

Sustainable Development Select Committee			
Title	Catford Regeneration Programme Review: Scoping Paper	Item No	7
Contributors	Scrutiny Manager		
Class	Part 1	Date	22 October 2015

1. Purpose of paper

- 1.1 At its meeting on 16 April 2015, the Committee decided as part of its work programme to undertake an in-depth review into the Catford Regeneration Programme.
- 1.2 This paper sets out the rationale for the review, provides some background information on the current situation within Lewisham and sets out proposed terms of reference for the review.
- 1.3 The in-depth review process is outlined at Appendix A.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Select Committee is asked to:
 - note the content of the report
 - consider and agree the proposed terms of reference for the review, outlined in section 6 and the timetable, outlined in section 7.

3. Policy context

- 3.1 A number of strategies and plans are relevant to this proposed review.
- 3.2 Lewisham's overarching Sustainable Communities Strategy sets out a vision for the future of the borough. One of the priorities laid out in the strategy is to develop, build and grow communities that are dynamic and prosperous – where people are part of vibrant communities and town centres, well connected to London and beyond.
- 3.3 Lewisham's latest Strategic Asset Management Plan (2015-2020) is an opportunity to optimise the use of assets to maintain the quality of service provision while further driving reductions in expenditure and exposure to costs; and to reframe the focus across the borough based on the evolving picture on housing, regeneration and development. During the life of the last Asset Management Plan (2010-2014) the Council made savings of over £100m with significant savings achieved through better use of assets. The Council now faces further budget pressures with an £85m budget gap over the three years to 2017/18.

- 3.4 The Regeneration Strategy 'people, prosperity and place' is also relevant and links the Council's corporate priorities to the development and regeneration of Lewisham's communities, the local economy and the built environment.
- 3.5 Lewisham's new Housing Strategy for 2015-2020 identifies four priorities: helping residents at times of housing need; security and quality for private renters; improving our residents' homes; building the homes our residents need. The Council's assets can play a role in this, creating opportunities to develop new housing supply of all tenures, making land available for the construction of new homes and by using an understanding of the borough to improve the way service delivery connects with communities at a local level.

4. Background

- 4.1 Previous attempts to regenerate Catford town centre have been hampered by various complex commercial and financial issues, including the number of different landowners with stakes in and around the town centre and a lack of external funding available to aid or enable redevelopment. Now the Council has ownership of Catford Shopping Centre as well as Milford Towers it will have more influence on future regeneration plans and can drive things forward more effectively.
- 4.2 There are been a number of different strands that have been part of the regeneration of Catford. For this scoping paper, they have been separated into four sections:
- Catford Town Centre Plan
 - Catford Centre acquisition
 - Proposals to relocate the A205 road behind Laurence House
 - Development of the former Catford Greyhound Stadium site.
- 4.3 The information provided below on the various aspects of the Catford Regeneration Scheme goes up to the end of 2014, when the Plan was last reviewed, and the Council commissioned Allies and Morrison to conduct some feasibility work on the Plan.

Catford Town Centre and the Town Centre Plan

- 4.4 Lewisham Council has made a firm commitment to regenerating Catford, but, as noted above, has been hampered by complex commercial and financial issues.¹
- 4.5 Plans to regenerate the area in Catford, stretch back over a decade. In November 2005 the Council undertook consultation on Issues and Options for a suite of local plans, including the (then named) *Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan*. Taking account of comments received, the Council then prepared *Preferred Options* and consulted local people and other stakeholders on these in June 2007. Following a period when resources were focused on preparing

¹ Catford plan - frequently asked questions, Lewisham website

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/planning/policy/LDF/catford/Pages/Catford-Plan-frequently-asked-questions.aspx> .

the Lewisham Core Strategy, the Council consulted on a set of *Further Options* from February to April 2013. These Further Options took account of changes that had taken place since June 2007, including: changes to the wider policy context, different ownership and management of key sites, known developer interest and planning permissions, the possibility of an extension of the Docklands Light Railway to Bromley (with a station at Catford) and the economic recession².

