

A21 Development Framework

DRAFT

A21 Development Framework

Contents

1	Introduction and Vision	3	5	Potential Development Sites	70
	Using this document	6		Overview	71
	Vision statement	7		Lewisham Town Centre (South) Character Area	72
	The six guiding principles	8		Site 1- Land at Endgate Street	72
	Project opportunities	14		Site 2- Slathwaite Car Park	76
	Spatial opportunities for the A21	15		Site 3- House on the hill	80
2	Overarching Guidance	21		Site 4- Albion Way Car Park	84
	Building heights	22		Site 5- 203-221 Lewisham High Street	88
	A distinctive public realm	24		University Hospital Lewisham, Park and Greens Character Area	92
	Architectural character	28		Site 6- Shell Garage	92
	Air quality	29		Rushey Green and Catford Character Area	96
3	Character Area Frameworks	36		Site 7- Aldi Site	96
	Overview	37		Site 8- Capital House	100
	Lewisham Town Centre (South)	38		Bellingham Character Area	105
	Ladywell Village	40		Site 9- Ravensbourne Retail Park	105
	University Hospital Lewisham, Park and Greens	42		Site 10- Land at Randlesdown Road	113
	Rushey Green and Catford	45		Southend Character Area	117
	Bellingham	47		Site 11- Catford Police Station	117
	Southend	52		Site 12- Hudson House	121
	Downham	55		Site 13- Car Showroom	125
4	Typological guidance	58		Downham Character Area	129
	Using the guidance	59		Site 14- BP garage	129
	Index of sites covered by typological guidance	60		Site 15- Beadles Garage	133
	Terraced parades	61		Appendix	137
	Small employment sites	64		Appendix 1: Emerging Transport Strategy	138
	Large employment sites	67		Appendix 2: Good Practice Examples	146
				Appendix 3: Public Consultation	149

Introduction and Vision

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Introduction and Vision

Project introduction



The A21 Development Framework Study Area

- Study area boundary
- Potential development sites

Project introduction

- 1.1 The A21 is the central arterial road in Lewisham - an historic north to south 'spine' that runs through most of the Borough linking several centres. The draft Lewisham Local Plan recognises the potential of the A21 corridor to deliver much needed additional housing and a key purpose of the A21 Development Framework is to identify where and how this could be delivered.
- 1.2 The A21 forms part of the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) and as such TfL is the landowner, highway, traffic, signalling and public transport planning authority for the corridor. It has important role in the flow of vehicles through Lewisham and for London overall.
- 1.3 As part of assessing the development potential for different areas along the A21 it is necessary to identify and describe how the historic environment should be preserved and enhanced and local character strengthened. Other key objectives of the framework are to identify how the public realm and movement along the A21 could be transformed to deliver an attractive environment for current and future residents and visitors to the A21.
- 1.4 As a Framework document the A21 Development Framework will not be part of the Council's statutory Development Plan and will therefore not carry weight as a Development Plan Document (DPD) or Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). However it may be a material consideration when considering planning decisions.

Introduction and Vision

Project introduction

The Study Area

- 1.5 The study area stretches from Lewisham Town Centre in the north to the borough boundary with Bromley in the south.
- 1.6 The A21 Development Framework does not provide comprehensive guidance for areas within the A21 Development Framework that overlap with the study areas for the Lewisham Town Centre Local Plan and the Catford Town Centre Framework.
- 1.7 For the part of the A21 Development Framework study area that also lies within the Lewisham Town Centre Local Plan DPD study area, the Lewisham Town Centre Local Plan DPD remains the primary planning guidance document.
- 1.8 For the part of the A21 Development Framework study area that also lies within the Catford Town Centre Area Framework study area, the Catford Town Centre Area Framework remains the primary planning guidance document.
- 1.9 University Hospital Lewisham and the Lewisham Shopping Centre are excluded from the scope of this study.

Potential development sites

- 1.10 The A21 Development Framework tests potential development sites within the study area. The aim is to explore design-led approaches that aim to maximise the potential of the sites and ground floor non-residential uses to support local centres.

Wider policy context

- 1.11 This framework should be read alongside the Lewisham Local Plan, the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework and national London and Lewisham transport policy and guidance.
- 1.12 The A21 forms part of the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) and as such TfL is the landowner, highway, traffic, signalling and public transport planning authority for the corridor. It has important role in the management of traffic through Lewisham and for London overall.
- 1.13 Buses play an important movement role along this corridor and the need to accommodate freight movements and the challenge of integrating cycling and bus infrastructure are recognised.

- 1.14 When transport and public realm proposals are developed for the A21 they must adhere to all relevant guidance and best practice and seek to improve the comfort and safety of pedestrians, cyclists and bus passengers.

