

KEY DECISION

Double click here and delete this text and the rectangle if the report is not a key decision.



Mayor and Cabinet

Report title: Response to recommendations from Sustainable Development Committee – Catford Town Centre Framework

Date: 9th March 2022

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: Rushey Green, Catford South

Contributors: Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm, Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law, Corporate Governance and Elections.

Outline and recommendations

- 1.1. Sustainable Development Select Committee made a number of specific recommendations regarding the engagement, learning and best practice around the Catford Town Centre Framework. This report sets out a response to these.
- 1.2. That Mayor & Cabinet:
- 1.3. Note the response to the recommendations made from the Sustainable Development Select Committee regarding the Catford Town Centre Framework.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

The Framework was adopted by Mayor & Cabinet on 14 July 2021. Four years of extensive community engagement has informed the draft Framework Plan with over 3,000 comments and ideas from local people shaping the vision. Lewisham Council has worked closely with the local community and local stakeholders in the area to shape a shared vision for Catford town centre.

1. Summary

- 1.1. Sustainable Development Select Committee made a number of specific recommendations regarding the engagement, learning and best practice around the Catford Town Centre Framework. The Catford Town Centre Framework and the successful processes that led to its finalisation are being shared as best practice across the Council. Documents associated with the finalisation of the Framework Plan,

namely the Consultation Statement provide a full account of the innovative approach to community involvement and strategic communications which can be referenced for future projects. Maintaining local enthusiasm is important to ensure that local people continue to feel involved, see progress towards regeneration and recognise the benefits of individual projects. Specific areas of focus for the team's time and resources during 2021/22 are Phase One projects, economic recovery supporting town centre businesses following COVID-19 and Borough of Culture.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Mayor & Cabinet:
- 2.2. Note the response to the recommendations made from the Sustainable Development Select Committee regarding the Catford Town Centre Framework.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. The Catford Town Centre Framework contributes to the implementation of the Council's Corporate Priorities as detailed in the "Corporate Strategy 2018-2022" document which are:
 - Open Lewisham: Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us.
 - Tackling the housing crisis: Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.
 - Giving children and young people the best start in life: Every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential.
 - Building an inclusive local economy: Everyone can access high quality job opportunities, with decent pay and security in our thriving and inclusive local economy.
 - Delivering and defending health, social care and support: Ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need.
 - Making Lewisham greener: Everyone enjoys our green spaces and benefits from a healthy environment as we work to protect and improve our local environment.
 - Building safer communities: Every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from fear of crime.
- 3.2. Lewisham's new Local Plan will build on the existing growth strategy contained within the Core Strategy 2011, which identifies a growth corridor extending from New Cross and Deptford to Catford. Lewisham's new Local Plan proposes a strengthened focus on Lewisham's places, to ensure that development is positively managed with communities over the long-term for the benefit of all.
- 3.3. Lewisham Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, committing to reach an ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030. Change and growth must be positively managed, to build green infrastructure and harness opportunities for walking and cycling alongside more sustainable forms of development in the borough. A number of other strategies and plans also support the need for the Framework from a planning policy perspective.
- 3.4. The Catford Town Centre Framework will form part of the evidence base for the new Lewisham Local Plan's place-making approach. The process of plan making involves significant information gathering and specialist studies at the front end of the process. This information is then used to set policy options and preferred approaches for the plan going forward. Local plans are required to meet prescribed 'tests of soundness' as set out in the NPPF. This includes that they must be 'justified' by evidence. The

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

evidence base will be published alongside the submission Local Plan and be subject to scrutiny through the independent examination process. The Catford Town Centre Framework will form part of this evidence base along with other Area Frameworks.

- 3.5. The London Plan has identified opportunity areas across London in order to help meet the challenges of economic and population growth. These opportunity areas represent London's largest development opportunities. The Plan identifies Catford as a Major town centre within the London retail hierarchy and as an opportunity area where more intensive development is supported.
- 3.6. The focus of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is on a presumption in favour of sustainable development and positive growth. The NPPF provides a high-level planning policy context for Catford, setting out the evidence base requirements for town centre uses and encouraging local authorities to meet town centre needs in full. This is particularly relevant for Catford, given the need to maximise opportunities for the regeneration of the town centre while responding to local needs.

