused

- Walking and cycling based trips are, as is expected, all local trips, with main destinations in the town centre and existing industrial areas

### River Transport

Due to the long distance and travel time from Erith to Central London, river transport is not seen as an option for travel. However, the river could be used as a local means of transport between Erith and other surrounding riverside locations and leisure facilities. A local service could run from as far as Greenwich to the west and to Gravesend to the east, stopping at places like Woolwich, Greenhithe, Grays and Tilbury along the way. However travel times would not be competitive with land-based modes and would only offer a viable opportunity to leisure travellers.

### Waterfreight

There are active wharves in and adjacent to the Erith area. By their nature, the wharves are used for import/export of bulk materials and the inland transport of all materials will be handled by road. Mayer Parry recycling, Standard Wharf and RMC Railway are safeguarded wharves within the Manor Road industrial area. RMC Erith is on the western boundary with the Belvedere Area.

Details on the safeguarded wharves in the study area are as follows:

- Mayer Parry Recycling (EMR Erith), 2.91 ha, 11 ships a month in 2001 (55,994 tonnes in 2000 and 25,487 tonnes in 2001 for metal recycling)
- Standard Wharf, 4.4 ha, 140,000 tonnes pa currently delivered by road
- RMC Railway Wharf, 0.64 ha, 9,600 tonnes of cement delivered pa, used by ships once a month in 2001.

### Access to Erith's Industrial Areas

All road access to the study area is via the A2016, with two non-grade separated junctions on the section known as Queen's Road. To the north is Belvedere, Bexley's strategic employment

# Transport and Accessibility

location, to the south Slade Green. Access to the waterfront, and the light industrial facilities in the southeast of the site are via local roads that are narrow and through largely residential areas.

Although there is a major rail route passing through the study area, there are no rail freight sidings within the vicinity.

The Manor Road Industrial Estate has particularly difficult access, as the only access is through Manor Road, a nominally residential street, unsuitable for high volume commercial traffic. Goods traffic on these roads is however unavoidable given the current land uses.

## Current environmental and health concerns

The assessment of local air quality undertaken by Bexley Council identified high levels of respirable particulate material along Manor Road, which poses a potential health concern to adjacent residential areas. The assessment concluded that the sources of particulate material were a complex mix of stationary and mobile sources.

Among these are: road traffic, material handling and storage, metal fragmenting, and handling bulk cement. The analysis identified the suspension of road dust through commercial traffic as the main mechanism for the distribution of particulate material in the area.

Manor Road is now a designated Air Quality Management Area under the Environment Act 1995. Key measures brought forward under this initiative include:

- Road cleaning,
- Development control,
- Speed reduction,
- Improving site cleanliness,
- Covering loads, and
- Vehicle cleaning.

## Access to Erith Town Centre

Pedestrian access to Erith Town Centre is negatively affected by the barrier effect produced by the A2016.

Most of the existing crossings are unattractive and can be perceived as unsafe, especially at night. This means that 'real' walk times to/from the town centre can be even longer if pedestrians choose the routes that are perceived as safer.

Recent developments of Morrisons, the shopping centre and the library will result in a migration of the new town centre to the east and as a result to the edge of the 10 minute walk zone exacerbating accessibility problems in the town centre.

It is important to create new crossings and to improve the existing ones in order to permeate this barrier, thus integrating the town centre with areas to the south west of the A2016.

## Access to Erith Station

With regards to Erith Station, the main barrier is the entrance configuration, where access is only possible through the north of the railway. In order to reach areas south of the station, such as the Europa Industrial Estate or the Quarry site, it is necessary to walk up to the roundabout in order to access Fraser Rd which then leads pedestrians to the area south west of Erith station. This creates a longer route. In addition, the difference in ground levels between the station entrance and the Fraser Rd roundabout makes the walk slower and less attractive, especially for people with mobility impairments.

Access to Erith Station does not seem as affected by the A2016 barrier as the Town Centre. This is due to the fact that two of the crossings lead directly to the station entrance.

## Access to the River

In general terms, access to the river from the outer areas of Erith has roughly the same characteristics as access to the Town Centre.

However, looking at the river in more detail, the Thames Path and Cycle paths have both been forced inland by aggressive residential projects built on the river's edge. It is not only residential but also established industrial sites which block public access to the Thames.

Erith is one of the few towns close to the river that actually has its town centre on the riverbank. The erosion of Erith's riverside identity has been caused by the decline in river oriented activity and accessibility. The development of the river as a destination and key connections, both visual and physical, need to be addressed.

## Access to Slade Green from Erith Town Centre

Pedestrian access to Slade Green from Erith Town Centre seems poor. Pedestrians have to walk all the way around the industrial area, and use either the A206 or to Slade Green Rd to reach Slade Green.

A connection through the industrial area, linking with one of the minor roads to the North would provide better connectivity. The estimated walk time at the moment is of around 30 to 35 minutes.

Public transport connections are better, having two services (418 and 469) running from the town centre and stopping close to the Slade Green site.

There is a significant problem with fly tipping at Wallhouse Road leading to the Crayford Ness Industrial Area. Fly tipping presents a risk to the March dykes and a consequent flood risk caused by blockages. This issue is also being looked at in the Managing the Marshes project. Future transport initiatives and schemes should seek to design out opportunities for fly tipping in the Erith Area.

## Key issues

The biggest factor influencing the flow of pedestrians within the study area is the A2016, which creates a physical barrier between Erith Station and the Town Centre. Furthermore, access

between Erith Station and the employment areas to the west including Europa and Atlas is very poor so schemes to redevelop these sites will be dependent on improved links being created.

Another key local transport issue is the restricted road access to the Manor Road Industrial Estate. The presence of residential areas along Manor Road raises questions about high levels of HGV traffic, pollution and its impact upon people's health.

The future construction of the Thames Gateway Bridge will increase the volume of traffic on the A2106 and A206, so traffic calming measures and efforts to increase the flow of traffic will also be key element of any future transport proposals for the area.

This diagram on the opposite page shows the 10 minute walk radial and actual 10 minute walks from stations. It shows that the historic town centre is within easy access from the station although the quality of underpasses and A2016 crossings are inhospitable and difficult. Europa provides a barrier to the west and accessibility to residential areas to the south is poor.

-  Actual 10 minute walk from station
-  Existing riverside walks
-  10 minute walk radius from station
-  Lines of poor connectivity
-  Poor pedestrian paths over road and rail
-  Train stations



Analysis of 10 minute walks from station

# Key Development Areas

This Framework identifies three sub-areas within the study area through which the issues relating to Erith's future development can be addressed:

- 1 Erith Town Centre
- 2a The Quarry,
- 2b Atlas
- 2c Europa
- 3a Manor Road Industrial estate
- 3b Slade Green
- 3c The Howbury Centre

These areas are broadly non-residential and are those areas which in the past have been of great importance but have undergone the greatest change in recent times. They are currently in a state of flux. They have undergone change without any significant strategy for how they can be developed and integrated into the whole town structure. As a result they are languishing.

## Area 1 - Town Centre

The town centre has capacity to grow but is restricted on all sides by residential development to the north west, the river to the north, industry to the west, the A2016 and established residential areas to the south.

## Area 2 - Europa, Atlas, the Quarry

Europa and Atlas are industrial areas which are in close proximity to the station and provide an opportunity for the town centre to grow across the A2016 towards the west. The quarry is currently unused but has the potential to be come a key public open space and desirable residential area due to its height in the west which provides views to the river.

## Area 3 - Manor Road, Howbury, Slade Green.

Predominantly industry of low density, poor environment. Howbury/Slade Green are isolated without focus and identity.



The town centre - High Street

1

2



a The quarry



b Europa



c Atlas



3



a Manor Road Industry



b Slade Green



c The Howbury Centre

# Key Development Area 1 - Erith Town Centre



## Conceptualisation and analysis

In this section the Framework develops the urban design analysis to identify the structure of the centre of town in more detail. This report focuses on Erith Town Centre as it is the hub and key to the regeneration of Erith.

Erith Town Centre is conceptualized as consisting of four inter-related thematic areas each with a particular orientation in terms of character.

The four thematic areas are:

- 1 Erith Riverside
- 2 Erith Gateway
- 3 The Retail 'Spine'
- 4 Town Centre South

These are characterized as follows:

### 1 - Erith Riverside

- Predominantly open space with new residential developments along the river edge. A key point where Erith meets the river.
- Footprint and scale recalls previous industrial buildings which occupied the area.
- Leisure related open spaces on the river edge. Riverside gardens and pubs (Running Horses).

- Orientation keyed to the river which meets the 'ridge' alignment at the intersection of the High Street and Bexley Road.
- Conservation area: fragments of Erith's historic town centre remain at the upper end of the High Street.
- Arts: The Playhouse is a strong focus for entertainment within Erith and a landmark within the centre.

### 2 - Erith West

- Characterized by diverse individual 'object' buildings within landscape setting of mature trees and green open spaces.
- Hillside topography.
- Disused sites of Walnut Tree Road depot, LEB.
- Residential towers of Carrick House and Bosworth House form landmarks from the station. Many new residential developments along the approach to the station.
- The prevalence of trees, shifting levels and the spatial qualities show the value in retaining Erith Western Gateway as a permeable, green public space.

### 3 - The Retail Spine

- Dense large scale blocks - precinct and Morrisons equate to scale of industrial buildings
- Strong linear west-east orientation which follows the 'ridge alignment' of Bexley Road. New shopping centre facade marks the boundary between the new town centre and the river and forms a strong street line to Bexley Road.
- Occupation is predominantly retail with residential above the precinct.
- Morrisons extends the retail spine to the east but is separated by the car park. The retail spine and the identity of the town centre could be strengthened by extending towards Morrisons.

1



The pier

2

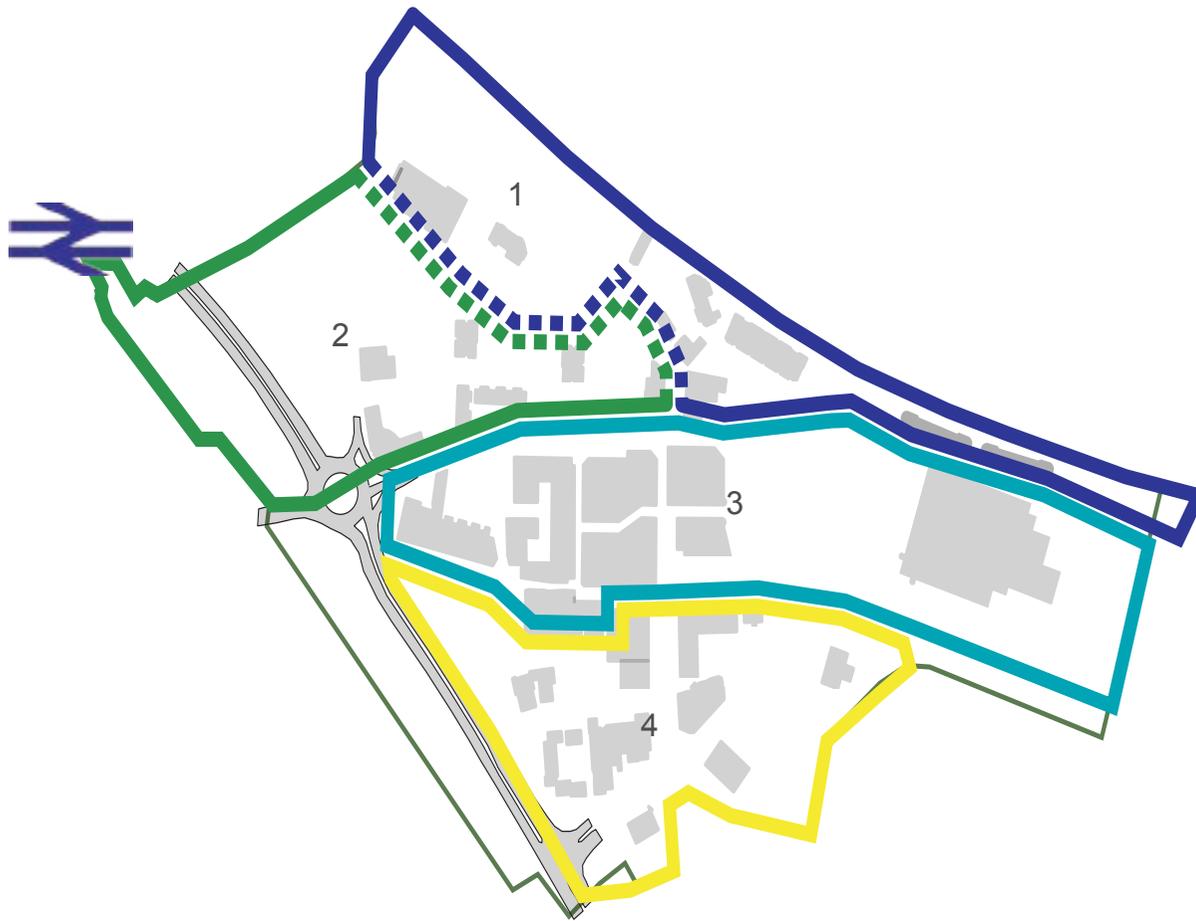


Walnut Tree Road and the Library

- The spine continues the 'ridge' alignment' to meet the river at the pier.

### 4 - Town Centre South

- Fragmented 'loose-fit' low rise block structure. 'Back-of-house' service yards to the precinct, Individual buildings without street presence.
- Mixed uses - church, sheltered housing, drive-in McDonalds



Conceptualisation of Erith town centre



**3** Shopping Centre Bexley Road



**4** Queen Street Baptist Church

# 1 - Erith Town Centre



and KFC, residential. Run down area with new changes around James Watt Way roundabout related to new town centre developments

## Land use

Erith town centre consists of a mix of retail, leisure, community and residential uses.

A distinctive feature of retail in Erith Town Centre is its concentration between Bexley Road and Pier Road forming a dense strip from west to east towards Manor Road Industrial Estate.

Erith town centre has a few entertainment or cultural facilities. Among these the Playhouse is regarded as a particular asset. A range of sports facilities and river related activities are found in the town centre, these include a rowing club and snooker centre. The offer of restaurants and bars and pubs in Erith town centre is poor. In the light of the high share of young people in Erith's population Erith town centre distinctly lacks restaurants, cafés, or family pubs.

Community uses in Erith town centre encompass a new Health Centre, located south of the retail spine and a new library under construction.

## Public realm

Erith has lost its connection to the river which is its main asset

and key in terms of public realm within the town centre. Whilst there is a lot of open space in Erith town centre there is little structured public space. There is no identifiable centre. There are key areas within Erith which have distinctive character in their own right but as a result give the impression of separate parts rather than an interrelated whole.

Despite the high proportion of open space, a low proportion of it is directly accessible to the public.

## Hill of bits, town of bits.

The baseline identified three zones of different character within Erith today:

- north of Bexley Road to the river: individual buildings set within open landscape - the 'hill of bits'
- the retail 'spine': the shopping centre extending to Morrisons
- the town centre to the south of the retail spine: buildings set back from the street - the 'town of bits'.

Existing open spaces are a consequence of post war demolition which has left gaps in the town fabric. Piecemeal developments have changed historic street patterns. Decline in river trade has caused radical changes in the use of streets. The High Street has changed from a dense two sided street to one which is open and 'garden' in character. The shopping centre has introduced a new west-east grain which has cut across the High Street. This has been reinforced by Morrisons supermarket as the main destination.

The new library development has created the potential for a new civic square at the eastern end of Pier Road. This will shift the centre of gravity of Erith towards the east.

The public realm for pedestrians is of poor quality in terms of space, materials and street furniture. Underpasses are threatening and of poor quality. The public areas around key public buildings and thresholds are of poor quality for example: the station, A2016 roundabout, town hall/library, Pier Road.

There are many current environmental improvement projects in Erith (mostly ODPM funded) and public arts projects which focus on particular areas. These are valuable stand alone projects which have yet to be integrated into a clear strategy linking into wider thinking.

## The River

- Visibility of the river is low as it is obscured by buildings, planting and flood defences. Steeply rising ground offers the opportunity for dramatic views to the river which are not currently available.
- Riverside walk access is not continuous.
- Flood defences are considerably higher than ground level, creating a visual and physical barrier particularly around Riverside Gardens.

## Riverside Gardens

The Riverside Gardens are valued and well used. They should be retained as open space and reconfigured to create a new positive connection to the river as they were originally conceived



*The High Street at Riverside Gardens*

in 1951. The Riverside Gardens area, along with Bexley Road and Erith High Street, are to be designated as one of the Mayor's 100 Public Space projects to achieve this aim.

### Morrison's car park

This is the point where the town opens up to the river and where there is a direct connection to the water via the pier. It is currently occupied by Morrisons car park. As a result the main open space in the town centre is not genuinely available for public use. The framework presents a strategy for the consolidation of car parking to create a new public space on the river's edge.

### Bexley Road and High Street

Bexley Road has replaced the High Street as the main artery through the town and is the line where town centre development meets the open space of the 'hill of bits' and the river. The High Street remains as the primary connection of the town centre to the river with remnants of the historic town at the upper end.

Bexley Road has the character of 'back of house' to the precinct although the refurbishment of the shopping centre has introduced new frontages which have helped to reorientate it towards the river. The design of prominent and permeable frontages with connections between Pier Road and Bexley Road should be encouraged as part of the next phase of development to reinforce the connection of the town centre to the river.

Current proposals for ODPM funded changes to Bexley Road and the High Street address the issue of bus stops and lay-byes along Bexley Road which should help to unclutter the south side of the road and provide a more attractive and permeable public realm.

There is potential for a strong visual and physical connection between Bexley Road and the river around the two residential towers of Carrick House and Bosworth House. Opportunities to develop public routes through this area should be pursued to create a primary link between Pier Road, Bexley Road, the High Street, Riverside Gardens and the river. This is one of the top priorities within this Framework.



*The river is close but difficult to access and see*



## Key Development Area 2 - Erith Quarry, Atlas and Europa



### 2a - Erith Quarry

Erith Quarry is a former sand and gravel quarry, which is now filled about 25-35 metres deep. It is currently disused and inaccessible. Bexley UDP identifies Erith Quarry as being of Nature Conservation Importance. The site is contaminated the extent of which is currently being determined.

The Quarry has the potential to be a key open space of natural importance within Erith. It is also a desirable site for residences with dramatic views to the river from higher ground. There is good opportunity for good connections from Fraser Road to the east and Riverdale Road to the north. The Framework recommends a combination of villa type residential development on high ground to the west, dense mixed use to the east, leaving the centre as a large public park which as an extension of the Green Chain, which may include a range of possible sports/recreational activities.

### 2b - The Atlas Site

The Atlas site is, by its use, divided into two parts (sites 'A1' and 'A2') with retail uses along Fraser Road and mixed small-scale industrial activity towards the back of the site, adjacent to Erith Quarry. This part of Atlas is characterised by limited vehicular access and densely wooded landscape.

It is estimated that about 15 to 20 businesses are located on the Atlas site. The current industrial activity is mixed including carpentry, engineering, and insurance businesses. Two large and

relatively new retail warehouses and small shop units of relatively low quality towards the eastern end of the site are found along Fraser Road.

Atlas has a backdrop of dramatic wooded landscape which follows the line of the historic quarry wall. This is an extraordinary landscape feature which should be considered of great importance within Erith and as a key component of the Green Chain extension to the river. The Local Plan has safeguarded the woodland by designating it as a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation.

Whilst there is potential for development along the frontage to Fraser Road, the secluded and 'wild' character of the backdrop should be retained without further encroachment. Opportunities for public access to the woods should be pursued as an extension of the Green Chain Walk. Should this option be pursued, it will be necessary for suitable management plan to be developed and implemented.

### 2c - The Europa Trading Estate

The Europa Trading Estate's current land use is industrial. It is estimated that around 40 industrial businesses are located on the Europa Estate. There is no particular specialisation of these industrial businesses discernible.

The industrial activity is very mixed including businesses in the chemical, mechanical, plastics, wood and paper industry sectors.

The whole site can be divided into four distinct parts: The eastern part of Europa closest to the station consists of a variety of industrial and warehousing uses accommodated in a mix of old and new industrial structures. The Hamlet Estate in the North of the Europa site is largely vacant and derelict. The area in the centre of the Europa site is marked by small-scale industrial activity; the site contains 14 relatively successful small business units. The remainder of the site is occupied by Batt Cables.

With the constraints of the town centre the Europa site, offers the greatest opportunity for future expansion of Erith. Due to its proximity to the station and to the town centre it has the potential

to develop a mix of uses which includes small scale industry, specialised retail residential and other activities (health clubs, restaurant, live/work etc).

The symbiosis of industry and other activities within Erith is fundamentally part of Erith's identity. In the context of Europa, integration rather than displacement of small scale 'clean' industry should be promoted. Wholesale redevelopment of Europa for mono-use residential would be detrimental to the life of Erith as a whole. Building typologies which integrate a range of uses vertically are most appropriate towards the station grading to residential to knit into the existing terraced houses to the north west.

Key Facts	Atlas industrial Estate (2c)
Location	Triangular site between Europa and Erith Quarry, within a ten minute walk of Erith station.
Current owner	Various
Site area	App 3.4 hectare
Existing buildings	One-storey buildings, partially in bad condition
Current use	Mixed use industrial and retail activity, no apparent specialisation: carpentry, engineering, record company, insurance company, two churches.
No. of businesses	App 15-20
UDP Designation(s)	Primary employment land
London Plan Policy Designation	Opportunity Area
Condition of site/environment	OK-POOR
Accessibility	Partially LOW

Existing land use by buildings

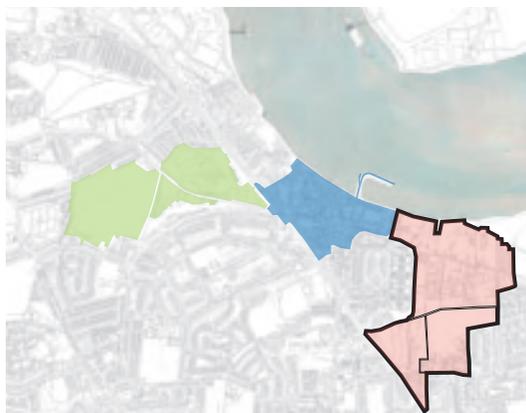
- Industrial buildings
- Retail buildings



Key facts	Erith Quarry (2A)
Location	West of Europa Trading Estate
Current owner	Exel logistics
Site area	16 hectares
Current use	vacant
UDP Designation(s)	Site of Borough Importance for Nature conservation Thames-side Special Policy Area E. UDP policies TS3/4 Mixed use
London Plan Policy Designation	Opportunity Area
Site history	Sand and gravel quarry backfilled as a landfill
Depth of landfill	25-35m
Potential for contamination	HIGH
Environmental sensitivity	Assume HIGH
Development sensitivity	HIGH

Key Facts	Europa industrial estate (2c)
Location	West of Erith Town Centre directly adjacent to Erith Station, within a 10 min. walking distance of Erith Station
Site area	App. 11 hectare
Current owner	Various, majority of site owned by Warner Estates and Batt Cables
Current use	Mixed industry activity, no apparent specialisation
No of businesses	App. 40
UDP Designation(s)	Primary employment land
London Plan Policy Designation	Opportunity Area
Existing buildings	Range from new to run down, derelict condition, site contains a series of old industrial buildings, worth preserving
Condition of site/environment	POOR
Accessibility	LOW

# Key Development Area 3 - Manor Road, Slade Green and Howbury



## 3a - The Manor Road Industrial Area

The Manor Road Industrial Estate and Slade Green Industrial Area are predominantly industrial areas mixed with warehousing uses.

