



The Planning Inspectorate

4/03 Kite Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

Direct Line 0117-372 8128
Switchboard 0117-372 8000
Fax No 0117-372 8804
GTN 1371-8128
e-mail: allison.ingham@pins.gsi.gov.uk
<http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk>

Mr Kevin Munnelly
Head of Town Centre Planning Projects
London Borough of Bromley
Civic Centre
Stockwell Close
Bromley
BR1 3UH

Our Ref: PINS/G1580/429/5

Date: 11 August 2010

Dear Mr Munnelly

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY, BROMLEY TOWN CENTRE AAP DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT: FINAL REPORT

Thank you for your letter of 5 August, providing your comments in response to the fact check of the Inspector's report on the Council's Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan.

The Inspector has corrected the errors that have arisen and made the amendments to the report where appropriate, and I enclose your final report.

Yours sincerely

Allison Ingham

Allison Ingham
LDF Section





Report to London Borough of Bromley Council

by Eric T Searle Dip TP FRTPI
FBEng MCMi
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State
for Communities and Local Government

The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN
☎ 0117 372 8000

11 August 2010

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

SECTION 20

REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO THE BROMLEY TOWN CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN

Document submitted for examination 11 November 2009

Examination hearings held between 30 March and 14 April 2010

File Ref(s): LDF000368

Executive Summary

The Council's plans for strengthening Bromley Town Centre through the promotion of a range of mixed use developments is supported. The 12 "opportunity sites" identified do provide appropriate opportunities for a range of new developments including shops, offices, dwellings and hotels. As one would expect in an Area Action Plan much of the discussion at the examination involved matters of detail and a considerable range of opinions were expressed by various interested parties. A number of changes are recommended but in general these were agreed or suggested by the Council as a result of representations made or the discussions that were held during the examination sessions. None of the changes alter the fundamental approach that the Council is proposing but they do help to build a stronger consensus about how the centre of Bromley should be improved.

The High Street opportunity site (Opportunity Site G) is important both for improved shopping opportunities and housing development in the town centre. The Council rightly regards it as one of the key sites. However the Plan has not provided sufficient detail to show how its hopes for the area can be realised. Consequently further work will need to be done through the development of a Master Plan for this area.

The overall conclusion is therefore that the Council's proposals are essentially sound and provide a good basis for the future planning of the Bromley Town Centre.

Introduction and Overall Conclusion

- 1.0 Under the terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the purpose of the independent examination of a development plan document (DPD) is to determine:
- (a) whether it satisfies the requirements of s19 and s24(1) of the 2004 Act, the regulations under s17(7), and any regulations under s36 relating to the preparation of the document, and
 - (b) whether it is sound.
- 1.1 This report contains my assessment of the Town Centre Area Action Plan in terms of the above matters, and my reasons for them, as required by s20(7) of the 2004 Act.
- 1.2 I am satisfied that the Area Action Plan meets the requirements of the Act and Regulations. My role is also to consider the soundness of the submitted plan against soundness criteria set out in Planning Policy Statement 12 at paragraph 4.51 - 4.52 to ensure that the plan is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- 1.3 The starting point for the examination is the assumption that the local authority has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. Although there were minor pre and post submission changes in wording for clarification none of these changes materially alter the substance of the overall plan and its policies, or undermine the sustainability appraisal and participatory processes already undertaken.
- 1.4 Appendices 1 and 2 combine the sets of focused changes which were subject to public consultation and were an addendum to the submitted Area Action Plan; these did not go to the heart of soundness but were minor editorial changes, together with later minor changes resulting from the examination. Appendix 3 contains my recommended changes for soundness.
- 1.5 My report firstly considers the legal requirements, and then deals with the relevant matters and issues considered during the examination in terms of soundness criteria contained in Planning Policy Statement 12.
- 1.6 My overall conclusion is that with the changes I have recommended the Area Action Plan is sound.

Legal Requirements

- 2.0 The Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan is contained within the Council's Local Development Scheme, that was submitted for approval in July 2007. The Core Strategy for the Borough is expected to be submitted in 2011.

- 2.1 The completion of works in the Area Action Plan is a Borough Council priority and for this reason the Area Action Plan has been submitted in advance of the Core Strategy.
- 2.2 The Area Action Plan is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (June 2009). This appraisal has identified positive social and economic benefits and that environmental impacts can be mitigated.
- 2.3 Vision and objectives are also contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy for improving quality of life in the Borough (Building a Better Bromley 2020 - March 2009).
- 2.4 I consider that the Area Action Plan has followed the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement for consultation.
- 2.5 The Area Action Plan is deemed to be in general conformity with the planning policy objectives set out in the Consolidated London Plan (2008) and with the South London Sub-Regional Development Framework (May 2006), which provides the development framework for South London, including Bromley.
- 2.6 A full Appropriate Assessment of the Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan under Regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats and Conservation) Regulations 1994 was not required by Natural England. In this city centre location I do not believe there would be significant harm to potential or designated habitat sites, as a result of the policies and proposals within this Area Action Plan.
- 2.7 With the changes proposed to update the Area Action Plan I am satisfied that the Area Action Plan has regard to current national policy.
- 2.8 The Borough Council submitted statements under Regulation 31 of the Town and Country (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004 in September 2008. I am satisfied that the Area Action Plan complies with the specific requirements of the 2004 Regulations including the requirements in relation to the publication of prescribed documents; availability of them for inspection and local advertisement; notification of interested parties and bodies and provision of a list of superseded saved policies.
- 2.9 It is evident from the documents submitted by the Council, including the Regulation 30 (1)(d) and 30(1)(e) Statements and its Self Assessment Paper, that the Council has met the requirements as set out in the Regulations.
- 2.10 Accordingly, I am of the view that the legal requirements have all been complied with.

Justified, Effective and Consistent with National Policy

3.0 I now consider the Area Action Plan under Issues 1 to 5 below.

Issue 1 – Whether the vision and objectives are appropriate and justified

4.0 Bromley Town Centre is the main retail and employment centre for the Borough but over the years its attractiveness and viability have declined. The centre has been unable to keep up with the competition from other centres such as Croydon and Bluewater. These larger centres will obviously continue to dominate but there is a pressing need to provide for planned growth to stimulate the renewal and expansion of the commercial opportunities which the town centre of Bromley can offer. Change is required so that the town centre can realise its full potential as a place to shop, live, and work, while protecting the essential character of the more historic parts of the town. The vision for town centre has been incorporated into 8 key objectives.

4.1 I did not find from my examination that there was particular local concern about the objectives of the Area Action Plan. There was more concern about the implementation of the objectives through the BTC policies and the more specific policies relating to the individual Opportunity Sites. These I consider in detail later in this report.

4.2 I find the Vision and Objectives sound.

Issue 2 – Whether the Area Action Plan policies will provide for an acceptable balance of uses within the town centre.

5.0 The Consolidated London Plan (2008) designates Bromley as a Metropolitan Centre and requires local policies to exploit and enhance the town centre's accessibility, provide for a full range of town centre functions and sustain and enhance vitality and viability. There is also the need to ensure capacity is available for an increase in retail, leisure, community and business services.

5.1 The mixed use development of the centre is proposed to accommodate the growth requirements of the centre and promote vitality and diversity, and is in accordance with the South London Sub-Regional Development Framework which states that growth across the sub-region must be accommodated in those areas with the greatest potential for sustainable development. This includes the town centre of Bromley.

5.2 The proposals are also intended to reverse the trend that the town centre is losing its competitiveness and attractiveness to shoppers and businesses in the face of expansion from competing centres.

