



Looking south on Dingwall Road

04

Land uses

CHAPTER CONTENTS

- Existing land uses
- Proposed land use approach
- Retail core
- High streets
- Residential
- Office and hotels
- Social infrastructure
- Decentralised energy

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- Promote a flexible plan and encourage a mix of uses across the Opportunity Area
- Promote the Town Centre in line with its London Metropolitan Centre status
- Promote new residential across the whole of the Croydon Opportunity Area
- Retail Core - reinvigorate comparison retail, leisure and residential
- New Town and East Croydon - focus commercial and new residential uses
- Mid Croydon and Fairfield - new residential and leisure, with small scale retail and commercial (close to East Croydon station) whilst also retaining its Civic function

EXISTING LAND USES

4.1 The dominant land use in the COA is office space, with retail space and car parking coming second and third. There are also smaller amounts of residential, hotel, education and community space.

4.2 Office space is the largest land use in the COA. The COA is London’s third largest office location after the City of London and Canary Wharf, and contains approximately 530,000 sqm. of office space (Croydon Council, 2011). The most successful office area in the COA is in the New Town and East Croydon character area. This area contains several high quality ‘Grade A’ office buildings. This area achieves the highest rentals and the least vacancies.

4.3 Across the COA as a whole, approximately 33% of office stock is vacant and a large proportion of the office space achieves rental values of only £22 per sq.ft (Arnold and Baldwin, 2009). This is below the rental level necessary to attract new office investment. A large portion of vacant office buildings are of poor physical quality that are not suited to modern commercial demands and so a lot of these buildings will remain vacant.

4.4 Retail is the second biggest land use in the COA. The COA is south London’s largest retail destination and attracts people from across London and the south-east. In 2008 Croydon was ranked

20th retail destination in the UK in the Management Horizons Retail Index. The COA has 218,547 sqm. of retail floorspace (Experian GOAD, 2011) and in 2010 the area had a retail turnover of £770 million (Drivers Jonas, 2010).

4.5 Comparison goods shopping is focussed in the Retail Core character area. While on the high streets, the majority of uses are independent retailing, banks and building societies, restaurants, take-aways, bars and community space.

4.6 Over the last five years there has been an increase in retail vacancy rates. In the Retail core, there is a vacancy rate of approximately 18% (Experian GOAD 2011) and on the high streets this vacancy rate varies from 16% to 21% (Croydon Council 2012). Much of the existing retail is tired and does not meet the needs of modern occupiers and shoppers.

4.7 Car parking is the third largest land use and is provided in a mixture of surface level, on-street and private parking (multi-storey and underground).

4.8 Other uses also play an important role in the character and function of the COA but account for only 11% of space, which demonstrate the limited mix of uses that currently exists.

4.9 The COA has an existing residential population of approximately 8,000 people. The majority live in urban/suburban housing in the Southern and Northern character areas. There are some residents living in higher density developments around the centre of the COA.

4.10 The hotel market in the COA is performing well and contains approximately 1,100 hotel bed spaces. This offer is linked to its excellent rail connections to central London, Gatwick and the wider south-east.

4.11 There are a number of prominent civic and cultural facilities; Fairfield Halls, Croydon College, the law courts, cinema, central library, Croydon Minster and St. Michael’s Church, along with other smaller places of worship. Other local facilities include schools, community, health and leisure. However, given the low numbers living in the COA, these facilities will need to be expanded in line with growth.

4.12 As set out above, there is a limited mix of uses in the COA. A primary objective of the OAPF is to support a greater mix of uses across the whole of the COA. This chapter provides further guidance on how this mix of uses could be achieved.