In terms of the type of industrial activity there is a division within the Manor Road Industrial area discernible. The northern part of Manor Road Industrial Area ('MRN') is characterised by wharf-related industrial activities, such as aggregate, waste and recycling businesses. Businesses in these sectors are more land-hungry and industrial activity as well as employment in this part of Manor Road is less dense than anywhere else in Erith as a consequence. Most of the southern part the Manor Road Industrial area is much denser and is characterised by highly mixed industrial activity in terms of industrial sectors but also business sizes. The site adjacent to Manor Road South is far less dense and consists of two large warehousing structures.

We estimate between 150 and 200 businesses to be located within the whole of the Manor Road Industrial Estate. In terms of industrial uses, sectors include motor vehicle sales and repair, construction, metals, machinery and equipment, food and logistics.

## 3b - Slade Green

Slade Green Industrial Area comprises of a series of industrial sites with mixed industrial activity. The sites in the northern part of the Slade Green Industrial Area are large (between 1.5 and 3.8 ha) and used/owned by only one business. These sites are the Linpac site, which is currently vacant, the Boots site and the Crane site. The southern tip of Slade Green Industrial Area is more mixed in terms of its industrial activity but also ownership. We estimate around 10 to 15 business located in the whole of the Slade Green Industrial Area.

## 3c - The Howbury Centre

The Council currently uses the Howbury Centre for internal training. Slade Green School is also located on the site. A secondary school formerly on the site had to close due to bad reputation and low demand for secondary school services. Other uses currently at the back of the site are:

- MCCH Society Ltd (Provider of housing and support services for the profoundly disabled),
- Secondary Pupils Referral Unit,
- Slade Green Library,
- A pre-school nursery,
- Sports hall/gymnasium

The Centre therefore fulfils a significant role in terms of community provision within the Slade Green Area.

The playing fields north of the Centre are currently in disuse due to contamination. It is assumed that the site is contaminated with asbestos; no soil and groundwater investigations have been undertaken to confirm this.

This area of Slade Green Road is fairly run down but with the Howbury Centre, school, and other uses give this area the potential to become the high street for the area.

Key Facts	Manor Road Industrial Area
Location	East of Erith Town Centre bordering the River
Current owner	Various
Site areas (hectares)	App. 29.6 Manor Road North: 14.5 Manor 1: 2.8 Manor 2: 8.8 Manor 3: 3.5
Current use	Industrial
No. of businesses	App. 170
Current uses	Mixed industrial activity, river related uses in Manor Road North.
UDP Designation(s)	Primary Employment Land
London Plan Policy Designation	Strategic Employment Area
Existing buildings	Partly low quality and/or old industrial buildings
Condition of site/environment	There have been various improvements in the past (eg. fencing), the business environment remains low quality.
Accessibility	LOW
Density	LOW (Manor Road North)
Potential for contamination	HIGH



Existing land use by buildings

- Industrial
- Retail
- Community
- Residential

Key Facts	Slade Green Industrial Area
Location	Located West of the Howbury centre and playing fields; within ten minuits walking distance of Slade Green Station.
Current owner	Various
Site areas (hect-ares)	8.5 (excl. Howbury centre, playing fields and Millpost site) S1 (The Linpack site): 3.8 S2 (The Boots site): 1.5 S3 (The Crane site): 1.5 S4 1.7
Current use	Mixed industrial activity
No. of buisnesses	not known, max 20
UDP Designation(s)	Primary Employment Land
Existing buildings	GOOD to POOR
Condition of site/ environment	Predominantly POOR
Accessibility	?
Density	LOW
Potential for contamination	HIGH

Key Facts	Slade Green Industrial Area
Location	Located off Manor Road industrial area: within walking distance of Slade Green Station.
Current owner	LB Bexley
Site areas (hect-ares)	App. 12.6 H1 (The Millpost Site): 1.9 H2 (playing Fields): ? H3 (Howbury centre): ?
Current use	Mixed use ocal authority offices, community, educa-tional, recreational.
UDP Designation(s)	Educational buildings and playing fields
Existing build-ings	low efficiency and functionality of building, low design quality
Condition of site/ environment	POOR, facilities are in a bad condition due to years of underinvestment
Security of site/ buildings	LOW, high incidences of vandalism & associated high costs
Potential for contamination	HIGH (contaminated playing fields)

# Erith Today - Summary of Key Issues

**Relationship to the river** has been reduced. The river and waterfront are underused. Access to and along the river is difficult.

**No strong centre or civic heart.** Morrison's car park is prominent within the town centre and on the river but is not public and is dominated by cars

**Riverside Gardens:** a key public space next to the river but seperated by flood barrier.

**'Hill of Bits':** landscape ridge next to the river. provides views to the river but no public access.

Town centre is cut off from residential areas to the south and west by A2016/railway. **Growth restricted to the north by the river.** Town centre offers a limited variety of retail, leisure and entertainment facilities.

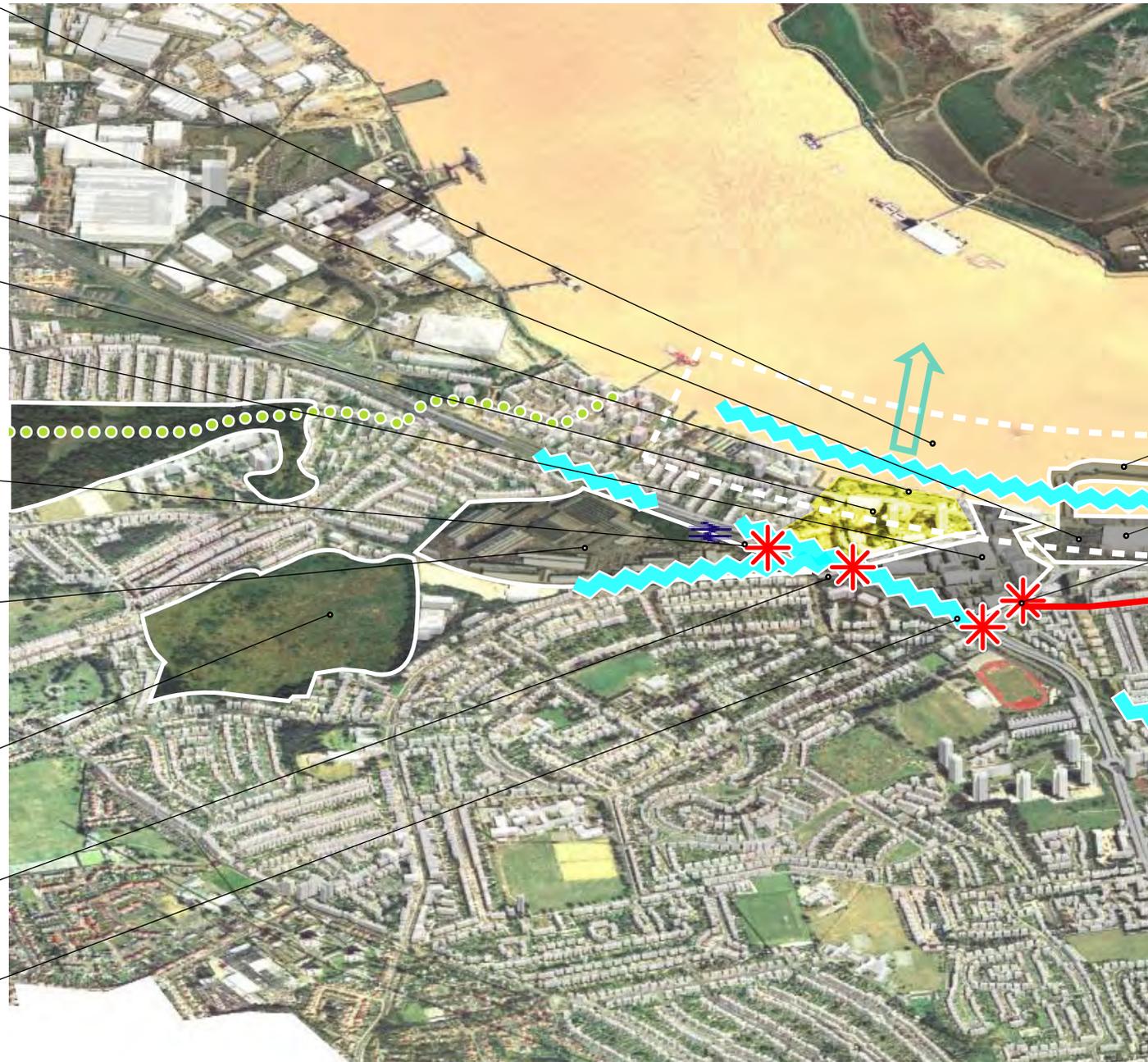
**The station** is close to the town centre but the A2016/ Bexley Road roundabout is a barrier. Poor pedestrian links to the town centre and Europa. Underpasses are threatening. Poor public transport links

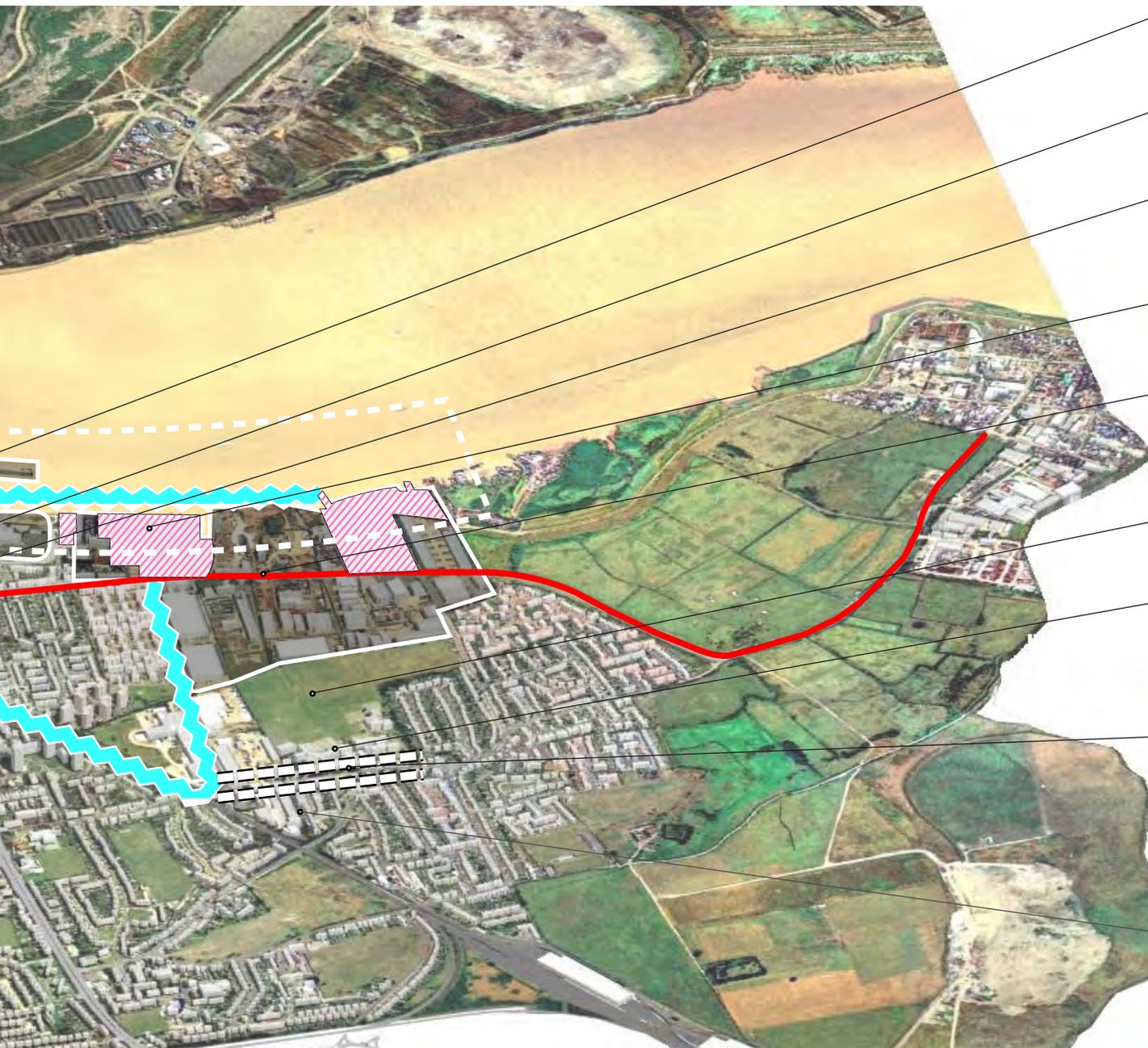
**Europa:** Occupies historic quarry. The industrial estate is partly run-down and vacant. Close to the town centre but with no connection to the station or public access through it. Creates a barrier between the residential areas to the south and the river.

**Quarry:** Historic quarry. Large area contaminated and inaccessible but potentially attractive open green space. A key site within Erith which is currently unavailable.

**A 2016** is a busy road and the roundabout is often congested. Congestion is bound to increase with new Thames Gateway Bridge.

**Train tracks and the A2016** are a barrier which cuts the town in two. There are few existing crossings. The residential areas to the south are separated from the old town and the river.





**The pier:** well used for promenading/fishing but no other activities. The only direct access to the river along with the slipway. Owned by Morrisons.

**Morrisons supermarket:** desirable destination which has revitalised the town but separated from the town centre by carparking.

**Industrial traffic** from **Manor Road** and Crayford Ness passes through the town centre at the James Watt Way roundabout which creates poor environment and conflicts with new developments

**Protected wharves** prevent growth of town centre to the east and will encourage development of river industries.

**Manor Road:** Serves active industrial area. Low public accessibility, no public destinations, poor quality of environment. Barrier to the river and to Crayford Marshes. Poor landscape, low density, no integration with surrounding areas.

**Contaminated ground** with use as playing fields. Potential for development in the east spur.

**Howbury Centre:** Occupies previous secondary school. Currently disfunctional building requiring maintenance. Security is an issue. Could be relocated and replaced by new secondary school.

**Slade Green:** is isolated and run down. It does not successfully provide for the community it serves. The area suffers from a high level of crime and vandalism. North End Ward has bad unemployment and educational performance within the Borough. It lacks, identity, focus and amenities. There is no centre although Slade Green Road has the potential to become a new **high street**.

**Howbury** community is split by industrial traffic the train tracks and poor transport links to Erith Town Centre.

# Erith SWOT Summary

## Strengths

- A town centre offering a range of facilities and benefiting from recent investment.
- Attractive waterfront and pier.
- Marshes and open spaces of ecological value.
- Significant industry still present with a significant number of jobs.
- Land bank including sites such as Erith quarry.
- Active and protected wharves.
- Good public transport facilities in the town centre, including train links to the centre of London and local bus services.
- Part of the Thames Gateway with significant Government funding and backing for regeneration.
- Reasonably healthy and vibrant local housing property market with new development on a number of sites.

## Weaknesses

- A poor quality civic heart and identity.
- Waterfront under-used
- Limited range of retail and leisure facilities in the town centre.
- Industrial decline and restructuring.
- Poor quality industrial estates with run down/vacant sites.
- Poor pedestrian links from station to town centre.
- Contamination on a number of sites such as Erith Quarry
- Congestion on the A2016
- Town severed by A2016 and railway
- Poor quality links to assets including the marshes and waterfront.
- High levels of vandalism and crime in some areas, e.g. Slade Green.
- Social deprivation, relatively high unemployment and relatively low skills levels.
- No high street for Slade Green.
- Some housing areas in poor condition and suffering from poor quality design.

## Opportunities

- Make more of the waterfront
- Create an enhanced civic heart
- Enhance pedestrian environment. Include better links between the station and the town centre.
- Creation of enhanced green chains linking green areas and assets.
- Bring forward quality development on sites including Erith Quarry.
- Enhanced industrial estates with more effective and intensive use of land.
- Employment areas will benefit from the Thames Gateway Bridge and improvements to the A2016.

## Threats

- Continued economic decline and under-investment.
- Lack of common vision for the area and/or lack of effective marketing/promotion.
- Over restrictive protection of employment land and mismatch with demand.
- Flood risk.

## Conclusion - key Issues

Erith currently exists as a series of fragments which record the effects of radical interventions during its modern history: the decline in river trade and industry, the construction of the railway, blanket low density suburban spread away from the river, post war and on-going piecemeal interventions within the town centre. This has led to a dispersed and fragmented town centre divorced from the river, disconnected areas of mono thematic and radically different topographies, conflicting scales, low density development, poor access and low grade public space.

On the plus side Erith has extraordinary assets: its location on the river edge, landscape features: hillside topography, river, marshes. A wide spectrum of attributes and activities within the town, many of these are seen as conflicts but can also be seen as the core of Erith's vitality: town centre, industry, residential, river,

However Erith's identity as a riverside town needs to be re-established and redefined within the context of change in the wider area.

Erith has lost its connections to the river which is its main asset and defines its character.

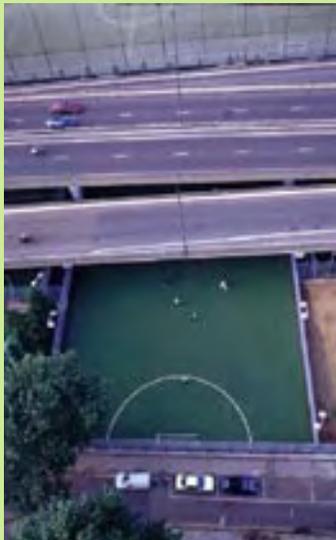
The historic town centre is separated from its residential hinterland.

The town centre does not provide for the community it serves. Retail is improving, Morrisons has been of major benefit in attracting people to the town centre but other amenities are limited or absent.

Erith is in a transitional stage of development where new uses have supplanted previous in a rather piecemeal way. There has not been a clear cohesive strategy for knitting together the urban fabric across boundaries which previously existed between conflicting uses and building types. This has resulted in a diverse topography of separation rather than integration.



*Remains of Erith's river trade industry are evidence of its transition*



residential civic marshes  
nature watersport identity  
walks wildlife transport biodiversity leisure ecology  
wildlife watersport identity  
transport biodiversity leisure ecology  
opportunity nightlife youth  
festival recreation water  
seaside  
**Erith Tomorrow**  
community centre public space  
sport active river  
market industry river

# Introduction

Erith Tomorrow brings together the analysis and observations from the previous baseline chapter and lays out the suggested future development of Erith.

This section sets out the vision and overall objective for Erith's future development. A series of six sub-objectives specify the overall objective and define the key thematic areas of intervention. The objectives have been developed in close collaboration with the client group and key stakeholders. A brief summary of the main elements of the strategy follows.

The rest of 'Erith Tomorrow' is organised as follows:

- Introduction to the main development sites and their key characteristics
- Presentation of key proposals for Erith's future development in terms of:
  - Land-use
  - Urban design
  - Transport
- Erith's development opportunities, housing and industrial capacity
- Development and urban design solutions for key sub-areas of Erith.

## Objectives

The overall objective for Erith's short, medium and long-term development is to:

'Transform Erith into a revitalised town centre on the River Thames, which fully realises its potential as an attractive location for a mix of town centre uses and activities, housing growth and employment'

The key thematic areas of intervention brought forward in this framework are:

- Erith Town Centre

- The River
- Housing
- Industry and employment
- Leisure
- Accessibility and transport
- Public realm

The objectives for the key thematic areas intervention are:

### The Town Centre

'To create a revitalised town centre in Erith, which serves the local and business community'

### The River

'To bring Erith back to the River and maximise its recreational potential'

### Housing

'To facilitate housing growth in line with the needs of the local community, the wider policy context and the objective of delivering sustainable communities'

### Employment and Industry

'To reinforce Erith's advantages as an employment location and to retain and upgrade existing industrial areas. The presence of a large pool of skilled manual workers dictates that industrial uses ought to remain the focus of employment activity within the study area.'

### Leisure and Public Open Space

'To create an attractive offer of leisure, recreation and entertainment activities'

### Accessibility and Transport

'Improve the accessibility, movement and linkage - locally and strategically'

- 1 Create a revitalised town centre, which serves the local and business community
- 2 Bring Erith back to the river and maximise its recreational potential
- 3 Facilitate housing growth in line with the needs of the local community, the wider policy context and the objective of delivering sustainable communities
- 4 Reinforce Erith's advantages as an employment location and to retain, diversify and/or upgrade existing industrial areas.
- 5 Create an attractive offer of liesure, recreation and entertainment activities
- 6 Improve the accessibility, the movement and linkage - locally and strategically

**Drawing a comprehensive framework for:**

**Optimising land uses and densities demonstrating development opportunities and capacity**

**Reorganising the relationship of the built environment to open space, the River Thames and infrastructure**

**Striking a balance between competing and conflicting uses**

**Identifying specific site based and thematic projects**

**Striking a balance between the policy framework, market reality and viability and Erith's Opportunity Area status.**

# Urban design strategy

The previous section showed Erith as a town in a state of transition. Its historical development is evident in existing street patterns though uses have changed. Recent developments have altered the grain and character of the town centre which has given it a new direction for growth.

## Principles of Approach

Our approach is based upon key principles:

- That density and diversity create more vibrant and sustainable urban environments both in the shorter and longer term. The strategy should promote and not preclude further development, density and diversity over time.
- Integration of diverse activities helps to promote and sustain economic and social-well being. The framework promotes expansion and integration of activities rather than reduction and displacement.
- Create conditions through which Erith can transform over time during and beyond the immediate 10-15 years. The framework includes consideration of regeneration in the longer term, what could Erith be like in 10, 20, 50 or 100 years? A sustainable approach is one which provides a coherent framework for immediate development but is also flexible enough to allow changes to take place in response to market conditions, local and wider influences.
- To support and develop a strong identity for Erith which takes on board recent changes. At the same time it reinforces the latent character and identity of its historic past.

The framework is founded upon research and understanding of Erith as a place. This goes beyond basic concepts of identity and character and is identified through the everyday life and conditions: from landscape topography to the most particular aspects of life of the community.

Erith is a unique place with many positive characteristics upon which to build. Our aim has been to overcome failings, draw upon the unique qualities of Erith and to assimilate past and present rather than impose a new order.

## River identity

Erith – means ‘muddy harbour’ or ‘gravelly landing place’.