- 1.15 Transport proposals should conform with the Mayor's Transport Strategy objectives including Good Growth and Vision Zero and follow TfL guidance including Streetscape Guidance, London Cycling Design Standards and Accessible Bus Stops.

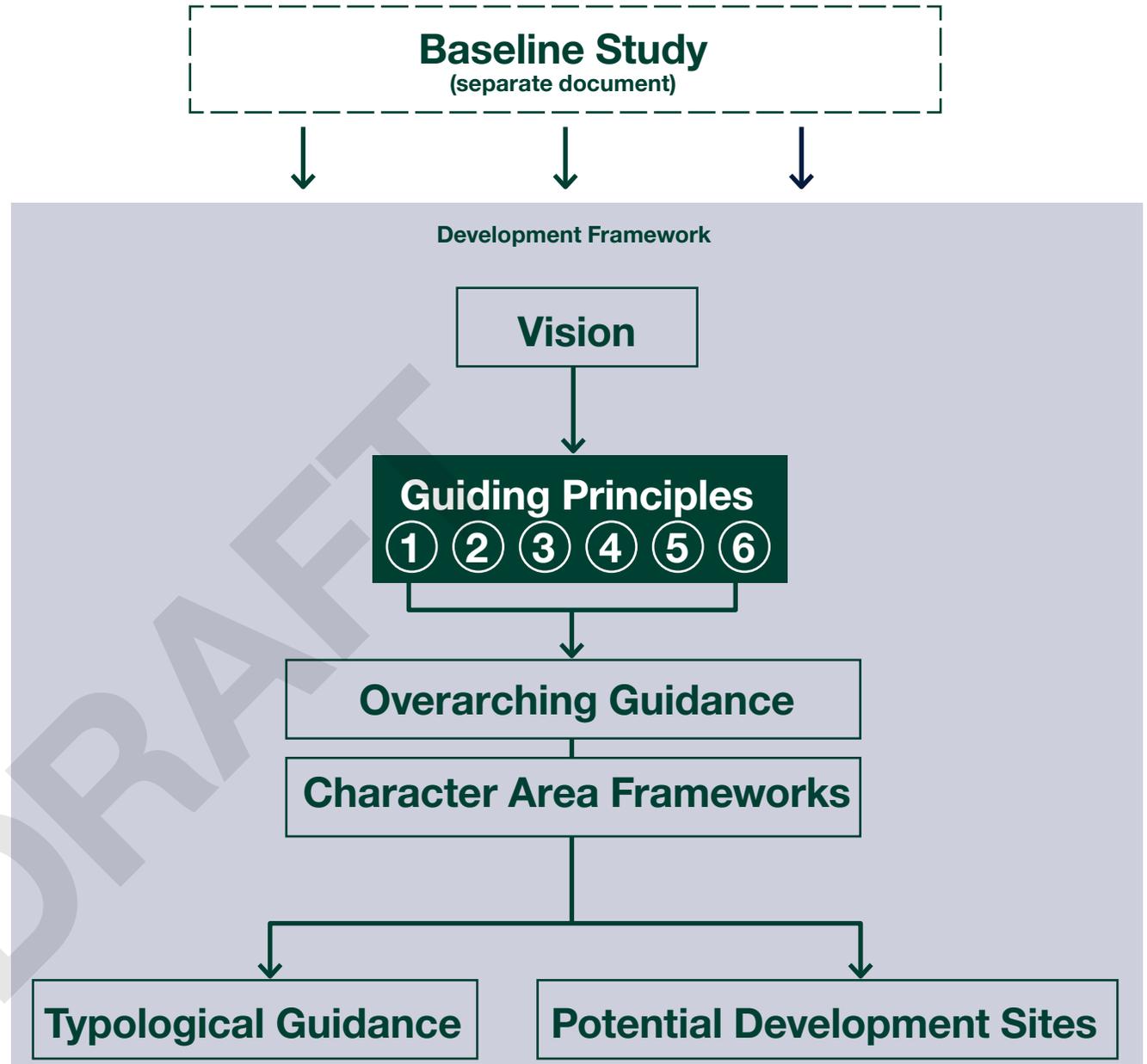
- 1.16 The transport proposals are at an early design stage and require further investigation and consideration to determine if they can be taken forward. This will involve collaborative working between TfL and the London Borough of Lewisham. There may be other transport priorities that take precedence over the concept proposals provided in the document in the future, which will be dependent on future broader movement strategies and transport hierarchy.

