

# LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>27<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>PARTIAL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Nick Hibberd, Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration &amp; Economic Recovery Heather Cheesbrough, Director of Planning &amp; Sustainable Regeneration</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Julia Dawe - Plan Making Team Leader Steve Dennington – Service Head for Spatial Planning, Growth Zone and Regeneration Email: <a href="mailto:Julia.dawe@croydon.gov.uk">Julia.dawe@croydon.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:Steve.Dennington@croydon.gov.uk">Steve.Dennington@croydon.gov.uk</a></b>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Cllr Jeet Bains, Cabinet member for Planning and Regeneration</b>	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>YES</b>  <i>Key Decision no 4923EM</i>	<b>Decision significantly impacts on communities living or working in all Wards of the Borough.</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	

## 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the Executive Mayor in Cabinet to publish the Proposed Submission draft of the Croydon Local Plan review for public consultation to be undertaken in accordance with Regulation 19 of the of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 Cabinet and Council approval was given on 13 December 2021 for a previous version of the Proposed Submission draft Croydon Local Plan review to be published for representations under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) Regulations 2012 on 6th January 2022 for a statutory 6- week period closing on 17 February 2022.
- 1.3 This resulted in a significant number of representations from local communities in opposition, particularly in relation to the areas proposed for high and moderate suburban intensification. As a result, in early 2022, and having regard to the concerns raised by the Mayoral candidates in their manifestos, the decision was made to “pause” work on the Local Plan and to seek instruction from the new Executive Mayor once elected.
- 1.4 Following the election of Mayor Perry, who stood on a clear manifesto commitment to listen to residents and amend planning policy and guidance, the Mayor’s Business Plan (2022-2026) was published which required additional changes to be made as part of

the Local Plan Review. Specifically, this required amendments to be made to Croydon's Local Plan to remove intensification zones, scrutinise and refine housing targets, support sustainable development and emphasise design and character over density. As a result, additional work was required to remove and re-draft policies within the Local Plan and Cabinet approval was needed for an amended timetable to the Local Development Scheme (LDS) to incorporate the Mayor's changes.

- 1.5** As previously stated, the most significant changes to the Local Plan are the removal of the intensification areas and the housing target has been revised in line with the London Plan. Following the commissioning of further evidence other changes have been made in the review of the Local Plan to ensure that the policies follow a design and character led approach over density as set out in the Mayor's Business Plan, whilst still planning for new homes and meeting the London Plan housing target. The revised Local Plan has also been updated to address Houses in Multiple Occupation with the inclusion of a new policy which ensures that any accommodation created is of a high standard of living environment and that proposals do not give rise to significant adverse amenity impact(s) on the surrounding neighbourhood including cumulative impacts arising from an overconcentration of HMOs within an area. These changes have now been incorporated into the Local Plan Review and the next step is to seek approval from Cabinet to publish the Local Plan Review for a further round of representations required under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) Regulations 2012. Once this has been undertaken, following approval by Council in April, the Local Plan Review together with the Regulation 19 responses will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination.
- 1.6** Throughout the process Officers have held workshops with internal colleagues, engaged with residents' associations and held on-going meetings across the Council's Political Groups. Further details are set out in section 6 of the report below. The Local Plan Review was also considered by the Council's Streets and Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023.
- 1.7** Subject to Cabinet approval thereafter the Regulation 19 consultation will run for a 6-week period during May and June 2024 with the aim of submitting the Local Plan Review to the Secretary of State for independent examination in October 2024.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

For the reasons set out in the report and its appendices and to deliver the requirements of the Mayor's Business Plan, the Executive Mayor in Cabinet, is recommended:

- 2.1.** to agree the publication of the Proposed Submission draft of the Croydon Local Plan review (Appendix 1), its associated additional Sustainability Appraisals (Appendix 2) and updated additional supporting evidence for six weeks for representations to be made upon it, in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;
- 2.2** to agree that the Proposed Submission draft of the Croydon Local Plan review be recommended to Full Council for submission to the Secretary of State upon expiry of the statutory 6-week publication period including, if applicable, any minor changes arising from any representations received in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;

- 2.3 delegate minor and/or factual changes to the Proposed Submission draft of the Croydon Local Plan review including the Policies Maps, prior to publication to the Director of Planning and Sustainable Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration.
- 2.4 delegate to the Corporate Director for Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, in consultation with the Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, the publication of draft Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 2.5 delegate to the Corporate Director for Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, in consultation with the Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, the publication of draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule: and
- 2.6 delegate to the Corporate Director for Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery, in consultation with the Executive Mayor and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, the publication of the Council's Authority's Monitoring Reports and Infrastructure Funding Statements.

### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. Croydon needs to review its existing Local Plan 2018 to rise to the challenges facing the borough and its communities over the next 20 years and beyond. Planning is critical to ensuring that Croydon meets the needs of all its residents, businesses and visitors.
- 3.2 This Proposed Submission draft of the reviewed Croydon Local Plan sets out how Croydon might contribute to meeting its own housing needs, with design and character led development; whilst tackling the causes of climate change in the borough and ensuring that it is developing vibrant places for people to live, work and visit focused on Town Centre and district centre renewal and regeneration.
- 3.3 It is a statutory requirement for the Council to have an up-to-date Local Plan to ensure that the Council can determine planning applications in accordance with up-to-date Local Plan policies and resist inappropriate development and minimise the level of developments occurring in the borough through the planning appeal process.
- 3.4 For this reason, it is recommended to approve the Proposed Submission draft of the reviewed Croydon Local Plan for publication and, subject to Council approval, for submission to the Secretary of State to enable the borough to meet the statutory duty to have an up-to-date Development Plan that is in general conformity with the London Plan and consistent with national policy. As minor changes may arise through representations received in accordance with Regulation 19 delegated authority is recommended to make these prior to submission.
- 3.5. The recommendations relating to the publication of other components of the LDS enable the LDS to be delivered in a timely manner and at the earliest opportunity for consultation to occur.

### **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

## **Background**

- 4.1** A key aim of the Local Plan Review is to address the need for Croydon to help deliver more high-quality housing, of the right design, in sustainable places and with affordable housing. This housing will support vibrant places to live, work, visit and socialise. It is important to note that this is a partial review of the Croydon Local Plan 2018. As such this document is an edited version of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 rather than a rewritten new document and as before with the previous consultation, it will be presented as a tracked change document (Appendix 1) for publication. It is important to have the tracked changed version so that it is clear that only those parts indicated as changed are subject to the review.
- 4.2** The Local Plan Review continues to include three additional strategic transformation areas for Purley Way, North End Quarter and Brighton Main Line & East Croydon Transformation Corridor. The revised Local Plan also includes updates to existing policies to reflect changes in central government policy and using existing and updated evidence for thematic policy areas including housing, affordable housing, housing design, urban design, heritage and local character, employment, retail, community facilities – health and education, community facilities – social infrastructure, environment and climate change, green grid, transport and parking.
- 4.3** The Local Plan 2018 existing Focused Intensification Areas and additional areas proposed for intensification in the December 2021 edition have been removed from the Local Plan Review, in accordance with Priority 4 of the Mayor’s Business Plan. The 16 places of Croydon will change depending on their local character, their accessibility to services and public transport, their heritage status and the ability to deliver growth. The strategy sets out in the proposed submission document, the vision for these areas, as well as the proposed growth scenario.

## **Detail**

- 4.4** Croydon needs to review the existing Croydon Local Plan 2018 to rise to the challenges facing the borough and its communities over the next 20 years and beyond together with ensuring general conformity with the London Plan (March 2021). Planning is critical to ensuring that Croydon meets the needs of all its residents, businesses, and visitors in a sustainable manner. This Local Plan review sets out how Croydon will contribute to meeting its own housing needs, with design and character led development; whilst tackling the causes of climate change in the borough, and ensuring it is developing vibrant places for people to live, work and visit focused on the town centre and district centre renewal and regeneration.
- 4.5** The London Plan was adopted in March 2021. Policy H1 of the London Plan and requires the borough to set a 10-year housing target for Croydon of 20,790 dwellings to be constructed between 2019-2029 i.e., over a 10-year period. This equates to 2,079 dwellings per annum. The 2021 Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan took this number and used it for the following ten years resulting in a housing target of 41,580, which received much criticism from residents as it went beyond the London Plan requirement for the last 10 years of the plan period. The Local Plan Review now sets out a strategy to accommodate at least 33,985 homes between 2019 – 2040, of which 20,790 homes are those required to be delivered by 2029 to conform with the London Plan requirements. Thereafter the housing target for the remaining period of the plan reduces to 1,465 dwellings per annum.