Eriths relationship to the river is ingrained in its character and identity although recent changes have reduced the influence of the river on the town.

The significant frontage of Erith onto the River Thames is its most valuable asset and one which at present is barely used. The river offers enormous potential to revitalise the town centre and for development as a major public open space. The need to redefine Eriths identity as a riverside town is the central theme within the framework. This involves:

- Inquiry into the traditional synergy between river and trade, within the context of Erith and the wider area (Belvedere, Crayford).
- Ways in which the presence of the river can be reinforced throughout the area through new connections inland, intensification of river edge development, public space, views and access, potential for taller buildings with views to and across the Thames, the relationship between the river and hill topography, river transport and access.
- Potential for river related uses: lido, pontoon ‘beaches’, watersports, river transport.

## Density / Diversity / Integration

The framework identifies opportunities for the integration of current uses and increased diversity within a denser urban topography. Themes and issues:

- The town centre is fragmented but provides the potential for higher density through development of available or under-used sites along with new building typologies.
- Intensification of the area around Morrisons store and river edge public spaces – exploration of the potential for development on, around or over Morrisons car park (possible land exchange).

- Along with increased density improve accessibility from the south and south east to the river by overcoming the barriers created by the railway and A2016.
- Potential for expanding the range of residential accommodation to cater for a more diverse population.
- Avoid displacement of industry. Explore opportunities for increase in density of existing sites, new sites and new industries of varying scales which can be located within a more diverse environment – creative and green industries, recycling, research, start-up etc. Landscape improvements to industrial areas - industry within business park settings with the potential for greater public accessibility and knitting in with adjoining residential areas.
- Europa Trading Estate is currently underused and inaccessible to the public. It creates a barrier between the residential areas and the river. It has high potential for a diverse range of uses in close proximity to the station. It is well situated to develop into a dense urban centre near to the station.
- The Quarry has been identified as a site for housing. With opportunities for increased density in the town centre and Europa there a case for this to remain as public open space consistent with its Nature Conservation designation.

## Design Strategy Key Points:

- Redefine Erith's identity as a riverside town. Identify ways in which Erith can reconnect and engage with the river. Reinforce existing river activities and promote new activities along the river edge.
- Create new connections between the town centre (Bexley Road, the shopping centre, Morrisons) and the river.
- Reinforce the identity of Erith and create a new centre for the town - an identifiable public space - a new town square.
- Identify opportunities for higher densities within the town

centre and opportunities for future growth.

- Sustain and support existing industry within the town, particularly river related. Take on board opportunities which may arise from changes in the use of the river within Thames Gateway.
- Identify key public spaces and reinforce their identity, character and linkages - A2016 round about, Riverside gardens, Morrisons car park, the station area.
- Identify and improve pedestrian and public transport desire lines and destinations.
- Identify and promote the use of underused/undervalued areas.
- Overcome the barriers of A2016 and railway lines.
- Reinforce Erith's landscape qualities and tie these in to the 'Green Grid' network. Connect the Green chain walk to the river.
- Improve accessibility along and to the river.
- Draw upon and reinforce the specific qualities which define Erith as a place - hill, river, mud flats, marshes, horizon, scale of buildings, diverse activities and uses.

# The Framework Strategy

**1 Erith Quarry** - mixed housing and apartments. Houses to the south take advantage of height and views to the river. The residential mix to the north has new links to Europa and Fraser Road. The Quarry itself will become a new park with leisure facilities.

**2 Europa Industrial Estate** - new mix of uses with greater public accessibility to link Europa to surrounding areas. Integration of small/medium scale industries, live/work, community/education/training, retail and residential uses, courtyard blocks and tall 'landmark' buildings. This new community area is linked to the river through a series of green spaces.

**3 Erith Train Station** - new prominent station with improved pedestrian and public transport links. The roundabout junction is replaced by a crossing to improve road level pedestrian access. A new public space links the station, civic and gateway buildings.

**4 Improved links under the A2016 and railway** - New pedestrian links from the train station to Europa.

**5 Active River Frontage** - watersports training within 'captured water', beach/ferry landing pontoon connected to the pier. New public square next to Morrisons. Reconfigured Riverside Gardens to create physical link between shopping centre and river with possible lido and/or river cafe/restaurant.

**6 Development of Morrisons** - wrapped in retail and residential. A new public square relocates Erith town centre to the east. Car parking is relocated to a multi-storey car park.

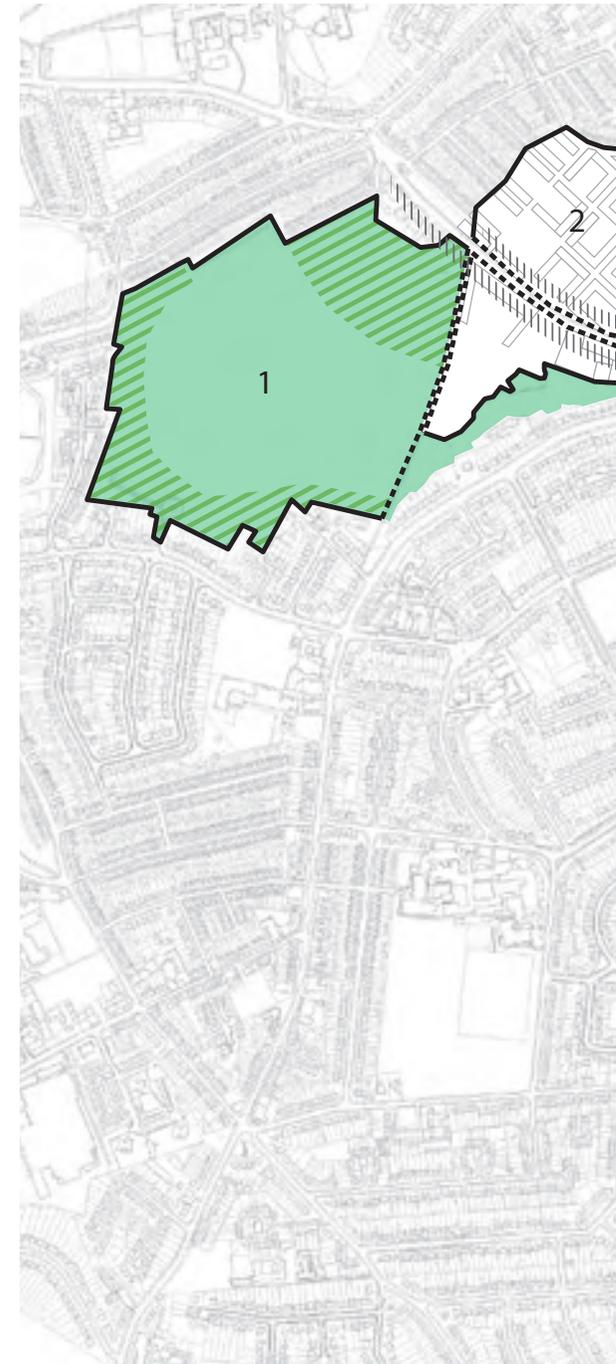
**7 Potential expansion of town centre** - Creation of buffer zone; new town centre shielded from heavy industry with mixed use riverside expansion around safeguarded wharves.

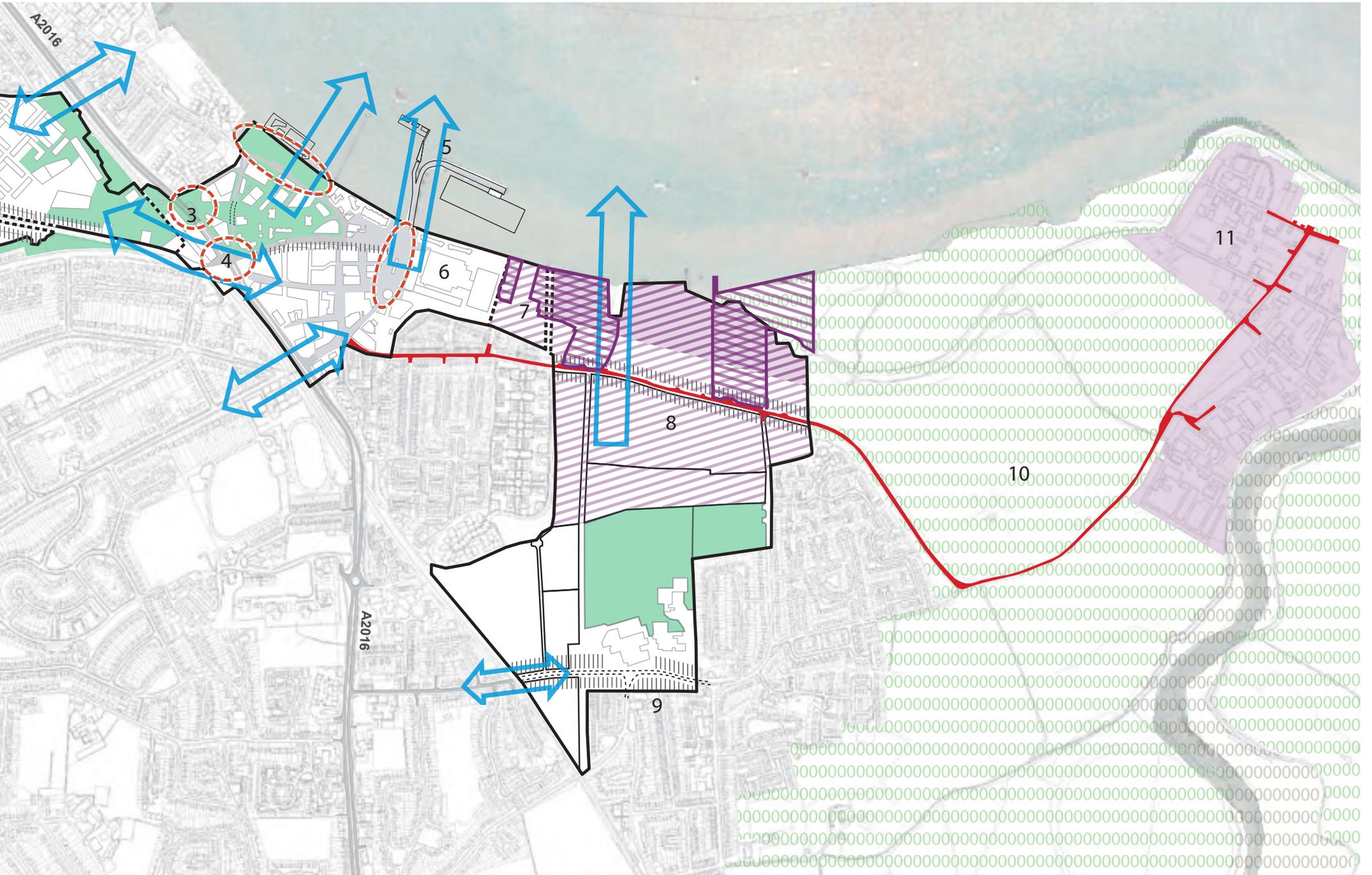
**8 Manor Road Industrial Area** - Environmental improvements. Traffic infrastructure improvements and chances to divert heavy traffic away from the town centre. Support river related industries. Finer grain of plots and density to Manor Road South. Support more diverse mix of industries and scales. Introduce shop frontages and greater public accessibility and interaction. Landscaping to create buffers and links to surrounding residential areas and to the river.

**9 New centre for Slade Green** - along Slade Green Road. Enhance the civic facilities and civic identity at the junction with Bridge Road. Improve link to Pearswood Road across the railway. Community transport links to Howbury improved traffic calming measures on new high street. Howbury centre relocated or intergrated within new secondary school.

**10 Crayford and Dartford marshes** - strategy to manage the marshes by Bexley council

**11 Crayford Ness** - to be considered within the context of a long-term industrial land management strategy across East London as recommended in the Draft East London SRDF





# Erith Tomorrow

**Active river frontage.** Extend Thames path along river edge

Reinforce **link** between town centre (Bexley Road) and the river.

Improvements to **Riverside Gardens** as one of the Mayors 100 Public Spaces. Reduce impact of flood defences. New river related activities.

**Hill of Bits:** enhance landscape qualities and public access. Connect **Green Chain** to the river through hill of bits and Riverside Gardens.

Improve **links** between station, town centre and Europa

**Improve public access** through Europa

Potential **growth of town centre** westwards into Europa. Retain light industries with mixed uses within Europa.

Increase **density along Fraser Road.** new residential development to northern end of the Quarry with high street uses along Fraser Road

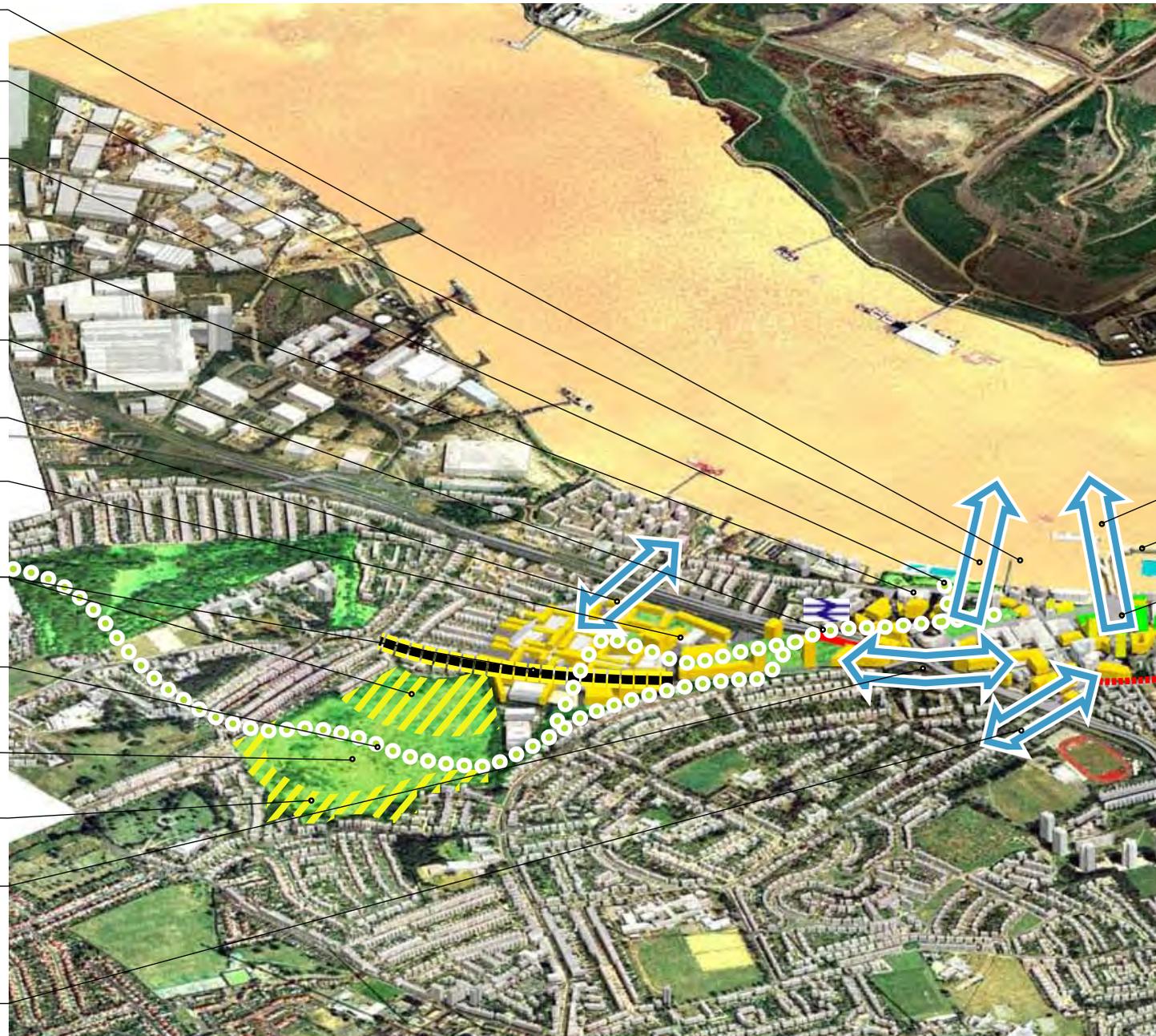
**Extend Green Chain** through the Quarry, Atlas, Europa to the river.

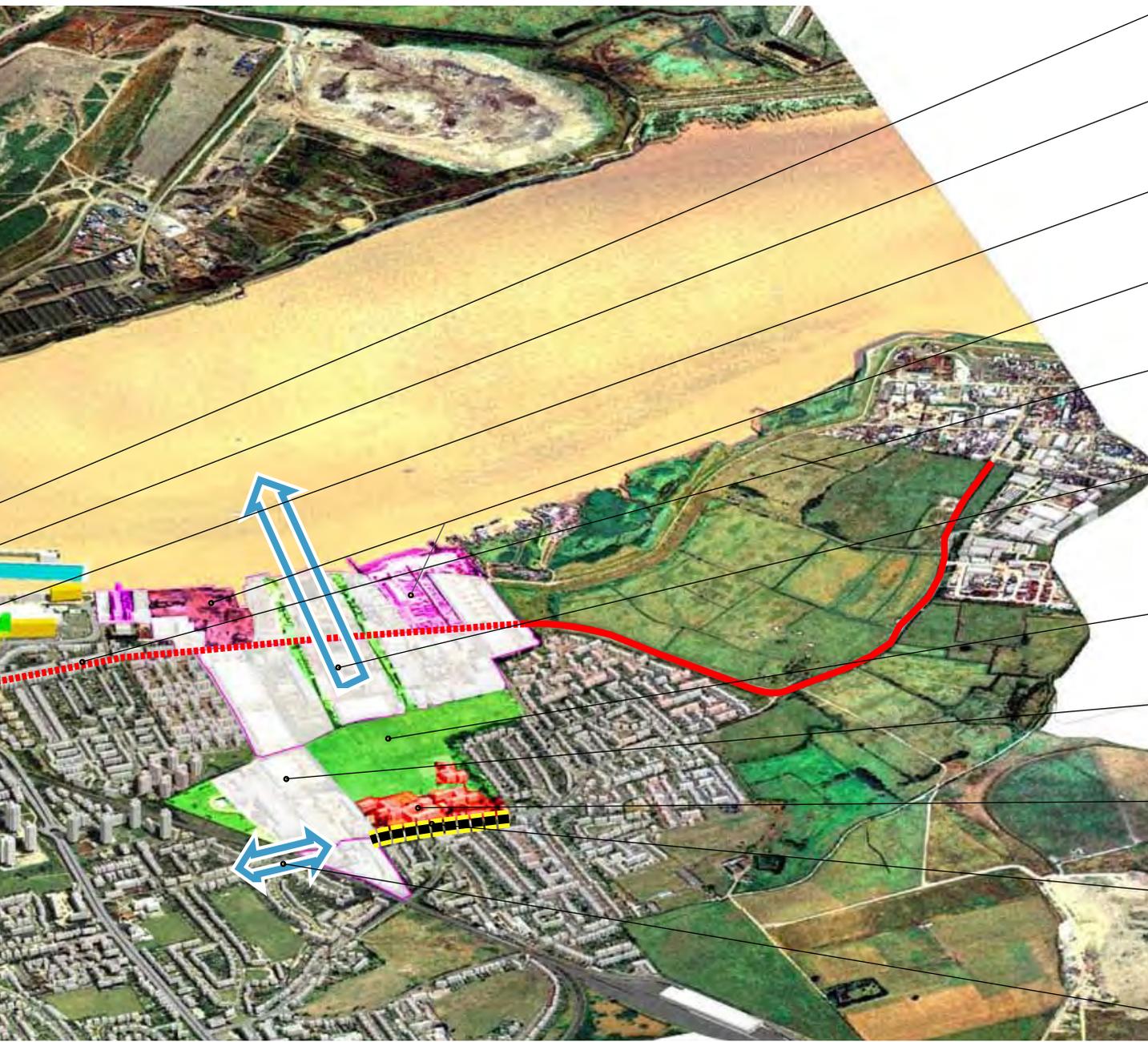
New **green open space** within the Quarry

Houses along the southern edge of the **Quarry** with views to the river

Improve **A2016/Bexley Road roundabout** and pedestrian crossings at road and underpass levels. Create new wide underpass connection between 'Hill of bits and Europa

**Link town centre** to residential areas to the south across A2016 and railway





Key **connection to the river** at the pier. Connect new public space to the river and pier

New **activities along the pier**: market, cafe, restaurant, possible watersports lake and beach pontoon.

**New public space at Morrisons**. Car park replaced by new town square.

**Protected Wharves**: retain and support river related industries.

Improvements to **environment of Manor Road**. Divert industrial traffic away from the town centre and links to the marshes.

Improve **environment of Manor Road industrial areas**. Increase density. Develop industry within business park environment. Introduce new landscape connections to improve public access and links from the south to the river.

Decontaminate **playing fields**. Eastern spur for residential development.

**Small scale industries** combined with new mixed uses on Linpac, Boots and Crane sites

**Howbury Centre** relocated or integrated within new secondary school.

New high street and **centre for Slade Green**. Increase density and mixed high street and community uses along Slade Green Road.

Improved **connection from Slade Green Road** across railway.

# The Framework Strategy - Development Site Boundaries



Discrete sites have been identified within each of the three sub-areas. The choice of these boundaries is based on the site's current use, density, ownership structure or main development.

## Sites:

### 1 Town Centre

- T1 Town centre 1:Erith Western Gateway
- T2 Town centre 2:Shopping Centre Phase 2
- T3 Town centre 3:Old Market
- T4 Town centre 4:Shopping centre extension
- T5 Town centre 5:Morrisons
- T6 Town centre 6:Job Centre
- T7 Town centre 7:Salvation Army/Mcdonalds
- T8 Town centre 8:
- T9 Town centre 9:Shopping Centre

### 2 The Quarry, Atlas, Europa

#### 2a The Quarry

- Q1 Quarry 1 (north)
- Q2 Quarry 2 (centre)
- Q3 Quarry 3 (south)

#### 2b Atlas

- A1 Atlas 1 (north)
- A2 Atlas 2 (south)

#### 2c Europa

- E1 Europa 1: East
- E2 Europa 2: Hamlet
- E3 Europa 3: Small Units
- E4 Europa 4: Batt Cables

### 3 Manor Road, Howbury, Slade Green

#### 3a Manor Road

- MRN Manor Road North
- M1 Manor Road 1 (Arjo Wiggins)
- M2 Manor Road 2
- M3 Manor Road 3

#### 3b Howbury

- H1 Howbury 1
- H2 Howbury 2
- H3 Howbury 3

#### 3c Slade Green

- S1 Slade Green Industrial Area 1: Linpac
- S2 Slade Green Industrial Area 2:Boots
- S3 Slade Green Industrial Area 3:Crane
- S4 Telephone Exchange



10 Minute walk from station

Development Sites

# Key Development Area 1 - Erith Town Centre Strategy - 4 Public Spaces



Erith Today identified that the town centre has a high proportion of open spaces to buildings but has a poor public realm.