- 5.3 To fulfil its strategic role as a Metropolitan Centre the Council promotes a mix of uses through the Area Action Plan. Policy BTC1 lays down the approximate amount of development which can be accommodated in the town centre. This includes around 42,000 square metres of additional retail floor space, around 7,500 square metres of additional food and beverage floor space, around 7,000 square metres of additional business floor space; around 1,820 residential units; around 4,000 square metres of additional leisure floorspace; around 3,500 square metres of additional community facilities; and up to three hotels. All these figures are "gross".
- 5.4 Bromley is a major centre for primarily comparison goods but there has been little retail development since The Glades was constructed in 1991. As two of the town centre's three department stores have recently closed it is essential to increase the attractiveness of the centre by increasing the quality and range of commercial activity. Some existing retail units, because of size, location and quality no longer meet the needs of modern retailers and there is a need to provide for future requirements in shopping. The Retail Capacity Study concluded that Bromley Town Centre could accommodate about 41,000 square metres of additional comparison gross retail floor space up to 2016.
- 5.5 The retail figure is to my mind indicative, in that the Bromley Retail Study Update 2009 recognises that the figure of 42,000 square metres would include a proportion of Class A2-A5 uses and that only about 25,000 square metres would be set aside for comparison goods and this could be supportable between 2016 and 2021.
- 5.6 I conclude that it is important to plan positively for additional retailing in the current economic climate to maintain the status of Bromley in the shopping hierarchy and support the additional expenditure on development and infrastructure towards the end of the plan period.
- 5.7 Bromley is a secondary office location compared with Croydon. The Economic Development and Employment Land Study (2009) highlights the importance of reinforcing the role of the office sector and its quality. From my visits I saw that at present much of the office development is outdated and not likely to be popular with modern users. Many of the existing offices are not attractive buildings and are in a secondary location. Regardless of the total floorspace which may eventually be provided, the role of the office sector needs to be reinforced with quality accommodation in the town centre, close to public transport.
- 5.8 The Consolidated London Plan identified Bromley town centre as an area where housing should be intensified as part of mixed use schemes with good access to public transport and community facilities, including open space. This plan provides for a minimum

of 4850 dwellings in the Borough by 2016/2017. The emerging London Plan (2008) attempts to increase the yearly figure in Bromley from 485 to 565 but this has been disputed by the Council and may well be reduced.

- 5.9 At present the town centre accommodates only 3.35% of the housing stock in the Borough. The close proximity of public transport provides an opportunity to significantly expand housing within the centre. New housing in the centre will also help to protect the suburban character of the rest of the Borough. All of this new housing needs to be complemented by a range of community facilities during the plan period. Provision is made in the Area Action Plan for around 1820 new homes in the centre as part of mixed use development.
- 5.10 The focus of development in the town centre will be the Opportunity Sites, to be phased over a 15 year period. The development of other sites which meet the objectives of the Area Action Plan may also come forward and if so the cumulative effects of these and the opportunity sites will be taken into account. It appears to me that the targets in Policy BTC1 provide a reasonable balance between uses in the redeveloped town centre. However, I do not find the housing figures critical. If they are achieved, the overall housing target for Bromley as a whole should readily be met.
- 5.11 Bromley town centre has no hotels and for an area of such large population is completely unrepresented in its provision for visitors. There is allocation in the Area Action Plan for appropriate opportunity sites to come forward during the plan period to remedy this deficiency. The hotels are supported by current negotiations for the development of opportunity sites and by the Greater London Authority.
- 5.12 There are two theatres in the town centre. The Churchill Theatre accommodating about 780 people and Bromley Little Theatre, an amateur theatre with 113 seats. There are opportunities in the Area Action Plan to improve the setting of The Churchill Theatre and there is also a recognised need to improve public areas. There also appears to be underused space in the complex to provide further for the arts if necessary.
- 5.13 Policy BTC1 can only lay down an approximate target figure for the redevelopment of the town centre, and for soundness Policy BTC2 should recognise the restrictions likely to be imposed on the redevelopment of sites affecting the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. I have dealt with this change at Issue 4 below.
- 5.14 I am satisfied that the overall mix of uses is sound.

Issue 3 – Whether the policies in the Area Action Plan will lead to sustainable forms of development in the town Centre.

- 6.0 It is for the Core Strategy to focus on critical spatial issues and to provide a locally distinctive framework on which other Development Plan Documents are to be based. However, in this case the Area Action Plan has been submitted for approval prior to the submission of the Core Strategy, which is in course of preparation. I am satisfied that there are good reasons for this early submission.
- 6.1 Firstly, the Unitary Development Plan was adopted in July 2006 and together with the South London Sub-Regional Development Framework, it sets out the basic strategy which the Area Action Plan will follow. The Area Action Plan is also in accordance with the Sustainable Community Strategy (Building a Better Bromley - 2020 Vision)(March 2009) for improving the quality of life within the Borough. It seeks to deliver planned growth, stimulate renewal of the town centre; protect and/or enhance the existing environment and promote sustainable development through comprehensive improvements.
- 6.2 Both the Greater London Authority and the Government Office supported the need for the early submission of the Area Action Plan in advance of the Core Strategy to facilitate growth and address development proposals comprehensively.
- 6.3 The Area Action Plan is a Borough priority in the Consolidated London Plan wherein Bromley is designated as a Metropolitan Centre, requiring local policies to exploit and enhance the accessibility of the town centre, provide for a full range of town centre functions and sustain and enhance vitality and viability. This is proposed through an increase in retail, leisure, community and business services to meet the needs of a growing population.
- 6.4 Although there was some concern regarding primary and secondary frontages, there was no specific evidence on the restriction on financial services. Key active frontages are shown on Diagram 2.3 and on Diagram 4.1, and from my visits around the centre I found the designation logical. The Unitary Development Plan may have restricted financial services in primary frontages but the Area Action Plan does not contain any additional restrictive frontage policies which would preclude central area financial sector uses from retail frontages. It was confirmed by the Council that its approach to such uses would be in accordance with government advice in Circular 03/2005. I am satisfied that no change to the plan is required for soundness.
- 6.5 In my view the Area Action Plan focuses on those sites which are expected to be redeveloped to provide expansion and regeneration on the basis of mixed use schemes, in accordance with national and regional guidance, including commercial and

leisure uses, housing and the promotion of sustainable transport modes.

Tall Buildings

- 6.6 The Area Action Plan is intended to provide criteria and key design principles to guide future development. Although there was concern about Policy BTC19 Building Height, the policy is supported by Diagram 4.3 which indicates Views and Protected Sites. Even if, as some representors say, not all important views have been included, the criteria in the policy itself makes it clear that proposals for taller buildings will be required to follow the guidance set out in the English Heritage/Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment's Guidance on Tall Buildings (2007). There are also additional safeguards in the Key Design Principles for opportunity sites where taller buildings may be considered.
- 6.7 I have also had regard to the effect of taller buildings when dealing with individual opportunity sites below. It seems to me that some of the concerns about tall buildings are related to the implementation of policies in former plans, where the policies have not stopped some poor developments taking place.
- 6.8 Of the 12 opportunity sites, tall or taller buildings are proposed for consideration on only 4 sites. I do not consider it needs a comprehensive character appraisal of the whole town centre to determine whether the approximate location shown for 4 taller buildings is reasonable.
- 6.9 It was suggested at examination that to guide development a range of heights should be considered for each site. I do not share the view that this would be helpful. I accept that some representors are concerned about what are considered to be weaknesses in the planning application system, under which planning committees occasionally permit some forms of development which are not popular with residents or local societies. Regardless of this, if the development is to achieve a balanced mix, ultimately the determination of the height, form and massing can only be satisfactorily decided upon when there is a detailed proposal to consider and its full impacts can be assessed.
- 6.10 Paragraphs 4.7.20, 4.7.21, 4.7.22 describe the topography of the town centre in relation to taller buildings and the policy itself makes it clear that an assessment will be required as part of any planning application.
- 6.11 Other representors would like the Area Action Plan to specify exact heights and precise numbers of dwellings for opportunity sites. However, this type of "zoning by-law" planning merely superimposes an arbitrary standard, and one approach, devised

by the Council, on to the development of a site. The Council's more flexible approach allows for creative design from developers and their architects. Accordingly I am satisfied that the plan is sound and no changes are required.