- 4.6** In summary the revised housing target for the Plan period to 2040 has been reduced from a total of 42,000 homes to 33,985 homes since the last Regulation 19 consultation version. The reduction in the housing number has been informed by the capacity constraints in the borough i.e. the Green Belt and the 2017 London wide SHLAA findings (as required by the London Plan) together with the Council's strategic approach to housing. The housing targets are set out in detail in paragraphs 3.15A – 3.13I in the Local Plan Review.
- 4.7** The Proposed Submission draft of the Croydon Local Plan covers the following sections:
- Strategic Option
  - Three strategic transformation areas
  - Thematic Policy Areas (including strategic and development management policies)
  - Place Specific Policies

### **Strategic Option**

- 4.8** The Local Plan Review sets out the proposed spatial strategy, sites and planning policies necessary to meet the needs of the borough, over the period from 2019 to 2040. During the Issues and Options consultation stage three strategic spatial options were set out. Each of the three options proposed a proportion of homes to be built in each of the boroughs 16 places based on differing criteria. Following the consultation, a strategy which closely resembles option 2 of the Issues and Options consultation is recommended to be taken forward. The delivery of this strategy is detailed in the Proposed Submission draft of the Croydon Local Plan and will be adopted following an examination by a Secretary of State appointed independent planning inspector.
- 4.9** The approach put forward is considered to be an environmentally and socially sustainable option as evidenced by the Local Plan Review's updated Sustainability Appraisal suite of documents. The strategy builds upon that in the adopted Local Plan 2018 where development is directed by a strategic approach as follows:
- the Croydon Opportunity area;
  - existing and additional site allocations;
  - existing permissions across the Borough; and
  - windfall sites.
- 4.10** To deliver additional growth as set out in the London Plan 2021 there is a focus on the Croydon Opportunity Area and district centres. There is a strategic level of development focused on the Purley Way which is proposed to accommodate up to 7,515 homes over mostly the later part of the plan period, through a vision and plan led approach to the redevelopment of the area with high density mixed use, residential and commercial/retail developments; whilst respecting the borough's most valued and protected commercial locations. A draft Purley Way Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared and will be adopted alongside the Local Plan Review. No Green Belt nor Metropolitan Open Land release is proposed to accommodate the London Plan housing target or infrastructure provision.

- 4.11** Under the Proposed Submission draft of the Croydon Local Plan, homes by place (2019-2039) are proposed through site allocations which are listed in Appendix 7 of the Local Plan.
- 4.12** Each of the thematic policy areas have been reviewed given the clear priorities set out in the Mayor's Business Plan. Also, policies have been reviewed having regard to feedback from the Regulation 19 consultation (2022). As this is a partial review, the suite of Development Management policies has only been updated to reflect changes in central government legislation such as the changes to the Use Classes Order for example. Policies have also been updated as necessary to reflect the London Plan and any revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as amended on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023. In addition, there are a number of "living" technical documents which have been used to inform any updates to existing policies. These documents are approved under delegation. These are:
- The Council's Annual Monitoring Report;
  - The Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
  - The Infrastructure Funding Statement

Where appropriate the following policy areas state and draw upon where new evidence has informed the review. The following amendments have been made to the Plan to support the delivery of the strategy, to ensure consistency with the NPPF (as revised December 2023) and the London Plan and to address environmental and climate change issues.

#### Urban Design Heritage and Local Character

- 4.13** This chapter has been substantially redrafted to remove all policies relating to the existing and proposed intensification areas in accordance with the Mayor's Business Plan. Policies SP4 and DM10 have been updated and strengthened to place greater emphasis on design and character over density and enhancing Croydon's varied local character. The Tall Buildings policy is being reviewed to take account of the findings from the Tall Buildings Study and ensure that the policy is in conformity with London Plan Policy D9. The policy will identify locations in the borough where tall buildings will be appropriate, set a Borough wide definition for tall buildings, and establish maximum heights in the Borough's 'places' where appropriate. This is a requirement of the London Plan.

#### Environment and Climate change

- 4.14** This chapter has been re-named to Sustainable Design and Construction and contains policies to address climate change. Climate change is a global issue with many local impacts, such as flooding events. Croydon is the 4th most susceptible town in the UK for surface water flooding.
- 4.15** Following the recommendations of the Council's Climate Change Commission and anticipated Climate Change Action Plan, the following changes have been made to the Environment and Climate chapter of the Local Plan to create positive change in support of the Climate Emergency:
- Policy has been updated to reflect the New London Plan, this includes new targets for carbon and construction, air quality neutral requirement, as well as 'Be Seen' as part of energy hierarchy;

- Policy has been updated to reflect amendments to the NPPF, including, the change to paragraph 157 to reflect current government policy on national technical standards;
- Additional Policy has been provided to promote the Circular economy;
- Policies amended to embed climate adaptation and carbon reduction actions.

#### Green Grid

**4.16** One third of Croydon is green space, made up of a mixture of Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, recreation / sports grounds and other open spaces. There is an increasing pressure on these green spaces from population growth and the fragmentation of the green grid. No changes are proposed to the existing Green Belt boundaries.