Many open spaces have resulted from large scale demolition of buildings, mainly industrial. Sites within the town have the character of individual plots with residual spaces between. Open spaces do not have clear identities or purpose. They do not provide coherent settings for activities within the town and they have not been considered sufficiently in relation to the design of the buildings which adjoin them.

Key to the structure of Erith's growth is how existing spaces can develop as part of the whole and how new developments help to define the public realm. There needs to be a clear definition of spaces, thresholds, boundaries, public/private, and better design to incorporate qualities which reflect their uses and which are part of the distinctive character of Erith.

Recent developments of the shopping centre and Morrisons have created a new grain and direction for Erith but have not considered integral improvements to the public realm from the outset. Current public realm projects are underway and will improve the town centre. However these are stand alone projects and do not yet reflect a strategy for the whole town.

In order to define future sites for development and their uses it is vital to consider the public spaces that they create and their effect upon them. This is of particular importance to Erith in terms of the current high ratio of open space to buildings. The need to identify areas where high density buildings are appropriate in dialogue with areas to be left open, their use, character and iden-

tity is a key issue. For this reason the framework identifies three key public spaces and their linkages within the town centre as a basis for the structure of the whole.

## Strategy

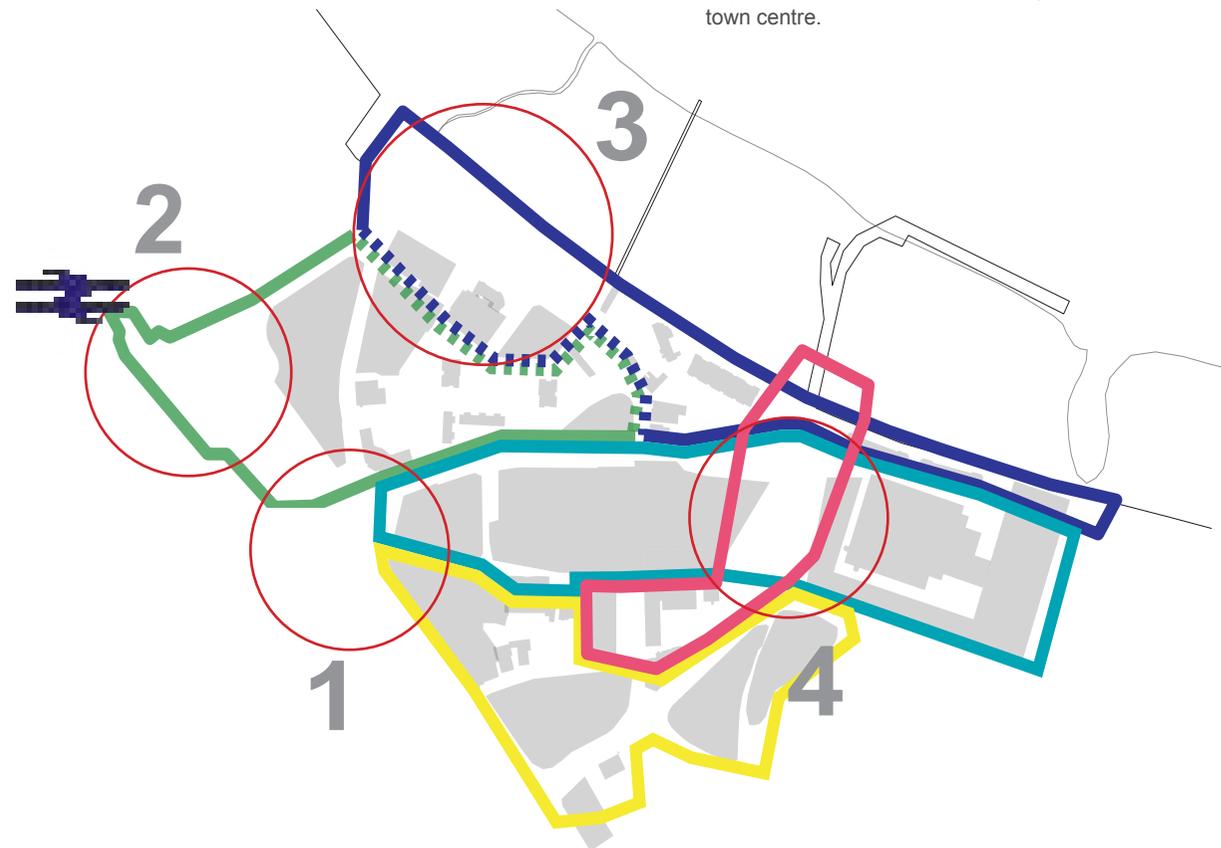
Four key spaces are identified as being most problematic and key to the future growth of Erith. These are:

- 1 A2016/Bexley Road Roundabout.
- 2 The Station and station approach.
- 3 Riverside Gardens and the 'Hill of Bits'
- 4 Morrisons car park and the pier.

## 1 The A2016/ Bexley Road roundabout, station:

This is the threshold to Erith as experienced from Bexley Road, A2016 and the station. It is a congested junction, of poor spatial quality, and difficult to cross as a pedestrian. It is a major barrier between the town centre and areas to the west and south. Priority is given to vehicles with heavy traffic along the A2016 which is likely to increase. Underpasses for pedestrians are of poor quality. The route from the station to the town centre is difficult, poor and threatening as a result. Current public arts projects will make improvements but will not sort out the major problems.

Improvements are necessary to link the station to the town centre, provide public transport links, improve traffic flow along Bexley Road into the town. Future development of Europa will depend upon improved accessibility from the station and to the town centre.



New landmark buildings on corner sites and changes to the station approach will provide the opportunity to transform the space into one which is more pedestrian friendly and consistent with the new identity of Erith.

## 2 The Station and Station Approach

Despite being relatively close to the town centre it lacks presence and accessibility by car and foot. Car parking near the station is limited. A new station building could extend towards the roundabout to give greater presence. A widened underpass which extends beneath the railway tracks could provide a direct link between Walnut Tree Road and Europa. A new station square would improve the sense of arrival into Erith and provide space for buses, taxis and cars.

## 3 Riverside Gardens and the 'Hill of Bits'

Riverside Gardens is the main open space fronting onto the river and is key to re-establishing Erith's direct connection to the river edge. The Gardens should be redesigned to accommodate new recreational activities and overcome the limitations imposed by the height of flood defences. Current proposals for the rowing club, cafe and playground will improve the area and its use but design quality of excellence is required to make them succeed. Riverside Gardens and surrounding area has been designated one of the Mayors 100 Public Spaces which will address these issues.

The Hill of Bits which encompasses the area around the library, Salford Close to Bexley Road is open but is not accessible to the public. Public access around and through this area will provide the vital connection between the shopping centre and the river edge.

## 4 Morrisons Car Park and the Pier.

Morrisons car park is currently the largest open space within the town but is not available to the public. It occupies a key position on the edge of the river with connection to the pier. Relocation of car parking from this area will give the opportunity to create a

new riverside town square for Erith.

## Linkages

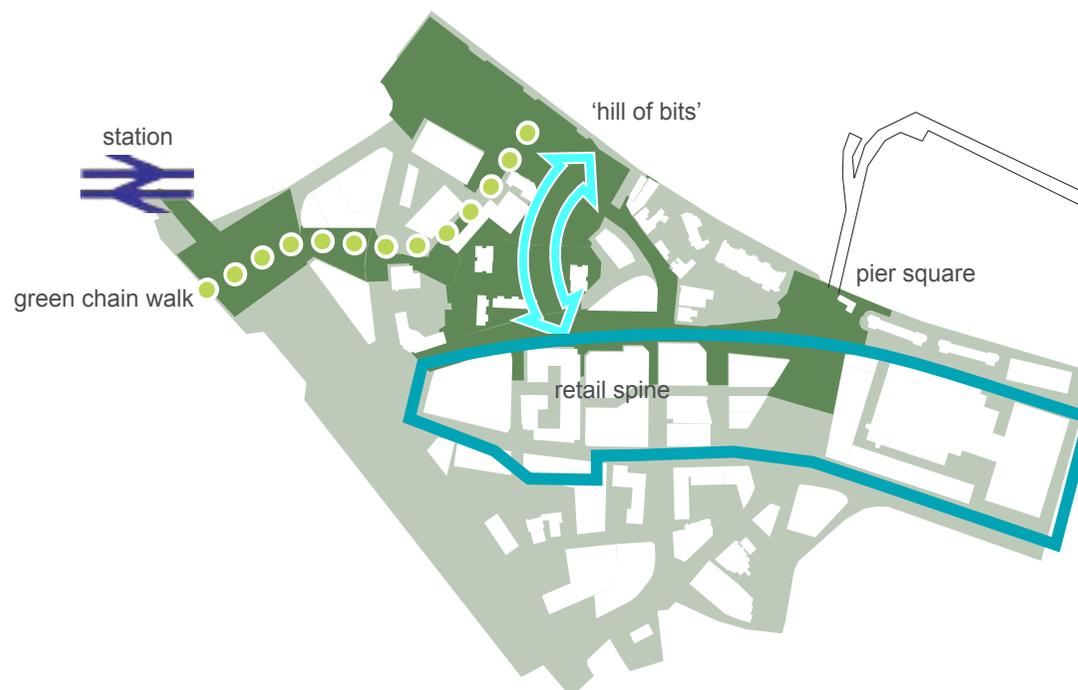
Improvements to these three spaces will place greater emphasis on the linkages between them. Bexley Road, the High Street and Walnut Tree Road form a triangle of key routes which connect the station, town centre and the river. The Hill of Bits is a key area which defines Erith today. It is the point where the high ground of the ridge meets the river. It has changed from a dense industrial setting to one of open landscape. Elevated parks are available to the public on the north side with views to the river currently restricted by planting. Despite being open it is largely inaccessible to the public.

There are strong desire lines across the space which, if made available for public access, could improve connections between the station and the town centre; the shopping centre and the

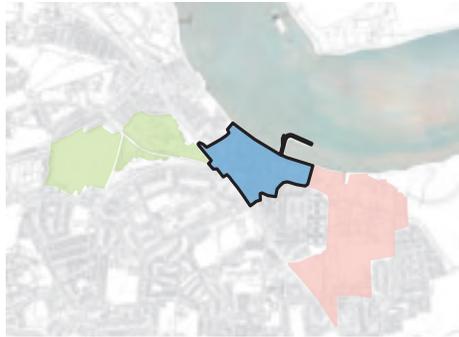
river.

The diagram opposite shows proposed key connections through the Hill of Bits:

- View and path between the station and Morrisons. A direct connection could be created between Walnut Tree Road and a new town square on Morrisons car park. As the centre of gravity of Erith moves east there is greater need for more direct access from the station to the town centre.
- A new connection to the east of the LEB site could provide more direct access between the station and Riverside Gardens through mature landscape.
- Bexley Road is the main east-west route through Erith Town Centre. It is identified as the place where the dense town (retail spine) meets the open landscape of the 'hill of bits' and the river. The framework proposes to reinforce the southern side of Bexley Road as the interface between town and river.



# 1 - Erith Town Centre Strategy



The plan opposite and 3D model on the next page show a vision for Erith town centre with suggestions for building block footprints, forms and heights within key sites.

The layout incorporates key principles described in previous pages.

## Summary of key principles:

- Erith town centre focussed on 4 key public spaces: A2016 roundabout, station square, Riverside Gardens, Morrisons Square. Bexley Road developed as main vehicular thoroughfare, Pier Road the main pedestrian and retail thoroughfare.
- Active river frontage: watersports and leisure activities, riverside walk, improved connection between Riverside Gardens and the river.
- Retain character of 'Hill of Bits' as individual buildings surrounded by green open space. Integrate development of Western Gateway sites within overall strategy for the 'Hill Of Bits'.
- Improve public access between Bexley Road and the river through the hill of bits.
- Emphasise Bexley Road as the edge between the dense town centre and the ridge/river.

- Reinforce identity and increase density of the retail spine. Develop east/west grain of the retail spine through new phase 2 shopping centre development and extension to the west.
- Reduce separation of Morrisons from the shopping centre. Move the town centre towards Morrisons by integrating supermarket into retail spine and creating new town square in place of car park.
- Town centre south to be increased in density and retained in character as 'Hill of Bits' - individual buildings set within more open spaces.

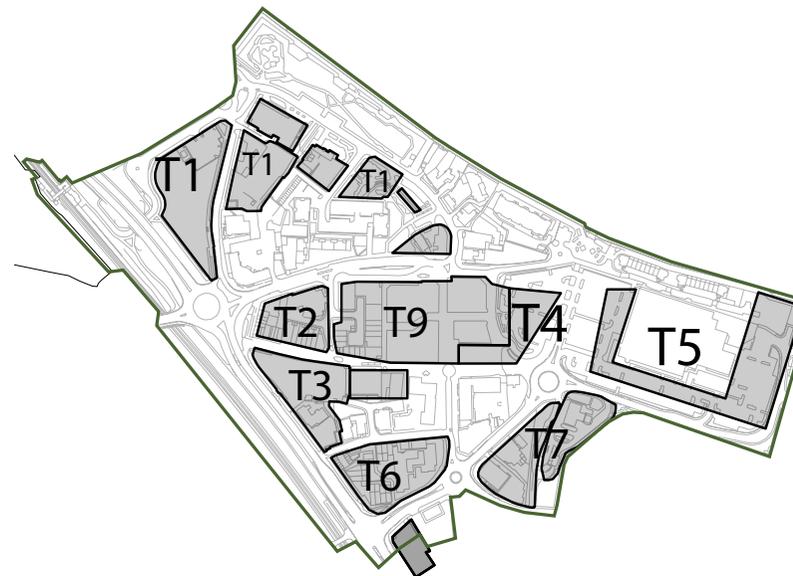
## Density

The diagram (right) shows areas identified as having most potential for development and increase in density. All are within a 10 minute walk of the station. These occupy Erith Western Gate-

way, the Retail Spine, Town Centre South. The existing shopping centre (T9) is shown as having potential in the longer term to increase in height and density.

Generally the framework shows that with high quality design, densities in excess than those in the London Plan can be achieved through imaginative building typologies and increase in height whilst supporting the character of particular areas. More compact and higher building types in appropriate locations, not only achieve higher densities but can also result in more open space at ground level.

The framework recommends concentrating density within key areas whilst retaining generous open space, as a counterpoint, within others. This is opposed to an even distribution of density which may result in more neutral open spaces and building types. Sites where higher density is appropriate are: T1 Walnut Tree Depot and LEB; T2, T4, T9 retail spine; T3 old market; T5 Morrisons; T6 job centre and T7 Salvation Army.



Areas for development and increase in density

*Erith tomorrow building footprints and heights, open space structure and new interventions*

-  2-3 storey buildings
-  4-8 storey buildings
-  12+ storey buildings
-  Public green space
-  Green roof park
-  Hard surface, road and public space
-  Captured water - lido, training lake
-  Bus station
-  New route of 'Green Chain Walk'



# Erith Town Centre Strategy



## Sites locations

Individual sites are identified to reflect current and historic ownership and to aid identification. The success of the urban environment in areas such as Erith Western Gateway, however, relies on continuity of landscape and treatment of open space. It is important that key distinctions are made between plots which should be separate and those where physical boundaries are not apparent. This applies in particular to the 'Hill Of Bits'. The opposite applies to the retail spine where containment within clear boundaries is a plus.

## Buildings forms, heights

The plan on the opposite page indicates possible building heights. The approach is to create clusters of landmark tall buildings around key spaces and on key corner sites.

An approach has been adopted which is counter to the current tendency of higher buildings along the river edge which obstruct views from those further back. Taller buildings are located away from the river edge to take advantage of rising ground and to maximise views to the river over lower buildings to the north.

There are three clusters of taller buildings:

- 1 Station and A2106 roundabout: landmark buildings of high (12 storeys+) and medium (4-5 storeys) height provide enclosure to the space and mark the gateway to the town centre.

Development site	Size (ha)	Current land use	Preferred future land use
Town Centre 1	2.1	Vacant	Leisure, open space, residential
Town Centre 2	0.4	Leisure/open space, retail	Retail, commercial, residential
Town Centre 3	0.6	Leisure, retail, residential	Retail, commercial, residential
Town Centre 4	0.4	Retail, residential	Retail, residential
Town Centre 5	1.1	Retail (supermarket)	Retail, residential
Town Centre 6	0.7	Car Parking	Retail, residential, community
Town Centre 7	0.8	Housing	Retail, residential, community
Town Centre 8	0.15	Resturant	Retail, residential
Town Centre 9	1.75	Retail (petrol Station)	Retail, residential

tre.

- 2 Erith Western Gateway: stepped massing has been shown with taller buildings on Walnut Tree Depot and LEB sites, a lower block on the swimming pool site.
- 3 New town square at Morrisons: 4 towers mark the north, south, east, west boundaries of the new public space

Location of taller buildings at intervals along the A2106 will give punctuation and frontages to the dual carriageway.

Certain locations have been identified with a combination of low, medium and high building forms. This allows lower storeys to define street edges with floor plates appropriate to retail, commercial and other uses on the lower floors. Tall and slender residential towers sit above, taking advantage of light air and views.

Erith today highlighted the way in which the meeting of river and ridge topographies have produced angular building plots at key intersections. This is a particular characteristic of Erith which is important to retain and reinforce. Many of the building masses and forms shown in plan and 3D model follow angular geometries which translate the strong landscape features of Erith into built form. Angles should also emphasise particular important views and orientations within the town centre. For example the

angled facade of the shopping centre extension opens a view from the eastern end of Pier Road to the river.

## Use Mix:

Within the town centre it is proposed the majority of uses at ground level are non-residential with residential accommodation above. Commercial uses should also be raised above ground level. The aim is to increase population density within the town centre through a balanced mix of residential accommodation and in parallel promote retail, entertainment and leisure uses to all street frontages.



3D model of Erith town centre tomorrow with new developments highlighted in yellow

# Key Development Area 2 - Quarry, Atlas, Europa



## Industrial Land Strategy

A future land use strategy for Erith should be considered in the context of the long-term decline in industry in London and the Thames Gateway and the policy context encouraging release of surplus land in documents such as the London Plan and the GLA's Draft SPG on industrial land. Some of Erith's industrial areas are suffering from under-investment and decline and there is probably benefit in consolidating industrial activity.

We have considered two options for industrial consolidation in Erith:

- Focus land use diversification on the sites on the western side of the town centre – the Europa and Atlas sites (and Erith Quarry though this is currently not in employment use). Under this option the employment sites on the eastern side of the town centre would be protected for exclusively employment use.
- Focus land use diversification on the eastern side of the town centre, principally focused on the Manor Road area. Under this option the employment sites on the western side of the town centre would be protected for exclusively employment use.

Each option has its advantages and drawbacks. The Europa and Atlas estates are in reasonable economic health and have a greater number of jobs. The Manor Road area is more mar-

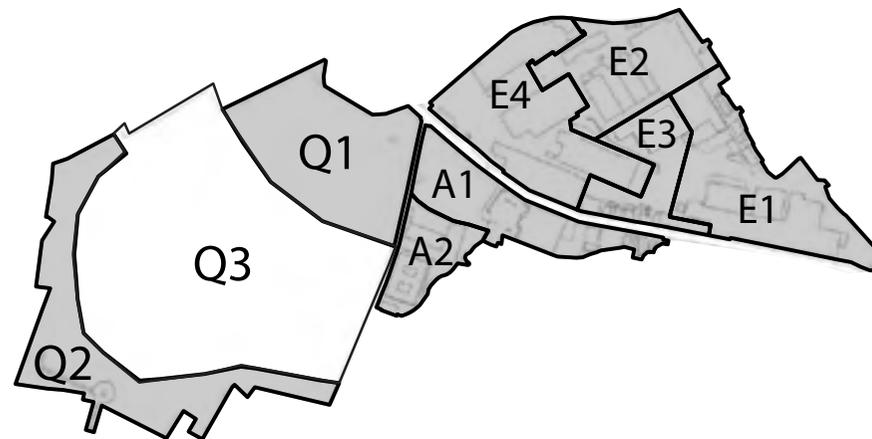
ginal, with a number of poor quality sites and suffers from under-investment. The Manor Road area also offers the potential of being transformed in to an attractive mixed uses quarter taking advantage of its river front aspect and linking the town centre waterfront to the marshes.

Account though would need to be taken of flood risk and it is likely that residential development would not be acceptable at ground floor.

The Manor Road area also contains the protected wharves of Mayer Parry recycling, Standard Wharf and RMC Railway with a combined site area of 7.95 ha. Release of safeguarded wharves to non-wharf related uses is strongly resisted on policy grounds and subject to a stringent set of tests. An option could be to release the rest of the Manor Way area for mixed use and keep the protected wharves. However wharf activities are usually noisy, dusty and unsightly and tend not to be compatible with non-industrial uses such as residential.

*Building footprints and heights, open space structure and new interventions*

- 1 storey terraced housing
- 3 storey blocks
- 4-5 storey blocks
- 12+ storey residential buildings
- Public green space
- Green Chain
- Hard surface, road & public space
- Bexley College
- New route of 'Green Chain Walk'



Areas for development and increase in density

extend green chain walk through new public park

residential developments within green landscape

extend terraces

courtyard blocks

industry beneath green roof which forms public open space as part of the green chain



residential developments within green landscape

large retail units and residential at Atlas

## Key Development Area 2 - Quarry, Atlas, Europa



Taking these factors in to account we suggest that it is better to focus land use diversification on the Europa and Atlas sites rather than the Manor Road area unless there is a reasonable prospect of de-designating/relocating the safeguarded wharves. If this were feasible in the plan period of Bexley's emerging LDF then we would certainly recommend the diversification of the Manor Road area over the Europa and Atlas sites. The strategy and details given below assume though that diversification is focused on the western sites.

The Draft East London SRDF also recommends development of an industrial land management strategy for the sub-region. The results of this work may be relevant in weighing up the advantages of the different industrial areas in Erith. Crayford Ness should also be considered within the context of a long-term industrial land management strategy across East London as recommended in the Draft East London SRDF.

(Further details on the scale of potential release and intensification of industrial land is given in the 'Erith Tomorrow – Industrial Capacity' section later in this report).

### 2a - Erith Quarry

- Erith Quarry is a large, disused site with the potential to develop substantial housing on the site yet retaining publicly accessible open space providing amenity and recreational value.
- The northern part of the site is within 10 minutes walking

distance of Erith station.

- The current owner, Excel Logistics, is interested in realising the site's potential and in bringing it forward for residential development.
- We envisage residential development along the western and northern edge of Erith Quarry.

The aim is to provide high quality residential accommodation. The quarry, despite being currently disused, represents an important recreational asset. Future development on the site needs to strike an appropriate balance between its residential and amenity potential. This Framework therefore envisages an area of open space at the centre of the site.

The balance of open space and development is flexible – the amount of open space shown in the following plans is more than is required in order to achieve green chain and amenity objectives. As well as green chain objectives a key determinant of the amount of open space is the costs of remediation – these may be so great that green space is the most viable option for large parts of the site.

