Looking south on Dingwall Road
CHAPTER CONTENTS

- Existing land uses
- Proposed land use approach
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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
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
Figure 4.2 Existing land uses

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

**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

**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

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.

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

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.

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.
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.

NEW TOWN AND EAST CROYDON
Commercial development (office and hotel) along with a mix of new residential uses.

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.

HIGH STREETS
A mix of small scale convenience and independent retailing. Along with community, leisure, restaurant, café, evening, residential and small scale commercial uses.

WELLESLEY ROAD
A significant new focal point in the COA providing transport and movement functions and new amenity spaces.

WEST CROYDON
A mixed use area including residential, new commercial space with some high street uses.

SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN AREAS
Residential-led with some opportunity for small-scale high street uses where there is a need.

Figure 4.3 Proposed land use approach
The Retail core includes North End, the Centrale and Whitgift shopping centres. 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Reference to the two shopping centres is considered to include those buildings housing: Marks and Spencers, Allders, Debenhams and House and Fraser.
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
Connection to Lansdowne Road and East Croydon station footbridge

Connection to East Croydon station & George Street

Connection to Drummond Road and Old Town

Connections into Mid Croydon

Wellesley Road improvements
High Street enhancements
Frith Road and Poplar Walk improvements
Main new public access east/west route (24 hr)
New and improved secondary routes

New public spaces/squares
Tall buildings area
Retail-led mixed use development including residential, leisure space and amenity space

Figure 4.6 Indicative application of desired outcomes for the Retail Core
4.33 Growth of the Retail Core will attract more people to shop and live in the COA. This will support enhanced economic performance for existing businesses across the COA’s high streets. Additional people will result in greater footfall that will be able to support new spin-off uses.

4.34 The COA contains a series of town centre high streets, including; London Road, North End, George Street, Church Street, Surrey Street, High Street and South End. In addition, there are also a number of smaller side streets that connect to the larger high streets, which contain a mix of other retail uses including; Frith Road, Station Road, and St Georges Walk.

4.35 The COA’s high streets perform a vital function and provide the local community with retail, community, leisure and social activities. The OAPF supports major investment in these high streets including retail, leisure, community, residential and night-time uses.

4.36 Temporary “meanwhile” uses will be important in the function and life of the high streets. The OAPF encourages the temporary use of vacant shops in order to maintain economic activity and interest until more permanent retailing can be established.

4.37 The Mayor and the Council have committed approximately £10m of capital and revenue funding to improve the COA high streets by March 2015.

4.38 Specific high street aspirations include;

- **George Street:** To the west of Wellesley Road it will retain its diverse character and historic form. Improvements to this street will create a better environment. Relocation of the existing tram stop and the demolition of No. 36 will improve permeability and pedestrian capacity as set out in the Mid Croydon masterplan. To the east of Wellesley Road, redevelopment of brownfield sites will help change people’s perception and experience of this important arrival space. The street will include day and evening options for eating and leisure for employees and residents travelling to and from East Croydon station.

- **Old Town:** (including Church Street, Surrey Street and Frith Road) Improved public realm and building facades along with a retail support project on Surrey Street will help facilitate the wider regeneration of Old Town and will increase footfall in the area. Old Towns streets should retain their historic grain and form, which are critical to the area’s character. The retail units are suitable for smaller, independent retailers, café and maybe restaurants.

- **North End:** will continue to be the primary comparison retail high street location. North End is the backbone of the Retail Core. It houses a mix of heritage assets which play an important role in defining the area’s character. Public realm improvements will be crucial in helping to create a desirable destination for the Retail Core.

- **South End:** Provides an entry point into the COA. It offers a successful mix of cafes, restaurants and night time uses. Changes will include infilling vacant and underused premises and sites, addressing problems created by outlying 1960’s and 1970’s office buildings, and improving the public realm and physical connection to the COA.

- **London Road:** Its local high street character and valuable diversity will be reinforced through sympathetic public realm enhancements and increased business and economic support.

- **Wellesley Road:** will not become a traditional ‘high street’, however, it will see significant transformation, realising the ambition of this street as one of the Mayor’s Great Spaces (see chapter 5 on public realm).