Medical Facilities

- 6.12 With the proposed large increase in housing within the town centre, the provision of expanded community facilities at the appropriate time is essential. This provision is well covered in the Area Action Plan with the exception of improved medical facilities viz: the need to expand existing group practice provision within the town centre. It is apparent from the concern of local doctors that greater emphasis needs to be put on direct consultation with the practice rather than leave it to PCT liaison meetings. The consultation process is needed for central Bromley to ensure that medical premises are fit for purpose and provided when they are required to meet the needs of the expanding population. I have recommended appropriate consultation in Appendix 3 **(IC1)**.

Public Transport Accessibility

- 6.13 Bromley Town Centre has good rail and bus links, although both stations are in need of improvement. The Public Transport Accessibility Level in the London Plan (a measure of relative level of access provided by public transport) is mostly 6a for this area, which is a very high value. The Area Action Plan recognises the merits of the existing system but also accepts that the quality of service and road capacity require improvement. Accordingly I am satisfied that the plan is sound and no changes are required.

Retail Development Policy

- 6.14 The revised wording to paragraph 2 of Policy BTC4 regarding retail development, suggested by representors at the examination, is preferable in that it makes it clear that there is a difference between prime retail units and smaller independent units. The change **(IC2)** was discussed during the examination and was not controversial and it was supported by the Council.

OPPORTUNITY SITES

- 6.15 **Opportunity Site A** (OSA) consists of Bromley North Station and adjoining land. Part of the vision of the Area Action Plan is the creation of a Northern gateway for the town centre which would deliver a new market, affordable homes, improvements to the existing railway station and bus terminus, new community facilities, retail and office uses together with public realm improvements.
- 6.16 Because of the size of the site, if full land assembly could not be achieved, less comprehensive schemes would be possible.

Although I do not consider the comprehensive development of the site is critical in terms of deliverability over the plan period, maximum visual improvement would best come from a fully integrated scheme.

- 6.17 However, although the freehold of Northside House is held by Network Rail, the development lease granted in 1983 was for a term of 125 years. The building has subsequently been sublet and provides reasonable quality office space with 2 residential units at roof top level. It is unlikely that this unattractive building would be replaced at an early stage and cannot be developed as part of a comprehensive scheme for the remainder of the site. I see no reason to change paragraph 5.2.5 for soundness as this merely says that the development *could* allow for the replacement of Northside House.
- 6.18 It has been argued by representors that this is a site with suburban characteristics and, because of this, development of it should be restricted. Although I agree with the view that the 800m distance criterion from the Metropolitan Centre is a crude measure to define a central area use, from my visits I found this site to have mainly central area characteristics and uses, with a close relationship to the adjacent key public transport hub and interchange for the town.
- 6.19 The Council has carried out a modelling exercise for the site which indicated a way forward. The scheme was dominated by a multi storey car park and the relationship of building blocks would not appear to provide an adequate public space, or for the best location for tall buildings. However, the urban design analysis suggests that around 250 units would be appropriate for this site and this was supported by a financial appraisal based on September 2007 values. I accept for the present this may no longer be economically viable but the Area Action Plan delivery period is flexible.
- 6.20 Although local residents would like a definite height restriction, an agreed number of houses, and an agreed layout for the site in the Area Action Plan, I do not consider this to be a practical exercise for the Council to undertake. With its range of uses it is not a site that lends itself to the Council producing a detailed Development Brief. Such a restrictive approach would not encourage flexibility in design. This is a complex site which has to be redeveloped in a viable and attractive way with a balance of mixed uses to achieve success.
- 6.21 There are a number of ways the site could be developed, and these have to allow for the integration of the needs of various users, and also respect the setting of the site. I believe there is no need at this stage to be further prescriptive than the wording of the policy itself and the key design principles set out on page 175. The ultimate relationship of uses and density of housing will

only become apparent when a comprehensive scheme is prepared, taking into account local context and listed buildings. There are 19th Century residential buildings to the north of the site and Bromley North Rail Station is a Grade 2 listed building. The area consists principally of 3 to 4 storey buildings with others ranging from 7 to 10 storeys in height. If 400 housing units were to be accommodated on site I consider the height of buildings on OSA would need to be significantly increased.

- 6.22 Planning Policy Statement 3 advises in Appendix B that net dwelling density is calculated by including only those site areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses. From Appendix 1 of the evidence of Boyer Planning and BNP Paribas Real Estate the various drawings do not convince me that the massing of development could be increased to 400 dwelling units without significant change in the balance of uses on the site.
- 6.23 I, therefore, do not consider it realistic to change the wording of the present policy. The policy is flexible in that it states "Around 250". To change the policy to "At least 250 dwellings" would impose an unreasonable planning burden on the Council to accept a scheme without knowing whether in planning and design terms a particular number of units could be accommodated.
- 6.24 As the developers have suggested, the key to achieving a successful development on this site is the ability to foster a good relationship between surrounding areas in terms of scale, connectivity and integration. However, according to the notes of the meeting held on 1 March 2010 with the Greater London Authority no net residential area had been defined to enable a reliable density figure to be produced in accordance with advice in PPS3.
- 6.25 It also seems to me that some of the costs shown, such as those involved in the provision of affordable housing and financial obligations in a Section 106 agreement may need to be re-negotiated to enable some development to take place. If over the years the market housing situation does not improve and a viable scheme cannot be agreed the Council will have to monitor likely development of the site to assess whether it should be in a later phase, or look to other Opportunity Sites to provide the required office and retail floor space. Although OSA is an important gateway site its development is not closely related to the development of other sites within the town centre.
- 6.26 The level of future car parking has been questioned and I share the view that on a site at a public transport interchange the total parking provision of 618 cars is high. However, although the station car park is underused, South East Trains are determined to retain the existing number of spaces (219) for future growth. There are 66 spaces at Northside House and these will have to be retained because of the conditions of the lease. The Council car

park has 83 spaces. There is some flexibility on residential parking, depending upon the type of units provided. To serve the site a multi-storey car park is unlikely to be viable and deck parking should be provided. This decked car parking will be required regardless of the number of units.

- 6.27 Because of its overall character I consider this site to be more suited to 1-2 bed units than larger family units but the policy merely includes provision for family housing. With such development the London Plan Car Parking Standards aim for a reduction to less than 1 space per unit where 1-2 bed units are provided. In this location at a transport interchange I see no reason why the parking provision for dwellings cannot be reduced further, even if this results in a lower market value for some units. The wording of the policy does not need change as there is no specific figure for car parking mentioned in Policy OSA.
- 6.28 It was suggested during the examination that further safeguards are required to protect existing residential amenity. As Policy BTC17 already requires development to respect local context, built heritage and character, and to protect existing residential amenity, I do not consider additional criteria are required.
- 6.29 **Opportunity Site B (OSB)** is located in the Conservation Area on the corner of Tweedy Road and London Road and has been the subject of a planning application and a dismissed appeal. In my view the proposed scheme did not comply with the criteria now contained in Policy OSB or the Key Design Principles for the development of this site shown in the Area Action Plan. The criteria laid down in the Area Action Plan, to guide the future development of this site, have been modified (**IC11**) by me to reflect the decision and the conservation area analysis by the Inspector who dismissed the appeal. I agree that the quadrant on the corner of the junction should be kept open but accept the view of the Council that it would be preferable for it to be included within the site rather than remain a no mans land outside of it. Changes for soundness are dealt with in Issue 4 below.
- 6.30 **Opportunity Site C** contains the old Bromley Town Centre Hall, a listed building and an important feature of the townscape. I am satisfied that the criteria and key design principles for the development of the remainder of the site and the rehabilitation of the listed building would provide appropriate guidance for the future development of the site.
- 6.31 **Opportunity Site E (OSE)** - It is proposed that The Pavilion leisure centre should be relocated from OSE to the Civic Centre site and the existing site of the leisure centre be used to expand retail facilities within the town centre. In my view this is a logical and practical way to provide part of the increase in retail floor space identified as an important element of the plan. The site is in the same ownership as The Glades so there is no obstacle to

the expansion of retail floorspace, other than the relocation of the leisure centre. Also as the relocation is to the Civic Centre site which is in the ownership of the Borough Council again there should be no ownership obstacle to the development.