### 2b - The Atlas Site

- The sites along Fraser Road currently are low density, and there is great scope for densification complementary to the Europa Trading Estate opposite.
- The sites to the back of the Estate are situated directly adjacent to Erith Quarry, these sites have a great potential to accommodate housing overlooking the Quarry site and its potential amenity provision.
- The Atlas Industrial Estate is within a 10 minutes walking distance of Erith station.
- We envisage a new and denser retail development with residential above along Fraser Road.

### 2c - The Europa Trading Estate

- The Europa Trading Estate is located adjacent to Erith Station, despite the current connectivity being very poor.
- The Estate contains a series of old industrial buildings, which have the potential to be converted or re-developed for mix-uses (including housing) and which can add a special character to the site.
- There is a fairly successful small business units scheme at the Europa Trading Estate; the occupying businesses can be seen as a nucleus with the potential of being further developed and expanded as part of a mix use scheme.
- A substantial share of the Europa site is owned by Warner Estates, who have shown interest to exploit the site's potential for mix-use development including the option of acquiring a new site in the area and relocating their tenants from Europa.
- Another substantial part of the Estate, the Hamlet Estate, is mostly vacant and derelict, the owners approached Warner Estates previously to sell the site.

### Summary - The Western Sites

As such the Quarry, Atlas and Europa, sites are seen as a development corridor stretching from Erith Town Centre across the A2016 to the west, providing the opportunity for a series of linked employment, residential and open space uses with supporting retail and leisure facilities.

The Europa Trading Estate represents a key site within this development corridor. In the preferred development option, it is envisaged that the Europa Trading Estate will be developed as a new dense and diverse centre around the station, creating a new mixed-use 'quarter' of the town.

More specifically the site closest to the station (E1) would accommodate a mix of residential and leisure uses, possible a new and extended gym, an Internet café and a pub/restaurant/bar to maximise the site's proximity to the station and Erith Town Centre. A large part of the Hamlet site (E2) would be redeveloped with new

Development site	Size (ha)	Current land use	Recommended future land use
Quarry	0	Disused	Housing, Open Space
Europa 1	3.6	Industrial	Housing, Leisure
Europa 2	2.5	Industrial	Industrial, Housing (new)
Europa 3 (sm. units)	1.7	Industrial	Housing, Retail
Europa 4 (batt)	3.8	Industrial	Industrial (Housing long-term)
Atlas 1	2.2	Retail	Retail, Housing
Atlas 2	1.2	Industrial	Housing

small business units and the existing units currently located at the centre of Europa would be relocated into these. This releases a central part of the Europa Estate, which can be brought forward for a mix of retail and residential uses. Batt Cables (E4) is to continue its activity but in the long-term would relocate and the site could be developed for housing with supporting uses.

A new centre with employment, residential, retail and leisure functions at Europa will provide a strong link with Erith Town Centre and will help overcome the barrier created by both the railway lines and the A2016. In order to link both parts of Erith the aim for the Europa Trading Estate is to provide an exciting mix of uses, which attract people from Erith Town Centre as well as from Erith Quarry, once it is developed.

To enhance the connectivity between Europa and Erith Town Centre, a crucial project encompassing a new vehicular, pedestrian and cycle link should be brought forward as part of this framework.

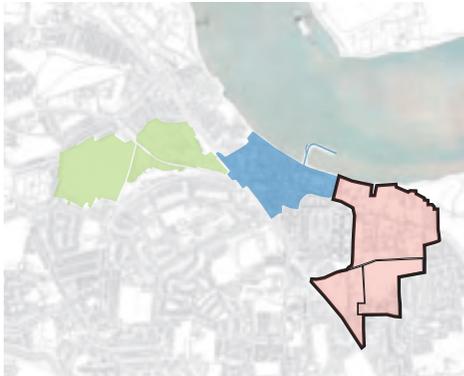
Table 1 above provides details of each of the sites in terms of size, current land use and envisaged land use. This table is complementary to the 'Preferred land use option' diagram on the opposite page.

It is recommended by the Environment Agency that a similar assessment of the potential for land contamination be carried out for the Europa and Atlas sites as it has been for Erith Quarry. The Environment Agency also recommends that prior to any redevelopment, the guidance held in 'The Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination CLR 11' be followed.

*3D model of Europa with potential new developments highlighted in yellow. The layout extends the existing grain of streets from the west. To the east a more complex and diverse arrangement of uses, including light industry beneath a public park provides accommodation for a range of uses as an extension of the town centre. More dense retail and residential development along Fraser Road create an extended link from Bexley road in the town centre to the Quarry.*



# Key Development Area 3 - Manor Road, Slade Green and Howbury



## 3a - Manor Road

The choice to retain Manor Road Industrial Area as one coherent pocket of industry is informed by the following:

- Safeguarded wharf-related industrial activities especially at Manor Road North.
- The importance of Manor Road in terms of employment, especially taken by local people (about 33% for Manor Road North and 21% for Manor Road South)

While generally retaining Manor Road Industrial Area for Industrial use it is suggested to:

- Aspire to a densification of current industrial activity through mix use development around wharf related activity,
- Promote effective implementation of the improvements brought forward as part of the Air Quality Management Programme already in place; measures include road cleaning, development control, speed reduction and improving site cleanliness,
- Promote shopfront development to increase the accessibility of the industrial sites, and
- Improvements to the public realm

It could be appropriate in the short to medium-term to see a further expansion of Erith Town Centre into the western end of the Manor Road Industrial Area.

Adjacent to the east of the Morrison's site lie RMC Railway Wharf and Mayer Parry Wharf (EMR Erith), which both have safeguarded wharf status. An expansion of Erith Town Centre to the East could incorporate wharf-related activities while at the same time intensify the current land use through mix use development. The proposed redevelopment of Convoys Wharf represents a good example of how to integrate a 'bad' neighbour use - a waste recycling and processing facility with residential, cultural/community and other employment uses.

This would partly be dependable on the continued or viable future use of the safeguarded wharfs, and whether in wishing to retain a strong employment base here some industrial uses could be consolidated/relocated to the East, enabling a balance to be achieved between existing industrial and new mixed uses.

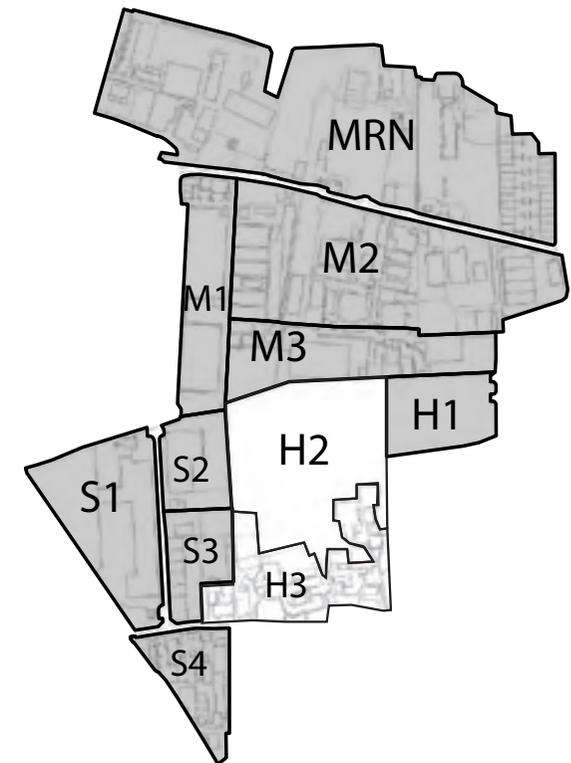
In order to mitigate land use conflicts between residential and industrial uses, the sites surrounding Manor Road South (M1 and M3) function as a 'buffer' zone; suggested uses are small-scale industrial or warehousing units, a garden, a DIY centre and/or to provide a landscaped open space and pedestrian/cycle link.

## 3b - Slade Green and 3c - Howbury

This framework sees the Howbury site including its playing fields as the main vehicle to regenerate the wider Slade Green area.

The preferred option in this framework suggests a complete demolition of the existing Howbury Centre and the construction of a state-of-the-art educational and training facility at the Howbury site following the extended school model. A new facility could accommodate a new primary, a secondary school, a nursery and adult training facilities.

Within the preferred option the playing fields are de-contaminated and brought back into use. Bexley's internal training unit could be relocated to a new development within the Erith Town Centre's Gateway Zone.



Areas for development and increase in density

A mix of small scale industrial, retail and residential uses are introduced to the neighbouring sites with the aim of creating a new centre and neighbourhood in Slade Green.

More specifically the Crane site (S3) features as the focal point for retail development, whilst the Linpac site could consist of a mix of small-scale industrial and residential uses. The Boots site (S2) and the Millpost site (H1) are proposed for residential use.

It is suggested to encourage shop-front development along Slade Green Road, which together with the development of the Crane site would form a new centre of gravity within the Slade Green Area.

The preferred option is supported by the following:

Slade Green has amongst others:

- The highest prevalence of crime in the Borough.
- A high share of residents without qualifications.
- The lowest school performance in the whole Borough
- An above average unemployment and economic inactivity rate.
- The Howbury Centre struggles with major security issues, problems of vandalism, a low efficiency and functionality of the building, low design quality and high maintenance costs
- Under-utilisation of the playing fields which have a great potential for local recreation.
- Increasing demand for nursery, primary, secondary and adult education due to housing developments brought forward in this framework.
- The sites brought forward for housing are within a 10 minute walking distance of Slade Green Station.
- Relative transparent ownership structure (apart from site S4).

Due to the social mixture and problems in the area, it is crucial to introduce the 'right' mix of uses as well as the right type of hous-

ing. The area already has a high share of affordable housing; it is important to diversify the current housing stock and to provide alternatives such as houses/flats of higher quality creating a new heart for Slade Green centred around the school site as well as along Slade Green Road

### Summary The Eastern Sites

The table below provides details on each of the sites in terms of size, current land use and envisaged future land use.

Development Site	Size (ha)	Current landuse	Recommended future-land use
Manor Road North	14.74	Industrial	Industrial (retain)
Manor 1	2.8	Industrial	Small scale ind. (new)
Manor 2	8.8	Industrial	Industrial (retain)
Manor 3	3.5	Industrial	Small scale ind. (new)
H1 (Millpost)	1.9	Disused	Housing
S1 (Linpac)	3.8	Industrial	Small scale ind. and housing (new)
S2 (Boots)	1.5	Industrial	Housing
S3 (Crane)	1.5	Industrial	Retail and Housing
S4	1.7	Industrial	Industrial (retain)
Howbury Centre		Educational	Educational
Howbury Paying Fields		Playing Fields	Playing fields

# Tomorrows Transport

## Roundabout and Erith Station

- Remove roundabout & improve signals or substantially improve the pedestrian environment at the roundabout (A).
- Maintain Bexley road as the main artery to the town centre.
- Wider underpass to include cars (13m).
- Relocated station building.
- Train station car park in Europa.
- Potentially a new station building (B).
- Bus drop/turnaround at level of underpass (C).

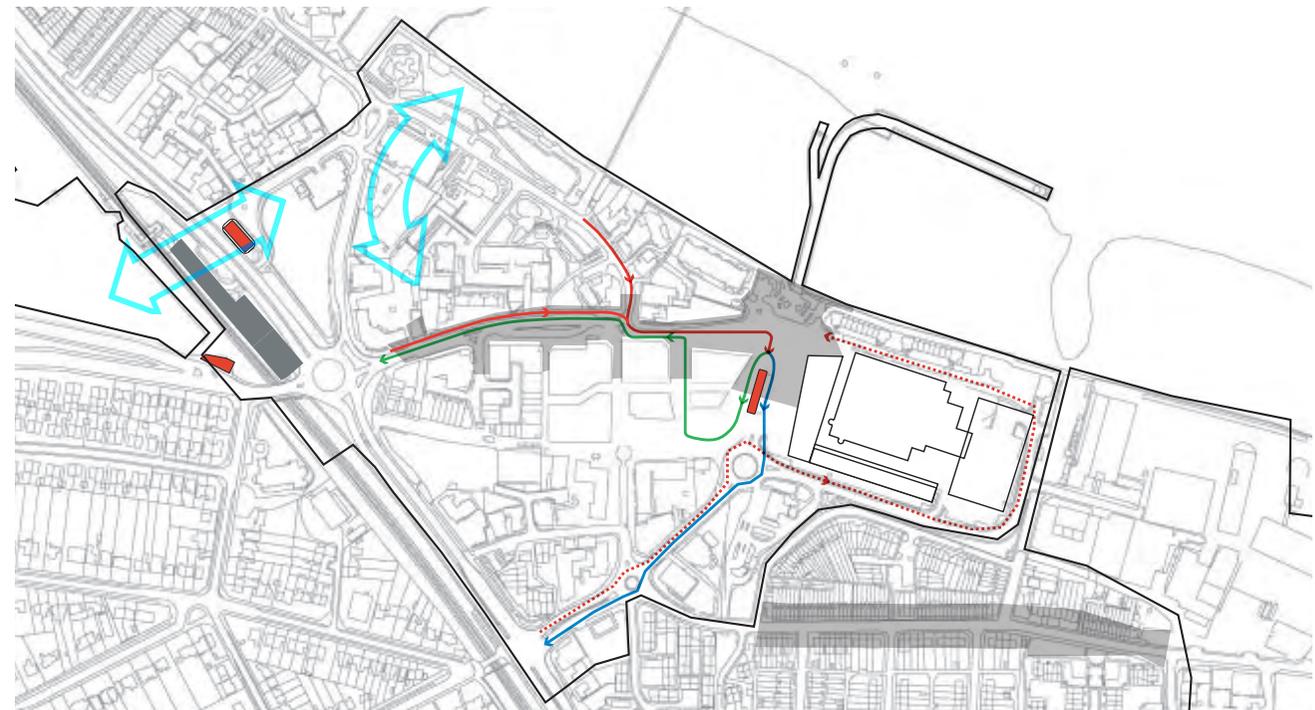
## Erith Town Centre and Morrisons

- Removal of bus stands from Bexley Road (D).
- Redirect to new public space (E).
- Shared surface lay-by for buses in public space (40m by 7.5 m) (F).
- Bus turns back through precinct or back to A2016 via James Watt Way (G).
- New access via James Watt Way for riverside residential developments (H).
- Bus drops passengers as it enters public space then turns at the roundabout and picks up passengers from the roundabout (I).



## Connecting Slade Green and Erith

- Stop industrial traffic going through town centre via James Watt Way.
- Create a link from Manor Road to the A2016.
- New road extending Turpin lane to Slade Green Road crossing the railway at Bridge Road and linking with Thames Road (A2016).
- Traffic restrictions (bus gates and width restrictions) on Manor Road West (To prevent HGV access).
- Traffic calming measures for new route, (Speed along route must be constrained to allow for schools and shops.) Key pedestrian crossing from Frobisher Road Estate and Howbury playing fields.
- Road becomes part of connection of Slade Green to the River.
- Town Centre bus routes can be extended through the new centre of Howbury.



Town centre transport strategy



Transport strategy

# Erith Tomorrow - Housing & Density

## Erith Tomorrow - Housing & Density

This section illustrates meeting the framework's key objective of Erith's additional housing capacity.

The density patterns chosen for Erith are based on the notion of sustainable urban development, as emphasised in the London Plan. The London Plan encourages high-density developments within a 10-minute radius of stations and highlights the role of high-density development in sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres.

The London Plan provides a density matrix, which sets out a strategic framework for appropriate densities at different location types within London. The densities suggested in this matrix have been used as a guideline for Erith. Further, work undertaken by Bexley Council on preferred densities for Erith Town Centre informed this exercise.

Within the density matrix the identified development sites in Erith fall into the category 'sites within 10 minutes walking distance of a town centre' in a 'suburban' setting. The densities brought forward in this category are displayed in the table below. In this framework, three housing density options are drawn up for Erith's main development sites:

- A low-density scenario,
- A medium-density scenario, and
- A high-density scenario.

Under the low-density scenario a total of 2,546 units could be achieved. The medium-density scenario would result in an additional number of 2,947 units; the high-density scenario would potentially lead to a total 3,971 additional housing units.

In the preferred development option and under each of the three scenarios, the majority of housing development would concentrate on the Quarry/Europa/Atlas sites followed by the Town Centre sites. The scale of residential development suggested for the Manor Road/Slade Green Area is comparatively low for each of the scenarios.

Table 2 overleaf compares the number of housing units, which can be achieved under the low, medium and high densities.

Table 2 also compares the number of housing units, which can be achieved under the low, medium and high densities.

We feel that the moderate/medium scenario is most realistic, with the maximum density being set at 100u/ph. We feel that this option may provide developments more in keeping with the surrounding areas and would promote the long term regeneration of Erith.

The average high, medium and low housing densities set out below work out at 66 units/ph, 49units/ph and 43units/ph respectively. When judged again the London plan quotas (Table 1) the overall density yields would appear low. However, the high, medium and low merely referred to the overall capacity and it must be noted that in the high and medium options there are individual sites released for development which do not appear in the low option. Clearly some specific sites, particularly those close to the town centre, have been planned for development at higher levels of density but those more remotely located have been ascribed lower densities to reflect that the market would probably only sustain demand for family type houses in these locations.

There was also the issue that because values in Erith are building from such a low base, developing at very high densities becomes economically unviable, particularly with regard to the increased cost of construction for building high rise, and we have taken this into account when allocating the sites which would be released for development and the phasing of this release.

## Phasing of Future Housing Developments

From a property market perspective the following phasing of housing development are anticipated to be the most viable:

### 1 Millpost

The softest potential gain for family housing is the Millpost site which is allocated within the UDP as being suitable for housing and therefore would make an obvious addition to the housing capacity in the Slade Green area.

### 2 Town Centre incl. Morrisons

For greatest impact Morrisons could be targeted for the earliest high density housing. There is scope above and behind the store, on the significant parking area surrounding and development here would encourage the creation of a new public square and transport hub, establishing the area as the main focus of Erith increasing the overall perception of Erith Town Centre as a whole and its attractiveness as a place to visit and live. Other town centre schemes can be progressed in parallel.

### 3 Erith Quarry

As a second stage, or possibly running alongside the development around the Morrisons site we would envisage the remediation of the Quarry site to enable it to accommodate some family housing in a countryside setting, Statement architecture would help enhance the off beat location. The UDP currently designated the Quarry as a Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation.

### 4 Linpac

The Slade Green Industrial Estate includes the former Linpac site, which is currently vacant. This area seems unsuitable for industrial needs given its poor transport communications to the national network and proximity to local education and therefore traffic fluctuations. However, the site is still designated in the 2004 adopted UDP as employment land so it would be difficult to deliver this in one of the first phases.

### 5 Europa Site

Better links to the railway station are required for Europa to support a high density scheme. As the development of the earlier sites is underway this will allow time for the asset management of the estate to be sorted out and to enable integration of Erith railway station and any improvements which may be undertaken to integrate and improve the communications across the A216 to be

undertaken. This may take a number of years and in the longer term the site would be ideal for a large mixed use development with high density product. The site has a unique setting and the existing Victoriana would create a saleable product. The UDP currently designates the Europa site as a Primary Employment Area.

	High	Medium	Low
Quarry/Europa/Atlas	1,920	1,430	1,284
Town Centre	1,418	961	784
Manor Road, Slade Green	634	556	478
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,971</b>	<b>2,947</b>	<b>2,546</b>

Table 2: The high, medium and low density scenario

Possible housing densities

- 55-80 (dph)
- 80-100 (dph)
- 100-145 (dph)
- 145+ (dph)



# Erith Tomorrow - Industrial Capacity

## Erith Tomorrow - Industrial Capacity

The proposals for re-organising the current land use structure would result in the loss of some employment land and the potential relocation of some industrial businesses. This section takes a closer look at the magnitude of potential loss of industrial land and also at the potential for increasing the density of the industrial sites to be retained for industrial uses in Erith.

The loss of industrial land to other uses is potentially justified in the context of London Plan policies on the release of industrial land. The released land could also play a key role in facilitating/triggering the regenerative process in Erith and in achieving the housing targets for the Belvedere/Erith Opportunity Area. Relevant factors to take in to account include:

- The projected structural reduction in demand for and a reduction in the vacant stock of industrial land in London as a whole; estimated at a total of 737 ha of land over the period 2001-16
- The extent to which industrial land can be released in a sustainable way; about 50ha per annum as set out in the London Plan
- Sub-regional differences in terms of demand, vacant stock and release of industrial land with East London having the highest share of industrial land and the highest suggested release of about 504 ha between 2001-16
- The allocation of London Borough of Bexley into the 'Managed Transfer' category of the Mayor's Draft SPG on Industrial Capacity, encompassing those boroughs, which have a greater supply of vacant industrial sites relative to demand and should take a more permissive approach to transfer
- Strategic guidelines identify Belvedere as a Strategic Employment Area within LB Bexley and therefore prioritise industrial land retention in this area.
- The amount of vacant industrial land identified in the Belvedere Development Framework amounting to about 70 ha (or 30% of the total)

- The opportunity to re-locate businesses to this area in an effort to consolidate industrial activities in the Borough

### Loss of industrial land

The amount of existing industrial land in Erith is currently around 50 ha. This covers industrial land identified as potential key development sites in this framework. The proposals of this framework document would lead to a loss of about 18 ha (or 35%) of industrial land as a result of re-zoning and the introduction of non-industrial uses. A total of 32.5 ha would remain in industrial use with two of the sites (E1, S1) containing an element of housing. Details are displayed in the table below.

Existing employment land (ha):	50.25
Loss of employment land (ha) :	17.74
remining employment land (ha):	32.50

### Potential for densification

Albeit industrial land would be lost, current densities suggest that the remaining industrial land (32.5 ha) bears the potential ratio of 13% for Manor Road North and the Batt Cables site (Europa 4) with 62%. This is based on the assumption of one-storey industrial buildings. Details on the footprint area, estimate of current floorspace and current plot ratios are displayed in the table above right.

In order to draw a picture of additional industrial capacity, the current densities are compared with an average plot ratio for industrial areas. The research and information on plot ratios is limited. A study undertaken by RTP/SERPLAN in 1996 attempted to estimate average plot ratios on the basis of site area data. The study obtained limited evidence on this matter but concluded on the basis of the responses it found that the weighted mean plot ratios for industrial areas was 42%. The report noted that averages should be treated carefully.

It is estimated that the development sites, which are retained for industrial uses, have an additional floorspace capacity of almost 64,000 sq.m. This figure only takes into account additional ca-

capacity and disregards the fact that some of the sites already are running at a higher than average capacity. Details for each of the sites are outlined in the table below.