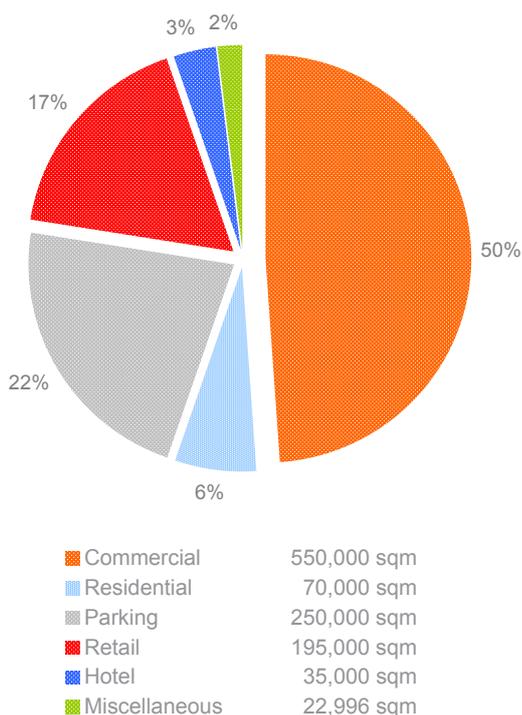
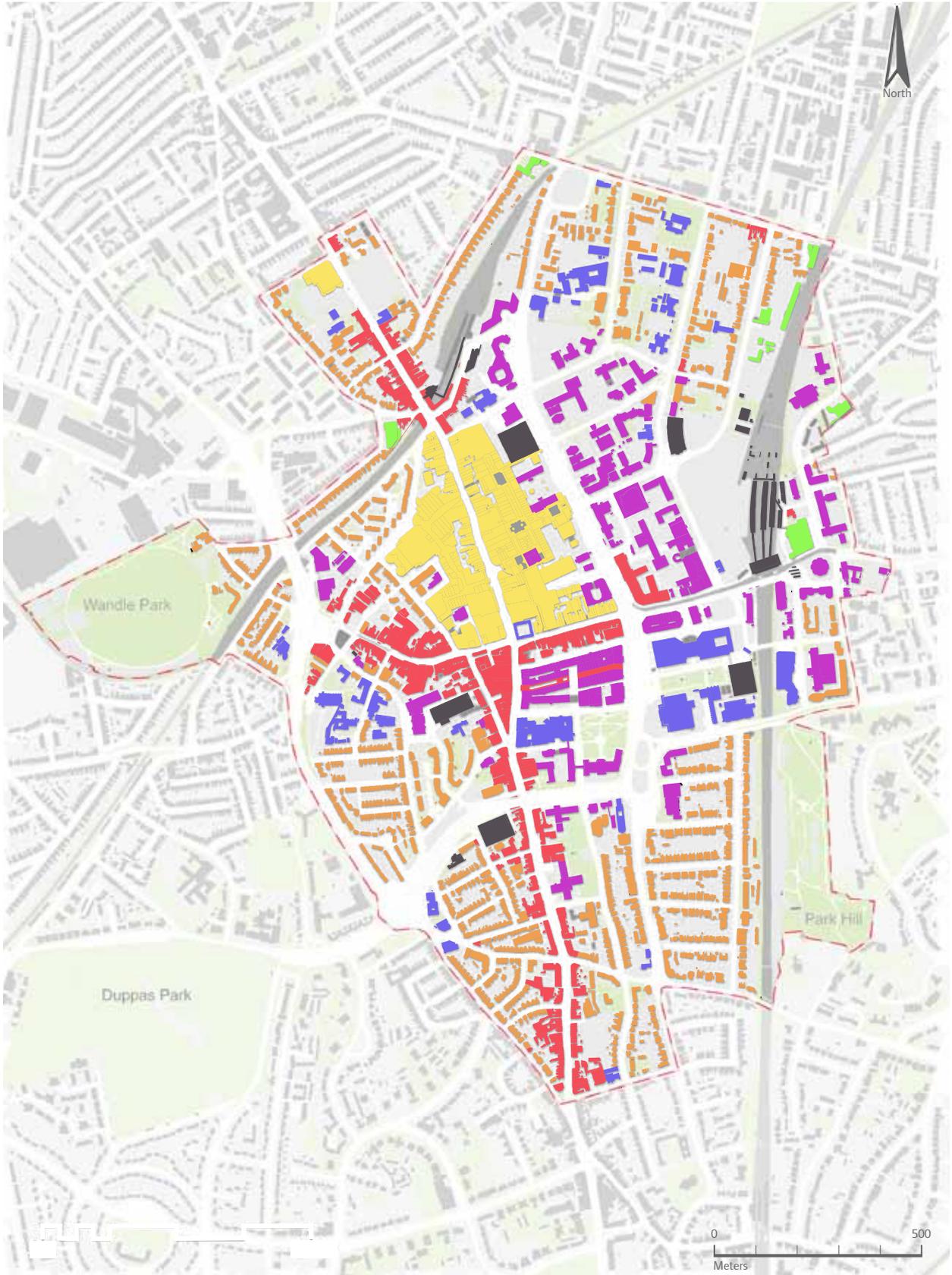


Figure 4.1 Existing distribution of land uses



- | | |
|--|---|
| ■ Residential | ■ Car parking and operational |
| ■ Comparison retailing | ■ Industrial |
| ■ Office and hotel | ■ Ground floor high street retail units with mixed use above (including residential) |
| ■ Civic buildings (inc. education) | |

Figure 4.2 Existing land uses

PROPOSED LAND USE APPROACH

4.13 The OAPF proposes a flexible land use approach that seeks to support a mix of uses. The following are the broad land use objectives.