4.39 A key high street objective is to improve east/west permeability across the COA and to strengthen existing north/south routes. This can be achieved by emphasising pedestrian movement in conjunction with calming traffic, and urban greening will encourage new retail, community, culture, leisure and cafés.
Figure 4.7  The location of the COA High Streets
RESIDENTIAL

4.40 An objective of the OAPF is to support the delivery of 7,300 new homes within the COA over the next 20 years. This equates to 17,000 new residents in addition to the 8,000 already living there.

4.41 Much of this change will be facilitated in medium and high density residential development. This level of housing is underpinned by a robust capacity and building typology model (see technical appendix). Fig. 4.8 shows an indicative housing provision of new residential across the COA by character over the next 20 years. These figures are not the required level of housing for each character area, but rather an indication of potential housing capacity.

4.42 Affordable housing requirements are set out in London Plan (2011) policies 3.9 to 3.14 and in Croydon Council’s Core Strategy policy CS2 and table 4.1. Future funding and delivery of affordable housing is in a state of evolution at the national level and so requirements will continue to change. Beyond the existing policy and economic position, applicants will;

- Have a combined engagement with Registered Providers and planning authorities
- Demonstrate that where off-site donor sites are proposed for affordable housing provision, these sites will contribute to a mixed and balanced community, as well as delivering their own affordable housing requirements. Details of the delivery mechanism will need to be agreed with the Council and GLA.
- Ensure that affordability is adequately considered where sub-market rented schemes are proposed, and to demonstrate that rent levels are not out of reach of prospective tenants in the area. Whilst smaller homes may be sustainable at rents of 80% of local market rent, rents on larger homes will need to be carefully assessed because of anticipated benefit caps.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Six Character areas</th>
<th>Years 0 to 5</th>
<th>Years 6 to 10</th>
<th>Years 11 to 20</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Town &amp; East Croydon</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern and Old Town Area</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Core</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfield and Mid Croydon</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Croydon</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Area</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1019</strong></td>
<td><strong>2895</strong></td>
<td><strong>3386</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.8 Residential capacity figures from 2012 to 2032

Housing mix

4.43 The Council’s core strategy requires a mix of housing in the COA, including a 20% provision of three bed homes. This 20% requirement equates to 1,460 three bed homes over the next 20 years.

4.44 Both the Mayor and Croydon Council accept that it will not be possible for each housing scheme in the COA to deliver 20% three bed homes, and nor would it be appropriate for all sites.

4.45 For example, it may not be desirable to have high levels of family housing in the most built up and busy areas around the Retail Core and New Town and East Croydon.

4.46 The OAPF proposes the following three bed breakdown across the six COA character areas;

- Retail Core: 5% three bed+
- New Town: 10% three bed+
- West Croydon: 20% three bed+
- Mid and Fairfield: 20% three bed+
- Southern/Old Town: 45% three bed+
- Northern Area: 45% three bed+

4.47 This breakdown is based on a capacity assessment for the whole of the COA (see technical appendix) and should be taken as the broad three bed housing requirement for each character area.

4.48 The exact level of three bed+ housing will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Some sites will deliver more, while other sites will deliver less. The figures are a starting point and the final agreed level of three bed housing should also be informed by: site context, site history, design potential, building height.

4.49 Sites seeking the renewal of existing planning permissions for residential schemes in the COA will have to have some regard for this approach.
Figure 4.9 Provision of family housing by six COA character areas

Three-bed housing requirements by character area

- 5% Three Bed+ Retail Core
- 10% Three Bed+ New Town and East Croydon
- 20% Three Bed+ West Croydon Fairfield Mid Croydon
- 45% Three Bed+ Southern and Old Town Northern Area
Office and Hotels

4.50 The OAPF promotes the growth of 95,000 sqm. of office space in the COA over the next 20 years. There is a need for new modern office space that meets the needs of modern users. Providing high quality, well located, office space will be crucial in attracting new office occupiers. These occupiers can take advantage of great access and cheaper rents.

4.51 To this aim, new space should be focussed around New Town and East Croydon. This area has the strongest market credentials; the highest demand for office space, the highest office rents, the best access to public transport and has an established cluster of office buildings.