**4.17** To support the borough's climate change objectives and deliver the proposed strategy the Green Grid changes cover the following:

- Delivering solutions to address the climate change emergency through the Green Grid;
- Enhanced sustainability and green travel options;
- Integrating the Green and Blue grid, restoring the value and optimisation of the borough's water bodies;
- Providing additional detail on expansion and delivery of the Green Grid network;
- Enabling additional tree planting, ecology and net increase in biodiversity;
- New policies on new publicly accessible open spaces and urban greening factor (UGF); and
- Identifying local green spaces based on the evidence received from the wider community.

#### Housing (including affordable housing)

**4.18** The Strategic Housing Market Assessment evidence identifies that Croydon's population is gradually getting older and household sizes are getting smaller. Furthermore, open market housing (both private rented and for sale) is getting less and less affordable for many households in the borough. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment has calculated that 1,817 affordable rented homes a year would be needed in Croydon to meet the housing need of lower income households. There is also a need for 1,028 immediate homes in the borough per year. Immediate Homes are a form of affordable housing consisting of London Living Rent homes and Shared Ownership homes. The following policy amendments address these issues.

- Reflecting the new housing target in the London Plan – focussed to sustainable locations;
- Policy recognises the housing crisis and the need to encourage significant housing delivery, especially affordable homes and how we deliver;
- Affordable housing policy alignment with the London Plan;
- Additional housing design guidance;
- Updated policy to promote 3 bed home delivery; and

- New policy to manage the quality and cumulative impact of Houses of Multiple Occupation.

#### Employment and Retail:

**4.19** Croydon is the largest metropolitan centre in London and one of only two strategic office centres out of central London. There are also 9 District Centres, 9 Local Centres, 18 Neighbourhood Centres and 62 Shopping Parades in the borough. The following policy changes have been made to support the strategic option and align the Local Plan Review with the London Plan, the NPPF, the latest Retail Needs Study and respond to the changing function and use of all tiers of centres:

- Updates to reflect changes to the Use Classes Order;
- Additional clarity has been provided around the town centre hierarchy;
- Additional clarity has been provided for edge and out of centre developments taking into account changes to the Use Classes Order;
- With the London Plan 'no net loss' provision for industrial and employment sites removed, policies have been amended to protect this land and encourage intensification to support the borough's economy, supported by the evidence from the Employment Land Review;
- Additional policies supporting the creative economy and providing benefits to the local workforce;
- Strengthen the protection of employment land, and
- Supporting the warehousing sector.

#### Community facilities:

**4.20** The key issue regarding community facilities is the access to appropriate community facilities for all ages, such as education, health, religious, sporting, cultural and creative spaces, for all residents and visitors of Croydon. The following amendments were made:

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan updated;
- Need to match facilities with new development to mitigate impact; and
- Burial space provision

#### Transport

**4.21** In accordance with the London Plan and the London Mayor's Transport Strategy, changes to the transportation policies aim to address the climate emergency and enable growth in the borough. The following policy changes have been made:

- Addressing the London Plan parking standards as appropriate for the borough;
- Promote changes to support reducing climate change impacts – promote development in sustainable locations (overall strategy);
- Reinforce and strengthen extant policies encouraging and delivering sustainable travel, resulting in reduced vehicle emissions and the promotion of physical activity with the added health benefits; and,
- Address development phasing and construction

### **Transformation Areas**

#### The Purley Way



**4.22** The Purley Way is the borough's primary out of centre employment location, including two London Plan Strategic Industrial Locations. There is a need to facilitate considerable growth in residential, mixed-use development along the Purley Way, outside the Strategic Employment Locations and industrial intensification development within Strategic Employment Locations. To support the Purley Way as one of the borough's strategic transformation areas the new chapter addresses:

- Redevelopment of brownfield land;
- Ability to connect and complement Croydon Opportunity Area;
- Urban design opportunity to transform a hard traffic corridor into a green street that encourages sustainable transport options and serves four new local centres;
- Gateway to Croydon physically, economically and socially;
- Opportunity for new communities supported by new local centres;
- Delivery of high - quality mixed use development;
- Support the borough's economic growth by encouraging intensification of industrial land; and
- Embracing the latest technology and sustainability.

#### The Brighton Main Line and East Croydon Transformation Corridor:

**4.23** Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme (CARS) is the largest and most complex part of Network Rail's longer- term Brighton Main Line upgrade project. CARS would remove one of the most operationally challenging bottlenecks on Britain's railway network, located in the 'Selhurst triangle'. East Croydon station and East Croydon is a critical sustainable transport node, providing access to the train, tram, bus, walking and cycling networks. To support this area's transformation the East Croydon transformation area policies cover the following:

- Set the policy context to inform the Transport Works Act Order Inquiry (should the project get DfT funding to progress), especially support for the Brighton Main Line Upgrade and setting the placemaking and renewal context for the Station Square and Station Building.
- Allocations included to phase and guide development sites adjacent to the station post construction of the project.