- 6.32 I see no need for a leisure centre to be retained as an integral part of the shopping area, and the Civic Centre site, (OSF) on the edge of the town centre, offers an early opportunity to relocate the leisure centre to enable the redevelopment to take place. It also seems to me that if land to the west side of the High Street OSG does not come forward as quickly as expected there is flexibility to bring forward OSE first.
- 6.33 **Opportunity Site F (OSF)** - This site accommodates the Civic Centre, including the listed building, Old Palace (1775), which forms part of a quadrangle of more recent civic buildings. It has the setting of Bromley Palace Gardens which is an enclosed but underused public open space. Pedestrians mainly gain access to the site via the pedestrian bridge over Kentish Way. These gardens include a number of listed structures. Criteria in the Area Action Plan require that new development must respect the existing footprint with no loss of open space.
- 6.34 Apart from safeguarding residential amenity and the setting of the listed building, both of which are listed in the Key Design Principles for OSF, I consider the redevelopment areas chosen by the Council are appropriate for the purpose. I am satisfied that the leisure centre could be relocated on the site and the floor space would be sufficient to replace the facilities which already exist. Although trends in leisure change over time, I share the concern of some residents that if a swimming pool is not provided at the outset it will be lost from the town centre.
- 6.35 I see little need for housing on this civic centre site and if the low density housing could not be accommodated I do not consider this would be a real loss in planning terms.
- 6.36 The listed Old Palace at present forms part of an unacceptable quadrangle but a well designed leisure centre could take advantage of the outlook towards the Old Palace. I find the policy seeks to enhance assets and appropriate active use of the site.
- 6.37 **Opportunity Site G (OSG)**, combined with OSN, is considered by the Council to be the key to the change in retail character of the High Street. Part of OSG falls within the Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area. This site may be the key to future comprehensive development, although in my view OSE - The Pavilion Site, will be far easier to develop comprehensively for retail uses than OSG.
- 6.38 Unlike other opportunity sites, where I consider a degree of flexibility is required, and has been allowed for in the policies and

the key design principles, on OSG there are unfortunately a number of imponderables to consider on which there is a lack of robust evidence. The Council envisage a phased development of this large area but the diagrammatic plan in the Area Action Plan provides little guidance as to how comprehensive development could occur and how development of parts of the site would be related to the whole.

- 6.39 The Area Action Plan is a delivery document. I accept that because of its size and location OSG has potential for redevelopment. However, if it is to be redeveloped comprehensively there needs to be far greater certainty about the form of development which should take place, and whether certain existing buildings need to be included, or excluded, from such redevelopment. There are many ownerships and land interests here and I consider a more prescriptive approach is necessary.
- 6.40 Under paragraph 5.7.4 the Council will encourage the use of different architects for different phases of the development. However, there is no robust overall guide for architects or developers to produce schemes as part of an integrated whole, or to assess whether such an approach would be achievable.
- 6.41 A decision also needs to be made about the importance of certain local buildings, such as 44 High Street, the Laura Ashley Building, and 72/84 High Street to determine whether they should be retained, and if so how their retention would influence the redevelopment and layout of the remaining area.
- 6.42 I found the small enclave of dwellings in Ethelbert Close to be inharmonious in this town centre location. The layout of the dwellings has a poor relationship with the park. However, this appears to be a popular cohesive housing area in the town centre, apparently with a high level of social inclusion. I consider it necessary to clearly show through a Master Plan approach how the land occupied by this group of houses would form part of any comprehensive scheme, to enable an assessment to be made whether the expansion of retailing and/or new housing on to Ethelbert Close is justified and how it could ultimately be laid out and achieved.
- 6.43 From my visits I found the area of OSG to be so large and so diverse, and in a mixture of ownerships, that I have no doubt there are a range of opportunities for extensive redevelopment to take place, with the opportunity for a taller building somewhere on the site without detriment to the townscape. However, without a Master Plan to direct and justify the form development should take I do not find OSG on its own to be robust enough to guide future comprehensive development.

- 6.44 I conclude that a Master Plan is necessary to supplement OSG so that the Council can be fully aware that its comprehensive proposals are viable and achievable and that developers, land owners and residents are also fully aware of what is proposed and how it could be implemented, based on the elements I have identified above.
- 6.45 OSG is a key site for, in particular, the expansion of retailing and housing in the centre, during Phase 2/3 of the Area Action Plan, but it is already recognised in the Area Action Plan at Policy BTC30 – Phasing - that should development of OSG be delayed, development on OSE and OSF could be brought forward to facilitate retail provision in the town centre. Meanwhile, early work will be required by the Council in the preparation of a Master Plan for this key High Street location. Many of the objectives and key design principles have already been established for this area west of the High Street during the preparation of the Area Action Plan and these can readily be incorporated into the Master Plan.
- 6.46 I have recommended a change in the introduction to OSG in Appendix 3 (**IC3**) to supplement the policy with a Master Plan.
- 6.47 **Opportunity Site J** - Bromley South Station is the major gateway into the town. Its importance is not currently reflected in the poor building quality both within and outside the station. The criteria to deliver improved facilities, including improvements to the station buildings, improved public transport facilities, re-development of retail units opposite the station and other public realm works to provide a public square should ensure appropriate future regeneration of the site. From my visit I do not consider that a taller building would inherently be out of place here subject to the key design principles laid down in the Area Action Plan.
- 6.48 **Opportunity Site K (OSK)** - Westmoreland Road Car Park. The existing multi-storey car park is an unattractive building in a Central Area location which does not bear a good relationship with adjacent buildings or its setting. There is an opportunity to provide a mixed use development to enhance this part of the town and improve links and visual relationship with the Bromley South Station and the High Street. The site was proposed for redevelopment in the Unitary Development Plan and the present proposal is for a cinema led development, with a mixture of central area uses including a hotel. There is currently no hotel in Bromley Town Centre. I am satisfied from the representations that the site is suitable for the uses envisaged and that there is sustained interest in developing the site.
- 6.49 There is considerable local concern about the impact that this development would have on The Empire cinema which has been in use for some 70 years. It has been upgraded and is further programmed for improvement, probably dependent on the outcomes of the Area Action Plan. With the competition it may

well close although the Council consider it could become a specialist arts cinema. The cinema operates at present in a highly competitive market and has needed to diversify its operation to include education and social activities.