Residential and community

- Support the development of 7,300 new homes
- Secure the development of approximately 1,500 new three bed homes across the COA
- Secure (as a minimum) 15% affordable housing
- Accommodate 17,000 new residents
- Promote a mix of medium and high density housing - in a mixture of housing typologies
- Support new specialised accommodation including student and hotel
- Help deliver new community, leisure, education, health and cultural facilities

4.14 The OAPF supports the benefits of attracting a large new residential population into the heart of the COA. A new residential community will help create a more lively and vibrant place. Enabling more people to live in the COA will help support demand for new leisure, retail, educational and community facilities.

Retail

- Improve on the COA's status as a major retail location consistent with its London Plan Metropolitan Centre designation
- Consolidate primary comparison retailing in the Retail Core character area (North End, Centrale and Whitgift)
- Improve substantially the qualitative offer of retail space in the Retail Core to meet the current requirements of retailers and the aspirations of shoppers
- Support the delivery of the Retail Core related outcomes and objectives as set out in paragraphs 4.27
- Support the development of a new quality full range department store, located to provide a joined up and comprehensive retail circuit [in the south east quadrant of the Retail Core]
- Support the provision of additional retail floorspace in the Retail Core, provided that new provision complements the remainder of the Retail Core, and contributes to the quality retail offer
- Enhance and enliven the COA High Streets through a mixture of physical improvements and a focussed high street retail support and physical improvement plan

4.15 Supporting an improved quality retail offer is critical to enhancing the COA's status as an attractive retail destination. Achieving this quality offer could be achieved as part of an increase in retail floorspace as set out in the Drivers Jonas 2009 retail capacity study.

4.16 This approach can complement existing high streets by attracting new visitors and shoppers into the COA that will in turn use and visit the other existing high streets.