- 1.17 The identification of potential funding sources, delivery mechanisms and the prioritisation of public realm

Introduction and Vision

Using this document

- 1.18 The vision captures the overarching intention of the A21 Development Framework.
- 1.19 The Guiding Principles on the following pages expand the Vision. They address the many opportunities of the corridor as a whole. They are a set of specific thematic objectives that can be used to measure any proposal for the A21 area.
- 1.20 The study area is divided into a series of 8 distinct character areas based around commercial centres along the A21 (see page 18 for map of character areas). Each Character Area Framework describes the principal tactical moves that will strengthen that area's functioning and distinctiveness.
- 1.21 Guidance for individual sites is provided in two forms. The Typological Guidance covers a variety of conditions within the character areas, and is organised by site type and scale of intervention. The Potential Development Sites section comprises indicative concept schemes. Key principles are described and the potential number of homes and non-residential floorspace that each site could deliver is estimated.
- 1.22 The A21 Development Framework Baseline Study precedes and forms the evidence base for this framework and provides detailed underpinning for this document's recommendations. Both the A21 Development Framework Baseline Study and the A21 Development Framework should be read with reference to each other.



Introduction and Vision

Vision statement

Our vision for the A21 is:

To strengthen Lewisham's spine as a place that **attracts, connects and inspires**.

To realise its potential to deliver an optimum level of **housing and social infrastructure** while improving the environment itself as a place of **health, safety and sociability**.

To **define and enhance the character** of the series of neighbourhoods that comprise the A21 area.

Guiding Principle #1 **Maximise the delivery of new homes to meet the** **Borough's identified need**

The A21 provides an opportunity to intensify and increase housing density. Massing can be increased beyond prevailing building heights in appropriate areas. In line with an uplift in density there must be a strong emphasis towards high quality residential design as a contribution to place-making.



Guiding Principle #2

Strengthen the distinctiveness of local centres, enhance the historic environment, and meet local employment and social infrastructure needs

The distinctiveness and heritage of each centre and character area should be celebrated and enhanced. Each centre along the A21 is unique, and these differences should be amplified through use and character, as well as provision of a rich experience. It's important that the A21 provides social infrastructure for local people.



Listed carriage ramp and the market yard, Deptford

Guiding Principle #3 **Support better air quality and create an exemplary healthy street at scale**

The way future buildings are positioned and designed along the A21 can improve air ventilation and as a result improve air quality on the streets. With this, additional greenery and more sustainable travel, the A21 can become a 'Healthy Street' environment where people want to dwell and gather.



Guiding Principle #4 Promote sustainable modes of transport

Shifts in the way people move suggest the A21 could be much cleaner in the near future. Make crossing routes safer and create a continuous cycle path to transform the corridor into being attractive for pedestrians and cyclists. Enhance and create new parallel walking and cycling routes to the A21 to provide lower trafficked corridors. Improve the Waterlink Way and links to it.



Guiding Principle #5

Increase tree planting and improve the condition of and access to the River Ravensbourne and other natural assets

The Ravensbourne is close but not always accessible and a key goal is to integrate the A21 into the wider blue/green network. East-west connections should be improved. Development proposals should look to re-naturalise the river wherever possible and provide access to and along the Ravensbourne. This will mean setting new building frontages back from the river and redefining backs of buildings as frontages. The condition and biodiversity value of the river should also be enhanced.