	Footprint area (sq m)	No. of floors (estimate)	Current floorspace in sq m estimate	current plot ratio in % (estimate)
Europa 2	13,631	1	13,631	54
Europa 4 (Batt cables)	23,527	1	23,631	62
Manor Rd North	18,300	1	18,300	13
Manor 1	16,052	1	16,052	57
Manor 2	10,952	1	10,952	32
Manor 3	24,357	1	24,357	28
S1 Linpak	9,992	1	9,992	26
S4	6,803	1	6,830	39
TOTAL	123,641	/	123,641	/

Increasing the development density of Erith's industrial areas would result in a more efficient use of land. It represents an opportunity to gradually renew the fabric of industrial property by re-organising the existing and the addition of new stock of industrial property.

	Current Floor-space in (sq m)	Floorspace capacity (sq m)	Additional floor space capacity (sq m)
Europa 2	13,631	10,609	-3,022
Europa 4 (Batt cables)	23,527	15,879	-7,648
Manor Rd North	18,300	59,483	41,183
Manor 1	16,052	11,825	-4,227
Manor 2	10,952	14,573	3,621
Manor 3	24,357	36,809	12,452
S1 Linpak	9,992	16,163	6,171
S4	6,803	7,295	465
Total	123,641	172,636	63,891

Factors to consider in developing policy based upon plans for increasing density and diversification of industrial activity include:

- Analysis of the economics of increasing density. Increasing densities beyond a certain level is likely to trigger greater development costs (e.g. multi-storey buildings, internal lifts and ramps etc) and is only likely to be viable if industrial land values increase sufficiently. This in turn is only likely to happen if the supply of industrial land is more limited than at present.
- a thorough stock take and analysis of existing activity, specifying the development potential and appropriate phasing of future development.

It is possible some of these issues will be considered in work relating to the East London SRDF industrial land management strategy.

The densification of Erith's industrial areas would result in a more efficient use of land. It represents an opportunity to gradually renew the fabric of industrial property by re-organising the existing and the addition of new stock of industrial property.

A prerequisite for densification and diversification of industrial activity is a thorough stocktake and analysis of existing activity, specifying the development potential and appropriate phasing of future development.

### Potential job creation through densification

Based on an employment density of 34 sq.m. per workspace approximately an additional 1,900 jobs could be created if the full potential for densification was realised (64,000 sq.m.). However given the retention of wharf related activity especially in Manor Road North and an envisaged mixed-use development around the existing wharfs, the number of jobs created are expected to be below this figure.

In any case, a densification would partly offset the loss of industry-related jobs, which would occur as a result of re-zoning. In addition to this new jobs would be created with regards to those sites rezoned for retail and mixed-use development.



# The Framework Strategy

From the options summarised in the previous sections (see appendices for additional appraisals) and from the principles discussed in the urban analysis and proposals the preferred strategy for uses is presented in this diagram.

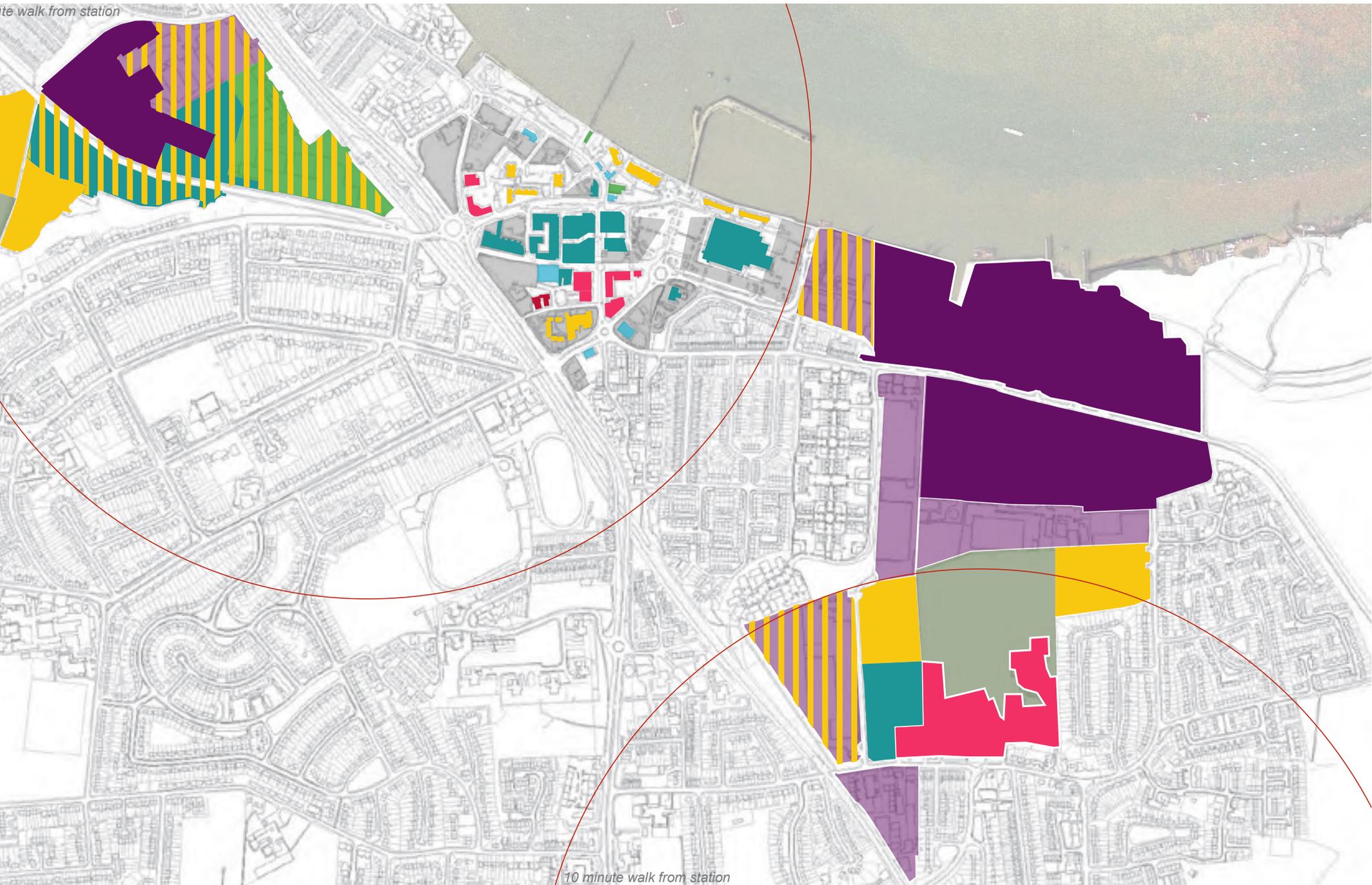
## Recommended development scenario

### Key

-  industrial
-  small scale industry
-  residential with supporting uses
-  residential mix
-  community
-  retail
-  leisure
-  usable public spaces
-  radius of 10 minute walk from station



ite walk from station



10 minute walk from station

## Town centre - six thematic zones and phasing

This framework divides Erith's future Town Centre into six thematic zones, which aim at guiding Erith Town Centre's future development. This division is based on existing uses and characteristics of Erith Town Centre, as conceptualised in the urban design analysis thematic zone structure. The zones aim to reinforce the distinctive character of areas within the Town Centre and to assign these areas a specific role within the regeneration of Erith Town Centre.

Development proposals which comply with these defined uses should be given preference. The six thematic zones are:

- 1 Erith Riverside
- 2 Erith Gateway
- 3 The Retail 'Spine'
- 4 Town Centre South
- 5 New Civic Heart
- 6 Europa

### Thematic zone 1 - Erith Riverside

In the context of future development in this zone preference should be given first and foremost to those uses which are related to and encourage the use of the river. These are: leisure and recreational uses, such as boating, sailing, yachting, but also cafes, restaurants, bars/pubs and entertainment related uses. These encouraged uses should be in balance with the natural environment and not at its cost/destruction.

Discrete projects brought forward as part of this framework are: a lido and pontoon at Erith Park, Riverside Gardens, as well as an extension/re-organisation of the Thames Riverside Walk. An additional aspiration project is amenity and environmental enhancements to Erith Riverside Gardens. (The potential for a lido will need careful further consideration as the tidal mudflats are particularly environmentally sensitive).

### Thematic zone 2 - Erith Gateway

The Erith Gateway Zone in the West of Erith Town Centre is of key significance in two respects:

- It represents the entry point to Erith Town Centre
- It plays a key role in knitting together Erith Town Centre and the major development opportunity sites west of the A2016 (Europa Trading Estate, Atlas, Erith Quarry)

This zone also encompasses Erith Station and the roundabout, which are key projects brought forward in this framework. Detailed studies and development solutions for Erith station and the roundabout are found later in the document.

To enhance the zone's character as a gateway to Erith, we believe a high quality mix of public and residential uses to be appropriate. A hotel may also be suitable in medium and long-term once Erith has become more attractive to investors and demand for such a facility is on the rise.

### Thematic zone 3 - The Retail Spine

A distinctive feature of retail in Erith Town Centre is its current concentration between Bexley Road and Pier Road forming a spine-like form stretching from West to East towards Manor Road Industrial Estate.

After two decades of decline the retail offer in Erith is now beginning to change. The building of Morrisons supermarket on the Deep Wharf site, which included the refurbishment of Erith Pier, has led to a significant increase in the number of visitors to Erith. With the Erith Riverside scheme, which opened in Spring 2005, Erith Town Centre is well on the way towards increasing its attractiveness in terms of shopping.

The future development of Erith Town Centre should reinforce the existing linear spine-like form. The aim is to maximise the spine's capacity as a retail loop as well as residential uses and densify the existing urban structure through a series of high density buildings. A key project brought forward in this context is the densification of the Morrisons supermarket site, the reorganisation of car parking and public space of Erith Town Centre.

The preferred uses for this zone are retail, commercial (offices) and residential uses.

### Thematic zone 4 - Town Centre South

The main areas of future expansion are the Europa Trading Estate (discussed below) and Town Centre South. To the east, the Manor Road Industrial Area restricts an expansion of Erith Town Centre in the short and medium-term, though there may be longer-term opportunities to further expand and integrate the Town Centre to the east.

The Expansion Zone is located south of the Retail Spine. Currently it consists of a series of sites with a loose mix of relatively low-density uses including housing, Morrisons petrol station, McDonald's, KFC and the former Erith Market site, which is earmarked for a surface car park. Considering these types of uses this zone currently comprises mostly of town centre-related and supportive activities. Due to their current low-density, the sites in the Expansion Zone have the potential to accommodate future growth of Erith Town Centre.

In the short to medium term, future growth of Erith Town Centre should be directed towards this zone.

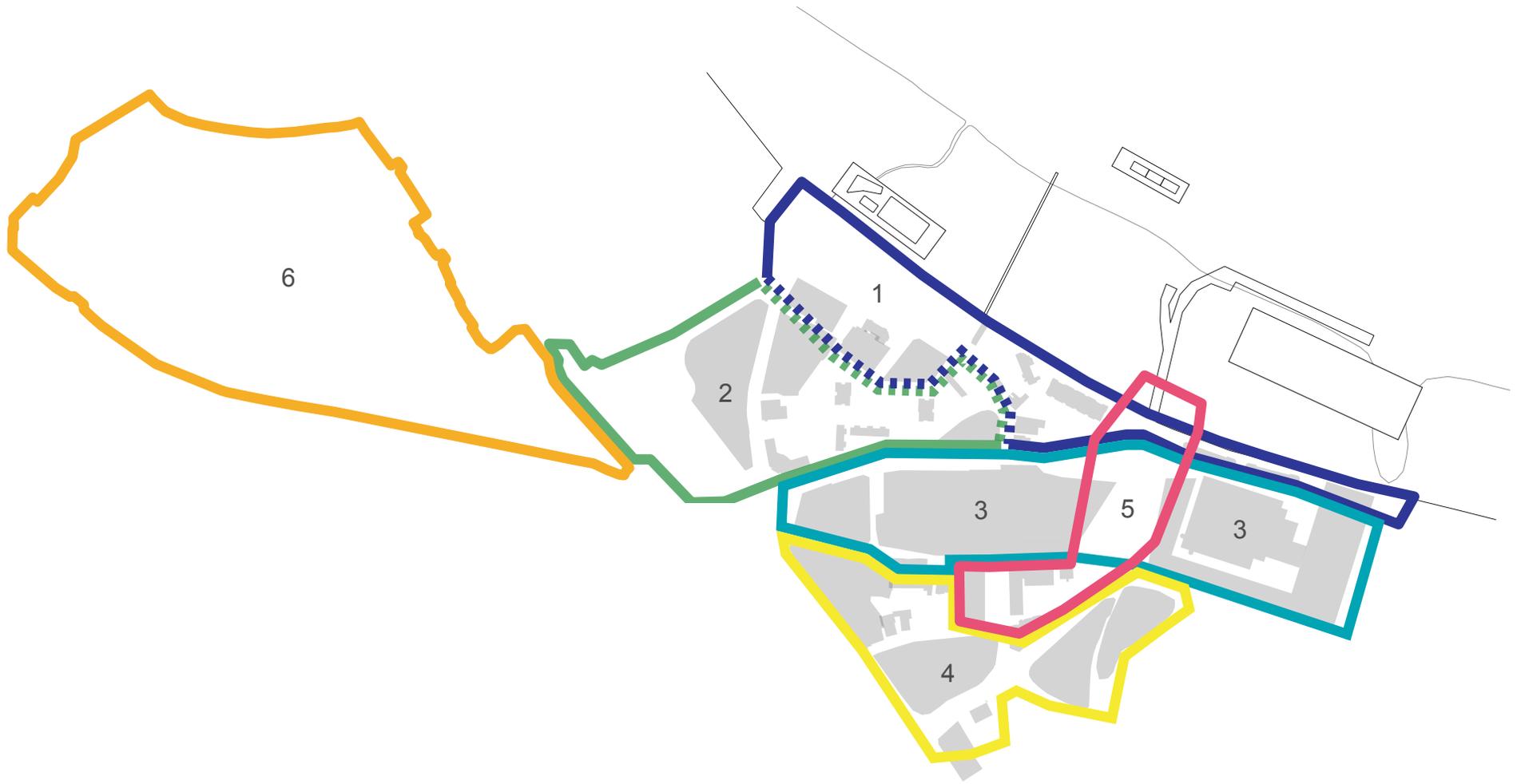
The preferred uses for this zone are: retail, commercial (offices), leisure/amenity and residential uses.

### Thematic zone 5 - The New Civic Heart

Identified in the urban design analysis is Erith's lack of a civic heart. Morrisons supermarket, whilst beneficial in triggering a regeneration process in Erith, occupies a prime location within the Town Centre - a location, which naturally forms the centre of Erith Town Centre right in front of the Pier.

This framework designates the redevelopment of Morrison's car park as the New Civic Heart of Erith Town Centre. Just south of Morrison's car park a new health care centre and the plans for an integrated community facility, including Erith Library, reinforce this zone as Erith's New Civic Heart.

In this zone community, leisure and amenity uses, which promote the use of new public open space (such as cafes, restaurants, bars and pubs), should be encouraged.



*Proposed town centre six thematic zones*

# Town centre - six thematic zones and phasing

## Thematic zone 6 Europa

Area identified for future growth of the town centre. It is in close proximity to the station and could develop a mix of uses which combine commercial, retail and residential uses towards the station with integration of compatible small scale industries graded to residential to the west.

## Town Centre Expansion -Phasing

The suggested phasing is listed chronologically by zones.

### PHASE 1

#### Erith Riverside

Is also currently seeing improvements to Erith High Street and Bexley Road. Riverside Gardens is a key community site and is part of the Mayor's 100 Public Spaces programme.

#### Erith Gateway

An essential link for the fluid expansion of the town centre. Pedestrian connections to be improved at the roundabout and the station.

#### Erith Town Centre

The new shopping centre is completed, the next phase should consolidate the retail spine and the new civic heart. A new public open space replaces the existing car park at Morrisons.

### PHASE 2

#### Town centre south

Growth of the town centre is restricted to the north and east.

Considerably higher densities can be achieved particularly on the Job Centre and Salvation Army sites. Recent development fronting onto James Watt Way roundabout shows the scale of building appropriate to this area.

### PHASE 3 - Europa

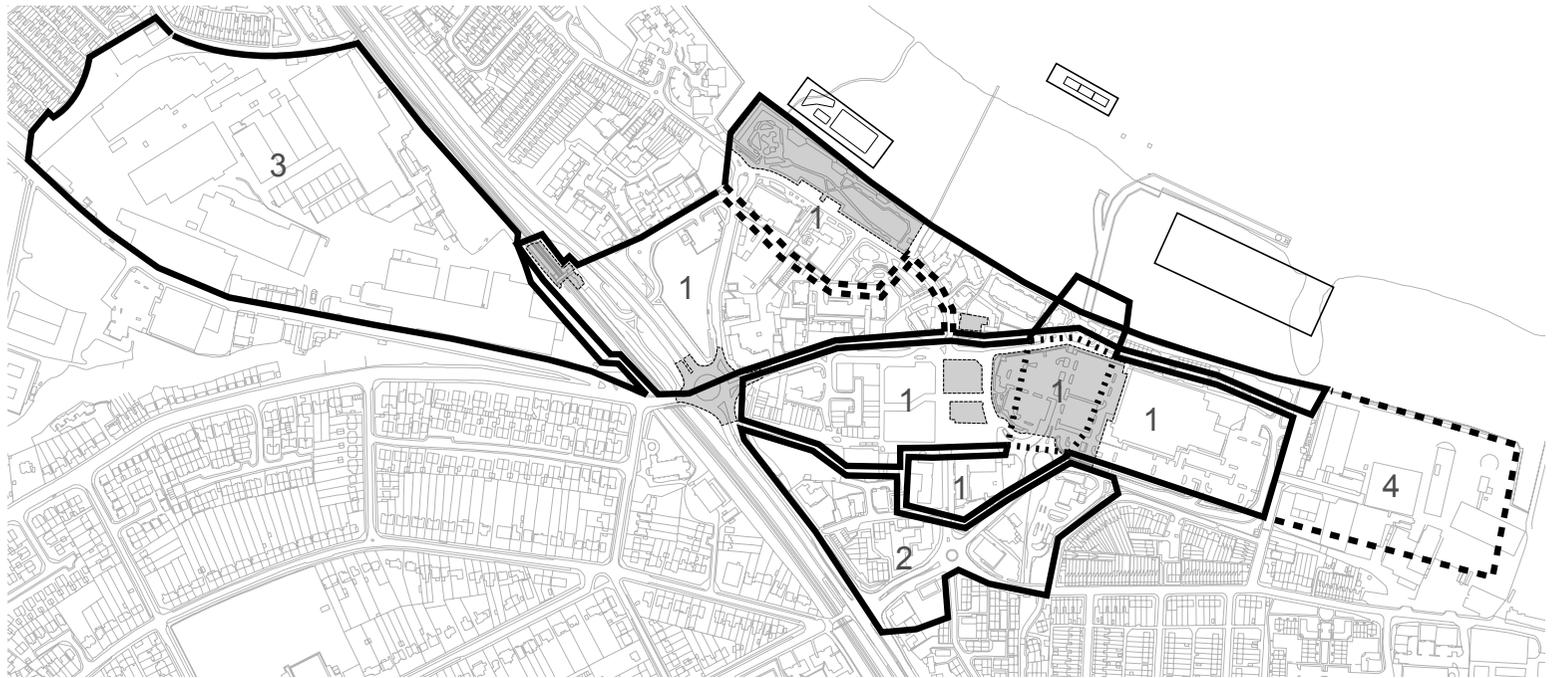
to provide new commercial, residential, retail and small scale industries for the expanding centre of Erith. Dependant on improved infrastructure links across A2016 and access to the station.

### PHASE 4 - Manor Road Industrial area

Erith town centre towards the East, incorporating development around safeguarded wharves. Development towards the east should only take place once the town centre including Europa have reached optimum capacity. If extension to the east happens too early the town centre may become stretched and without clear focus.

### Proposed figure-ground

The figure ground plan opposite shows a possible scenario for the growth of the town centre through phases 1-3. It compares existing buildings (black) with a proposal for new building footprints (red) within sites identified for potential redevelopment within the existing town centre. The layout for Europa shows its potential for extension of the town centre as a mixed development towards the east graded westwards to residential courtyard blocks and terraces which knit into existing street patterns to the west. The footprint of courtyard blocks is based upon the exemplar of the 'Iroko' block at Coin Street, London described on the following pages. The 'Iroko' block has been chosen as an example of a successful recent development which carries both density and spatial arrangement which may be appropriate to Erith.



*Proposed town centre phasing*



*Proposed town centre figure-ground plan - existing and new buildings phases 1, 2 & 3 with possible development of Europa site.*

## Precedents

These images show inspiration and precedent for certain proposals within the framework.

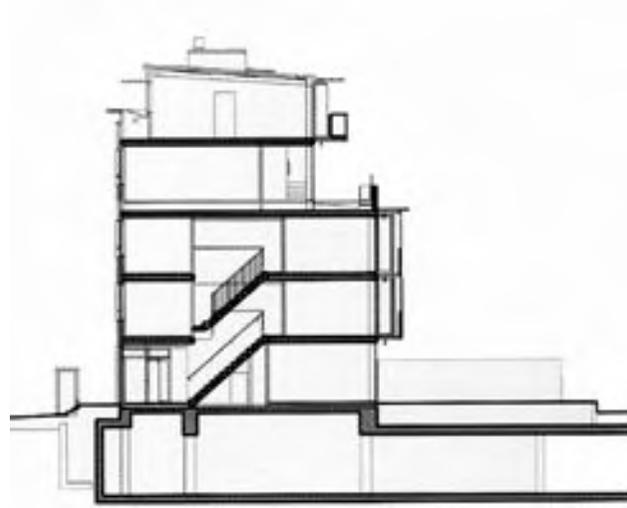
The Iroko courtyard blocks at Coin Street London (this page), by Haworth Tompkins Architects are a good example of high density development which includes a mix of residential types, private and shared open space. This block type has been adopted within this framework as a unit of relative high density to demonstrate what can be achieved within the Europa site. The perimeter block arrangement is appropriate because it provides a large amount of open space to flow between blocks and creates well-defined streets to the exterior which can incorporate a wide range of possible uses at ground floor level

An example of captured water in Berlin is shown on the opposite page.

Other examples (far right) show contemporary buildings with varied profiles integral with open spaces which have town square and landscape qualities.

Each of these types have been chosen for their potential to knit into existing and proposed urban fabric and also for the character and quality of public realm which they create.

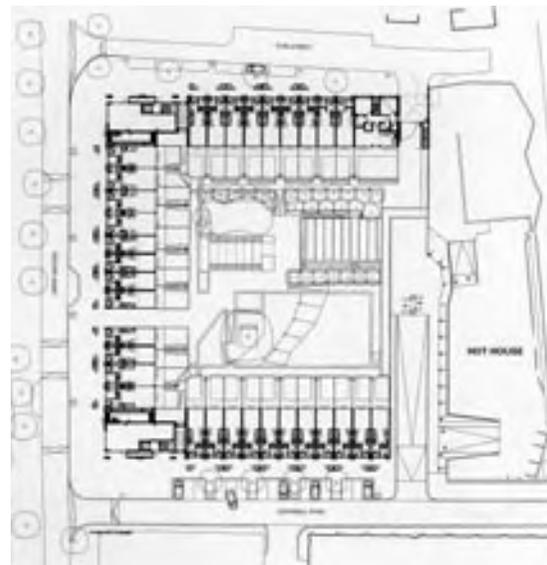
It is not the case that these examples are exclusive to city centres. Quality of this kind can be achieved within the context of Erith. Excellence of design is no less achievable within tighter financial constraints than elsewhere and should be a pre-requisite for development. It is only by 'raising the bar' that real improvements in the quality of the built environment can happen.