- 6.50 Cathedral Group plc, the preferred partner to the London Borough of Bromley, has had three expressions of interest from cinema operators to develop OSK and has already selected Vue cinemas. It has also had two offers and one expression of interest from hotel operators. These interests are still ongoing despite the recession.
- 6.51 Regardless of the possible detrimental effect on the existing cinema I cannot say that OSK is unsuitable for the uses proposed. At present I understand that 28.5% of cinemagoers travel to Bluewater and 21.6% travel to Beckenham. My concern is whether Policy OSK as written is justified and I am satisfied that it is. Whether the Council should support the adaptation of the existing cinema, which is not before me in the Area Action Plan, in preference to supporting a new multi-plex which is expected to encourage cinema goers to stay within the town is a local decision, as is the competition between uses and how it affects the future overall provision of leisure facilities within the town centre.
- 6.52 It appears that in paragraph 5.9.3 the Council accepts that if the development of OSK impacts on the commercial viability of the existing cinema the building should be reused for alternative entertainment or cultural purposes. As the Empire is a local "anchor" this may mean a greater concentration of activity at the southern end of the town with a reduced footfall in Bromley North Village. However, this balance in footfall may well change anyway because the major retail expansion is expected to occur on sites at the southern end of town.
- 6.53 **Opportunity Site L** - DHSS Building and Bromley Christian Centre. The existing DHSS building which is at present vacant is an unattractive block forming a stop to development at the southern end of the town. The location of the site near Bromley South Station makes it very suitable for a hotel led development and, in terms of visual impact, any development in this gateway location will need to be of the highest quality. I do not consider this design criterion, nor the important view, to be a reason not to consider a taller point building on part of the site as long as the remainder of the development forms an attractive stop and vista, and also allows views through to the wooded ridge beyond. For example a taller building in the position shown in the indicative diagram could create a focal point and would not read directly with St Marks Church to the west.
- 6.54 I accept that the London Plan encourages local authorities to exceed housing targets particularly in locations which are highly

accessible. This site has a PTAL6 rating for the highest level of accessibility. Under the London Plan density matrix the site may well be able to deliver a higher density than that shown but I consider this should clearly be a hotel led development and because of the important vista which I have identified above the site would be sensitive to taller buildings which would block the view. The Council has related its density figure to its assessment of the share of uses on the site. If the Council decide that none, or that only some, of the existing office floorspace should be replaced I agree that the density of housing could be increased. For soundness I have formally recommended this flexibility in the policy in Appendix 3 **(IC5)**.

- 6.55 The Employment Land Study projections for office floorspace are higher than the London Office Policy Review 2009. The Area Action Plan target of 7,000 square metres for offices could be met without this site but early replacement of *modern* offices is needed in the town centre and with its particular characteristics it is not clear when OSC would come forward.
- 6.56 Activity and vitality at ground floor level would depend on the design of the hotel and the relationship with community and other commercial uses, which could include small retail units. I find the policy is flexible on the replacement of office floor space, as the policy merely requires the *appropriate* replacement of existing floor space. If the Council is satisfied that the target of 7,000 square metres is going to be met on other sites it may not require office floor space here. This should be reflected in the wording and I have recommended accordingly. This would be in accordance with paragraph 4.4.9 of the supporting text which reflects the Economic Development & Employment Land Study (March 2009).
- 6.57 I see no reason why small retail units, perhaps linked to the hotel, should not be considered but these would be a minor part of the development and ancillary to the remainder of the proposal. The Council accepted that there would not be a retail capacity issue if small retail units were permitted on site **(IC4)**.
- 6.58 The Bromley Christian Centre is located on the site, but is a separate entity. Attempting to develop comprehensively would mean a temporary relocation of the Christian centre elsewhere. Although it would be desirable, I do not consider it essential that this use needs to be developed with the other central area uses proposed. Therefore, the Christian Centre should remain within OSL to ensure an integral development, but it could be redeveloped separately **(IC6)**.
- 6.59 This site is affected by Policy BTC23, or more specifically by Diagram 4.5 which accompanies it, and indicates the safeguarding of land for transport schemes. Although I do not consider the wording of the policy itself to be unreasonable, as it is flexible

enough to provide for mitigation, I am concerned about the extent of safeguarding shown on Diagram 4.5.

- 6.60 From the highway evidence at the hearings it became clear to me that there may be a number of ways to provide for improvements, not necessarily as severe in land take. Although the details of the bus priority scheme have been produced retrospectively as a guide, they have demonstrated that it provides good assistance to bus travel through the junction without causing the junctions to exceed theoretical capacity. It also seems to me from my visit that some improvement will be necessary to the Masons Hill/Westmoreland Road junction. Work on the Transport Strategy during 2008 demonstrated the need for a dedicated bus priority on the southern approaches to the town.
- 6.61 The study by Savill Bird & Axon (SBAX) took into account traffic reductions related to OSG and also that policies in the Area Action Plan are to make a step change and this would significantly reverse the decline. The consultants used observed data rather than TRICS and TRAVL database analysis an approach I consider acceptable. The scheme is to be funded as part of the A21 Bromley Southern Approach Transport Scheme as the Council needs to ensure that these bus priority measures are carried out during the life of the Area Action Plan.
- 6.62 However, I believe it would be sound to indicate the safeguarding by means of a thick line along the roadside showing that some form of improvement will be required. The extent of any land take can then be determined depending upon the details of a submitted scheme. This change would also need to be reflected in Diagram 4.5 and paragraph 5.10.2 of the supporting text and I have recommended accordingly in Appendix 3 (**IC7 & IC8**).
- 6.63 **Opportunity Site M** - Queens Gardens is a protected open space and is within the Conservation Area. I found from my visits that it is generally well used and tranquil but it has "dead spots" which are underused and there are possibilities to make better use of these hardened areas. Although it is adjacent to The Glades and The Pavilion, there is little indication at present of a close relationship between Queens Gardens and the adjoining buildings. Queens Gardens are also clearly divided from the Civic Centre site by the barrier of Kentish Way.
- 6.64 With redevelopment of The Pavilion there will be an opportunity to make better use of Queens Gardens as an integral part of the shopping area. Active A3 uses around part of the edge were previously identified in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and café or restaurant facilities would make use of currently underused hard standing area and increase the overall use of Queens Gardens by the public. Eating and drinking are well recognised recreational uses of open space. The Diagram on page 197 is misleading in that it shows a site on the northern edge of

Queens Gardens which would intrude into a planted area. The Council has suggested a proposed change to delete this which I agree with.

- 6.65 It seems to me from the examination that a range of options may come up for consideration as either temporary or more permanent solutions to provide café or restaurant uses in connection with Queens Gardens. These could include breaking through the main wall of The Glades to provide a facility within the building itself, with probably some limited outside use, so that customers can take advantage of Queens Gardens. Some of the people using the café would be garden users anyway. Another option would be to provide a similar facility in the future retail extension to The Glades on to The Pavilion site.
- 6.66 In the meantime a café could be provided on the terrace or on part of the hardstanding area shown diagrammatically on page 197. With Belgo already in existence offering a bar and eating facility at the entrance to The Glades, the viability of other than a small scale café in the short term to serve those using Queens Gardens might be in some doubt.
- 6.67 **Opportunity Site N** - Central Library and Churchill Theatre. This seems to me to be an underused facility and could contribute more to the arts. This principle is already recognised in Policy OSN.
- 6.68 **Opportunity Site P** – Sainsburys, West Street. This site has been included in the Area Action Plan, so that guidance can be given on infrastructure requirements and development criteria. However, Sainsburys is already operational and successful in this location, and the Area Action Plan objectives are not dependent upon the scheme for this site. There is, therefore, flexibility in its timescale. I have dealt with the impact of this proposal on the environment at Issue 4 below.
- 6.69 **I recommend the changes (IC1-IC8) which I have listed in Appendix 3 to make the document sound.**

Issue 4 – Whether the Area Action Plan policies will promote and maintain quality environments

- 7.0 Bromley town centre has a strong architectural heritage with a number of listed and locally listed buildings. Part of the town centre is within the Conservation Area. Most of the listed buildings are within this Conservation Area and Bromley North Village, although there are some individual buildings which are listed, or are of local interest, in the southern part of the town centre. Unfortunately, over the years a number of buildings of uninteresting design and massing have become interspersed with historic and attractive buildings. There is also a lack of distinctive landmark buildings in the town centre. Nevertheless, there is still

opportunity under guidance in Planning Policy Statement No 1 to protect and where possible enhance the natural and historic environment and existing successful communities.

