

# Opportunity Area Portrait

## Bexley Riverside



# Introduction

## List of acronyms and abbreviations

- OA: Opportunity Area
- LP: London Plan
- GLA: Greater London Authority
- TfL: Transport for London
- OAPF: Opportunity Area Planning Framework
- CAZ: Central Activities Zone
- LESD: London Employment Sites Database
- SHLAA: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- LB: London Borough
- RB: Royal Borough
- AAP: Area Action Plan
- SPD: Supplementary Planning Document
- SIL: Strategic Industrial Land
- LSIS: Locally Significant Industrial Sites
- BID: Business Improvement District
- CEZ: Creative Enterprise Zone

# Introduction

## Purpose of this document and clarifications



### What is a pen portrait:

- A strategic analysis/ summary of an OA.
- We collected a series of data on delivery of homes, jobs, town centres and high streets, transport, land use and industrial land to assess local change at a strategic level, to better understand places in the OAs, and evaluate how they are performing against the expectations in the London Plan 2021.



### How will this information be used?

- This evidence base supports the OA propositions in the Towards a new London Plan document.
- The OA propositions include:
  - change in the status of the OA to reflect the housing and/or infrastructure delivery since 2019
  - highlight opportunities to review the OA boundary and/ or OA designation.



### Data sources and clarifications

#### Homes

- The London Plan 2021 identifies indicative homes capacities (10 year, 22 year).
- The indicative homes capacities are based on the SHLAA 2017.
- The monitoring year for the London Plan 2021 starts in 2019.
- This document includes an overview on the progress against the SHLAA 2017 to understand what has happened in the OA.
- Acknowledging that a lot has changed since 2017, including the adoption of new development plans, the current document provides an overview of site allocations based on the latest publicly accessible information.
- All spatial data is available in the London Datastore, unless stated otherwise.
- All data relating to development progress is available via the Planning Data Hub, unless stated otherwise.

# Introduction

## Purpose of this document and clarifications

### Data sources and clarifications

#### Jobs



- The LESD is a database that records recently completed employment developments and those in the pipeline in London to produce an estimate of London’s additional employment capacity.
- Since the adoption of the London Plan 2021, a new London Employment Sites Database was produced in 2021. This provides up to date estimates by OA.
- A jobs dashboard has been produced to monitor the jobs’ performance in the OAs.

#### Local Plan status



- Local Plan status information is based on publicly available data, or information received by the boroughs.

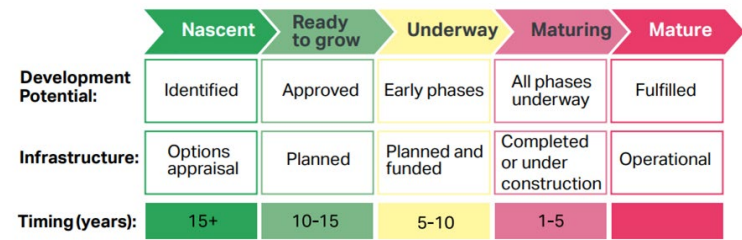
#### OA boundaries

- The London Plan designates OAs, whilst the boundary can be adopted through development plans. See more on [OA boundaries](#).

### OA status - London Plan 2021

- The OA categorisation in the Key info refers to the London Plan 2021 Figure 2.2 - OAPF process diagram, also shown below:

Figure 2.2 - OAPF process diagram



### Additional resources

- Growth Corridors: [Engagement summaries from Planning for London events \(November/December 2024\)](#)
- Opportunity Area monitoring GLA [webpage](#).

# Introduction

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Transport  
and  
connectivity

Delivery of  
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SHLAA 2017

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Development  
activity 2021  
and 2024

Jobs

Town Centre  
and High  
Streets

Industrial  
Land

Place  
strategies\*

Moving  
forward

\* This section refers to existing/ emerging strategies for the OA.