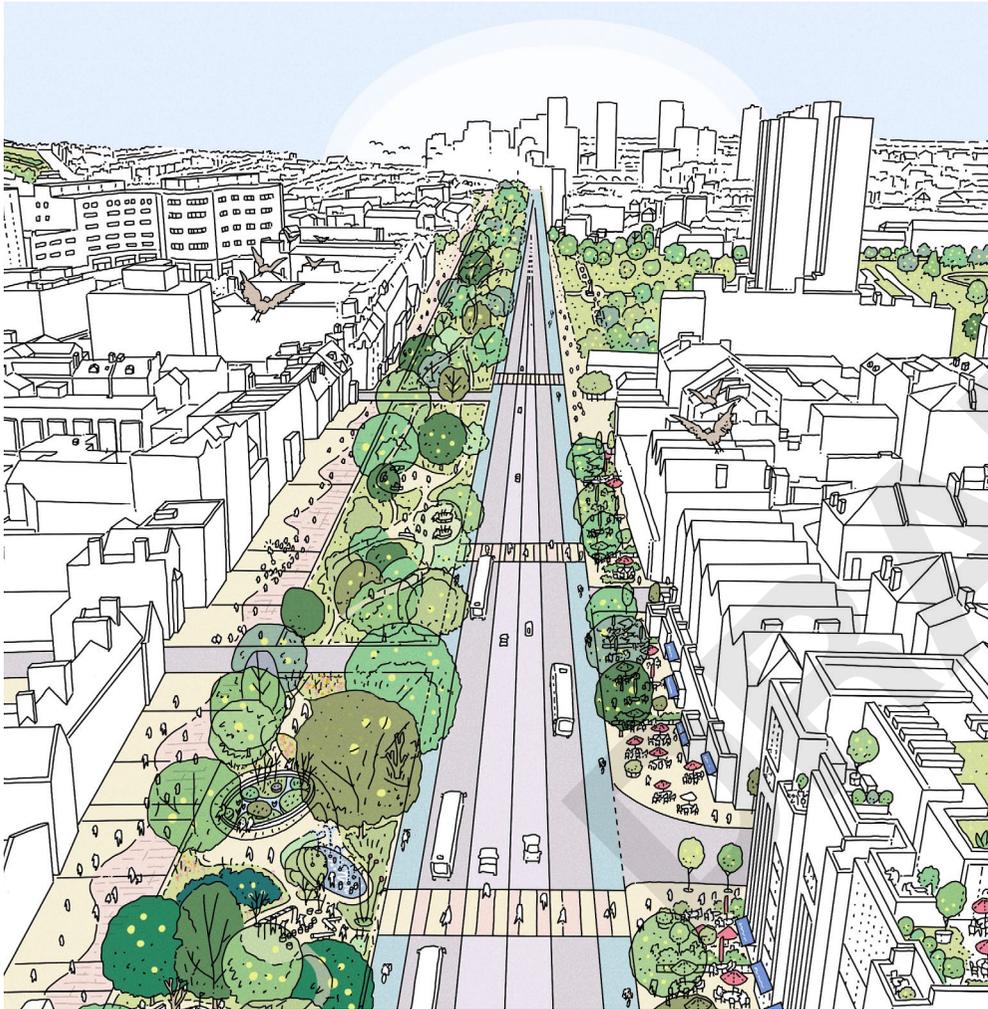
Guiding Principle #6 Celebrate a rhythm of pause and intensity

The A21 has open spaces of a variety of sizes and character and similarly the scale of development rises and falls in different areas of the road. This variety should be celebrated in order to provide diversity, legibility and breaks in the intensity of development along the corridor.



Introduction and Vision

Project opportunities



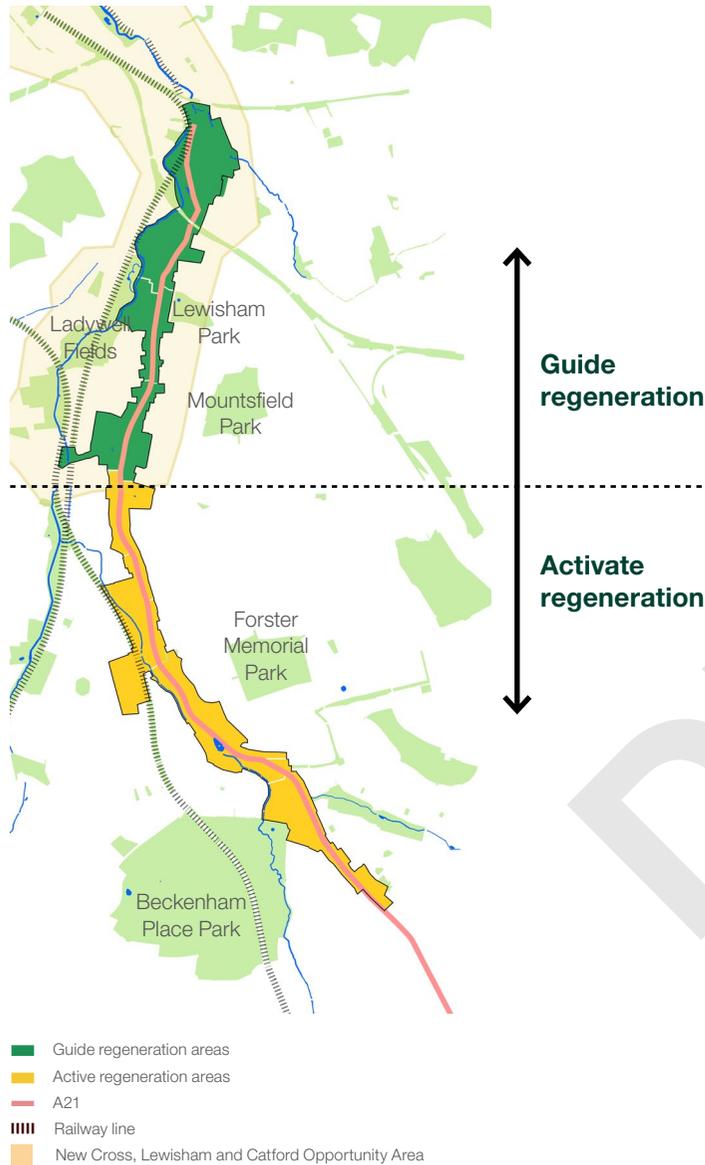
A vision for part of the A21 in the context of LB Lewisham