#### The North End Quarter

**4.24** A chapter setting out the statutory planning framework / policies for the renewal and regeneration of the Town Centre around North End. The chapter provides a planning vision and strategy for the transformation of this area as the role of town centres change and evolve in response to the pandemic and much changed function and role of town centres. The chapter will be supplemented by URW's current masterplanning exercise, the Council's Town Centre Vision, Regeneration Framework and Delivery Plan commission and the outputs from the Croydon Urban Room.

#### The 16 Places

**4.25** The longstanding 16 Places of Croydon will evolve and change based on their local character, their accessibility to services and public transport, their heritage status and the ability to deliver growth and commensurate physical and social infrastructure to

mitigate growth. The structure of the places has been edited to emphasise placemaking around character and these updates have been done with reference to the Borough character appraisal.

### Allocations

- 4.26** Site Allocations are also identified under each Place, including sites for future housing and other development such as schools, health facilities and community centres. The Local Plan Review lists all site allocations, sorted by Place or Transformation Chapter.

### Local Green Spaces

- 4.27** National planning policy says that local communities should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them by designating them as 'Local Green Spaces' in Local Plans. NPPF paragraph 105 states that "Local Green Spaces can only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated and be capable of enduring beyond the plan period." The NPPF goes on to state in paragraph 106 that "Local Green Space designation should only be used where land is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."

- 4.28** The NPPF (paragraph 107) also requires that policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

- 4.29** In 2016, as part of the preparation of the Croydon Local Plan 2018, the Council tried to introduce this extra layer of protection for all of Croydon's parks and green spaces that met the above-mentioned criteria. All identified sites were put forward to be designated, however, none of them were granted the Local Green Space designation as the previous Planning Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the adopted Local Plan, felt there was not enough local evidence to prove how these spaces were special/important to local communities, or that they hold any particular local significance. In particular he said that "*many of [the characteristics identified by the Council], such as a community garden, children's play area, natural open space, playing field or recreation ground seem rather commonplace with the consequence that, even where three of these co-exist, the criterion of "demonstrably special" or of "particular" significance within the terms of [national planning policy] is not met.*"

- 4.30** In preparation for the Local Plan Review, between 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019 to 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019 the Council asked local residents to tell us which green spaces were special to them and why. The considerable responses received have been reviewed by Officers. In reviewing the responses Officers have had in mind the following comments made by the Planning Inspector who examined the current Croydon Local Plan 2018 in which he said:

*"A large number of [representations made to the Council about designating particular spaces as Local Green Space] argue for the general benefits of open space to recreation and health. These are undisputed but, by definition, general benefits do not amount to the special justification needed to support Local Green Space designation on a specific site. Others argue for the historic interest of*

*particular places or pointed to their ecological or nature conservation interest. These too cannot be disputed but... the [Croydon Local Plan 2018] already contains policies to protect land with these characteristics. Other [representations] provide pointers to the kind of criteria that the Council may wish to use in the [Local Plan] Review which I recommend... The concept of Local Green Space is not simply about maintaining a quantitative standard of open space or facilities, important though that is; it is concerned with boundaries which are capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period, i.e., not just ensuring that a sufficient quantity of open space is provided or retained in an area but that it be provided or retained on the particular site in question because its location has particular importance to the local community, possibly as the result of an event on the site or as the result of a campaign of acquisition or gift in relation to the site.”*

- 4.31** Where responses have highlighted a feature or use of a green space that is beyond a general benefit; and it is not a feature protected by another Local Plan policy; then they are proposed in this Proposed Submission draft of the Croydon Local Plan. The proposed Local Green Spaces are set out under each Place and include the reason why they are demonstrably special.
- 4.32** It should be noted that just because a “green space” has not been put forward as a proposed Local Green Space, it does not mean that it is a development site. All green spaces are important; even more so in the context of for the target of circa 33,985 homes by 2039. These new homes will require access to green spaces. Therefore, other green spaces that do not lie within the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land and do not fulfil the criteria to be designated as “local green spaces” will be protected in the Local Plan review under an ‘important green spaces’ policy. Many of them will also be part of the green grid network of open spaces proposed in the Green Grid section of this Proposed Submission Local Plan.
- 4.33** These spaces that are proposed to be protected through an “Important Green Spaces” designation include the following types of space:
- **Town (or Place) parks and natural open spaces** – These are large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features. They provide a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children’s play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits. The category also includes larger areas of natural open space. They will usually provide recreation for an entire Place and can be up to 20ha in size.
  - **Local parks and natural open spaces** – These provide for court games, children’s play, sitting out areas and nature conservation areas; or they are slightly larger areas of natural open space. They serve more than the neighbourhood in which they are located but won’t serve an entire Place. Usually, they will be under 2ha in size.
  - **Neighbourhood parks and natural open spaces** – These also only serve the neighbourhood in which they are located but will be more formal green spaces. They include public gardens, sitting out areas, children’s play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas. Generally, they are under 1ha in size.
  - **Informal green spaces** – These are small areas of informal open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and small amounts of play equipment.