# Bexley Riverside Context

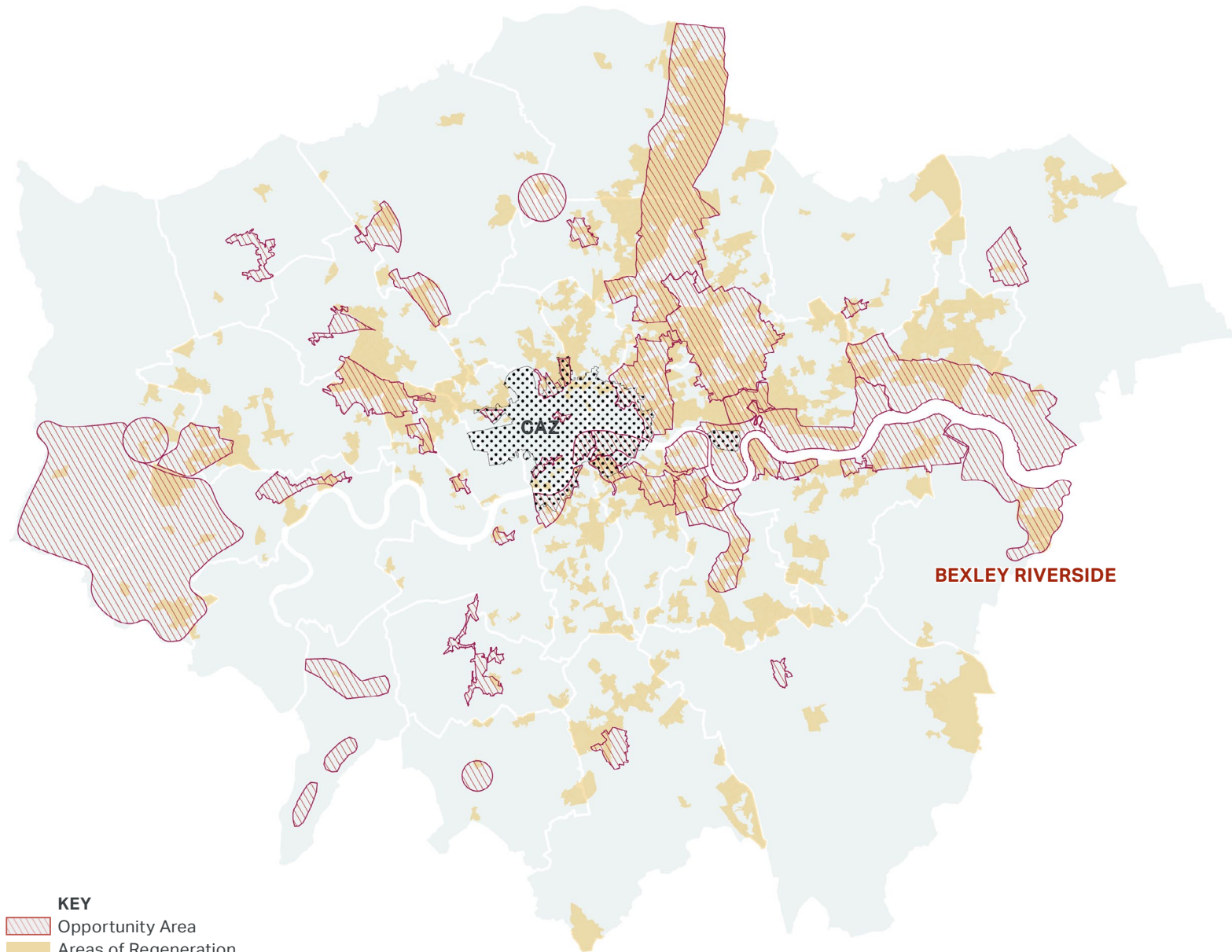
## OAs in the CAZ

- King's Cross (Maturing)
- Tottenham Court Road (Maturing)
- Victoria (Maturing)
- Waterloo (Maturing)
- London Bridge/ Bankside (Maturing)
- Euston (Ready to Grow)
- VNEB (Underway)
- Elephant & Castle (Underway)
- Part of City Fringe/ Tech City (Underway)
- Paddington (Underway)

The OA is not within the CAZ. It is in outer London.

## Areas of Regeneration

Some areas in the south part of Bexley Riverside are identified in the London Plan as areas of regeneration.

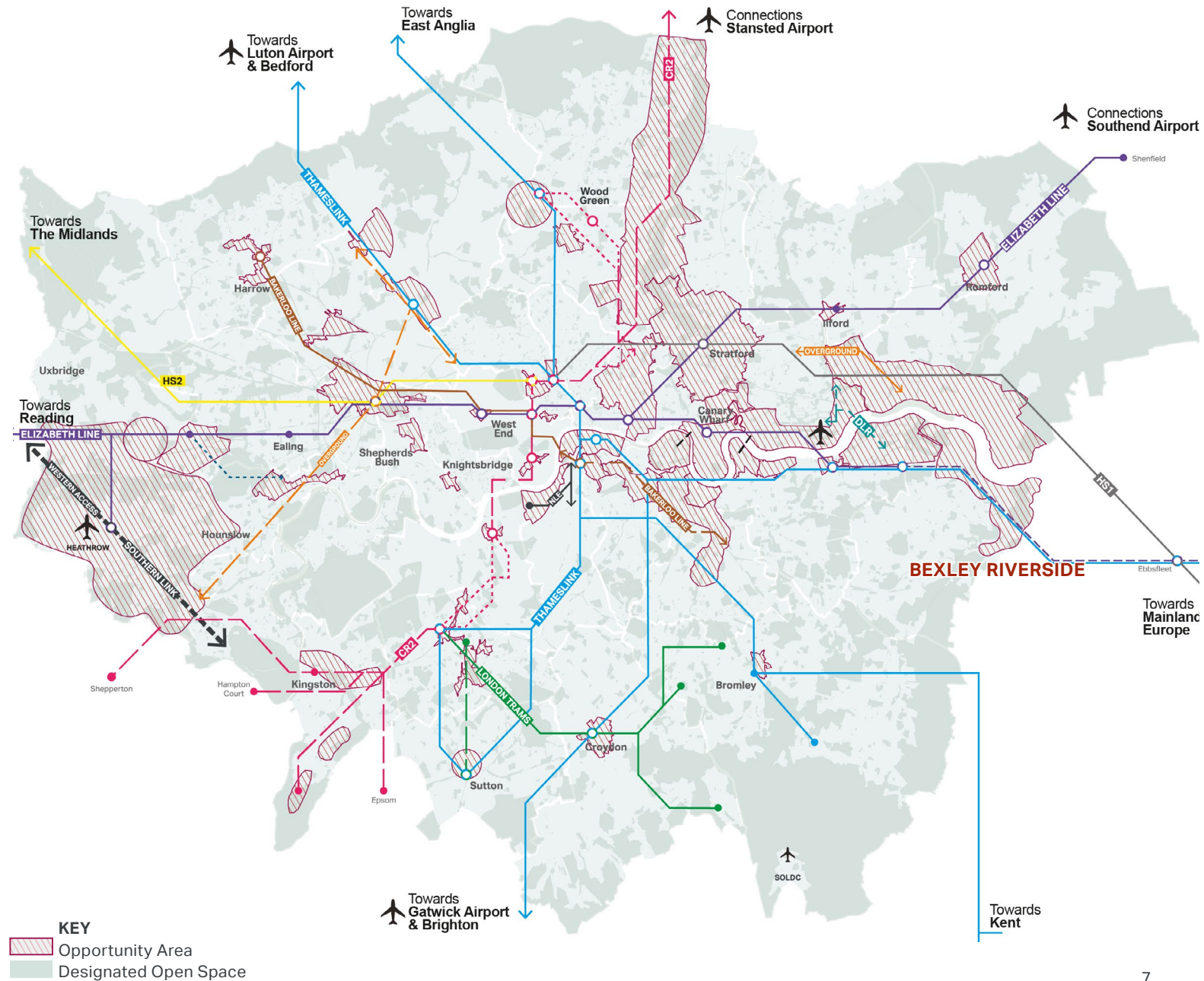


Source: Areas of Regeneration as per London Plan 2021

# Bexley Riverside

## Context

- The OA has benefited from the Elizabeth line opening in 2022 (Abbey Wood station).
- There are currently no plans for the Elizabeth line to be extended from Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet.
- There have been studies and TfL has engaged with third parties to discuss the potential role for Elizabeth line services to support other proposed network extensions.
- Any future development of the extension proposals will be dependent on external factors including securing funding, local growth aspirations and confirmation of development potential.