4.52 Focussing new office space in New Town and East Croydon should not be considered a zoning approach. The OAPF still encourages a flexible approach and would permit the development of new/converted office space in any of the other character areas. However, applicants must be convinced that new office space in other locations would be viable.

4.53 The OAPF supports a reduction in office vacancy rate to 12% (from 30%) and a rejuvenation of at least 25% of the existing office stock. These targets would occur through the refurbishment, redevelopment and conversion of existing buildings.

4.54 The OAPF promotes conversion and/or redevelopment of surplus offices to other uses. Conversion will be encouraged across the Northern, Southern and Old Town, Retail Core, West Croydon, Mid Croydon and Fairfield so long as it complies with any relevant masterplan, and/or the desired outcomes for the Retail Core as set out in the OAPF.

4.55 New Town and East Croydon is considered the most viable location for good quality office space. As such, it is anticipated that conversion schemes in this character area would be less likely to come forward, but in principle they would still be acceptable.

4.56 Conversion schemes should achieve a high standard of design and should be used as an opportunity to help mend damaged public realm and the built environment, by helping to define streets and spaces and improve the relationship with surrounding buildings.

4.57 The Mayor and Croydon Council both recognise that there can be site specific issues that can restrict the ability to deliver a viable office building conversion. The delivery of a viable conversion may require some policy dispensation to assist with the feasibility of the scheme. The extent and type of dispensation will need to be discussed and agreed during the pre-application and planning application process. All conversion schemes will still need to achieve a high standard of design to avoid the development of poor quality residential. The types of dispensation could include;

- **Height**: potential to add additional floors
- **Land use**: not including a mix of other uses
- **Affordable Housing**: possibly providing a lower level of affordable housing where fully justified on a case by case basis
- **Family housing**: provide a lower level of three bed homes (based on the building and context)
- **Design standards**: there may be scope to relax some internal design standards and on-site play space but this would need to be carefully justified and the impacts reviewed for the whole building
- **Energy**: There may be scope to relax required connections to a COA wide district energy system but only where this is clearly justified.

4.58 The COA also has a strongly performing hotel market. The OAPF will continue to support the COA’s hotel market. New hotels can take advantage of high quality transport links to London and Gatwick along with the attractions offered by the COA itself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Six Character areas</th>
<th>Existing 2011 (sqm)</th>
<th>Net uplift (sqm)</th>
<th>Net total 2031 (sqm)</th>
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<tr>
<td>New Town &amp; East Croydon</td>
<td>235,000</td>
<td>230,000</td>
<td>465,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Fringe</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Fringe</td>
<td>72,000</td>
<td>-50,000</td>
<td>22,000</td>
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<td>West Croydon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civic and Cultural</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail Core</td>
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<td>-50,000</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>530,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>95,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>625,000</strong></td>
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</table>

Figure 4.10 Commercial space breakdown
Figure 4.11  Indicative list of buildings that could possibly be converted

- Duppas Park
- Wandle Park

Indicative list of existing office buildings in the COA that could be converted to other uses:

1. Prospect First
2. Delta Point
3. Lunar House
4. Sunley House
5. Apollo House
6. Whitgift blocks a,b,c
7. Emerable House
8. Carolyn House
9. Southern House
10. Centre Tower
11. Amp House
12. Nestle Tower
13. Ryland House
14. Davis House
15. Taberner House
16. Impact House
17. Direct Line building
18. Grosvenor House
19. Leon House
20. Seagas House

New Town & East Croydon character area
Focus for new offices
SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

4.59 Critical to building a new residential community of 17,000 people is the provision of social and community infrastructure.

4.60 The infrastructure needed to support and underpin the borough’s growth to 2031 identified in Croydon’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2011 (IDP). The measures set out in the IDP will be programmed by Croydon Council over the next 20 years.

4.61 In addition to these, there are facilities in the COA that are already committed including:

- Stephenson House, Cherry Orchard Road, 328 sqm, medical centre
- Ruskin Square, George Street, 346 sqm healthcare facility
- 16 to 18 Barclay Road, 464 sqm, GP consulting room
- 73 North End, 358 sq.m, hairdressing training centre
- 267 to 279 High Street, 662 sqm, education
- Woolwich House, George Street, 125 sqm, dentist
- 96 Drummond Road, 317 sqm, place of worship
- 36 Pitlake, 1656 sqm, place of worship
- Croydon College extension which was opened in September 2011

4.62 Primary school: the Council’s projections for the borough showed demand for 4500 places in 2011 which will be sustained on an annual basis for the next 10 years. This growth is concentrated in the north and central parts of the borough which includes the COA. 10 Form of Entry (FE) are planned in September 2012 at a cost of approximately £25 million and one expansion is located at the Aerodrome Primary School located west of the COA. Up to £34 million has also been set aside to fund the delivery of the additional permanent primary expansion.