4.6 The Catford Plan Pre-Submission Report produced in August 2013 provides the overarching vision for the type of place that Catford will be in 2026 and the key planning and design principles that underpin this. It states that, “Catford Town Centre, home of the Council’s services and the civic heart of the borough, will be a lively, attractive town centre focused around a high quality network of public spaces. Driven by the redevelopment of key opportunity areas, including the redevelopment of the former Catford Greyhound Stadium site and the Catford Centre, Catford will have an improved retail and leisure offer and will be home to a diverse residential community. The Broadway Theatre will continue to be a focus for arts and cultural activities and the street market in Catford Broadway will continue to contribute positively to Catford’s identity”.³

4.7 The Catford Plan Pre-Submission Report describes the vision Lewisham Council has for Catford Town Centre, and consists of the following:

- *Delivering sustainable development* - Building upon its strategic role as a shopping and civic centre and hub on the public transport network Catford can become a sustainable, safe, healthy and attractive place to live, work, shop and socialise
- *Ensuring a mix of land uses and activities* - Shopping is still the main reason many people visit and the vitality and viability of the primary shopping area and the market must be protected. In addition a mix of suitable shops should be provided throughout the town centre to provide continuous and active street frontages on major pedestrian routes and spaces.
- *Enhancing valuable public and cultural services* - Public services need to be accessible and reflect anticipated changing requirements and demand. In Catford they should also be better integrated with the public spaces.
- *Improving connectivity and transport* - Changes to traffic management, particularly the South Circular and the gyratory, could dramatically reduce the impact of traffic and reduce severance. This would improve the environment for pedestrians, cyclists, create new open spaces, and free up land for new development. Catford has excellent public transport but the railway station environment, the walk to the town centre, and bus stop locations can be dramatically improved.
- *Encouraging healthy lifestyles* - The design and management of Catford’s public spaces should encourage walking and cycling and contribute to healthy lifestyles.

² Page 21, Catford Town Centre Local Plan Proposed Submission 2013, August 2013.

³ Page 26, Catford Town Centre Local Plan Proposed Submission 2013, August 2013.

- *Managing change* - The anticipated change in the town centre needs to be managed to minimise disruption for businesses and residents and to help maintain business continuity⁴.

4.8 The Catford Plan Pre-Submission Report also lists the objectives that underpin the vision, and they are as follows:

- Deliver a strategy for improving the traffic network that is both deliverable and effective in making Catford a cohesive, pleasant and safe place to move around by improving movement and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and buses, enhancing interchange between buses and rail stations and reducing severance.
- Strengthen Catford's role as the civic centre of the borough, with Council services and offices providing a key anchor for the town centre economy.
- Provide a variety of shops and a thriving street market that caters for the needs of the local community (including a mix of convenience and comparison shopping) as well as offering shops and services to attract visitors from further afield.
- Establish Catford as a popular evening and weekend leisure destination, building on the success of the Broadway Theatre and accommodating cultural and leisure facilities, restaurants and cafes, that appeal to a wide variety of people.
- Maximise housing choice by providing new homes in the town centre for people on different incomes and household sizes and by so doing provide additional users for existing and additional retail and leisure activity.
- Ensure new developments embrace the highest standards in architecture and urban design that raise the image and profile of Catford, complemented by the retention of historic buildings and those of townscape merit.
- Create an attractive, safe and animated public realm, including new public spaces and the introduction of high quality design and public art throughout.
- Ensure developments contribute positively to the health, education and social well-being of the population, promoting and supporting active lifestyles to reduce health inequalities and that there is sufficient social infrastructure to support growth.
- Reduce the impact of development on the environment and help tackle climate change, poor air quality, pollution, noise, waste and flood risk⁵.