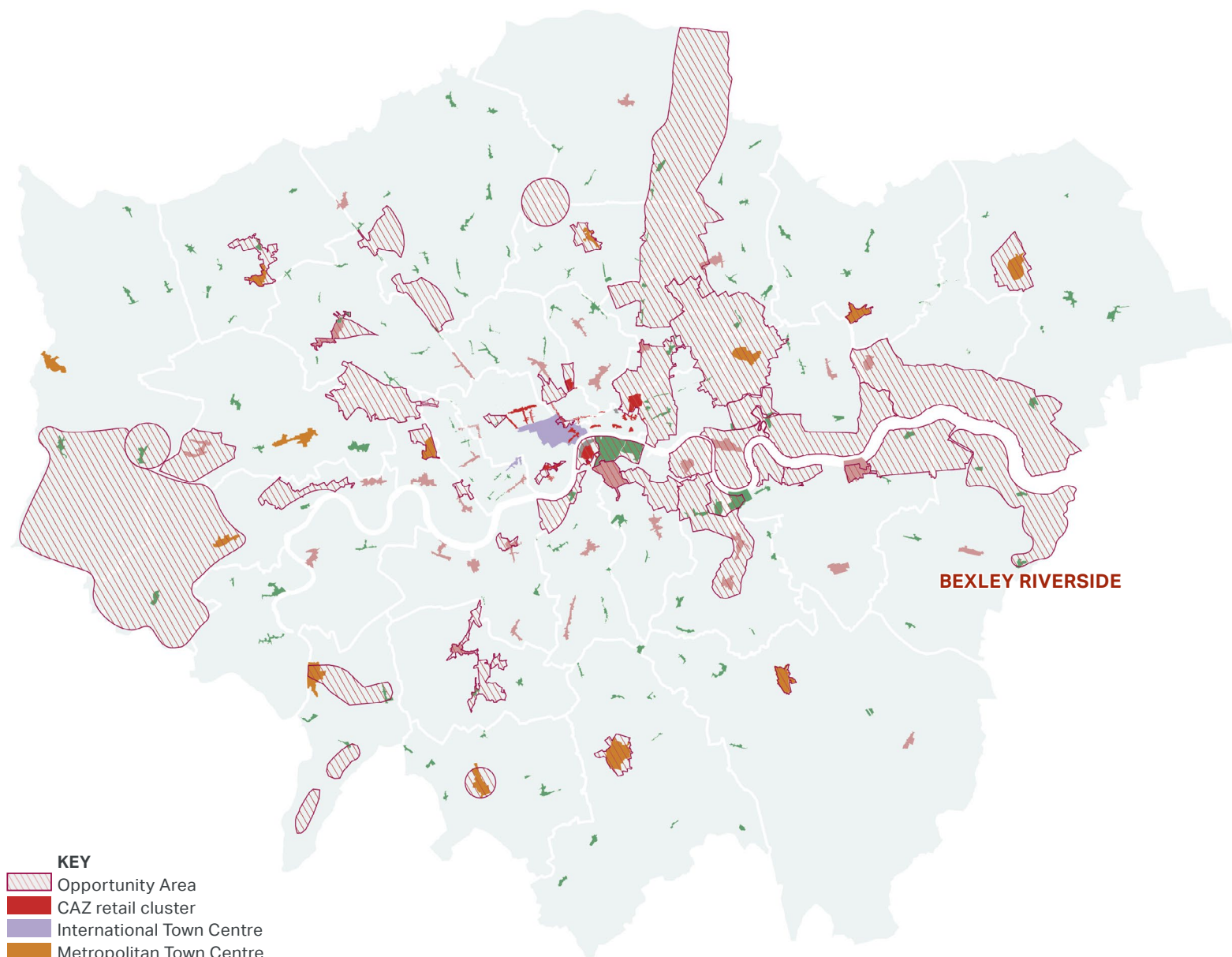
# Bexley Riverside Context

## OAs and Metropolitan Town Centres

- Olympic Legacy (Maturing)
- Harrow & Wealdstone (Underway)
- White City (Underway)
- Croydon (Ready to grow)
- Romford (Ready to grow)
- Ilford (Ready to grow)
- Wood Green (Nascent)
- Kingston (Nascent)
- Bromley (Nascent)
- Sutton (Nascent)

There is no overlap between Metropolitan Town Centre designation and OA designation in the case of Bexley Riverside OA.

The OA is home to **Erith District Centre**, **Lower Belvedere District Centre** and **Crayford District Centre**.



**KEY**

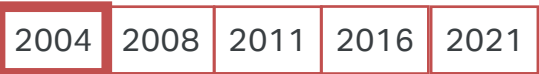
- Opportunity Area
- CAZ retail cluster
- International Town Centre
- Metropolitan Town Centre
- Major Town Centre
- District Town Centre

Source: Planning Data map

# Bexley Riverside

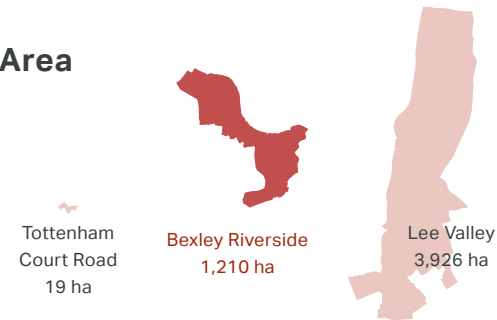
## Key info

### London Plan Designation Year



**Borough**  
LB Bexley

### Area



### OA specific plans

Not started

### Local Plan status

Adopted in 2023

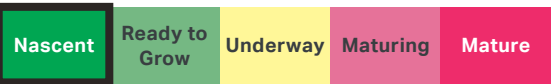
### Growth Corridor

Thames Estuary - South

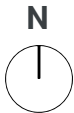
### Housing Delivery Test 2023

None

### OA status (London Plan 2021)



London Plan 2021 capacities by 2041



Source: Google Earth

**KEY**  
Opportunity Area (indicative boundary)

\*Note that the LESD (2021) decreased the capacity to 2,000 new jobs

# Bexley Riverside

## Transport and connectivity

- Elizabeth Line station outside of the Bexley Riverside OA (Abbey Wood).
- Plans for Bus Transit from North Greenwich to Slade Green.

### Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet Connectivity Study (extension of the Elizabeth Line)