Opportunities

- 1.23 The A21 Development Framework Study Area runs through the centre of the borough and is a place where community life happens. Whilst the corridor contains homes, places of work and social amenities, its identity is now primarily as a movement corridor - that is, its movement function is greater than its place function.
- 1.24 Issues surrounding air quality, noise, safety and poor public realm hinder its offer to be an attractive place to live and work.
- 1.25 One of the tasks of the A21 Development Framework is to help improve these current conditions.
- 1.26 Public access to the River Ravensbourne that runs parallel to the A21 and green infrastructure could be improved.
- 1.27 The condition and biodiversity value of the River Ravensbourne could be increased having regard to the adopted River Corridor Improvement Plan SPD (2015)
- 1.28 The A21 Development Framework Study Area comprises a number of character areas, each with their own distinct character. A goal of the framework is to respond positively to local character whilst also optimising the potential to deliver new homes.

Introduction and Vision

Spatial opportunities for the A21



Summary of Findings from A21 Development Framework Baseline Study

1.29 The A21 area can be broadly characterised as having two distinct sub-areas - with the northern sub-area being much more urban in character than the southern sub-area and the dividing line between the two sub-areas being located to the south of Catford Town Centre.

1.30 The southern area has a suburban character. Although some development of this area occurred in Victorian times, a lot of the development in this area came forward during the Edwardian and inter-war period. The northern sub-area was developed earlier and today has a much more intense and urban character than the southern sub-area. A church was located at the St Mary's Church as far back as the 10th Century and a lot of development came forward in the northern sub-area during the Victorian era.

1.31 Public transport is generally much better in the north (majority Public Transport Accessibility Level 5-6b with some 3) than the south (PTAL 1b-4). The south of the A21 Development Framework study area is predominantly punctuated by high street parades set within quiet residential areas and consistent with its PTALs, there is more reliance on car use. See PTAL map on page 18.

1.32 Street life is most active in the north of the study area. South of Catford the street life of the pavement is much more localised to parades of shops.

1.33 The River Ravensbourne is an important asset that runs close by to the A21 to the west and there is the potential to improve public access to it and its biodiversity value.

Spatial Opportunities

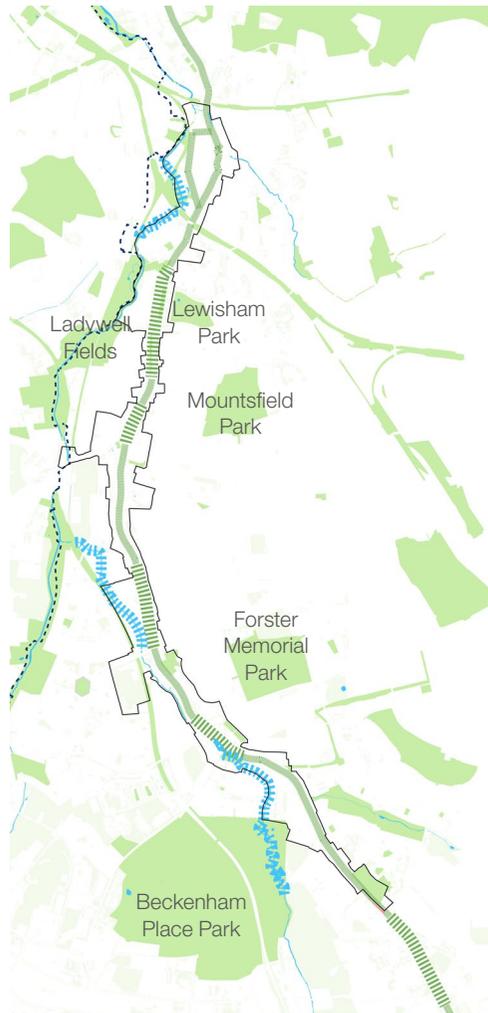
1.34 As a result, we can broadly characterise two different approaches to regeneration to these two sub-areas: The north provides natural market conditions for development on appropriate sites. The role of this framework is to **guide regeneration** to meet wider planning and place-making objectives ensuring a regularity of lower density (moments of pause) within what is largely a continuously active streetscape.

1.35 For the south to realise its development potential, the framework seeks to **identify areas for intensification and regeneration** by highlighting to owners of sites in appropriate locations the potential of their sites. There is untapped development potential and opportunities for public realm focused improvements (moments of intensification) within what is a largely residential character.