4. Background

- 4.1. Full background information, detailing the previous key decisions made by the Mayor & Cabinet to take a Masterplan Framework approach in Catford, and to re-align the South Circular road through the town centre can be found in the November 7th 2016 Mayor & Cabinet report, the July 19th 2017 Mayor & Cabinet report, the 28th February 2018 Mayor & Cabinet report.
- 4.2. After the road re-alignment approval by Mayor & Cabinet in July 2017, a masterplan brief was prepared for Catford Town Centre. This set the fundamental purpose, objectives, requirements and scope of the study, which was endorsed by Mayor & Cabinet in February 2018.
- 4.3. In July 2018 Architects Studio Egret West (SEW), supported by Carl Turner Architects (renamed Turner Works), Greengage Environmental Consultants and Civic Engineers, were appointed to develop the Catford Town Centre Framework study.
- 4.4. On 16th September 2020, the draft Catford Town Centre Framework was presented to Mayor & Cabinet. The vision was endorsed and approval was granted to release the document for a further period of non-statutory public consultation.
- 4.5. The last phase of public consultation on the draft Framework Plan concluded in February 2021.
- 4.6. The Framework Plan was adopted by Mayor & Cabinet on the 14th July 2021.

5. Response to recommendations from Sustainable Development Committee

- 5.1. The following specific recommendations were made by members of the committee and our response to these follows below.

"3.1. The Committee recommends that the Council should build on its learning from the Catford master planning process, recognising that it is an exemplar of best practice.

3.2. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that Mayor and Cabinet should ensure that the knowledge and insight gained from this process is retained for use on future projects.

3.3. The Committee also believes that Mayor and Cabinet (if it is minded to approve the Catford Town Centre Framework) should ensure that effort (and resourcing) continues to ensure that local residents and stakeholders remain informed and engaged in the regeneration of the town centre as it progresses."

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

- 5.2. The Catford Town Centre Framework and the successful processes that led to its finalisation are being shared as best practice across the Council. Internal briefings, site visits and presentations continue to be scheduled with officers across departments and including the Council's Executive and elected members.
- 5.3. Team Catford's award-winning approach has attracted interest from within local government as well as academic circles. The team continues to explore opportunities to capitalise on its success through industry speaking engagements, training and mentoring opportunities, events and awards, which will in turn, raise the profile of Catford and Lewisham Council helping to generate interest in the regeneration and boost community pride.
- 5.4. Documents associated with the finalisation of the Framework Plan, namely the Consultation Statement provide a full account of the innovative approach to community involvement and strategic communications which can be referenced for future projects.
- 5.5. Maintaining local enthusiasm is important to ensure that local people continue to feel involved, see progress towards regeneration and recognise the benefits of individual projects. This requires a commitment to high standards of community engagement and communications. Team members involved in the Framework Plan's delivery, continue to work closely with third parties bringing forward planning applications and advise on community engagement.
- 5.6. Local people can ask questions and find out more by talking to the team at the pop-up shop and engagement space, House of Catford and at the monthly Catford Food Market. Specific areas of focus for the team's time and resources during 2021/22 are Phase One projects, economic recovery supporting town centre businesses following COVID-19 and Borough of Culture.
- 5.7. A strategic approach ensures that everyone who lives, works or visits the town centre (including Council staff) can find out more through regular updates through the Council's corporate channels as well as Catford-specific communications which include a quarterly community newsletter - Catford Conversations, regular content for Catford Chronicle and Team Catford's digital channels.
- 5.8. A regular internal officer programme board for Catford is ensuring that work in the town centre is coordinated across divisions and allowing for good practice learnt through the development of the framework to be shared more widely in regeneration activity across the Borough.

6. Update on Phase One Projects

- 6.1. The council has progressed a number of projects in recent years to begin the delivery and implementation of the framework's aspirations. These include:
- 6.2. Thomas' Lane Yard will deliver a new pedestrianised space with flexible workspace for local businesses, small shops and food and drink kiosks. The project will deliver up to 100 new homes at 50 per cent affordable and over 2,000 sqm of commercial space across two buildings ranging from eight to twelve storeys.
- 6.3. Pre-planning consultation for Thomas Lane Yard took place in 2021, and gave the public the opportunity to comment on the emerging plans and provide feedback. This included:
 - Postcards issue to 15,000 homes across Rushey Green and Catford South Wards in September 2021. The postcards also offered a Freepost address for the returned comments. An additional email feedback address was provided along with details about the forthcoming Zoom events
 - Two zoom events held on 14th & 21st September 2021 with the project team.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