Office and hotel

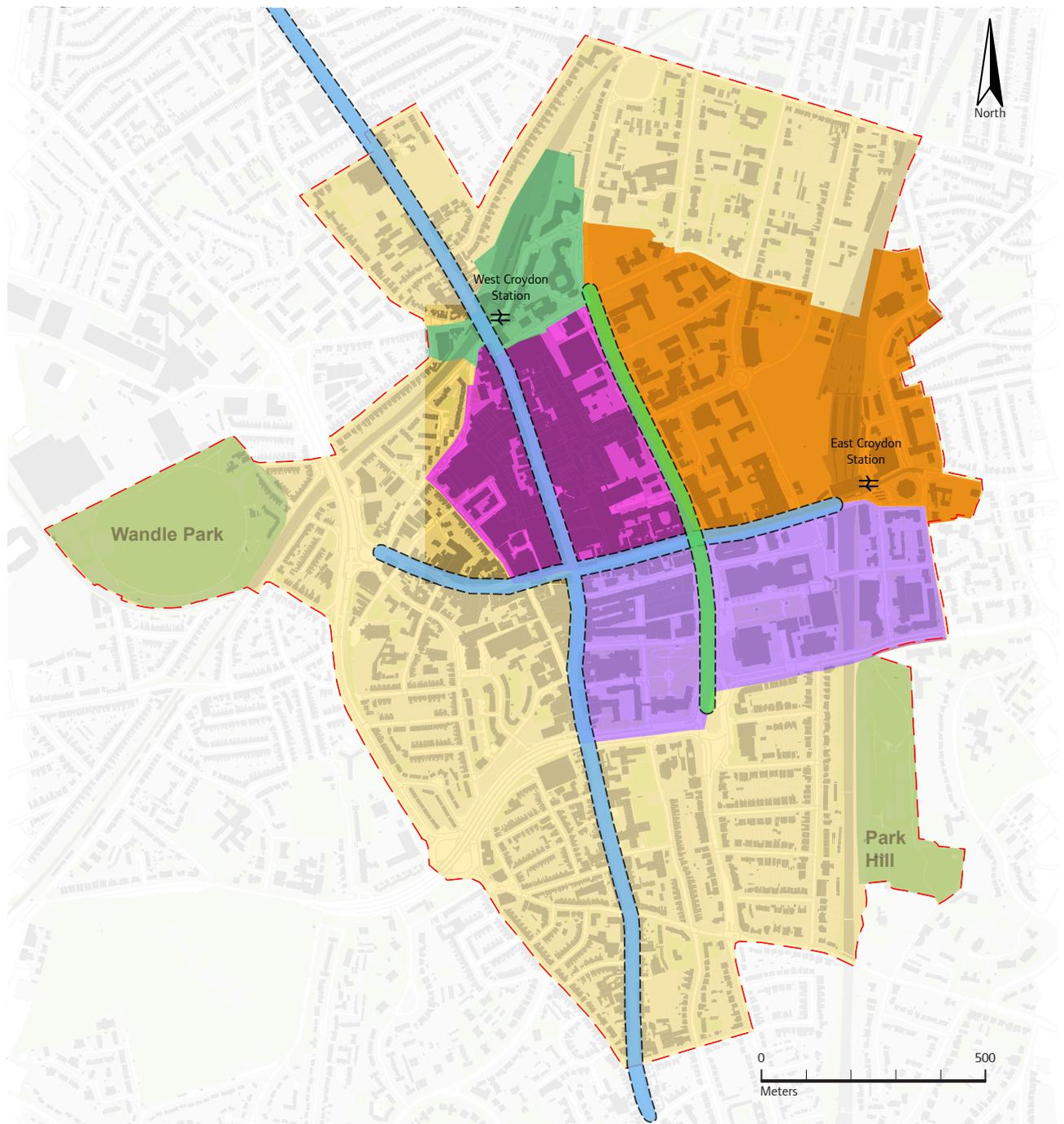
- Focus new commercial space in the New Town and East Croydon character area
- Support development of 95,000 sqm. of new office space
- Encourage refurbishment of 150,000 sqm. of existing outdated office space
- Promote conversion/redevelopment of surplus office buildings to other uses
- Support the development of new hotel space in the COA
- Encourage new cultural and creative industries through the establishment of a new Enterprise and Innovation Centre in the COA

4.17 New and improved commercial space will be strongly encouraged to locate around the New Town and East Croydon character area. This will coincide with support for a reduction in surplus commercial space from elsewhere in the COA. This reduction of commercial space in other areas will be achieved through a mixture of redevelopment and/or conversion to other uses i.e. leisure, hotel, student housing, cultural, educational, health and community.

4.18 The proposed land use approach is set within a realistic public realm and transport capacity improvement programme as set out elsewhere in the OAPF.

4.19 Within the OAPF, it is recognised that to attract new residential, retail, office and hotel, leisure and community uses into the COA, there is a requirement to deliver a greatly enhanced public realm. This is required to create a physical environment where people are willing to invest in and spend their time in.

4.20 Further detailed on the public realm, built environment, transport capacity and parking proposals are set out in chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 of this OAPF. A combination of approaches will help bring about the desired outcomes.



- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>RETAIL CORE
Retail-led development comparable with the COA's status as a Metropolitan Centre, with a mix of residential and leisure uses as an integral part of the area</p> <p>NEW TOWN AND EAST CROYDON
Commercial development (office and hotel) along with a mix of new residential uses</p> <p>MID CROYDON AND FAIRFIELD
The area will retain its civic and community function, but will also include a mix of residential and leisure uses, as well as small-scale shopping and commercial uses.</p> | <p>HIGH STREETS
A mix of small scale convenience and independent retailing. Along with community, leisure, restaurant, café, evening, residential and small scale commercial uses.</p> <p>WELLESLEY ROAD
A significant new focal point in the COA providing transport and movement functions and new amenity spaces</p> <p>WEST CROYDON
A mixed use area including residential, new commercial space with some high street uses</p> <p>SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN AREAS
Residential-led with some opportunity for small-scale high street uses where there is a need</p> |
|--|---|

Figure 4.3 Proposed land use approach

RETAIL CORE

4.21 The Retail core includes North End, the Centrale and Whitgift shopping centres¹. The Retail core faces onto Wellesley Road, George Street, Poplar Walk, Tamworth Road and Frith Road. It includes the Central Croydon Conservation Area and a series of heritage buildings. The Retail Core is the COA's primary comparison retail location.