Typically, they will serve only the neighbourhood in which they are located and are generally under 0.4ha in size.

- **Linear open spaces** – These are paths, disused railways, nature conservation areas and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation. They can often be characterised by elements that are not public open space but that contribute to the enjoyment of the space.

**4.34** Sites contained within the proposed categories of green space designations (Local Green Spaces and Important Green Spaces) are based upon two rounds of public consultation undertaken in 2019 and 2020. The assessment carried out by the Council thus far has been largely qualitative, so it is important that the quantitative value of the local spaces is included in the assessment of their suitability for designation. The Council has appointed consultants to carry out this work, who also updated the available qualitative evidence. The list of local green spaces is in line with the findings of the open space study.

#### Other Local Development Framework Work

**4.35** The Local Development Framework consists of a series of documents that are created to produce a policy framework. The Local Plan is the key document in this however there are other documents that are produced. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) includes other supporting documents to be prepared in order to enable the delivery of development and appropriate infrastructure. These include:

- Review of the CIL Charging Schedule;
- Preparation of a Financial Contributions SPD; and
- Webb Estate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as an SPD;
- Preparation of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD

**4.37** To provide guidance to support the policies seeking to protect the character of the borough the Conservation Area Appraisal SPD's and Residential Extensions SPD are needed.

**4.38** To support the delivery of infrastructure set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and mitigate the impact of development, the Council has commenced a review of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule originally adopted in 2013. In addition, work has also commenced on a Financial Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will set out additional contributions that will be secured through a Section 106 Planning Obligations. Both of these documents will seek to strike an appropriate balance between additional investment through CIL and Section 106 contributions to infrastructure to support development and the potential effect on the viability of developments.

**4.39** Work has commenced on all four of the above documents and are progressing well and it is anticipated that these will be completed within the time frames set out in the LDS. These documents are finally adopted by Council, but the draft consultation documents are approved under delegation.

## **5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

**5.1** It is a statutory requirement for the Council to prepare a Local Plan and keep it up to date in order to ensure compliance with national planning policy and the London Plan. Paragraph 33 of the NPPF states that policies in local plans and spatial development strategies should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once

every five years and should then be updated as necessary. An up-to-date Local Plan ensures that the Council is able to determine planning applications in accordance with a robust planning policy framework and resist inappropriate development.

- 5.2** The Council's Local Plan was adopted in 2018 some 5 years ago and therefore needs to either be updated or reviewed in accordance with Paragraph 33 of the NPPF. Failure to update the Local Plan will result in a set of policies which are out of date leaving the Council vulnerable to unplanned development being allowed through the planning appeal process.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1** The Croydon Local Plan Review (partial) has been subject to consultation from the start and has been on - going as it has progressed. It has previously been considered by the Streets Environment and Homes Sub-Committee. At meetings of the Sub-Committee on 16 March 2021 recommendations related to Low Traffic neighbourhoods and sustainability objectives. These recommendations have been taken on board and Strategic Policy SP1 has been amended to include references to the Healthy Streets initiative as set out in the Mayor's Business Plan. The London Plan has been adopted since the Sub-Committee last met and contains more robust sustainability objectives and climate change policies which have been reflected in the Local Plan Review.
- 6.2** The Issues and Options consultation for the Local Plan took place between 1 November 2019 to 20 January 2020. The consultation was required under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The consultation covered the three strategic options, the local plan topic area policies, two transformation areas and the Place of Croydon chapters. Issues and options related to these areas were identified and detailed in the issues and options document.
- 6.3** The Local Plan Review was published for consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) Regulations 2012 on 6th January 2022 for a statutory 6 - week period closing on 17 February 2023. More than 8,000 representations were received in response, including significant numbers from local residents' associations, individual residents, local councillors and the local MP. The vast majority of the representations objected to the proposed designation of intensification areas and particularly Addiscombe. A number of comments were also made in relation to the timing of the Local Plan review and that it should not be progressed until after the Mayor had been elected (May 2022). As a result of the above together with issues raised by the previous Regulation 19 consultation, the decision was made to "pause" work on the Local Plan until the Mayor was in office and the Mayor's Business Plan had been published.
- 6.4** The final development of the policies in the revised Local Plan started in September 2023 with briefings for all members which explained; the scope of the review, feedback from the previous Regulation 19 consultation and the changes required to be made as a result and the additional evidence needed. Ahead of the all-member briefings officers met with all the Council's political parties to ensure that the briefings included issues that they wished to be covered. Officers have also met with the representatives from the opposition parties on a regular basis during the formulation of the revised Local Plan. A draft copy of the revised Local Plan has been provided two months ahead of this Cabinet meeting. All feedback has been carefully reviewed and used to inform the policies in the revised Local Plan.