4.63 Secondary school: The planned level of new housing across the borough is expected to have an increase of 15-30% for secondary school places. This demand equates to 10 FE secondary school provision in the north and central parts of the borough. Funding for delivering this growth has yet to be determined as proposals are currently being developed against the Government’s recently announced ‘priority school building programme.’ A new 6th Form school will be built on the vacant hospital site on the London Road and should be delivered and operational by September 2015. This will provide much needed school capacity for the area.

4.64 Special Needs: Approximately £36 million of funding has also been identified within the 5-year Croydon Capital Programme to deliver specific Special Education Needs proposals.

4.65 University: A key part of the vision for the COA is to achieve a new university presence. A ‘multiversity’ concept is preferred whereby a range of further and higher education courses and qualifications is offered, possibly from a number of institutions across the borough and beyond. The Council will adopt a partnership approach to forge links with the higher education sector and develop it around Croydon College. The College currently has an agreement in place with Surrey University to offer degree level courses and hopes to offer masters level courses in the next 2-3 years.

4.66 Enterprise / Innovation centres: The OAPF will support the establishment of an Enterprise Centre on the London Road High Street along with a new Innovation centre in the New Town and East Croydon character area. These facilities will provide training and support for existing businesses and will also help to establish new businesses in these areas. Some of the COA’s substantial supply of vacant and underutilised office space could potentially be converted to meet some of the need identified above. Further evidence supporting the conversion of offices to other uses is outlined in the Technical Appendix.

4.67 Emergency services: To ensure that the COA can be a safe and secure place for residents and visitors, it is important that the diverse nature of policing needs as a result of development and intensification can be met. The Council will work alongside the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime and the Metropolitan Police Service to ensure the delivery of necessary policing facilities in Croydon Town Centre so that the impact of new development upon policing can be appropriately mitigated.
DECENTRALISED ENERGY

4.68 Delivery of a Croydon Central Area Heat and Power Scheme is an objective of the Croydon Council climate change strategy. In order to achieve a major reduction in the Borough’s carbon footprint, and meet the Mayor’s decentralised energy target, the Core Strategy (Policy CS6) expects that larger developments and refurbishments should be enabled to connect to district energy networks based on centralised combined heat and power plants (CHP), particularly in the COA and other district centres within the borough.

4.69 Croydon Council has undertaken a detailed study on the viability of delivering a district heating network to support the regeneration of the COA. The scheme would provide low carbon heat to new developments which would enable them to meet the energy performance standards required by planning policy and national Building Regulations. Existing buildings would also be able to connect to the scheme to benefit from the lower carbon heat. Some key features are:

- A centralised “energy centre” fuelled by gas fired Combined Heat & Power plant
- This heat is distributed across the COA as hot water in a network of buried pipes
- The electricity generated could be sold for use in nearby buildings with the excess being exported to the public supply grid
- The scheme would be financed, designed, built and operated by a commercial partner
- Cost of connecting to the scheme would be lower than making on-site heat provision
- Cost of heat to building users will be less than alternative on-site provision of heat (e.g. having own boiler system and paying for heat)
- Wandle Road car park has been identified as a potential location for the energy centre but further feasibility work is required to assess this option in more detail

4.70 It is envisaged that the first phase of the scheme would connect to new developments in mid Croydon and East Croydon, along with a core of existing public buildings. The full potential would expand to buildings across the wider COA area. The council will be working with the GLA “Decentralised Energy Project Delivery Unit” to configure the scheme so that it would be commercially attractive to the energy services market. This work is currently ongoing. As and when new development comes forward it will be expected to help deliver and connect into such a district heating system, if feasible.

Figure 4.12 Aerial image of the COA highlighting street lighting energy use