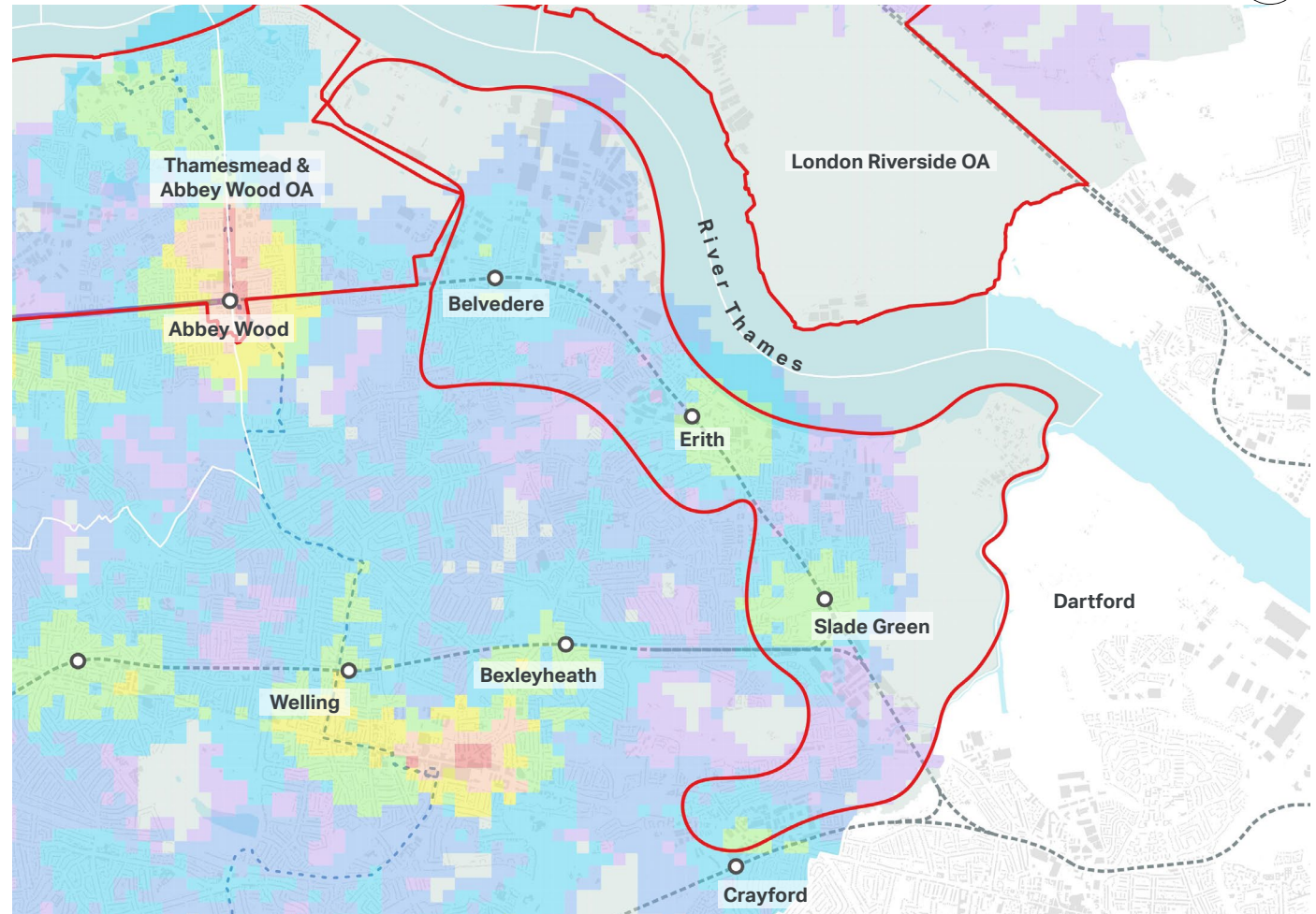
- In 2019, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) provided funding to the C2E Partnership to undertake a comprehensive study into options to improve transport connectivity between Abbey Wood and Ebbsfleet/Gravesend in order to support new housing and employment growth along the Corridor.
- Business case submitted
- In 2021, the C2E Partnership submitted the consultation information to Government as part of their Strategic Outline Business Case submission.
- No TfL plans for this; technical, operational and financial challenges.



# Bexley Riverside

## Transport and connectivity: PTAL 2031

- Impact of the Elizabeth Line in Abbey Wood.
- TfL is working on 'sustainable connectivity metric', so would be interesting to see how that may differ from PTAL.
- Challenges: no Thames crossings
- No plans for an extension of Docklands Light Rail to Belvedere (DLR to Thamesmead is a priority).
- Plans for River Thames passenger services



Source: Transport For London

**KEY**  
 0 (worst)  
 1a  
 1b

2  
 3  
 4  
 5

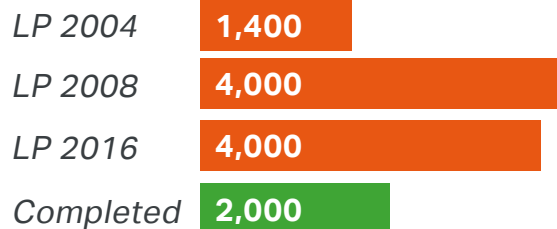
6a  
 6b (best)  
 Opportunity Area  
 (indicative boundary)

# Bexley Riverside

## Delivery of homes

### Delivery pre-2019

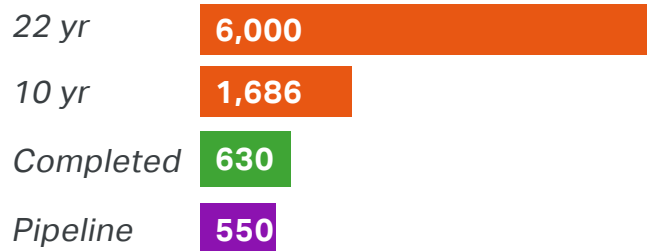
Completions since designation against capacity