1.36 Different scales of development will be appropriate for different locations along the A21.

Introduction and Vision

Spatial opportunities: Green and blue infrastructure



- ▬▬▬ Aspirational Ravensbourne riverside links
- ▬▬▬ Existing green space/pocket park designated as a 'London Square'
- Study area
- Waterlink Way walking and cycling route

Summary of Findings from A21 Development Framework Baseline Study

- 1.37 In this document, green/blue infrastructure is the multifunctional, interdependent network of open green spaces, green features, natural and constructed watercourses, standing water and drainage features in the A21 area. These include the Ravensbourne and small section of the River Quaggy in the north, as well as green common verges (many designated as London Squares*), river and ponds.
- 1.38 Although the Waterlink Way is a defining feature of the study area from Catford and further north where it provides a walking and cycling route along the River Ravensbourne, to the south of Catford the River Ravensbourne is inconsistently accessible from the A21.
- 1.39 The London Squares are green verges that front the A21 to the north of Catford and include several mature trees. Although currently in poor condition, the green spaces and their trees provide an important visual amenity that has the opportunity to be enhanced. See map of the London Squares.

Spatial Opportunities

- 1.40 The River Ravensbourne has four dominant conditions: (1) ponds and soft edges, (2) culverted, (3) canalised, and (4) ponds that were associated with former mills. There is the opportunity to improve the condition and the biodiversity of the River Ravensbourne and wherever possible the river should be renaturalised in line with Lewisham's River Corridor Improvement Plan SPD.
- 1.41 Likewise the amenity and biodiversity value of green assets like Lewisham Park should be improved and better signposting provided to improve their accessibility.
- 1.42 All new development will be required to provide a net gain of biodiversity.
- 1.43 Green and open spaces along the A21 corridor should be improved.
- 1.44 Wherever possible the river should be renaturalised in line with Lewisham's River Corridor Improvement Plan SPD.
- 1.45 All new development will be expected to achieve an Urban Greening Factor score of 0.4 in line with the London Plan Urban Greening Factor London Plan Guidance.

* The London Squares were designated by the London Squares Preservation Act 1931.

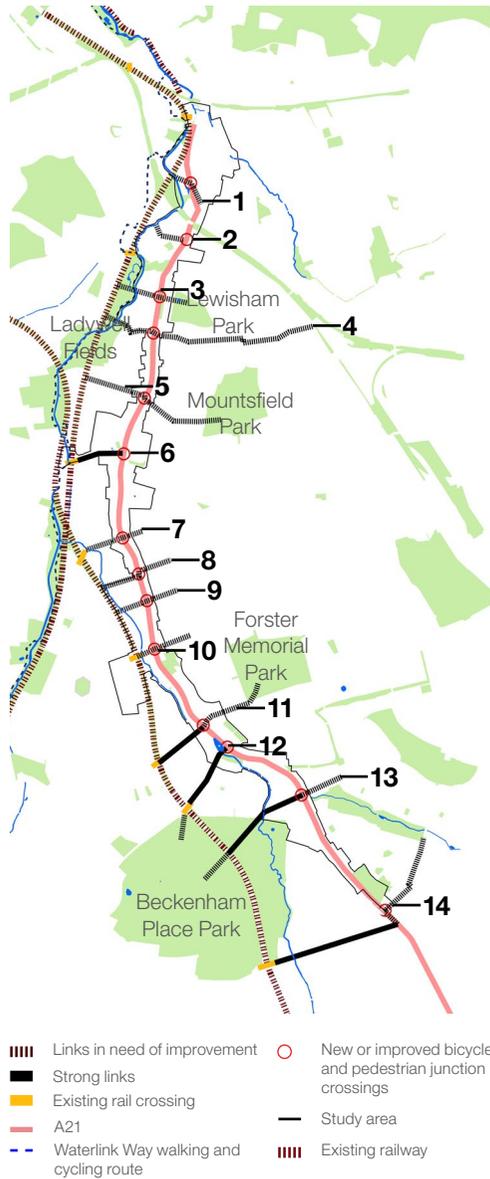


London Squares designated by the London Squares Preservation Act of 1931

- Existing London Squares
- Historic Footprint of London Squares

Introduction and Vision

Spatial opportunities: Movement network



Summary of Findings from A21 Development Framework Baseline Study

1.46 Current Carriageway and Footway Widths
For the majority of the A21 corridor, the carriageway width is generous with two lanes (or one very wide lane) in either direction. The presence of the bus lanes is inconsistent, however they are given the priority for the entirety of the A21 corridor study area. Cycle lane provision is intermittent and poorly defined.