4.22 Today much of the retail offer in the Retail core is tired and does not live up to its potential. It offers neither occupiers nor shoppers the type of quality retail experience or accommodation that is required or expected. These shortcomings need to be addressed.

4.23 The OAPF promotes the regeneration and reinvigoration of the Retail core in line with the COA's status as a London Plan Metropolitan Centre. The Retail core should be a central factor in identifying the COA as a retail destination for south London and the wider south-east of England.

¹ Reference to the two shopping centres is considered to include those buildings housing; Marks and Spencers, Allders, Debenhams and House and Fraser.

4.24 The Council and the Mayor recognise that regenerating the Retail core would require significant change across a large part of the Retail core, and there is a strong preference for this to be done in a holistic and comprehensive way. It is envisioned that significant change would require a mixture of demolition and redevelopment, renewal and refurbishment. Achieving significant comprehensive change in the Retail core is strongly supported and preferred by both the Mayor and Croydon Council.

4.25 Any significant change should be focussed on delivering a substantially improved qualitative retail offer. Attracting a new full range quality department store to sit within a joined up, comprehensive and complementary retail circuit would strongly support this objective. An improved qualitative offer is likely to require the provision of some larger retail units and potentially may require additional retail floorspace beyond the existing levels. The level of floorspace would be agreed through detailed planning application(s) and it should be demonstrated that the level of floorspace would not impact adversely on the holistic retail offer for the COA.



Figure 4.4 Image of North End looking north to West Croydon

4.26 The Retail Core should become a mixed-use, retail-led destination with new homes, leisure and other work space forming an integral part of the area's make-up. These uses should sit alongside a new quality physical environment of streets, spaces, enhanced heritage assets and transport connections. This complementary approach should help attract more people into the area, in turn generating a vibrancy to support new and existing uses.

4.27 The following section identifies a series of outcomes that new development in the Retail Core should seek to deliver. These outcomes would help to deliver the Council's and Mayor's objectives for the Retail Core:

- Regenerate the retail offer in line with the COA's designation as a Metropolitan Centre
- Provide a retail-led, mixed-use destination
- Provide for approximately 1,100 homes across the Retail Core over the 20 year life of plan and the associated amenity and social requirements of a residential population
- Provide other uses including leisure and complementary work space
- Provide a new high quality, full range department store that would achieve a joined up, comprehensive and complementary retail circuit across the whole of the Retail Core
- Secure high quality architecture and design for the built environment across the COA
- Provide a joined up servicing and delivery access
- Provide a high quality 24 hour publicly accessible east/west route from Wellesley Road to Old Town
- Provide new and improved east/west and north/south routes
- Enhance the streets and roads within and surrounding the Retail core area including; Wellesley Road, North End, Poplar Walk, George Street, Church Street, Church Lane, Frith Road and Tamworth Road as well as the internal routes
- Locate tall buildings closest to Wellesley Road away from the most sensitive locations in terms of privacy, heritage security and overshadowing
- Connect to and help deliver a COA wide district energy system where feasible

4.28 The future of the Retail core requires investment, and as of 2012, it is recognised that there are a range of future development scenarios that could play out. As stated, the Council's and the Mayor's strongly preferred scenario is to deliver significant change in a comprehensive manner across a large part of the Retail Core that meets the outcomes set out above.

4.29 Achieving the above list of outcomes would be most achievable through a comprehensive approach as part of a large redevelopment and renewal approach and this comprehensive approach is the one preferred by the Mayor and the Council. This would preferably be carried out as part of a single, or a complementary phased programme of redevelopment proposals and works.

4.30 Should a single, or a complementary phased programme of redevelopment proposals and works not come forward within a reasonable timescale, there is also scope to deliver some of the above outcomes in an incremental manner through a range of individual developments and renewals. However, any proposals and works that represent an incremental approach will be required to demonstrate how it makes a positive contribution to achieving the outcomes set out in paragraph 4.27.

4.31 Incremental proposals and works should still seek to deliver qualitative improvement to the Retail Core and should seek to deliver the outcomes as set out in paragraph 4.27. In addition to these, any incremental approach should also seek to refurbish existing buildings, retail space and public realm. It is recognised that an incremental approach may not be able to deliver all of the outcomes in paragraph 4.27 and in this regard, an incremental approach is less desirable to the Mayor and the Council.