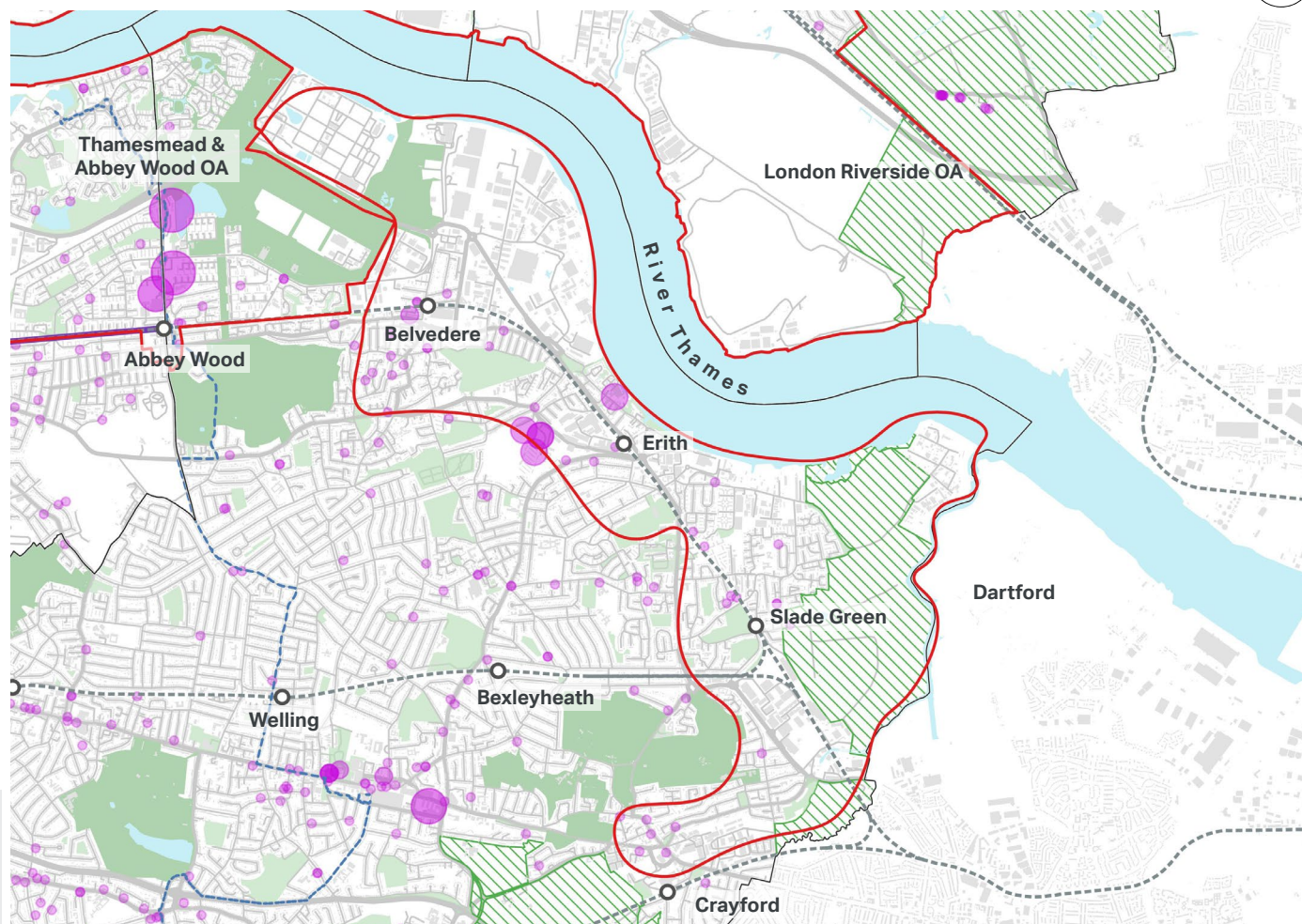
Note: In 2004 the OA boundary was drawn around Belvedere/ Erith. The OA has delivered half of the indicative capacity identified in 2008.

### Delivery post - 2019 (London Plan 2021)

Progress against 22yr, 10 yr capacity



The OA has not delivered a significant amount of homes since 2019. The OA delivered approximately 157 homes per year, against an indicative LP capacity of 272 homes per year. The pipeline and the existing completions might mean that it meets the 10 yr figure.



**KEY**

- Opportunity Area (indicative boundary)
- Pipeline (Planning Datahub, May 2023). Size of circle is proportionate to the number of homes.

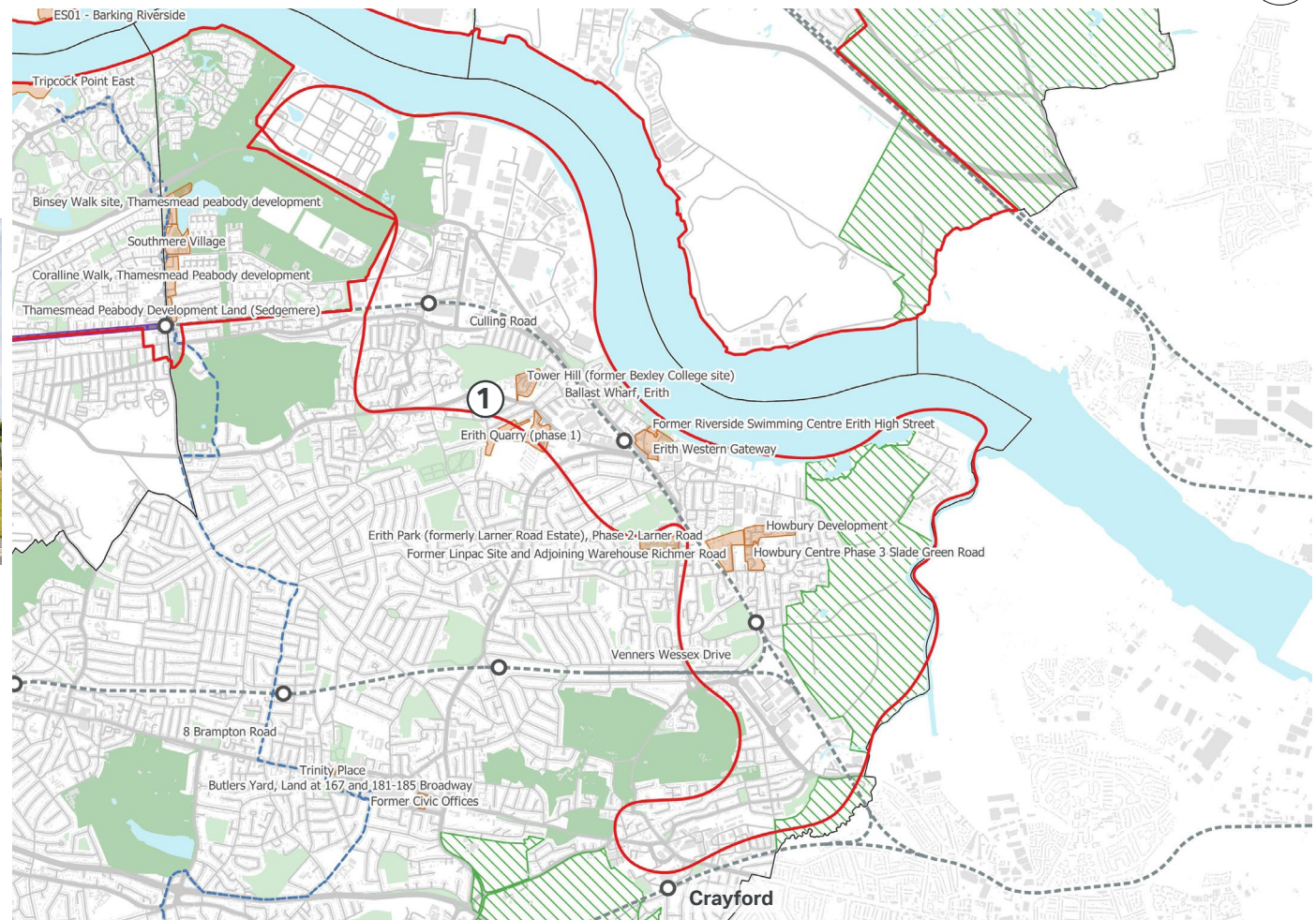
\*[Completions](#) account for all types of supply between 2019/2020 to 2023/2024.

\*\* [Residential Pipeline in 2023/2024](#)

# Bexley Riverside

## SHLAA 2017: Approvals and Allocations

- ① **Erith Quarry:** Gained permission to increase overall housing totals to 850 in February 2021. Construction completed for more than 140 new homes, and a new school.