4.9 The area covered by the Catford Plan can be divided into eight character areas with their own specific issues:

- Rushey Green and Bromley Road
- Catford Centre
- Catford Broadway and the Civic Quarter
- Laurence House

⁴ Page 26-27, Catford Town Centre Local Plan Proposed Submission 2013, August 2013.

⁵ Page 28, Catford Town Centre Local Plan Proposed Submission 2013, August 2013.

- Plassy Road Island and Sangley Road
- Catford Road and the railway stations
- Former Greyhound Stadium
- Wickes and Halfords retail area⁶

4.11 The current situation with the Catford Regeneration Programme is that the Local Plan was withdrawn (which will be explained later) and the whole programme it is currently under review. It is anticipated that there will be a report to Mayor & Cabinet with a full update and recommended way forward by the end of this year once the review is complete.

Catford Centre acquisition

4.12 Catford Regeneration Partnership Limited (CRPL) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Lewisham Council. The company was originally created in January 2010 to purchase the leasehold interests in and around the Catford Centre in order to manage and regenerate the property to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the people of Lewisham.

4.13 In terms of structure and governance, CRPL currently has two directors, who are senior Council officers. The directors are responsible for the day to day running of the company in line with the articles of association and have other statutory duties as defined by the Companies Act 2006. The directors must take account of the approved business plan when exercising their functions in the management of the Company. The directors are appointed and removed by the Council as sole shareholder.

4.14 CRPL continues to develop an effective and efficient management approach for the operation of the property through a team of professional advisors, including an in house surveyor from the LBL Corporate Asset Services and external agents that oversee daily management of the property and report to the directors of CRPL⁷.

Proposals to relocate the A205 road behind Laurence House

4.15 It has been the long established ambition for decades that there are merits in looking at relocating the A205 road behind Laurence House to help reduce congestion and improving traffic flow in Catford. This is mentioned in the Catford Town Centre Plan Pre-Submission Report: "Proposals to realign the South Circular (A205) to the rear of Laurence House have been promoted for around 40 years⁸." However, there is no clear timetable or funding strategy to carry out this work, which would be a major project. The Catford Town Centre Plan proposes a different solution to congestion at the Catford Gyratory, which consists of a strategy for improving the Catford traffic network that is deliverable (i.e. less complex, less land intensive and less expensive) and results in a cohesive place that benefits pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. The proposals utilise TfL and Council safeguarded land to facilitate delivery.

⁶ Page 12-17, Catford Town Centre Local Plan Proposed Submission 2013, August 2013.

⁷ Pages 2-3, Business Plan 2015/16; Catford Regeneration Partnership Ltd, June 2015.

⁸ Page 35, Catford Town Centre Local Plan Proposed Submission 2013, August 2013.

4.16 The proposal was as follows:

Figure 1: Council's policy for the South Circular (Catford Town Centre Local Plan (CTCLP) Proposed Submission 2013, August 2013)



Orange (light) - Proposed carriageway alignment
Brown (dark) - Proposed footpath

4.17 Following publication of the independent 'Roads Task Force' (RTF) report in July 2013, the Mayor of London requested that TfL and the London boroughs look again at long established road improvement proposals and how they might be implemented. This included the long established proposals to improve the A205 South Circular road in Catford Town Centre by relocating the A205 road behind Laurence House. As a result of the Mayor of London's request that the TfL A205 road improvement be re-examined senior officers at the Council and TfL met to discuss this matter. The outcome of these discussions was that in the new context of the RTF report and possible new resources for implementing road improvements there was merit in re-examining the original TfL A205 road improvement proposals. As a consequence of the above the Local Plan was withdrawn. As the Local Plan has been withdrawn, it is now withdrawn as a planning document and cannot be used for deciding on planning applications. A formal process would be required to resume the Local Plan, including a new round of public consultation on any changes.