- 6.5** The Local Plan Review has been considered by the Council's Streets and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 1st November 2023. At this meeting Members considered a number of issues but particularly welcomed the inclusion of the Green Grid and Local Green Spaces in the Local Plan Review. The Committee recommended "that Blue Corridors (watercourses and natural ponds) were explicitly referenced and considered in this area of work." This matter has been addressed in the revised Local Plan.
- 6.6** A programme of meetings with Local Residents' Associations, other community groups and representatives across the Council's political groups has taken place. These series of meetings took place during October 2023. The events comprised a presentation which set out the proposed changes to the Local Plan as detailed in this report, including the removal of proposed intensification areas followed by a question and answer session, which have informed the final drafting of policies. Members were able to come along to hear what was being asked and the answers given. Feedback from these sessions has been positive and welcomed by the community groups.
- 6.7** Given the proposed changes it will now be necessary to invite further representations under Regulation 19. Subject to approval from Cabinet in accordance with Regulation 19 representations will be invited starting in May 2024 for a period of no less than 6 weeks. Officers will then collate the responses which will be submitted alongside the Local Plan to the Secretary of State, for Examination. This is anticipated to be at the beginning of October 2024. Dependent on the workload of the Planning Inspectorate (which is out of the Council's control), the Examination is likely to commence in the late Spring of 2025. The Local Plan will be brought back to Council for adoption which is anticipated to be at the end of 2025.
- 6.8** Engagement with officers at the GLA and TfL and other neighbouring authorities has been on-going.

## **7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

- 7.1** The Local Plan Review is key to delivering Priority 4 in the Mayor's Business Plan "Ensure new homes are safe, well-designed and in keeping with the local area." The Business Plan states that we will: "**Review Croydon's Local Plan to remove intensification zones, support sustainable development and emphasise design and character over density**". The Local Plan Review addresses this key priority.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1.1** The project is funded from an approved the Local Plan Earmarked Reserve. The reserve totals £1,268,000 across 2023/25. A proportion of Spatial Planning staff costs of £484,000 are funded from the Local Plan Earmarked Reserve per annum. The evidence update (Retail Needs Assessment, Strategic Housing market Assessment, Green Spaces Study and Tall Buildings Study for example) to support the amendments and undertake testing of the policies such as Sustainability Appraisal and All Plan Viability Testing represent further expenditure for 23/24 financial year (£142,430). There is £157,570 for the remaining period (2023/25) to pay for costs associated with the Local Plan Review Examination and adoption and the adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents listed in paragraph 4.35.
- 8.1.2** The effect of the decision would be to publish the document and undertake the consultation.

**8.1.3** Comments approved by Nish Narendran, Finance Manager Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery on behalf of Corporate Director for Resources and 151 Officer. (Date 21/02/2024).

## **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**8.2.1** Regulation 10 A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) which was introduced in 2017 provides that local planning authorities must review their plans every five years from adoption. Section 17 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required local planning authorities to keep Local Plans and Statement of Community Involvement under review and the new Regulation 10 A formalises this requirement further.

**8.2.2** Regulation 19 of the above-mentioned 2012 Regulations required consultation to be undertaken so as to provide an opportunity to the public for representations to be made on the Local Plan before it is submitted to a planning Inspector for Examination. Although a sound plan is required to be submitted, as the need for minor changes may arise following receipt of representations in accordance with Regulation 19 full Council will be asked to delegate authority to officers to make such changes.

**8.2.3** National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) paragraph 33 states that “Policies in local plans and spatial development strategies should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every 5 years and then should be updated as necessary. Reviews should be completed no later than 5 years from the adoption date of the plan and should take in to account changing circumstances affecting the area and or any relevant changes in national policy. Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every 5 years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the near future.”