*'Iroko' courtyard block, Coin Street, London.*

*Above: Section showing maisonettes on ground and first with private gardens, maisonettes with balconies on the second and third floors, low cost essential worker flats on top floor.*

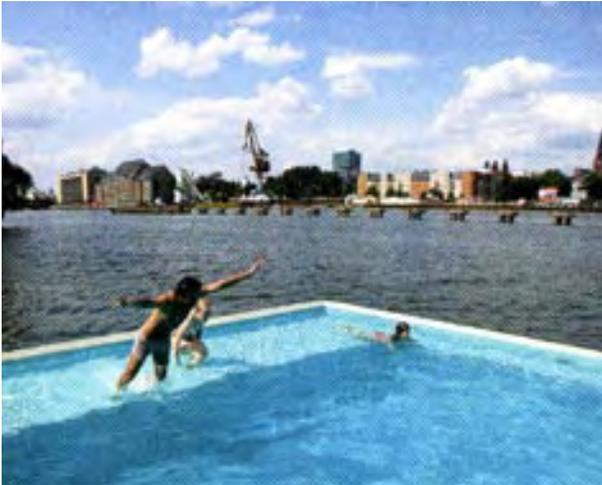
*Below: Plan. The development provides 115 dwellings per hectare*



*Coin Street London: View into the shared courtyard garden with private gardens to the perimeter. The open space has been well designed to incorporate a range of conditions which integrate the needs of a diverse community - private gardens, semi-public and public space, communal play spaces, gardens and thoroughfares*



*Coin Street London*



*Riverside Lido Berlin: Captured water enables water recreation within the river*



*Courtyard block housing precedent Groningen NL.*



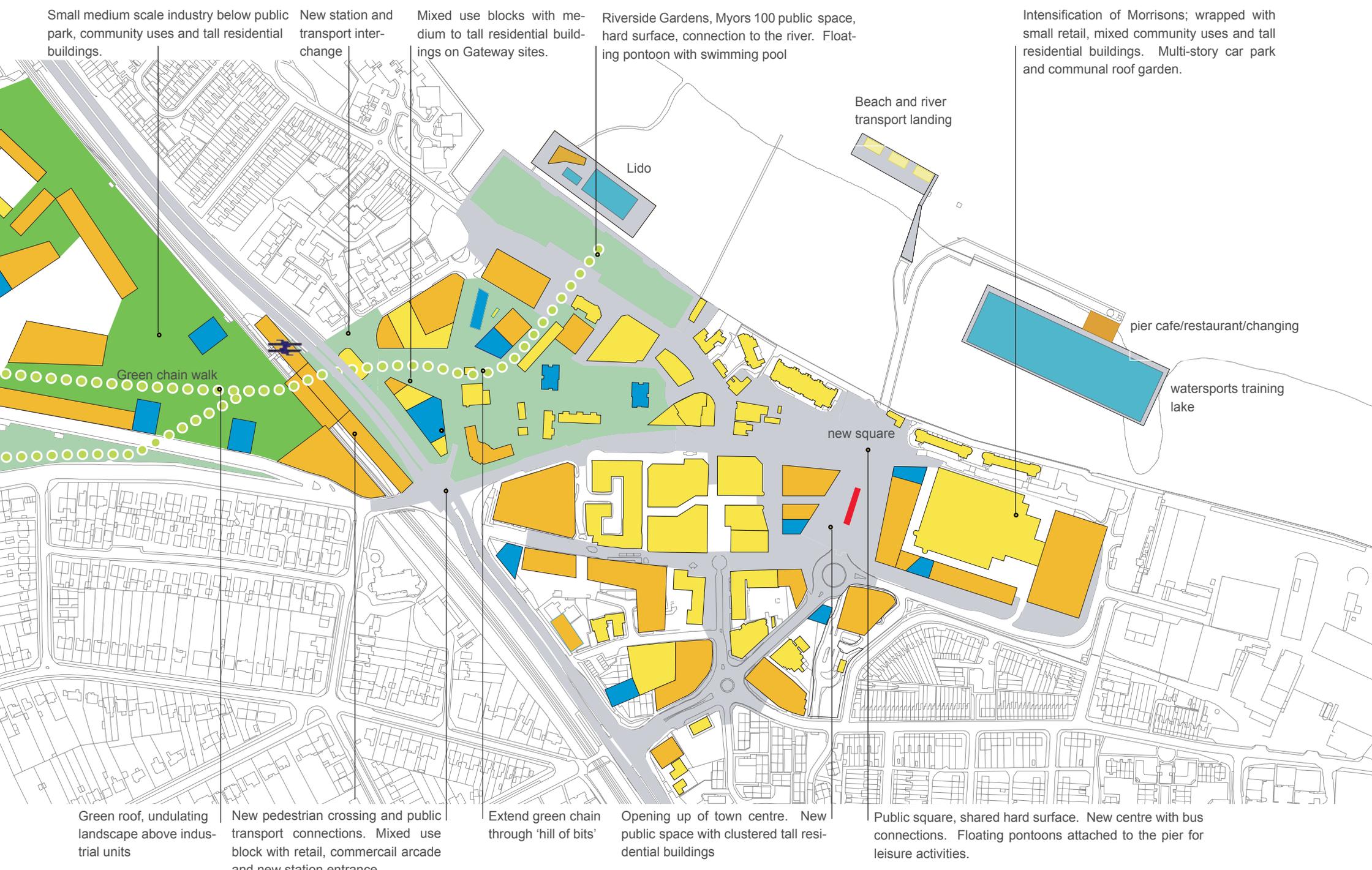
*Development provides 73 dwellings over 1 ha*

# Town Centre - Summary of Key Interventions

This plan brings together the proposals for the town centre and Europa to show the extended town centre of Erith tomorrow. The junction of A2016 and Bexley Road has been transformed into a key public space within the town centre with new tall buildings defining its edges and new crossings at road level to give better access to the station and to Europa. With new infrastructure improvements this junction can become the key link between the town centre and Europa providing the opportunity for Erith to grow westwards in the future.

-  1 storey terraced housing
-  3 storey blocks
-  4-5 storey blocks
-  12+ storey blocks
-  Public green space
-  Green roof park part of 'Green Chain'
-  Hard surface, road and public space
-  Captured water, Lido, training water
-  Bus station
-  New route of 'Green Chain Walk'





Small medium scale industry below public park, community uses and tall residential buildings.

New station and transport interchange

Mixed use blocks with medium to tall residential buildings on Gateway sites.

Riverside Gardens, Myers 100 public space, hard surface, connection to the river. Floating pontoon with swimming pool

Intensification of Morrisons; wrapped with small retail, mixed community uses and tall residential buildings. Multi-story car park and communal roof garden.

Beach and river transport landing

Lido

pier cafe/restaurant/changing

watersports training lake

Green chain walk

new square

Green roof, undulating landscape above industrial units

New pedestrian crossing and public transport connections. Mixed use block with retail, commercial arcade and new station entrance

Extend green chain through 'hill of bits'

Opening up of town centre. New public space with clustered tall residential buildings

Public square, shared hard surface. New centre with bus connections. Floating pontoons attached to the pier for leisure activities.

## Summary of Key Interventions

The 3D model of the key interventions in Erith town centre combined with a vision for the development of Europa.





*3D block model vision for the extended town centre*

# Erith Town Centre - Public Realm Strategy

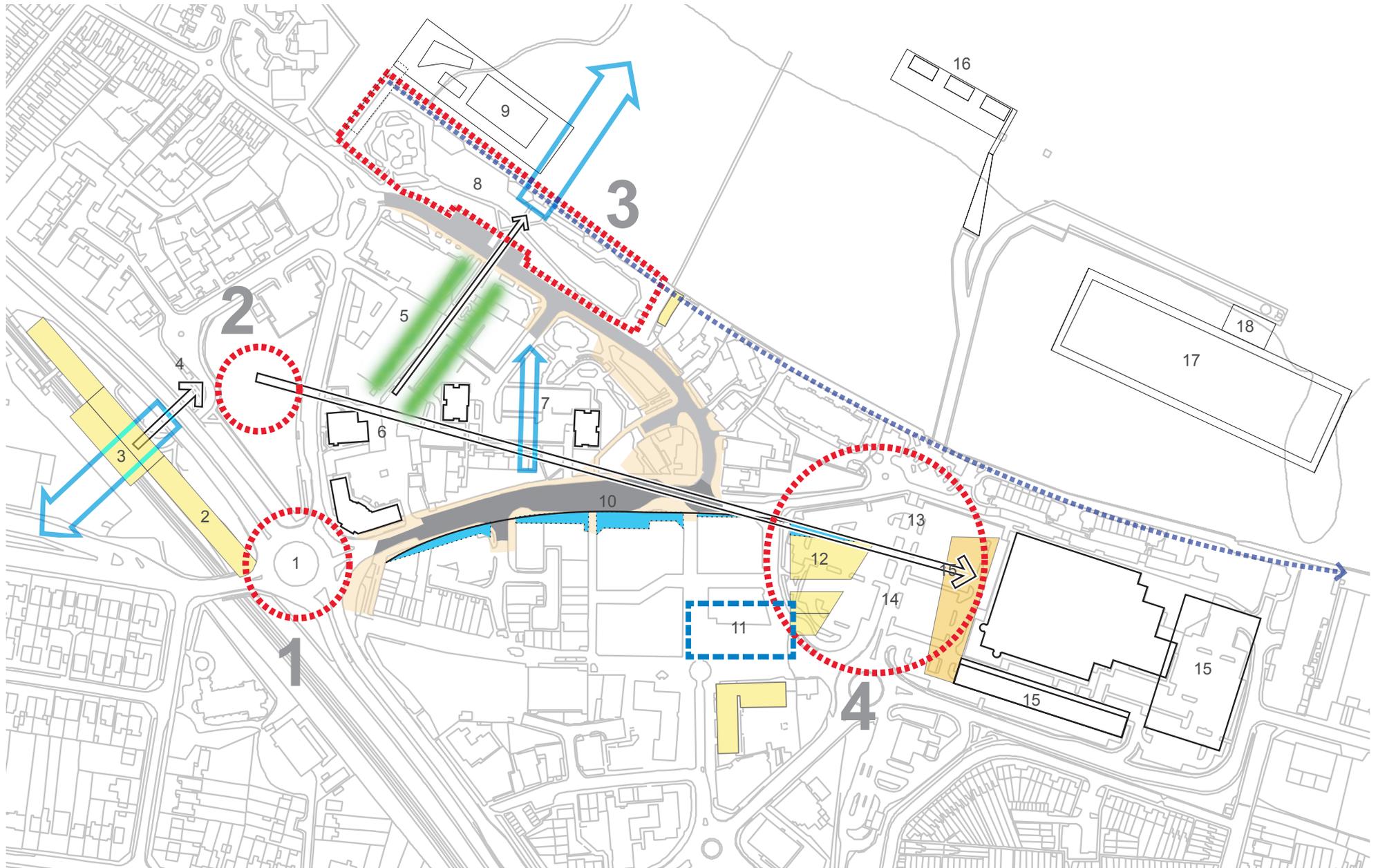
Improvements to the public realm are currently underway within the town centre. These include improvements to Bexley Road and The High Street incorporating new materials, kerb alignments and bus lay-bye.

## Proposals

- 1 A2016 Roundabout: possible change from traffic junction to gateway square with improved environment, pedestrian access, road level crossings. Develop corner sites (Walnut Tree Walk, Precinct phase 2, ) with landmark buildings to enclose and define the space on its edges.
- 2 New station: Bring the station closer to the town centre. Extend/relocate station as part of mixed use building towards the roundabout to increase presence.
- 3 Station underpass: Improve underpass access between Walnut Tree Walk and the station.
- 4 New station public space: create point of arrival/drop-off between walnut Tree walk and the station. Access across the Walnut Tree Walk Depot site will provide a direct connection between the station and the town centre
- 5 River connection: a new landscape connection between the library and Riverside Gardens. Reinforce existing avenue of trees.
- 6 The Library: improve access and quality of open areas around the Library to provide views and direct route across the 'hill of bits' to the town centre. Gardens to the rear of the Library and Town Hall could become a new public space.
- 7 Public access from Bexley Road to Riverside Gardens: Possible public access through 'Hill Of Bits' to create direct connection from the shopping centre to the river edge. This may not be possible due to land ownership and security issues.
- 8 Riverside gardens: improve use and design of Riverside Gardens. Improve visibility and connection to the river. Designated as one of Mayor's 100 Public Spaces.

- 9 Lido: Possible floating Lido to provide water recreation on river edge and improve connection to the river. This will be contentious with Environment Agency who are keen to protect the mudflats.
- 10 Bexley Road South side: Realignment of shopping centre facade to create more open frontages along Bexley Road, and future streetscape improvements - possible kiosk(s)
- 11 Pier Road Market Square: A new civic square to the north of the new library. Possible market site.
- 12 Shopping Centre extension: New retail with mixed use buildings increase density within retail spine, extend shopping centre block eastwards towards Morrisons, reduce size of Morrisons car-park to create town square of appropriate scale.
- 13,14 New Town Square: New square in place of Morrisons car park to connect retail spine/Bexley Road to the river and the pier. A key public space at the eastern end of Bexley Road. Riverside square (13) connects to the pier and is for pedestrians only. Morrisons Square (14) is vehicular with central bus stand and kiosks. Connects to market square (11). These can only happen if Morrisons develop supermarket site and relocate carparking from this area (see later).
- 15 Development of Morrisons site: Extension to supermarket with mixed retail/residential blocks incorporating multi storey car park to the east to allow relocation of cars from area to the west (13, 14).
- 16 Beach Pontoon: Floating pontoon as a possible landing for river bus/ river taxis/ferry to Rainham Marshes. Also with sand for sunbathing, beach sports.
- 17 Watersports training: 'captured water' creates safe environment for water sports classes and training.
- 18 Cafe/restaurant and changing facilities

-  Area of proposed pedestrian improvements
-  Tarmac shared surface (Erith High Street)
-  Tarmac shared surface (Bexley Road)
-  New key public spaces
-  Existing buildings
-  Proposed buildings
-  Tree avenue
-  New improved facades
-  Green Chain Walk
-  New pedestrian routes



Public realm strategy

# Erith Town Centre - Morrisons

Morrisons supermarket is a key destination within Erith and has been a key factor in the revitalization of the town. Morrisons investment in the refurbishment of the pier has given Erith a vital connection back to the river and has kick-started the use of the river as a place for recreation and leisure.

The diagrams on these and next the next pages propose how Morrisons can develop, benefit and contribute to the growth of Erith.

## Issues:

- To connect and integrate Morrisons into the retail spine.
- Create a new town square for Erith: transform the open space created by Morrisons from car parking to one available and accessible by the public as a new centre for Erith and key connection to the river.
- Increase density on the Morrisons site which is currently of low density. It has the character of an 'out-of-town' supermarket in town.
- Propose a scenario which is of mutual benefit to Morrisons and Erith as a whole.

## Proposal:

Relocate car parking within a multi-story carpark to the east of the store. By stacking car parking the area to the west can become a new public square.

A wrapping of new development around the supermarket will allow Morrisons to expand at street level with office and residential accommodation above to take advantage of a prime site close to the river.

Expansion to the west would give Morrisons prime frontage onto the main square.

Comments received from consultation show that there is inadequate bus provision to Morrisons. The new square would be the

main public transport destination.

Sections show tall residential buildings above Morrisons with views to the river. They show a platform constructed over the supermarket to provide communal outdoor space for residences overlooking the river.

## Precedent

Safeway in Chalk Farm is developing in this way.

## Phasing

The diagrams below show possible phasing of the development to allow car parking to be decanted whilst the store remains in operation at full capacity.

### Phase 1

Construct new multi storey car park to the east of the store as part of a mixed development with residences above. Car parks to the south and east decanted into the new multi-storey car park. Retain car parking to the west.

### Phase 2

Construct wrapping to the south and west. Car parking at ground level. Buildings designed on piloti to allow for retail infill later. Offices and residences above.

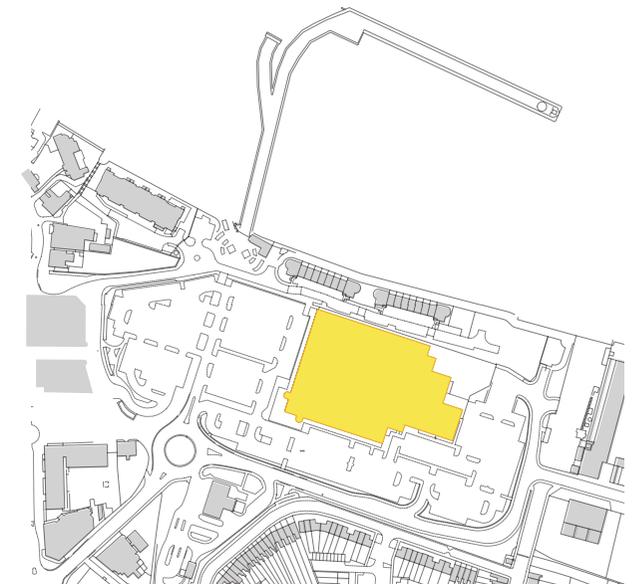
### Phase 3

Development completed, new town square in place, all car parking decanted to new multi-storey car park.

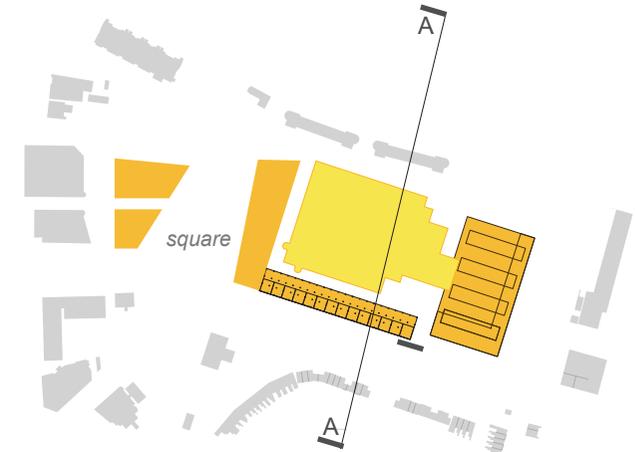
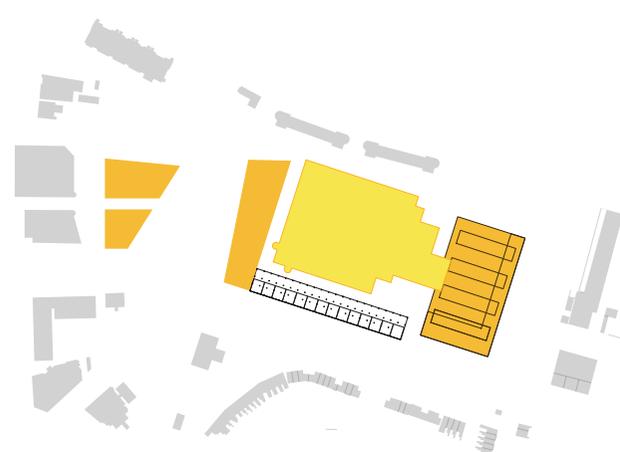
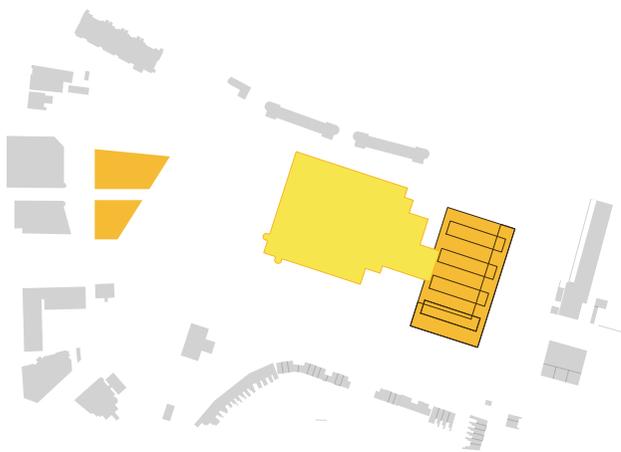
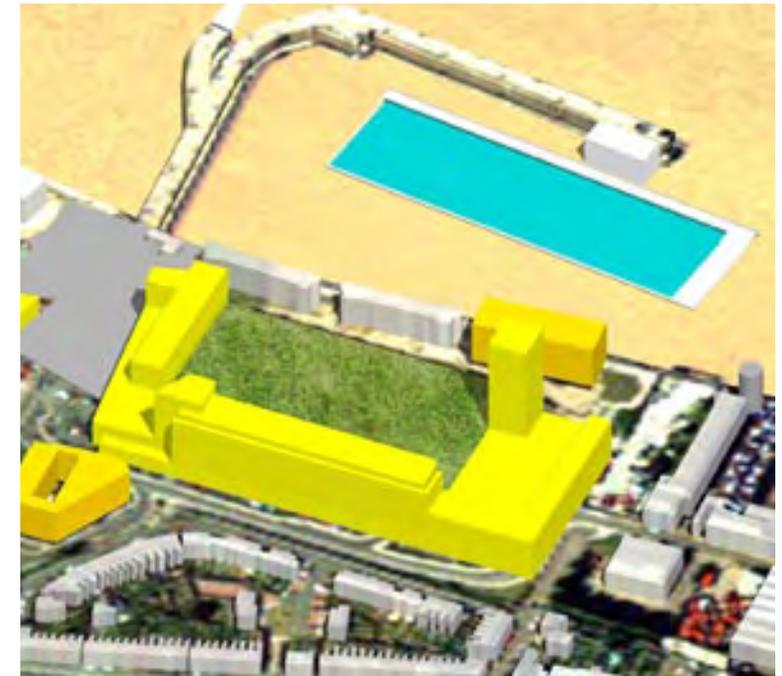
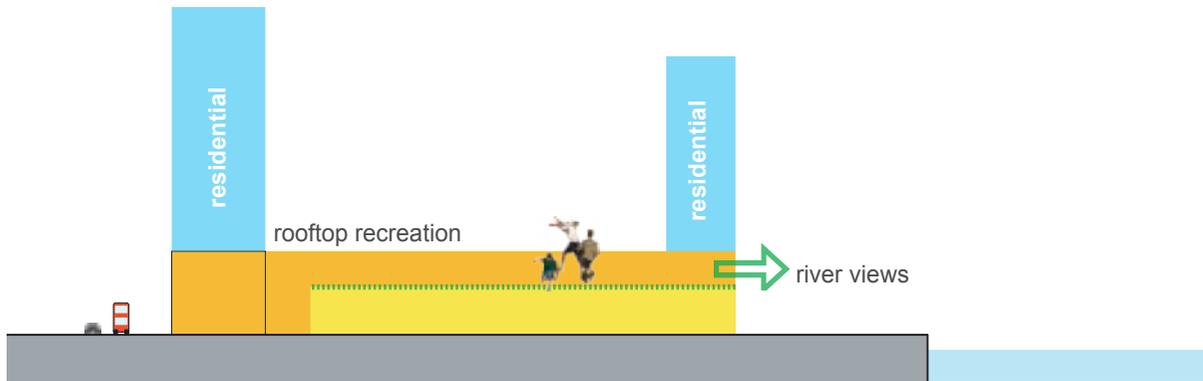
## Morrisons View.