4.18 In light of this decision, WSP were commissioned by TfL's Strategy and Outcome Planning to undertake a micro-simulation (VISSIM) traffic modelling study to assess the feasibility of the proposed A205 re-alignment and removal of the gyratory in Catford. The study aimed to provide an evidence base to inform TfL's response to policies being proposed by the Council⁹.

⁹ Page 5, Catford Surface Transport Feasibility Study; TfL, July 2014

4.19 Based on a combination of TfL and LB Lewisham schemes, and further refinement through discussion with TfL and LB Lewisham, WSP recommended a new “hybrid” scheme which was taken forward for testing in micro-simulation in this study. The final “hybrid” Catford town centre highway scheme involves:

- Re-alignment of the A205 Catford Road to the south of Laurence House.
- Conversion of Rushey Green between Brownhill Road and Sangley Road to two-way operation for general traffic.
- Conversion of Plassy Road, Sangley Road and Brownhill Road to two-way operation.
- Conversion of Thomas’ Lane one-way to two-way movement to provide access/egress for proposed town centre development.
- Removal of traffic signals at Brownhill Road / Plassy Road and Plassy Road/Island Retail Park Access.
- Creation of a new signalised pedestrian crossing of Rushey Green between Brownhill Road and Catford Road.
- New junction layout, signal control at Rushey Green/Sangley Road/Bromley Road/Catford Road.
- New junction layout at Plassy Road / Sangley Road.
- New junction layout at Rushey Green/ Brownhill Road.
- New junction layout and signal control at Catford Road/Canadian Avenue/Thomas’ Lane staggered-T junction.
- Public transport changes to bus stops and routes where required by the new scheme¹⁰.

4.20 The modelling that was carried out forecasts that the proposed “hybrid” highway scheme for the Catford Town Centre will provide significant improvement in the town centre traffic operations. In particular, bus journey times are improved and travel distances are reduced. In addition the modelling forecasts an improvement in general traffic journey times.

4.21 The key findings from the modelling results are summarised below:

- Bus journey times are improved for most services in the AM and PM peaks; typically 10% - 30% saving in journey time. Models also forecast that in the “hybrid” scheme scenario most bus services will have shorter journey times than today.
- Network wide improvement in total bus travel time in the AM (10% reduction) and PM (16% reduction), and total travel distance in the AM (3% reduction) and PM (1% reduction).
- General traffic journey times improved in both directions on the A205 through Catford with savings of up to 6min 45s in the eastbound direction in the PM peak.
- General traffic journey time savings in both directions on the A21 with savings of around 4 minutes in the PM peak hour in the northbound direction. The only exception is a small (14 second) increase in the PM peak hour in the southbound direction.

¹⁰ Page 6, Catford Surface Transport Feasibility Study; TfL, July 2014

- Network wide improvement in total travel time in the AM (2% reduction) and PM (17% reduction), and total travel distance in the AM (3% reduction) and PM (2% reduction).
- 4.22 The “hybrid” scheme is shown to generally maintain or improve queue lengths across the model. Queues are significantly improved on Bromley Road northbound approach to Sangley Road, on the Catford Road approach to Rushey Green, and on the Brownhill Road approach to Plassy Road, where traffic signals have been removed. Queueing is forecast to increase on the Rushey Green southbound approach to Sangley Road due to opening up this section of Rushey Green to general traffic. Queues on Canadian Avenue and Thomas’ Lane are also forecast to increase¹¹.
- 4.23 The study noted that “there are clear benefits of a re-aligned A205 through Catford and that the removal of the gyratory also offers improvements in traffic conditions in Catford town centre. The modelling undertaken through this study, and consultation with TfL and LB Lewisham raised a number of issues that will need to be resolved going forward. We recommend that the following aspects are progressed to resolution to confirm the form and viability of the “hybrid” Catford town centre highway scheme:
- Consideration of options to ban the Thomas’ Lane – Canadian Avenue through route
 - Design development of the A21/A205 junction to reduce the overall size of the junction and remove left turn slips to improve pedestrian crossing Consider moving Island Retail Park Access Junction to Sangley Road or Plassy Road/Sangley Road junction, which would require re-configuration of McDonalds car park
 - Consider the feasibility of creating a bus-gate southbound on Rushey Green approaching the signalised pedestrian crossing and Catford Road junction
 - Explore options to reduce overall width of Rushey Green and minimise crossing distances
 - Identify location to re-provide pedestrian crossings at Brownhill Road/Plassy Road and Plassy Road/Island Retail Park Access
 - Review of bus stopping/interchange strategy in town centre with TfL Buses¹².