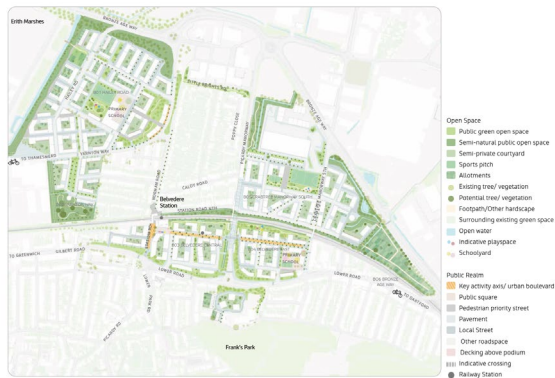


- KEY**
- Opportunity Area
  - Approvals and Allocations (SHLAA, 2017)

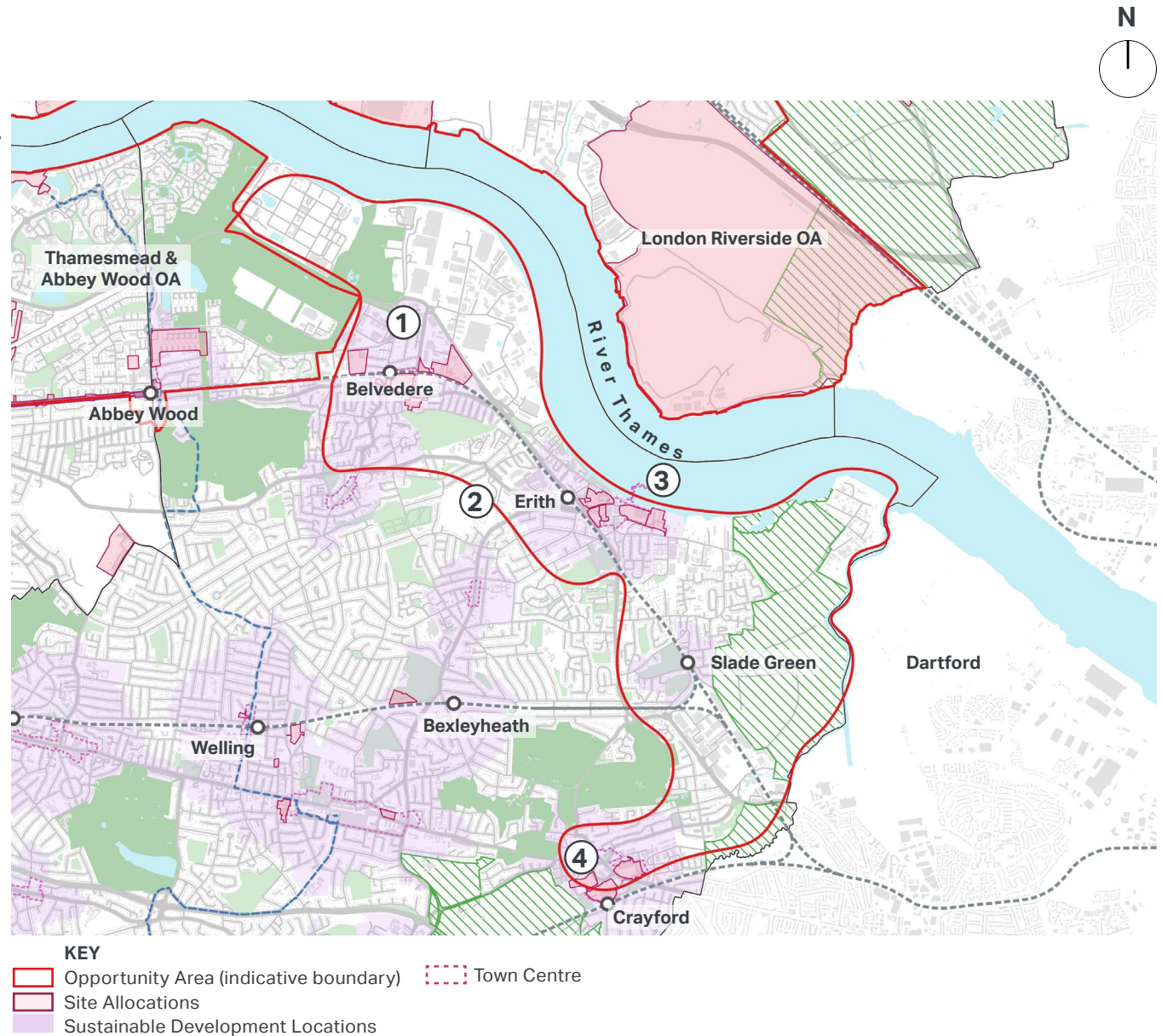
# Bexley Riverside

## Site allocations: Bexley Local Plan

- ① Site allocations include sites that were considered 'unsuitable' in the SHLAA 2017 (review of industrial land since then; land swap) (Belvedere).
- ② Removal of strategic sites that show progress (Erith Quarry).
- ③ New allocations around Erith, beyond the Western Gateway , include Morrisons Erith and Erith Riverside.
- ④ Crayford:
  - Former Electrobases,
  - Tower Retail Park
  - Sainsbury's Crayford