These proposals were presented to the Morrison's architect who was 'receptive' to the proposal and enthusiastic for Morrisons to be associated with the development of Erith's future. Morrisons have recently been involved in joint venture developments though not residential.

However trading takes absolute precedence over any potential development opportunities. The focus is currently on rebranding Safeway.



Existing



## Vision

These images show the importance of a key connection between a new town square adjacent to Morrisons and the river. It is the point within the town centre where a large public space can both serve the town and give a direct visual and physical connection to the river. The new square would be continuous with the pier with many other possible uses - seasonal market stalls, end of pier cafe/restaurant and entertainments.

### Key themes and issues:

- The presence of a new town square adjacent to the river will reconnect Erith to the river and provide a new public space as a focus for the town.
- Dense development of Morrisons will help to integrate Morrisons into the 'retail spine' and give the range of town centre uses necessary for the success of the town square.
- There is potential for a cluster of tall buildings around the new public space. Taller buildings set back rather than along the river edge take advantage of views without creating a barrier between the town and the river.
- Elevated roof gardens make views to the river more available.
- A new riverside public space is proposed as a key destination at the eastern end of Bexley Road.
- Possible extension to the Playhouse with rehearsal spaces and roof terrace overlooking the river. With future growth of Erith the already significant arts presence will have the opportunity to develop.

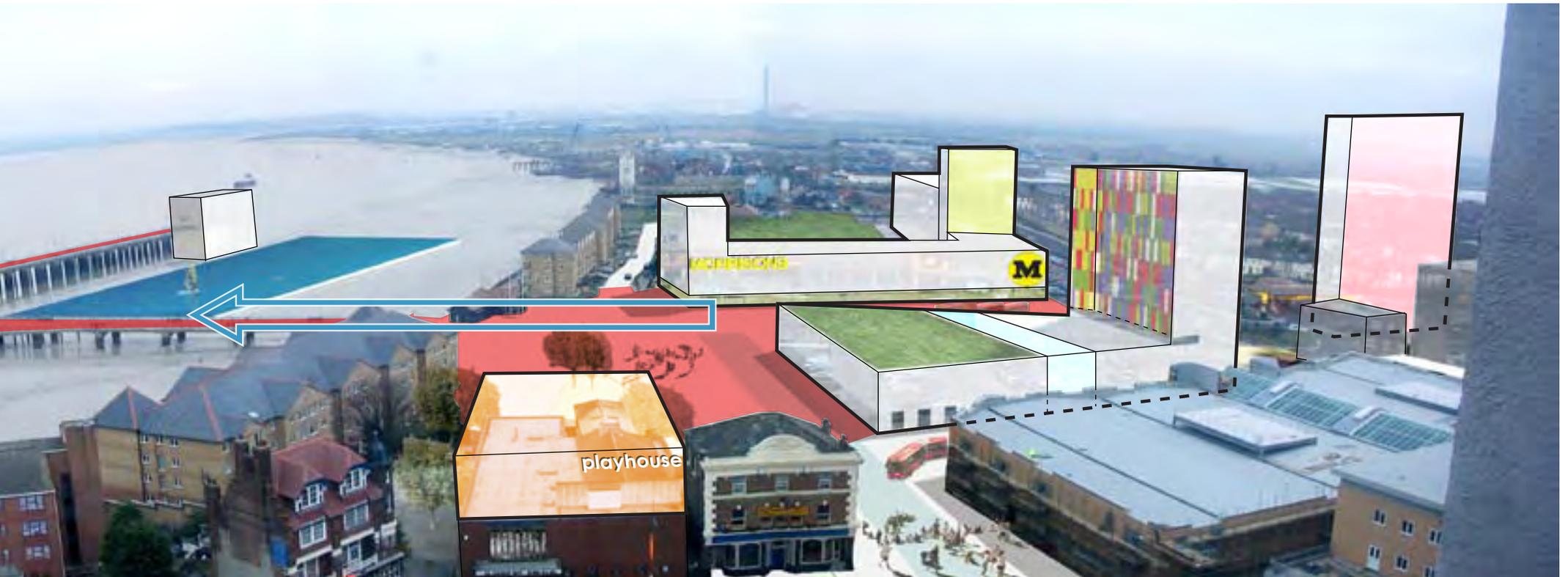


*Vision for the new riverside square which creates a key connection between the town centre and the river. Morrisons is enveloped by new development surrounded by a cluster of taller residential buildings. Taller buildings are set back from the river to take advantage of views whilst retaining the river frontage for public access.*



*Morrisons car park has the potential to be a major public space for Erith - a key destination and the centre of the town. This image (left) shows Morrisons integrated into a more dense urban fabric with taller mixed use blocks giving density and vitality of life to the space. It also shows how new public life can be created within the square from everyday access to the river, shops, permanent and seasonal entertainments.*

*The potential for views from taller buildings with rooftop gardens is shown by the vision for Erith Playhouse which could be extended to have a prominent entrance from the new square and a roof terrace overlooking the river*



# Erith Town Centre - New Station and Square

## Aims

- Create more direct access between the station and the town centre.
- Connect the station to Europa.
- Extend the station towards the A2016 roundabout.
- Create better pedestrian and vehicular access to the station. Provide for public transport connections and drop-off.

## Proposal

Connections across the A2016 and railway are important to the future growth of Erith, to connect the station to the town centre and Europa. Despite being relatively close to the town centre (Morrisons is within a 10 minute walk from the station) there is an impression that it is remote and difficult to get to. It is not visible from the town centre.

Widening of the existing Stonewood Road underpass will allow a more direct connection between the station and the town centre. It will also allow for a new public space on the north side of the station with space for a bus stop, turn-around and drop-off around a retail pavilion. A narrower underpass connection can be made beneath the railway tracks to provide car and pedestrian access into Europa.

A new station building and extended platforms are proposed. The station is shown integrated within a mixed use building which extends to the A2016 roundabout. The station could have an entrance directly from the new public space of the A2016/Bexley Road junction which will increase its visual and physical presence within the town centre.

There is a connection between Europa and the station at an upper level. The eastern end of Europa is proposed as a green open space formed on the roof of light industrial accommodation below. While maintaining the density of Europa and industrial uses it extends the green landscape of the Quarry and Atlas to the station and the town centre. The green chain walk continues across this open space.

- 1 Improved public transport links at lower station level. Retail pavilion at the centre of traffic turn around and drop off.
- 2 Pedestrian and vehicular underpass into Europa provides better access to Europa. Possible car park beneath rooftop park at eastern end of Europa.
- 3 Station building extended to be closer to the A2016 roundabout and Bexley Road, with easier pedestrian access to the town centre.
- 4 Undulating green public open space above light industry below. Park between residential buildings allows green chain to connect to the town centre.
- 5 Pedestrian bridge linking Europa to the train station via park (4).
- 6 New public transport links.

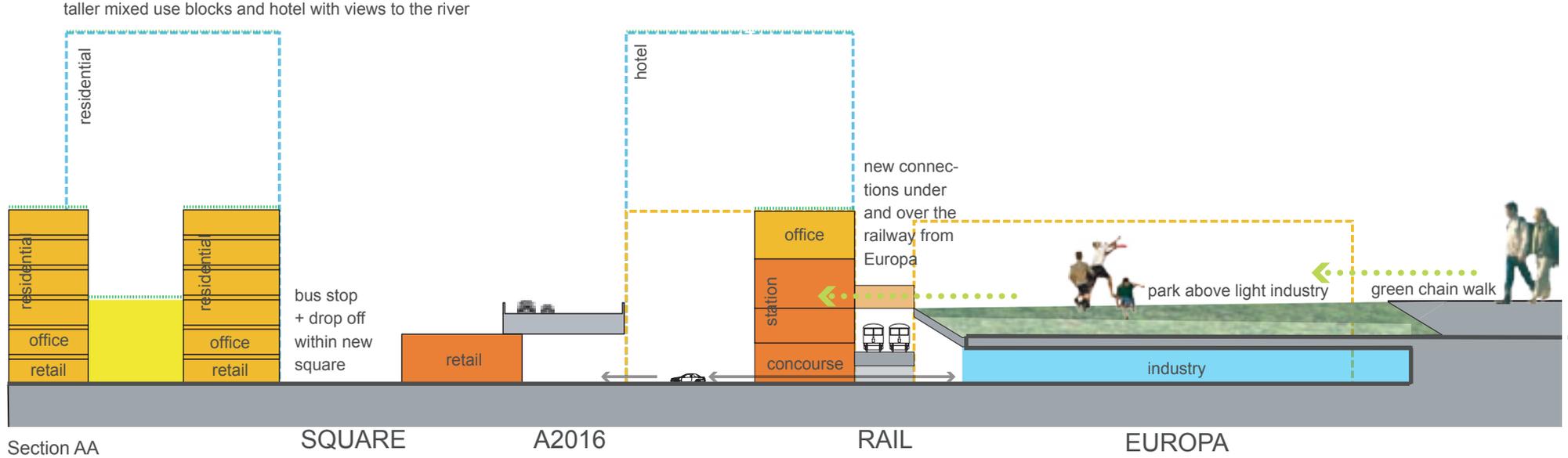
-  1 storey terraced housing
-  3 storey blocks
-  4-6 storey blocks
-  12+ storey blocks
-  Public green space
-  Green roof park part of 'Green Chain'
-  Hard surface, road and public space
-  Bus station
-  New route of 'Green Chain Walk'



Extended station, new square and link to Europa



3D model of the station area showing new public spaces and mixed use extension with arcaded entrance from the A2016 / Bexley Road roundabout. The station is more prominent within the town centre and the entrance is closer to the retail developments of the town centre.



## Erith Action Plan

This Action Plan identifies key projects (13 in total), ranging across a number of different areas of possible intervention, and sets out delivery actions and agencies, along with identifying issues affecting project viability, timescale for delivery and, for the initial list of projects, broad order of cost.

The Action Plan serves as a tool for bringing together a 'Next Steps' summary in terms of specific interventions by both public and private sector bodies to achieve real change in Erith. This Action Plan is, necessarily, simplified – and further reviews/studies are necessary to move towards implementation of such projects.

However, as part of a Framework for change, it is necessary to identify individual, tangible projects which can help support and act as a catalyst for change – in pursuit of the broad regenerative objectives set out.

It should be noted that while none of the above identified projects directly meets Objective 4 – Reinforcing Erith's advantages as an employment location and to retain, diversify and/or upgrade existing industrial areas – many of these projects will indirectly assist with reinforcing the benefits of Erith as an employment location – particularly the improvement of the Bexley Road/Queens Road roundabout. It should also be noted that the Brief for this study is based on 'physical' change – and it should be recognised that grants or economic development initiatives through the Council, and its Partners', programmes must be run in parallel with proposals for physical change. The other aspect which will directly assist with Objective 4. is based around Planning Policy which should seek to retain, diversify and upgrade industrial areas, as identified.

## Key Projects

Project	Description	Framework Objective(s) Met (see Strategy section)	Delivery Actions	Delivery Agents / Partners	Project Viability	S, M, L Term	Cost*	Phasing**
<b>1. New Public Space</b>	New civic space to create a new heart to Erith – linking Town Centre to Morrisons and the River/Pier	1. Revitalised Town Centre 2. Relationship to the River	Morrisons proposals to come forward GLA/LBB to promote Comprehensive scheme design Funding	Morrisons/GLA/LBB	Dependent on willingness of Morrisons to relocate car park and funding	Medium – Long term as part of above	£7.25 – 7.75m	Stage 2
<b>2.1 Training Lake</b> <b>2.2 Lido</b> <b>2.3 Pontoon &amp; Link to Pier</b>	In river structures creating a facility for safe water sports (canoeing/windsurfing?), swimming with re-creation of beach and boat docking facility	2. Relationship to the river 5. Leisure and Recreation	Scheme Design  Acceptability to relevant agencies (EA, PLA etc)	Private Leisure Company/River Boat Operator with Public Sector Partners  EA/PLA	Demand, Technical, Operational, Funding assessments needed. Lido may not be acceptable on environmental policy grounds.	Medium – Long Term	1.1 £36 - 39m 1.2 £10 – 12m 1.3 £5 – 6.5m	Stage 2
<b>3. Link between Europa site and Erith station approach</b>	Vehicular and pedestrian link to enhance Europa site as key development opportunity (continue station approach under railway)	6. Improved accessibility, movement & linkage	Technical Exercise Design (taking account of potential of Europa & existing elevated A2016 and bridge) Funding	LBB , Highways Agency (responsible for A2016) , Landowner, Europa, Railway Authorities (who?)	Technical/Design issues related to railway, A2016 and existing bridge  Dependent on proposals for Europa site coming forward	Medium Term	£25 – 27m  (includes station)	Stage 2
<b>4. Bexley Rd/ Queens Rd Roundabout</b>	Improve traffic flow/capacity (pre and post TGB Opening) and improve public realm. Further work could look at the feasibility and impact of a grade separated junction.	6. Improved accessibility, movement & linkage	Technical exercise Design Funding	LBB  TfL/HA (?)	Remove roundabout and signalise junction	Medium Term	£2 – 2.25m  (cost of a grade separated junction would need further detailed study)	Stage 1

Note:

Key projects have been selected in light of the overall recommended strategy. They are anticipated to make the most significant contribution to the regeneration of Erith. It is possible that on further detailed review some of the projects listed under 'other projects' (see following pages) may be given greater priority.

# Costs

## \*Notes re. Costs

Costs are estimates based on preliminary outline project assumptions, based on concept rather than detailed schemes. Cost breakdowns and assumptions are separately identified in a Technical Note with LB Bexley.

## \*\*Note re. Phasing

In addition to the town centre and residential phasing set out in the Erith Tomorrow, we would recommend the following overall phasing in 3 distinct stages. Stage 1 is less than 5 years; Stage 2 is between 5 and 10 years; and Stage 3 is 10 to 15 years.

Notes

### Generally

- a) All estimated costs are given based on current day prices for works procured through traditional competitive tendering and exclusive of any allowances for inflation
- b) VAT has been excluded from the estimated costs
- c) No allowances have been included for compulsory purchase of any land to facilitate creation of the projects
- d) No allowance has been made for de-contamination of land to any of the projects - the extent of decontamination can only be determined by detail ground surveys
- e) It is assumed that all utility services associated with the projects have sufficient capacity for the increased demand as a result of any of the proposed projects. Any upgrading of main infrastructure for drainage or electrical distribution is excluded from the estimates
- f) Cost of re-routing main infrastructure services to facilitate these projects has been excluded from all costs - routing and size of services would need to be verified through searches and site surveys
- g) All scopes of works and estimates would be subject to veri-

fication by detailed site surveys

- h) The estimates are based on the phasing identified by Meadowcroft Griffin. Should alternative phasing be agreed then the estimate would need to be updated to reflect this.

### Project 1 - Ph1

- a) Cost exclude the construction of a new multi-storey car park to the rear of Morrisons - it is assumed that this would be part of private development project by Morrisons themselves
- b) No costs have been included for for the development of building on the sites created, adjacent to the new public space. However, costs have been included for site clearance and preparation for private development
- c) Assume that there are no structures on the site of the existing car park that require demolition

### Project 2 -1

- a) Nothing assumed, costs fully justified.

### Project 2 -2

- a) Nothing assumed, costs fully justified.

### Project 2 -2

- a) Nothing assumed, costs fully justified.

### Project 3

- a) Any costs associated with track possessions have been excluded
- b) It is assumed that the high visibility building at the junction of A2016 and A220 will be a private development and has

been excluded from the estimated costs

- c) The estimate costs a for platform works are based on new platforms. However, there may be an option to extend the existing platforms to reduce costs
- d) It is assume that the A2016 is constructed on make up embankments and that the creation of the new bus turning area will require construction of flyovers

### Project 4

- a) Nothing assumed, costs fully justified.

### Project 5

- a) Estimated cost based on tender returns for City Academy Schools
- b) No allowance for expanding the school to incorporate training facilities as current use of buildings
- c) Costs include for demolition of existing building, including and allowance for the removal of asbestos, the extent of which would be subject to detail survey

## Other Projects

Project	Description	Framework Objective(s) Met (see Strategy section)	Delivery Actions	Delivery Agents / Partners	Project Viability	S, M, L Term	Phasing
<b>Town Centre</b>							
<b>Erith Riverside Centre Phase 2</b>	Alterations to remaining part of former Precinct Centre to incorporate residential dev., improved retail/leisure /commercial premises and facades	1. Revitalised Town Centre	Agreement with landowner and/or land assembly? Design scheme Funding	Landowner(s) LDA – funding ? GLA – funding? LBB - lpa	Uncertainty is over landowner agreement, market suitability, attracting funding	Medium Term (If Short Term – proposals would have been more advanced by now/ linked to 1 <sup>st</sup> phase	Stage 2
<b>Phased Redevelopment of Morrisons</b>	Series of changes – replace car parking, introduce resi & additional retail	1. Revitalised Town Centre	Morrisons to promote Comprehensive design Funding	Morrisons/GLA/ LBB	Viability determined by Morrisons commercial decision making, aided by lobbying/'incentives' from other partners	Medium – Long Term	Stage 2
<b>Riverside Gardens: 100 Public Spaces Project</b>	Creation of revitalised riverside Park – making it a desirable attraction/meeting place	2. Relationship to River and Recreational potential 5. Recreational Facilities	100 Public Spaces Initiative to be clarified GLA/LBB to promote: Design Competition Funding	GLA/LBB	Depends on programme/ prioritisation of GLA/LBB in seeking an exemplar Open Space project for Erith	Could be Short – Medium Term	Stage 1
<b>Enhancement of Pier</b>	Improved Linkage to proposed Public Space and creation of pavilion structures on pier	2. Relationship to River 5. Leisure & Recreational facilities	Morrisons (as owners) to promote Demand /Technical Assessment Scheme Design Funding	Morrisons  LBB/GLA  EA/PLA	Dependent on demand – and view taken on temporary or permanent structures	Short Term	Stage 1
<b>Erith Quarry</b>	Decontamination/ Remediation, infrastructure to serve new development (inc. access)	1. Housing growth 5. Improved recreational facilities	Technical exercises to be completed  Demand assessment for development	Landowner English Partnerships LBB as lpa/ 'promoter'	Full technical study to be completed	Multi-phase project – Medium – Long Term	Stage 3
In addition we propose the following key transport proposals as set out in 'Tomorrows Transport'	Enhancement of Erith station and Roundabout.  Connection of Slade Green and Erith  Public transport improvements in the Town Centre.						



# Conclusions & Next Steps

This Framework for Change is presented to form the basis of a number of future actions, as set out in the Introduction to this document.

Further consultation of these ideas will be necessary to establish a firmer agenda for change in the area.

The analysis underpinning the findings is based on the Consultant team findings during the study along with published and other material provided through working in partnership with the client team.

## Housing

In terms of the London Plan target of a minimum of 1500 new dwellings within the Belvedere/Erith Opportunity Area, this can comfortably be reached, with a likelihood of in excess of a range of 2,500 – 3,000 units being provided within the London Plan period (until 2016).

## Jobs

The Opportunity Area designation for Belvedere/Erith of future employment targets (5,000 jobs within the Plan period) can comfortably be met within the strategic employment area at Belvedere. This framework brings forward suggestions of re-organising the current land use structure, including measures of re-zoning, re-location of industry, densification of remaining industrial sites through mix use development. Whilst some of the existing industrial employment would be lost through re-zoning, new employment opportunities arise through densification but also through the creation of additional retail capacity in the town centre. Considering that the re-location of existing industry and therefore jobs focuses on Belvedere industrial employment would still remain local.

## Erith Town Centre

There is opportunity for enhancement of the town centre, building on the back of the change in fortunes of the Town with, firstly, the arrival of Morrisons (and now providing one of the key oppor-

tunities for change), and secondly the recently completed Erith Riverside Centre.

## River use and public open space

Similarly, there are the same opportunities and aspirations for enhancement of Erith's position on the river Thames – in terms of improved access to the river and recreational use of it. This will also build on helping assist with the transformation of Erith into a more desirable place – making more of its unique position as a Town Centre on the river in this part of Thames Gateway. Improved public space, assisting with enhancement of enjoyment of both the Town Centre and the river is also key.

Fundamental to realising the change identified in this document is the list of key projects identified in the Action Plan, with the need for joint working between a number of partners.

## Key interventions

Key interventions brought forward as part of this framework encompass:

1. The Creation of a new public space and civic heart in Erith Town Centre
2. New leisure facilities at Erith Riverside
3. Improved linkages of Erith Town Centre with Erith Station and the Europa Trading Estate
4. Improved traffic flow/capacity at Bexley Road/Queen's Road
5. The creation of a new centre in Slade Green including a new secondary school and community resource centre
6. A new residential community at Erith Quarry and an enhanced public open space at the centre of the site
7. The re-organisation of Europa as a mix-use development and potential extension to Erith Town Centre

With such collaborative working, a great many elements of the vision set out in this Framework document can help achieve real change in Erith.

## Comprehensive Regeneration of Erith

Despite the fact that this framework addresses only physical change, we are aware that the comprehensive regeneration of Erith depends not solely on improvements to the built environment. If the aspirations, goals and vision of Erith are to be achieved then the regeneration agenda must be widened to address social and economic issues.

Our socio-economic review evidenced that the area suffers from not just environmental and physical problems, but also those associated with high unemployment, economic inactivity, low skills base and poor educational attainment. It is therefore imperative that those responsible for delivering the tasks set out within this framework work in partnership with project managers of other schemes, programmes and initiatives that are being delivered in Erith and Bexley.

For example, the development proposals set out in the framework will require substantial levels of construction to take place. With this in mind it is appropriate that delivery agents should work together with the Construction Skills Training Centre on Manor Road to ensure that local trainees are given an opportunity to gain valuable onsite employment and training opportunities. This is just one example where Erith residents can benefit.

Clearly if all opportunities are to be realised, then further dialogue will need to take place at a local level among the Local Strategic Partnership and other local agencies to ensure that a programme of action is devised. The aspiration is that this framework can act as the principal catalyst for change in Erith, in order to transform the lives of those who live and work there.