1.47 Current Footpath Condition
While pavement widths are generous in some locations, there are issues with car parking, bus stops, vehicle cross-overs to front gardens, and railings to soft landscaped areas which cause clutter and act as impediments to pedestrian movement. Current signed walking routes avoid running along the A21, directing pedestrians to more attractive paths.

Spatial Opportunities

1.48 The movement spatial opportunities can be categorised under two themes related to improving a 'laddered' network of routes:
1) The opportunity to strengthen east-west routes to and across the A21.

This will involve improving pedestrian and cycling facilities at A21 crossings and creating new crossings.

2) The opportunity to improve sustainable travel along the A21 corridor. The A21 should be welcoming for cyclists with continuous segregated cycle lanes where possible, that are legible through main junctions (but do not result in the net-loss of green space or the felling of mature trees unless all other options for the location of the cycle route have been thoroughly assessed and satisfactorily discounted). A big emphasis should be made on creating an attractive environment for walking and dwelling on pavements where greenery plays an important role.

1.49 It is important to create and maintain a hierarchy and separation between different traffic flows: pedestrian - cyclist - public transport - car.

1.50 The transport proposals are emerging strategic aspirations and if and when specific projects are funded then more detailed analysis of their potential impacts will be undertaken.

1.51 Please see the Emerging Transport Strategy in the appendix for further movement proposals.

East-West Links

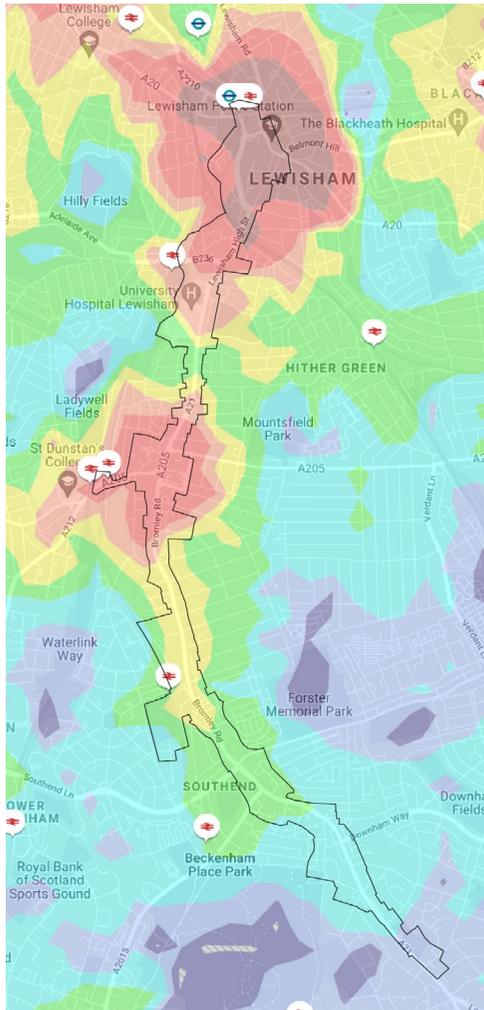
1.52 A number of key east-west links across the A21 have been identified that provide connections to key destinations either on or close by to the A21. The following east-west links are routes between key destinations on or in near proximity to A21. Routes highlighted in green are the focus east-west routes along A21.

1.53 To the north of Catford, improving east-west connections between the A21 and the Waterlink Way is a priority to facilitate walking and cycling between Catford and Lewisham Town Centre.

- 1. Ravensbourne River** → A21 → Lewisham High Street
- 2. Ravensbourne River** → Wearside Road → A21
- 3. Ladywell Fields** → University Hospital Lewisham site → A21 → Lewisham Park
- 4. Ladywell Fields** → Albacore Crescent → A21 → Mount Pleasant Road → Hither Green station
- 5. Adenmore Road** → Holbeach Road → A21 → Ringstead Road → Mountsfield Park
- Catford Stations → A205 → A21
- 7. Fordmill Road** → Canadian Avenue → A21 → Bargery Road
- 8. Ravensbourne River** → Aitken Road → A21 → Arran Road