- Three Drop-In and Site Walkabout sessions held over two weekends in September 2021 in 17/18 Catford Broadway.
 - Via articles in Catford Chronicles and locally distributed postcards, people were informed of the Beyond Broadway website address that had been developed specifically for the project by Turner Works. The website provided information about the developing plans for the site and also collated comments and feedback.
 - Wider social media output to the community.
- 6.4. The former Catford Constitutional Club and the adjoining Georgian house will be refurbished as part of the Thomas' Lane Yard proposals enabled by the GLA's Good Growth Fund. The locally listed Victorian building was forced to close in August 2019 due to structural and safety issues. The Council has recently completed an Invitation to Tender exercise to appoint a new operator for the venue.
- 6.5. Pre-planning consultation with the public to seek their views and help form the designs for the former CCC building took place in 2021 and included:
- Postcards issued to 15,000 homes across both Rushey Green and Catford South Wards in conjunction with an article inside the Catford Conversations magazine in May 2021. The postcards also offered a Freepost address for the returned comments and an article in the magazine provided a wider background to the scheme. An additional email feedback address was provided along with details about the forthcoming Zoom events.
 - Through articles and postcard, people were informed of the Beyond Broadway website address that had been developed specifically for the project by Turner Works. The website provided information about the developing plans for the building and also collated comments and feedback.
 - Two Zoom events held on 18 & 20 May between the hours of: 6pm and 7pm.
 - Wider social media output to the community.
 - The events also highlighted the opportunity for a new operators for the former CCC which received 7 expressions of interest.
- 6.6. Holbeach Road Public Realm improvement will deliver the regeneration of approximately 500sqm of the pedestrianised section of Holbeach Road enabled by the GLA's Get Building Fund. The project will deliver new paving, seating / play, trees and planting, enhanced CCTV and in-ground power supply to support potential future events. The project aims to increase footfall to the area to support existing businesses including Catford Mews who aim to open out onto the street.
- 6.7. In November 2021, information boards describing the proposals were first displayed in Catford Mews and 17/18 Catford Broadway. The project was also featured in the Autumn 2021 issue of Lewisham Life.
- 6.8. The station links project aims to improve the area between Catford and Catford Bridge stations to create a welcoming, new place for local people and commuters. This may include the opening up of the underpass below the South Circular Road to make it easier to walk and cycle, implementation of broad river decks with new planting and seating and covered cycle parking.
- 6.9. Consultation with the public took place in 2021 to seek their views and feedback on the scheme:
- In May 2021, two consultations took place online and consisted of a presentation of the project to date followed by discussions and three in

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

person consultations held on site consisting of a walkabout.

- Consultation boards made available online via the commonplace website where public could comment until 13/06/21.
- 6.10. The council and TfL continue to progress designs for the realignment of the A205. The realignment will create a new area of public realm in place of the existing A205, which will be a focal point for the new town centre. The council has secured £10m Housing Infrastructure Fund Marginal Viability Funding from the GLA, to support the realignment of the road. Further funding is being sought by TfL from Department for Transport's Major Road Network funding programme.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the recommendations set out in this report.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. There are no specific legal implications arising directly from the recommendations set out in this report.

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1. The Council's Comprehensive Equality Scheme for 2016-20 provides an overarching framework and focus for the Council's work on equalities and helps ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

- 9.2. The Catford Town Centre Framework does not have any direct equalities implications.

10. Climate change and environmental implications

- 10.1. There are no specific climate change and environmental implications arising directly from the recommendations set out in this report.

11. Crime and disorder implications

- 11.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising directly from the recommendations set out in this report.

12. Health and wellbeing implications

- 12.1. There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising directly from the recommendations set out in this report.

13. Background papers

- 13.1. [Catford Regeneration Programme – Catford Town Centre Framework.](#)

14. Report author(s) and contact

- 14.1. Charlotte Harrison, Catford Regeneration Programme Consultant, 020 8314 8049, charlotte.harrison@lewisham.gov.uk
- 14.2. Francesca White, Project Manager, 07501 727426, francesca.white@lewisham.gov.uk
- 14.3. Comments for and on behalf of the Executive Director for Corporate Resources: sofia.mahmood@lewisham.gov.uk
- 14.4. Comments for and on behalf of the Director of Law, Governance and HR: Mia.agnew@lewisham.gov.uk (Ref JW).

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>