4.32 One of the most important aspects of any incremental development will be about ensuring that both Centrale and Whitgift shopping centres, where possible, will mutually complement each other. Achieving the outcomes in paragraph 4.27 requires delivering improvements in both centres would require joined up working between freeholders, leaseholders, service providers and various public authorities.

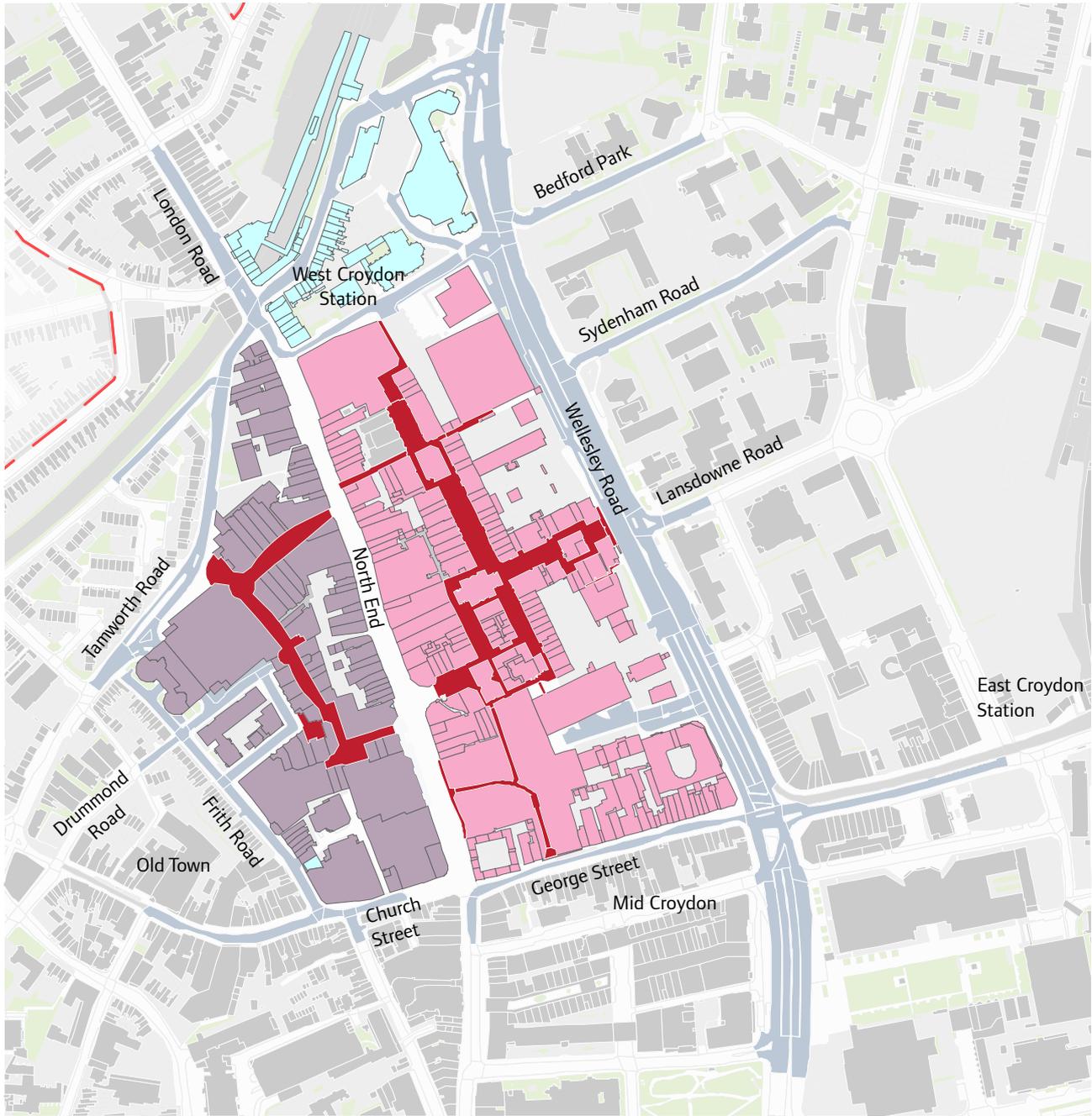


Figure 4.5 Existing arrangement of the Retail Core