Introduction and Vision

Spatial opportunities: Movement network



PTAL map of study area

Source: TfL via WebCAT tool

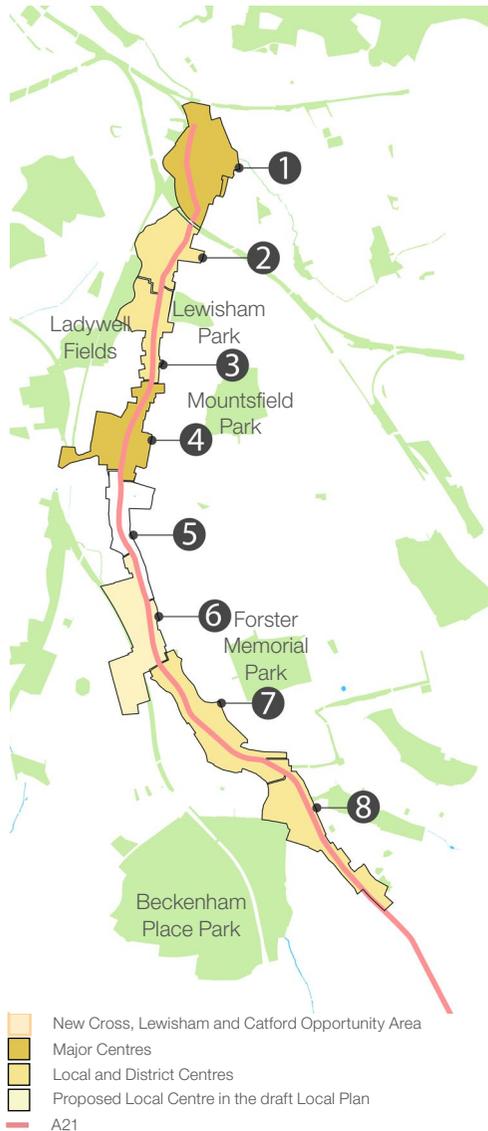
Hawkins\Brown © | A21 Development Framework

9. **Bellingham Trading Estate** ^{1.51}
Ravensbourne Retail Park site →
Crantock Road
10. **Bellingham Station** →
Randlesdown Road → A21 →
Bellingham Road ^{1.52}
11. **Southend Lane** → Whitefoot Lane
→ Forster Memorial Park
12. **Beckenham Place Park** →
Beckenham Hill Road → A21
13. **Beckenham Place Park** → Old
Bromley Road → Downham Way →
Downham Playing Fields
14. **Ravensbourne Station** →
Ravensbourne Avenue → Elstree
Hill → Avondale Road → Alexandra
Crescent → Downham Playing
Fields

^{1.54} It should be noted that the railway is a significant barrier to east-west movement to the west of the A21.

Introduction and Vision

Spatial opportunities: Character



Summary of Findings from A21 Development Framework Baseline Report

- 1.55 The Baseline Report studied eight character areas. These areas are approximations of what is understood to represent local neighbourhoods.
- 1.56 It is recommended that new development responds positively to the distinctiveness of individual character areas.

1. Lewisham Town Centre (South) Character Area

a place of high density development focused around key transport infrastructure

2. Ladywell Village Character Area

a place of many historic buildings with good accessibility to the River Ravensbourne

3. University Hospital Lewisham, Park and Greens Character Area

a place with opportunities to enhance the London Squares* (linear pocket-parks)

4. Rushey Green and Catford Character Area

a changing town centre with a shift in density and associated uses

5. Culverley Green Character Area

a suburban residential area much of which lies within the Culverley Green Conservation Area.

6. Bellingham Character Area

a proposed Local Centre where there is an opportunity to redevelop existing large retail units to create a more intensified mixed use development with homes, retail and improved public access to the River Ravensbourne

7. Southend Character Area

a place of community assets and an opportunity to rethink crossings

8. Downham Character Area

a place to improve the local parade and generate public realm improvements

Spatial Opportunities

- 1.57 While the A21 is a consistent thread throughout the study area, this report recognises the changing character from north to south and particularly between each of its town, district and local centres.
- 1.58 Each of the different character areas of the A21 has a varied character which manifests itself visually in the scale, height and massing of development, townscape and architecture, building use, public realm and landscape design. It is recommended that new development responds positively to the distinctiveness of individual character areas.
- 1.59 This manifests in many ways including the retail offer, social amenities, street life, hours of activity, built massing, movement patterns and landscape. This framework seeks to reinforce the distinctiveness of centres whilst providing a consistently positive approach to activating and intensifying development along the entire A21 study area. There is an opportunity to increase density of development along the A21 study area without compromising townscape or adjoining occupiers due to significant width of the road.

* The London Squares were designated by the London Squares Preservation Act 1931. See map of the London Squares on page 16.

Introduction and Vision

Spatial opportunities: Development potential



Summary of Findings from A21 Development Framework Baseline Study

1.60 Flatted development is the predominant existing typology along the A21 from Catford and to the north. Lower density terraced and semi-detached housing is predominant to the south of Catford.

Spatial Opportunities

1.61 The A21 Study Area has the potential to significantly contribute towards addressing the borough's housing needs, due to its connectedness, concentration of amenities and presence of developable sites.

1.62 The A21 Development Framework does not include an assessment of future social infrastructure needs. This information is provided in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan that is informed by the Local Plan. The Council works with key infrastructure providers to prepare the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.