- 7.1 Despite its recognition as a Metropolitan Centre, the area has experienced physical and economic decline over many years. Department stores have been lost and office and retail vacancy rates are high in the area. It is evident from my visits that only substantial investment and redevelopment within the centre can reverse this trend.
- 7.2 I have dealt elsewhere in my report with the sustainability of the development proposals in the Area Action Plan at Issue 2 above and do not repeat it here. I merely consider the impact of the proposed regeneration on the environment.
- 7.3 Although concern has been expressed about the Council's overall assessment of the character of the town centre, there has been an analysis of the Historic Context (Diagram 1 and text), Urban Context and Structure (Diagram 2.3 and text), Spatial Strategy (Diagram 3.2), Public Realm Strategy (Diagram 4.2 and text), and Views and Particular Sites (Diagram 4.3 and text). All of these studies are helpful and go some way in identifying key buildings and frontages, views and vistas and landmark buildings, but they do not replace the holistic approach required for the Conservation Area in a Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 7.4 However, although there is no Conservation Area Appraisal in place, during the course of my examination it was stated that the Conservation Area Appraisal will be drafted between now and July 2010 as support for the emerging Core Strategy and reported to the Development Control Sub Committee in August.
- 7.5 I am concerned that this document was not available to support the Area Action Plan, and do not consider that the Supplementary Planning Guidance on the Conservation Area is a detailed enough substitute, but am now satisfied that by the time my report is submitted and the Area Action Plan is adopted by the Council, the Conservation Area Appraisal should be well enough advanced to form a basis for decisions affecting the Conservation Area.
- 7.6 Use of the emerging Conservation Area Appraisal should ensure that decisions in respect of Opportunity Sites which fall within, or have a material impact on the Conservation Area, will be taken on the basis of the criteria laid down with the advice of English Heritage. Therefore, I consider it important for soundness, that regardless of the criteria listed to guide development in the Opportunity Site policies, it is stated clearly in the Area Action Plan that the overriding consideration for those Opportunity Sites which have an impact on the Conservation Area will be the criteria in the appraisal, to ensure that new development enhances and or

preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area **(IC13)**.

- 7.7 There are of course other ways to assess the merits of proposals and their impact on listed buildings or conservation areas. A development brief can be prepared for a particular site, or an assessment carried out on the basis of the criteria laid down by English Heritage at the application stage.
- 7.8 Although a holistic approach is preferable, the Planning Inspector who dealt with the appeal in respect of OSB was well able to provide a detailed analysis of the site and surrounding area on an ad hoc basis as part of the planning process, more than sufficient to dismiss the appeal. The Area Action Plan will be a more up to date document than the appeal decision but any developer who ignores that well argued decision would do so at considerable risk.
- 7.9 The Urban Appraisal which analyses the townscape and built form goes some way to identifying key views and important buildings. It also identifies the key issues and design objectives for the centre as a whole and for the historic environment by assessing the character areas and key land uses. The Council has also defined 6 character areas in the Area Action Plan, described their key characteristics, and produced a Spatial Strategy for these character areas, together with Diagram 3.2.
- 7.10 Although some representors believe that the Area Action Plan policies should be more prescriptive, even going as far as saying that modelling is required to determine the precise number of housing units, and the height of buildings, I do not agree (even in respect of OSG, where I believe a more prescriptive approach is required than that taken by the Council). The precise number of housing units and the height of buildings can only be realistically determined when a comprehensive scheme for a site has been prepared and negotiated.
- 7.11 The acceptable height of a building will depend on its design, whether it is a point block or a slab, where it is located on the site in relation to adjoining uses, what impact it would have on important views, neighbouring properties and its compliance with daylighting and sunlighting standards.
- 7.12 As I have reported above the Area Action Plan makes it clear in Policy BTC19 – Building Height - that any tall buildings will need to be assessed on the basis of guidance from English Heritage and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.
- 7.13 I accept that in this Metropolitan Centre the Housing Matrix in the London Plan must be given due consideration. However, from my visits to the area it seems to me that for the Opportunity Sites within the Conservation Area too much emphasis is put on density in Policy BTC2– Housing Density. I also find paragraph two (not

numbered) to be ambiguous and in need of rewording. It states that the number of residential units to be accommodated on the Opportunity Sites should be in general conformity with the indicative *numbers* identified in Policy BTC1. The indicative number of dwellings in Policy BTC1 is a total housing figure for the opportunity sites in the town centre and can give no indication of the appropriate level of development for an individual opportunity site. Also as some of the opportunity sites are sensitively located in a conservation area, density of housing, or intensity of development, should not be the prime consideration (**IC9 & IC10**).

- 7.14 Although habitable rooms per acre is a more concise method of measuring density than number of units, as housing numbers are only one factor in the consideration of the mixed use development of opportunity sites, and unit numbers are not critical, I see no reason to impose yet a further measurement in the criteria on density for the opportunity sites.
- 7.15 It is argued that the housing implementation strategy should contain contingency plans in the event of certain sites not producing the numbers of dwelling units proposed. I have said elsewhere that I do not find the housing numbers critical to the borough as a whole. Also these housing numbers are only related to the Opportunity Sites which have been identified. I saw other sites and areas within the town centre which have not been specifically identified, probably because of their size or shape, where additional housing and other development may well occur during the plan period. There are also likely to be other sites coming up for development in the remainder of the Borough during the plan period.
- 7.16 **Opportunity Site A** – Bromley North Station is on the edge of the Conservation Area but I do not find it to be an integral part of the character of that area. I have dealt with the sustainability and impact of the proposed policy at Issue 3 above.
- 7.17 **Opportunity Site B** – Tweedy Road/London Road now has a detailed brief as a result of the Inspector's appeal decision. I have commented on this site above where sustainability is considered. For soundness I have changed the wording of the policy to reflect the appeal decision (**IC11**).
- 7.18 **Opportunity Site C** – Former Town Halls and South Street Car Park - This is not in my view controversial in that any development will have to respect the listed status of the existing buildings in the area and require sensitive conversion of the listed building. I believe the policy and Key Design Principles laid down will provide sufficient guidance on the future development of the site.

- 7.19 **Opportunity Site M** – Queens Gardens. I have dealt with this site in some detail above and consider a flexible approach is necessary because of various options available either in the short or longer term.
- 7.20 **Opportunity Site N** – Central Library and Churchill Theatre. The provision of a town square can only be assessed when a detailed proposal is considered for the development, or comprehensive development, of the buildings to the south of site N, shown as part of OSG.
- 7.21 **Opportunity Site P** – Sainsburys, West Street. Because of the impact on the views from the College only low rise development would be appropriate for College Slip and this has been recognised by the Council in its assessment. Although any development would need to be set back to enable planting and hard surfacing and to avoid a building dominating College Slip, I do not believe the car park or the view from it is of such significance that it needs to remain open at the northern end to allow glimpses of Bromley College and the cedars.
- 7.22 On balance, a sense of enclosure to the north of OSP would be preferable to retaining the openness of the car park. As the Council argued such enclosure would also help in creating cohesiveness with the rear elevations of properties in the High Street. I consider the Key Design Principles in the Area Action Plan should provide adequate safeguard against future inappropriate development. With the changes **(IC12)** I have made to the criteria in OSP to protect Bromley College, and with a well designed building that creates a sense of enclosure, the future expansion of Sainsburys should enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 7.23 Therefore, subject to the following changes I find the environmental impacts to be justified, effective and in accordance with national policy.
- 7.24 **I recommend the changes (IC9-IC13) which I have listed in Appendix 3 to make the document sound.**

Issue 5 – Whether (i) the Area Action Plan is sufficiently flexible to provide for the delivery of development and cope with changing circumstances, and (ii) there is appropriate and adequate monitoring of its effectiveness.