Development of the former Catford Greyhound Stadium site

- 4.24 The redevelopment of the former Catford Greyhound Stadium site (now known as Catford Green) is proposed to deliver 589 new homes, commercial floor space and a community centre. The development will comprise 13 blocks up to a maximum of eight storeys in height, along with associated landscaping, including naturalisation of the River Ravensbourne and the creation of a public plaza between the stations, plus a footbridge to Doggett Road. The site is being redeveloped by Barratt Homes¹³.

¹¹ Page 7, Catford Surface Transport Feasibility Study; TfL, July 2014

¹² Page 39-40, Catford Surface Transport Feasibility Study; TfL, July 2014

¹³ Caford Green, London Borough of Lewisham website;

<https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/regeneration/Catford-regeneration/Pages/Catford-Green.aspx>

5. Meeting the criteria for a review

5.1 A review into the Catford Regeneration Programme. meets the criteria for carrying out a scrutiny review, because:

- it is a strategic and significant issue
- it affects a number of people living in Lewisham
- scrutiny can add value in this area
- there has already been significant work in terms of the regeneration of Catford and Lewisham Town Centres

6. Terms of reference/Key lines of inquiry

6.1 The terms of reference/key lines of inquiry are as follows:

- What are the key element of the Catford Regeneration Scheme?
- Who are the key partners that can help to progress the various elements of the Scheme?
- What can the Review do to help progress the Catford Regeneration Scheme?
- Are there any barriers that are delaying the scheme – and how can these barriers be overcome?
- What is delaying the decision on whether the A205 should be relocated from its current position; and can this be overcome so a swift decision can be made?
- What can the Committee do to help progress the decision on the location of the Council Offices, as part of the Scheme?

7. Timetable

7.1 The Committee is asked to consider the outline timetable for the review as set out below.

First evidence-taking session (26 November 2015):

- Verbal evidence from the Deputy Mayor of Lewisham: the Cabinet Member for Growth and Regeneration
- Written and verbal evidence from Senior Council Officers on the Catford Regeneration Scheme
- Verbal evidence from Council officers/a representative of the Catford Regeneration Partnership Limited (CRPL)

Second evidence-taking session (14 January 2016)

Verbal and written evidence from:

- TfL representatives
- A selection of representatives from the following:
 - Network Rail
 - Tesco

- Allies & Morrison (on work conducted in 2015 on the feasibility of the regeneration plan)

Recommendations and final report (8 March 2016)

- The Committee will consider a final report presenting all the evidence taken and agree recommendations for submission to Mayor & Cabinet.

8. Further implications

- 8.1 At this stage there are no specific financial, legal, environmental or equalities implications to consider. However, each will be addressed as part of the review.

Background Papers

Sustainable Development Select Committee meeting - Thursday, 16 April

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MId=3829&Ver=4>

Catford Regeneration Partnership Limited – 2015/16 Business Plan

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s37139/CRPL%20Business%20Plan.pdf>

Sustainable Development Select Committee meeting - Tuesday, 9 September

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MId=3444&Ver=4>

Mayor and Cabinet meeting – Wednesday 14 November 2012

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=2459&Ver=4>

For further information please contact Roger Raymond, Scrutiny Manager on 020-8314-9976.

How to carry out an in-depth review