**8.2.4** As set out in the report the Council is complying with its statutory obligations by undertaking a review of the Local Plan and is following a detailed statutory process.

**8.2.5** Once the Local Plan in due course has been declared sound by the examining planning inspector then such Local Plan together with a report will be submitted to full Council exercising non- Executive function for adoption of the Local Plan.

**8.2.6** The Local Plan will form part of the Development Plan.

**8.2.7** The adopted Local Plan will become the starting point for determining any planning applications that are submitted to the Council for consideration. The planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations dictate otherwise pursuant to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**8.2.8** Comments approved by Samra Yunus, Corporate Solicitor on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer 19/02/2024.

## **8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

**8.3.1** The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Section 149 Equality Act 2010. The Council must, in the performance of its functions, therefore, have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.
- Foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

**8.3.2** An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken with the following chapters flagged for screening: Homes, Employment, Green Grid, Transportation and Communication, Urban Design and Local Character, Community Facilities, and Place Making.

**8.3.3** An equality review has been undertaken and approved in October 2023, to align the plan to current organisational priorities and to consider current data in respect of each characteristic.

**8.3.4** Comments reviewed by Helen Reeves Head of Strategy & Policy 21 February 2024.

## **9. APPENDICES**

**9.1** Appendix 1

a Proposed Submission Draft of Croydon Local Plan

b Proposed Submission Draft of Croydon Local Plan – Policies Maps

**9.2** Appendix 2 Sustainability Appraisal

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Previous Sustainability Appraisal, Equalities Impact Assessment [Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Impact Assessment | Croydon Council](#)

Additional Evidence Produced as a result of the review of the Local Plan since 2019

Strategic Housing Market Assessment

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/planning/planning-evidence-and-information/local-plan-evidence-topic/homes>

Green Belt Review

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Croydon%20Green%20Belt%20and%20Metropolitan%20Open%20Land%20Study.pdf?src=redirection-fix>

Employment Land Review [Economy and employment | Croydon Council](#)

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/planning/planning-evidence-and-information/local-plan-evidence-topic/economy-and-employment>

Future Destination of Retailing Study [Economy and employment | Croydon Council](#)

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment [Climate change | Croydon Council](#)

Purley Way Masterplan



<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Croydon%20Green%20Belt%20and%20Metropolitan%20Open%20Land%20Study.pdf?src=redirection-fix>

East Croydon Strategic Regeneration Framework

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/planning/planning-policy/further-guidance/masterplans/east-croydon-masterplan>

Whole Plan Viability Assessment [Viability | Croydon Council](#)

Further Evidence Produced to inform the review of the Local Plan since the previous Regulation 19 consultation in 2021

Tall Buildings Study (new):

A new study is required to meet the requirements of London Plan Policy D9 and the GLA 'Characterisation and Growth Strategy LPG'. Refer to existing 'Borough Character Appraisal' and existing ['Urban Design, Local Character and Heritage' evidence](#) on the Council website.

Open Spaces Study (new)

A new study is required to quantify the value of community-nominated open space which reflects the community desire to strengthen the protection of open space. See also existing ['Nature and open space' evidence](#) on the Council website.

Town Centre and Retail Study (new)

A new study is required as the existing evidence is out of date. The overall retail need for the borough and the full suite of main town centre uses needs to be reviewed to inform policy choices, both in terms of quantum of supply, and uses on individual site allocations. The existing town centre hierarchy and designations will also need to be reviewed and re-confirmed. See existing ['Economy and employment' evidence](#) on the Council website.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (update)

An update to the existing [2019 SHMA](#) is needed to take into account of the new economic climate, updated affordable products and housing mix. Refer to existing SMHA and current ['Homes' evidence](#) on the Council website.

Whole Plan Viability Appraisal (update)

An update to the existing [Whole-Plan Viability 2020](#) is required to take account of the new economic climate. The study will need to focus on updated development mix and affordability. Refer to existing ['Viability' evidence](#) on the Council website

Other Reports

Scrutiny Committee Report "Croydon Local Plan" 28 September 2020

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=170&MId=2140&Ver=4>

Scrutiny Committee Report "Croydon Local Plan" 16 March 2021

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=170&MId=2143&Ver=4>

Scrutiny Committee Report "Croydon Local Plan" 1 November 2023

<https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=170&MId=3507>

The full suite of evidence documents is available on the Evidence Page for the Local Plan (see paragraph 3.31) of this report for how this relates to the review of the Local Plan – [Local Plan evidence by topic | Croydon Council](#)

Inspector's report into the adopted Local Plan 2018:

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/inspectors-report-on-the-croydon-local-plan.pdf>

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