- 8.0 The town centre has faced a decline in retail offer and is currently underperforming. Its retail offer needs to be much improved to support its role as a Metropolitan Centre.
- 8.1 The Area Action Plan identifies Opportunity Sites to provide the major development during the plan period, although I saw from my visit that there are other smaller sites which might also come

forward on an ad hoc basis, as they are not large enough for comprehensive development. Of the Opportunity Sites some are partially linked to the development of other Opportunity Sites such as OSG and OSN. There is a close link between the development of OSE and OSF but otherwise the Opportunity Sites, because of their location and proposed uses can be developed independently.

- 8.2 As the link between most of the sites is tenuous there is flexibility for their independent development subject to appropriate infrastructure provision.
- 8.3 I have dealt with the flexibility in the delivery of development on the Opportunity Sites when I considered the sustainability of the proposed development on the individual sites above. Otherwise the Phasing incorporated into Table 6.1 is flexible enough to allow for change. Development proposals in Phase 1 can come forward without new major infrastructure and provision for transport investment.
- 8.4 Key Transport measures are listed in Table 6.2 - Transport Strategy implementation - and Indicative Budget Costs are shown in Appendix 9. These are broken down into Annual programmes.
- 8.5 With the present financial crisis there is some doubt about housing completion rates in the early part of the plan period and disposable incomes are likely to decrease. This may well also have an impact on the commuted sums available under Section 106. Fortunately, the larger developments proposed in the Area Action Plan are in later phases, but even so there was strong indication from the hearings that some opportunity sites may come forward to application stage in the short term through the Council's preferred partners. This is despite the early delivery phase of the plan taking place in economic circumstances very different to those at the time the plan was in preparation.
- 8.6 Although there may well be uncertainty in the future it seems to me that the Council has in its phasing recognised this and has as far as possible linked development to available public realm and transport funding. Also with important transport funding already in place, delivery of the Opportunity Sites should be effectively managed.
- 8.7 There will be a need to carefully monitor the Bromley Retail Study Update to assess any change in shopping patterns over the period against the retail target in the Plan. I note, however, that retail related permissions and completions are a monitoring indicator in Section 7 - Monitoring Mechanisms.
- 8.8 I consider the flexibility and the monitoring aspects of the Area Action Plan to be sound.

Minor Changes

9.0 In addition to the advertised changes which accompanied the Area Action Plan the Council wishes to make minor wording changes to the submitted Plan in order to clarify, correct and update various parts of the text. These changes do not address key aspects of soundness. I have made only reference to one of these recent changes in my report, otherwise no specific mention of them is made. These minor changes are incorporated into the Appendices 1 and 2. The Appendix 2 changes came out of the public examination. I have considered these changes and endorse them on a general basis in the interests of clarity and accuracy.

Overall Conclusions

10.0 I conclude that with the changes I have made the proposals for the town centre are realistic, have been justified by a sound evidence base, would be effective and are consistent with national policy. I also conclude that the London Borough of Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan satisfies the requirements of s20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the soundness criteria in Planning Policy Statement 12.

Eric T Searle

INSPECTOR

Appendices (incorporating Appendices 1 and 2 of focused changes and schedule of minor changes put forward by the Council and Appendix 3 with the Inspector's recommended changes.)

Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan

Appendix 1 - Table of Council Changes already proposed and published (as Regulation 30[e])

This table includes a list of proposed changes to the November 2009 (Regulation 27) area action plan, that have been proposed and published (as part of Regulation 30[e]) prior to the public hearing sessions of 30th March to April 2010.

The table comprises of three types of changes:

1. Points of clarification, factual and grammatical corrections which are supported by the Council.
2. Minor changes which are points of clarification arising from representations and are to which the Council are not opposed.
3. Change that is necessary to meet changing legislation or government policy to ensure that the document is up to date when adopted.

In each case, the nature of the proposed change is identified, and the reason for it specified.

Location	Proposed amendment	Reason for change
General		
Policies BTC8, BTC9, BTC11, BTC12, BTC13, BTC14, BTC16	Remove references to UDP policies which have not been saved – ER1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15	Update. Direction received on saved policies
Diagram 1.2, 2.3, 4.1 etc.	Alter boundary line of the AAP and opportunity sites, where necessary, to coincide accurately with property boundaries (see attached map)	To correct discrepancies arisen during development of the plan, due to the scale of the maps
Contents	Update Page Numbering	Update for Adoption
Foreword	Update Foreword as it relates to Submission draft	Update for Adoption

Preface	Remove Preface as it relates to Submission draft	Update for Adoption
Sections 1.1.1 -1.1.3	Relates to Submission draft, delete and start at Section 1.2.1	Update
Diagram 1.1	Label should read "Bexleyheath" not "Bexley"	Correction
Section 1.3.4	Remove reference to examination and soundness tests.	Not required in adopted plan
Section 1.3.14	Refers to Council's application to Save UDP policies in July 2009 Update - After "...adopted in July 2006" delete remaining text and replace with: "and under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, the policies were saved for three years. In July 2009, a Direction was received to allow further retention of most of the policies until they are superseded by new policies in forthcoming DPDs."	Direction received on saved policies

Section 1.3.16	Delete first sentence. First sentence will be confirmed through independent Examination.	Update
Section 1.3.18	Line 21 Correct spelling of "wellbeing"	Typographical Correction
Section 1.3.19	In first sentence after "Core Strategy" insert "which will set the strategic policies for the borough." Delete remainder of sentence.	Clarification & Update
Section 1.3.20	Delete, duplicates Section 1.3.19	Repetition
Section 1.4 Evolution	Remove section – delete paragraphs 1.4.1 to 1.4.5	Update. Refers to AAP development process
Section 1.5.2	Delete "Draft" before "AAP"	Update refers to the Submission version

Section 1.6.1	Delete "proposed Submission"	Update
Section 2.1.17	Reference to community facilities under housing may read more clearly under a new sub-header "Community Facilities" before paragraph 2.1.17	Clarification
Section 3.2.1	Replace "Diagram 3.1" with "Diagram 3.2"	Typographical Correction
Section 3.2.6	Sections 3.2.6 – 3.2.7 on Sustainable Community Strategy need to be summarised and moved to after 1.3.18 in Context section	Update. Background context and not Vision
Section 4.1.2	'Community Plan' should read 'Sustainable Community Strategy'	Update
Section 4.1.6	Wording implies AAP will deliver Sustainability Appraisal objectives , which is incorrect . Delete paragraph as wording is not necessary in adopted plan.	Clarification and Update
Appendix 4	Appendix 4 relates AAP Policy linkages which are not appropriate in the adopted version of the Plan.	Update
Policy BTC1	Key Diagram relates to Diagram 4.1	Clarification and Update
Section 4.2.2	Add to Section 4.2.2 'The additional new floorspace figures in the Policy BTC1 are additional to the existing quantum in the Town Centre.'	Clarification
Section 4.3.1	Replace "Community Plan" with "Building a Better Bromley"	Clarification and Update
Section BTC2	Policy BTC2 relates to residential development and not just residential densities. Amend title to read "Policy BTC2 - Residential Development"	Correction