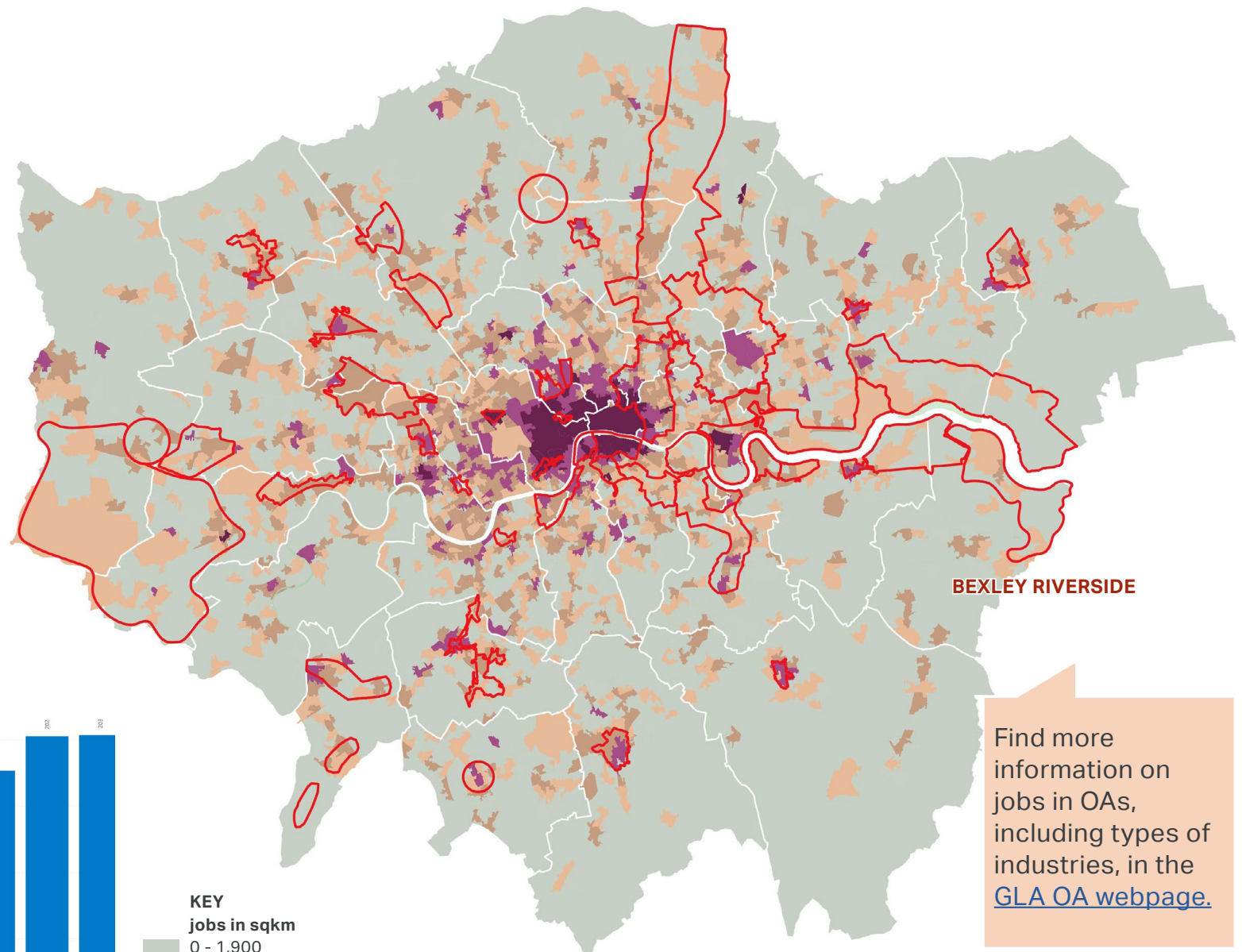


Illustrative indicative masterplan from AW2EB connectivity study

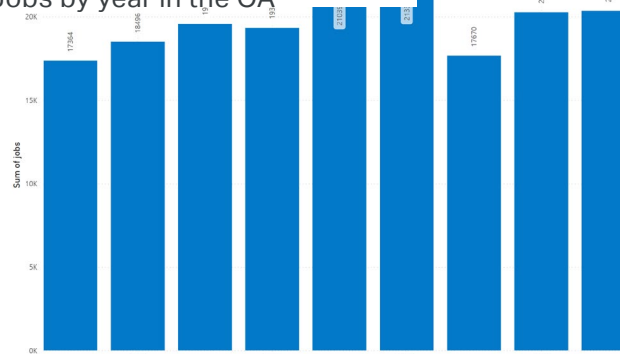


# Bexley Riverside Jobs

- In 2023, there were 20,351 jobs in the OA.
- According to Business Register and Employment Survey gathered by Nomis, in 2023 there were 74,000 jobs in Bexley. 20,351 of which were in the OA (28 per cent).



Jobs by year in the OA



Source: Census, Business Register

Find more information on jobs in OAs, including types of industries, in the [GLA OA webpage](#).

# Bexley Riverside

## Town Centres and High Streets

- A new district town centre at Belvedere station, Belvedere District Centre.
- According to 2016 London Plan pen portrait for the OA - the town centres provide scope for **intensification**, whilst the OA as a whole has a 'strategically important role in addressing London's logistics requirements'.



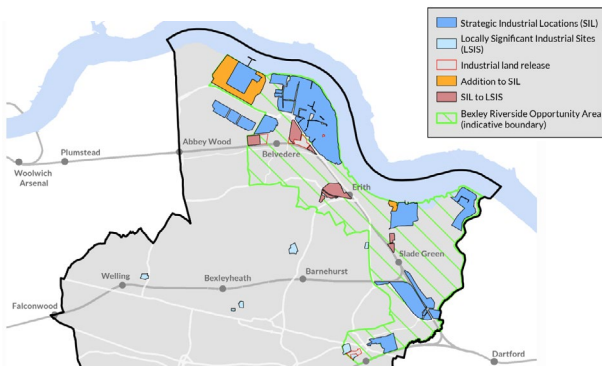
Lower Belvedere (Top), Erith Riverside Shopping Centre (Bottom). Source: LB Bexley



