

Croydon Opportunity Area

General character

11.50 Croydon Opportunity Area is an urban area with diverse character types. It is the only one of Croydon's 16 Places to contain all nine non-residential character types, each of which influences the way in which this Place has developed. The centre of Croydon is typically characterised by the dominant intersecting "Linear Infrastructure" of the roads (such as the Wellesley Road, Park Lane and the Flyover) rail and tram lines which create distinct separations between the different character types. The "Shopping Centres and Precincts" and Tower buildings are located to the west and east of the central spine along Wellesley Road. These areas have a larger grain and predominantly contain modern and contemporary buildings. The character of Wellesley Road has also been influenced by the number of "Large Buildings in an Urban Setting" which are concentrated to the north and east of this road and in close proximity to the "Transport Nodes". There are also a small number of "Large Buildings in an Urban Setting" located to the south. Radiating southwards from the "Shopping Centres and Precincts" are the "Urban Shopping Area" character. The urban grain of these areas reflects the surrounding residential character with a smaller finer grain.

11.51 The residential areas are located around the edge of this place and consist of a predominant mix of "Large Houses on Relatively Small Plots", "Terraced Houses and Cottages" and "Mixed Type Flats". Interspersed amongst the residential areas are small pockets of "Industrial Estates", "Retail Estates and Business and Leisure Parks", and "Institutions with Associated Grounds".

Policy DM32: Croydon Opportunity Area

Preferred option

DM32.1 To enable development opportunities; including public realm improvements, to be undertaken in a cohesive and coordinated manner a Croydon Opportunity Area Planning Framework and masterplans for Fair Field, Mid Croydon and, West Croydon and East Croydon have been adopted. Additionally a masterplan will be created for Old Town.

DM32.2 To ensure development opportunities positively transform the local character and include public realm improvements that are undertaken in a cohesive and coordinated manner, a masterplan will be considered for the area within New Town and the Retail Core⁴⁶.

DM32.3 In the London Road area to ensure that proposals positively enhance and strengthen the local character and setting of locally listed buildings, the development should:

- a. Complement the existing maximum height of 4 storeys;
- b. Incorporate multi-stock brick as the predominant facing material;
- c. Retain, enhance and positively reference existing set backs of the major massing above ground floors; and
- d. Retain, enhance and positively reference architectural detailing on locally listed buildings.

DM32.4 In the area along Sydenham and Lansdowne Road, to facilitate growth and enhance the sense of place, developments should retain and create glimpses and separation distances between buildings in order to improve openness within the edge of the town centre.

46 As defined in the Croydon Opportunity Area Planning Framework, pg 167

How the preferred option would work

11.52 A map showing the areas in which Policies DM32.2 to DM32.4 apply can be found in Appendix 11.

11.53 The extent of Croydon Opportunity Area is mostly covered by the Masterplans for Fair Field, Mid Croydon, Old Town, West Croydon and East Croydon which address the complex issues within these areas. With the exception of the London Road area and along Sydenham and Lansdowne Roads the character elsewhere in the opportunity area can be successfully managed by the general policies.

London Road area

11.54 London Road is the northern gateway to Croydon Metropolitan Centre. Buildings range from listed Victorian high street buildings to large modernist residential and commercial buildings along with run down and derelict units. Similarly, there is a mixed quality public realm, from the welcoming and colourful entrance at West Croydon station to large unused spaces and car yards to the north of London Road. West Croydon station, the Lidl supermarket and the proximity of the Retail Core and the University Hospital are some of the major attractions that draw people into the area. The area has been undergoing change due to proximity to the town centre and a major transport interchange of West Croydon Station. Additionally a number of redevelopment opportunities have arisen from the civil unrest damages.

11.55 The London Road area has a variety of fine examples of architecture which has been recognised by being designated as locally listed buildings. Though their articulation varies, they have a number of common characteristics such as: regular rhythm of elevations marked by windows and the way they are framed, high quality workmanship and materials. There are fine examples of brickwork and render. A number of buildings, which were originally set back from the street, have been extended on the ground floor. These create a feel of openness, more human scale and introduce formal diversity to the street.

11.56 In order to accommodate growth in a way that respects and enhances the diversity of the London Road character, new development should be informed and inspired by these qualities.

Area along Sydenham and Lansdowne Road

11.57 Areas along Sydenham and Lansdowne Road have a very mixed character due to undergoing densification and redevelopment. The original character of “Large Buildings on Relatively Small Plots” is being gradually replaced with “Mixed Type Flats”. Residential buildings of a detached form, with spacing between them, set back and forecourts are key features of urban pattern in the area.

11.58 In order to maintain and enhance the distinctive character of the residential edge of the town centre, and to prevent further erosion of it, a cohesive approach needs to be taken to ensure new developments retain and reference this urban pattern.