Section BTC3	Re-title policy "BTC3 – Promoting Housing Choice" Delete bullet points and replace last sentence with: "All new housing will be required to meet Lifetime Homes (or subsequent) standards and at least 10% of units within each scheme should be specifically designed to be suitable, or capable of being adapted without further structural alteration, for occupation by a wheelchair user, in accordance with current best practice"	Clarification and future-proofing of the Policy
Section 4.3.8	Delete last sentence	Appendix being removed
Section 4.4.3	After "...gross retail floorspace up to 2016" add "The Retail Capacity Study was updated in 2009 and the figure revised to 42,000 square metres."	Update
Section 4.4.5	"catchments" should read "catchment"	Correction
Section 4.6.1	Amend the last sentence to read "The Council will be committed to joint working with key partners such as the Environment Agency"	Clarification and Update
Section 4.6.6	Replace first sentence with: "The AAP seeks to ensure that a significant proportion of the energy supply to new development comes from decentralised, renewable and low carbon sources, on-site where feasible."	Clarification and Update in response to GLA representations
Section 4.6.8	Delete first sentence.	Clarification and Update in
Section 4.6.14	Paragraph needs to be reworded to make clearer through bulleting SUDS and drainage measures.	Update for Adoption
Section 4.6.17	Delete last sentence, text is not relevant to AAP	Clarification and Update

Section 4.7.7	Include reference to 'Building for Life Standards'	Clarification and Update
Sections 4.7.8 4.7.19	Text needs to be summarised as it repeats content contained in Appendix 3 and 7.	Update for Adoption
Section 4.7.21	Replace "Appendix 4" with "Appendix 7"	Correction
Section 5.2.5	Add 'The 2000 sq m of B1a Office space is additional to existing office floorspace including Northside House'	Clarification and Update
Section 5.3.2	Delete Section and it repeats content of Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.3	Clarification and Update
Policy OSC	Remove the word "net". 5000sq m new floorspace is additional to existing office floorspace.	Clarification
Policy OSF	Final paragraph, first sentence, relating to protection of existing open space, to be deleted as it overlaps with final sentence.	Clarification and Update
Policy IA2	Missing word. Add 'of' after designation in sentence one.	Clarification and Update
Table 6.1 Delivery Strategy	Site E Flexibility. Add sentence ' If deliverability and viability constraints inhibit the relocation of the leisure centre by the start of Phase 3 then this would require an early review of the AAP in respect to comparison retail provision.	Clarification and Update in response to Government Office for London representations
Section 6.3.3	Replace "APP" with "AAP"	Correction
Section.6.5.2	"compliment" should read "complement"	Correction
Section 6.5.9	Correct the total of the Investment Programme to read "£52.95 million"	Correction
Section A1.47	Delete paragraphs A1.47 to A1.50	Formatting error

Appendices		
App 4 – linkages	Delete	Redundant
App 5 – lifetime homes	Delete	Not required in the plan
Transport strategy	Update for Adoption	
Objective 2	Amend objective to read “to build further traffic capacity in support of the new development as identified in the AAP ”.	Clarification and Update in response to Highway Agency representations
Objective 4	Amend objective to read “To seek to minimise the traffic and transport impacts generated from the developments alongside commercial viability considerations.	Clarification and Update in response to Highway Agency representations

Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan

Appendix 2 - Table of Council Changes Arising from the Public Hearing Sessions

This table includes a list of proposed changes to the November 2009 (Regulation 27) area action plan, arising out of the public hearing sessions of 30th March to 14th April 2010.

The table comprises of three types of changes:

1. Points of clarification, factual and grammatical corrections which are supported by the Council.
2. Minor changes which are points of clarification arising from representations and are to which the Council are not opposed.
3. Change that is necessary to meet changing legislation or government policy to ensure that the document is up to date when adopted.

In each case, the nature of the proposed change is identified, and the reason for it specified.

AAP Reference	Nature of the Proposed Change	Reason for the Change
Para 1.3.7	Insert - Superseded by PPS 4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, Dec 09)	Update
Para 4.7.4	Insert - Superseded by PPS 5 (Planning for the Historic Environment, 2010)	Update
Appendix 1, A1.8	Insert - PPS 6 (Planning for Town Centres) and PPS 4 (Industrial, Commercial and Small Firms) have been cancelled and replaced a consolidated PPS 4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth)	Update
Appendix 1, A1.21	Insert – PPG 15 (Planning for the Historic Environment) has been cancelled and replaced with PPS 5 (Planning for the Historic Environment)	Update
Appendix 7	Site E (The Pavilion) Existing Situation, second bullet point – amend to read “...Elmfield Road that detracts from these street edges. The frontage to Queens Gardens is also...”	Correction
Opportunity Site M (p.197)	Delete the development area shown to the north of Queens Gardens from the Opportunity Site	Agreed at the hearing sessions in discussion with Tony Banfield of the Bromley Civic Society
Transport Strategy Implementation – Fig’s 6.1, 6.2 & 6.3	The demarcation of opportunity sites needs to be consistent within these diagrams. In particular the incorrect inclusion of the Police Station in Fig. 6.3.	Suggestion by Michael Short (local resident) at the hearing sessions

Appendix 3 - Inspector's Recommended Changes

Inspector Change No.	Change
IC1	<p>Add to third paragraph of Policy BTC1 after... development.</p> <p>“Direct liaison by the Council will take place with local medical practitioners on the provision of improved surgeries and medical facilities to serve the planned increased population in the town centre”.</p>
IC2	<p>Delete second paragraph of Policy BTC4 and replace as follows:</p> <p>“New retail development on Opportunity Sites should provide for prime retail floorspace and complement and be fully integrated and well connected with existing retail facilities. The improvement of and extension to existing shops will be permitted provided they achieve a high standard of design and are well integrated with the rest of the town centre. Smaller units suitable for independent traders will be encouraged in suitable locations”</p>
IC3	<p>Add to first paragraph of Policy OSG after “key diagram”</p> <p>Detailed development will be on the basis of a Master Plan to be prepared and adopted by the Council. The Master Plan will determine the location, mix and amount of development. The targets for development are:</p> <p>Delete “Development will comprise”</p>
IC4	<p>Add further bullet point to Policy OSL:</p> <p>Small retail units may be acceptable as part of the hotel scheme to provide vitality at street level</p>
IC5	<p>Add to second bullet point of Policy OSL:</p> <p>Around 40 residential units “but the final density will depend on the appropriate level of replacement office floorspace.”</p>
IC6	<p>Delete the last sentence of paragraph 5.10.1 and replace with:</p> <p>Although it is accepted that the DHSS building and the</p>

	Bromley Christian Centre can be developed independently, an indication of how they integrate one to the other will be required.
IC7	Amend Diagram 4.5 to show where road improvements may be required by means of a thick line along the road boundary.
IC8	Delete paragraph 5.10.2 and replace as follows: A line is shown diagrammatically on Diagram 4.5 to identify where transport priority measures will be required on redevelopment. The extent of such measures will be identified at the planning application stage.
IC9	Add to first paragraph of Policy BTC2 "As some of the development will be on sensitive conservation area sites where development should preserve or enhance the character and/or appearance of the areas, density of development will not be the determining factor"
IC10	Delete the first sentence of the second paragraph of Policy BTC2 commencing "The number of residential units..... in Policy BTC1"
IC11	Delete the third paragraph of Policy OSB and replace with: Although the density Matrix in the London Plan indicates the possible accommodation of around 70 units, because of the sensitivity of this site any proposal will be determined on the basis of the impact of the development on the character of the area; the retention of important views into the conservation area; a satisfactory relationship with housing which exists to the north; the recognition of the context provided by Bromley and Sheppard's Colleges; and to the effective landscaping of the site to integrate the development into the townscape.
IC12	Add a further sentence to OSP: Sainsburys, West Street on page 89. After "West Street." In the second paragraph add: Any built development on the car park must not dominate the listed building to the north of College Slip or College Slip itself.

IC13	Add to the first paragraph of Policy BTC17 - Design Quality Any development affecting the Conservation Area shall be assessed on the basis of the emerging Conservation Area Appraisal
-------------	---