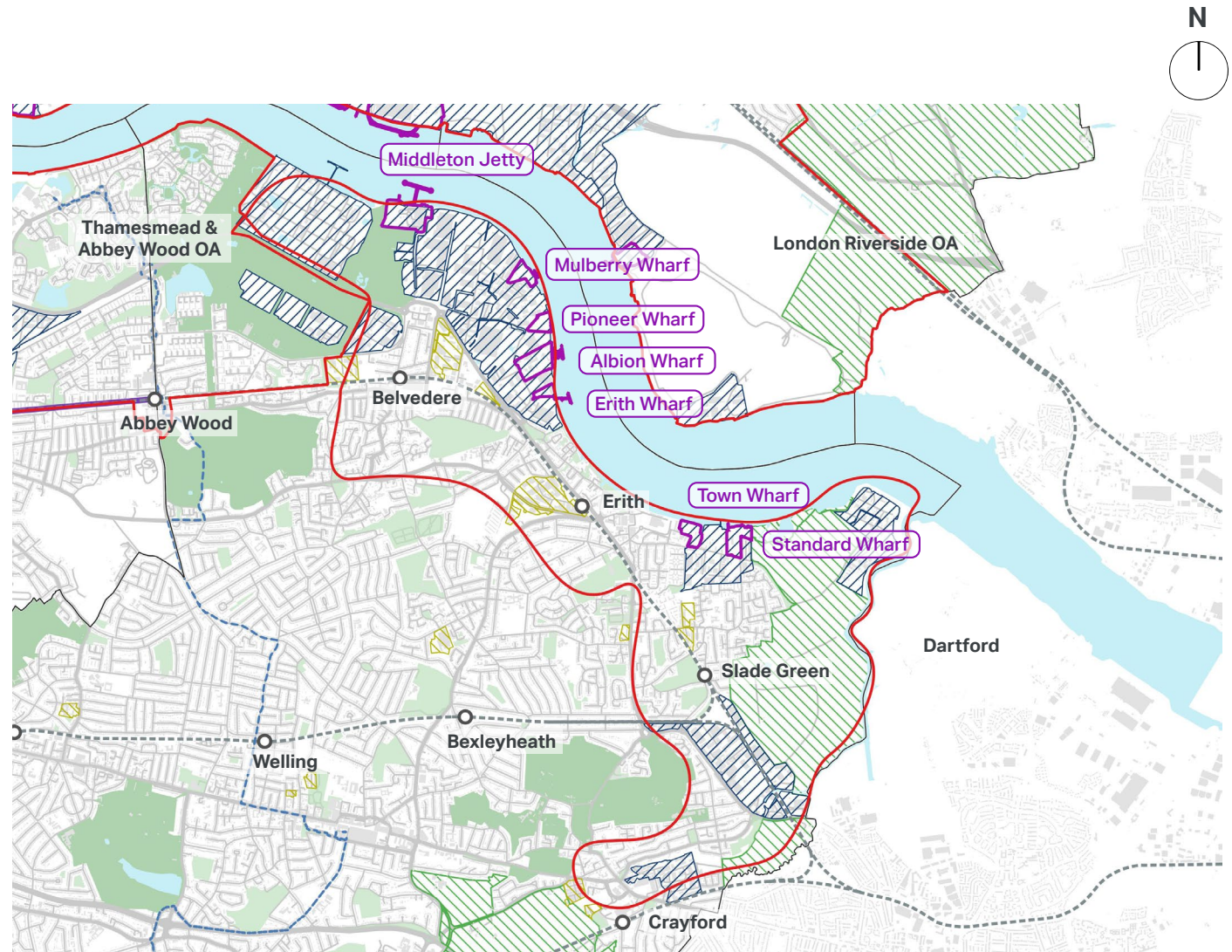
# Bexley Riverside

## Industrial land: Designations

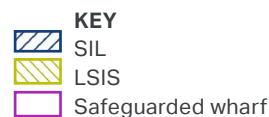
- North Bexley has **one of the largest areas of industrial land** in the capital and a significant river frontage with a number of safeguarded wharves and the longest publicly accessible pier in London at Erith.
- Historically, industrial development dependent on access to the rivers for transportation of goods and power.
- Development to date: Consolidation in to large contiguous industrial areas mainly in the north of the borough and contraction of industrial areas close to town centres.
- LB Bexley Local Plan has a 'no net loss' approach to industrial land. It released 19,630 m<sup>2</sup> of SIL.



Source: LB Bexley - Local Plan (2023)



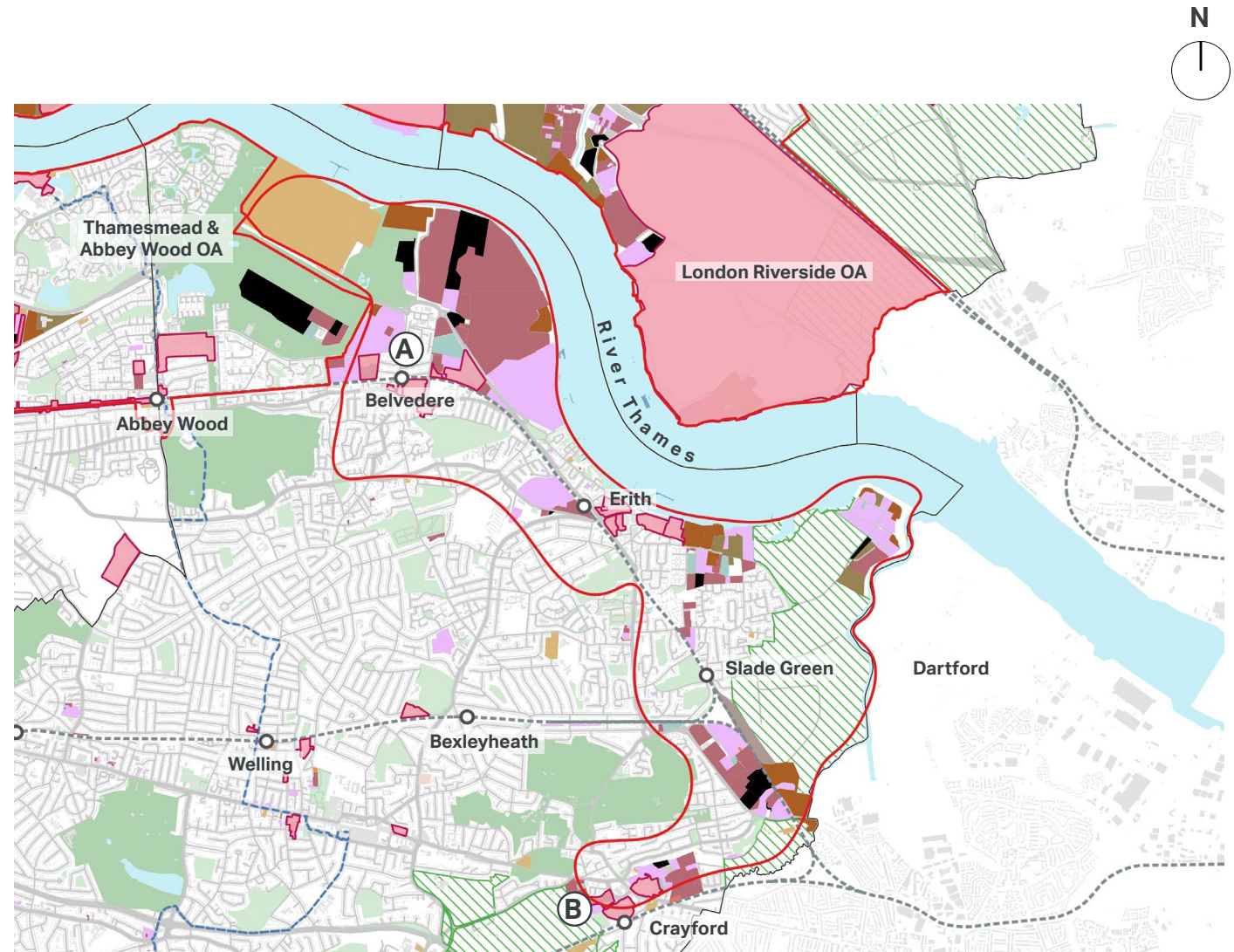
Source: London Industrial Supply Study



# Bexley Riverside

## Industrial land: Types of industry

- Some previously vacant industrial land sites have been cleared and designated as site allocations in the local plan (adopted in 2023). These sites include:
  - A** Belvedere Gas Holders, Yarnton Way (decommissioned utilities infrastructure)
  - B** Former Electrobases/ W heatsheaf Works, Crayford West Industrial Area

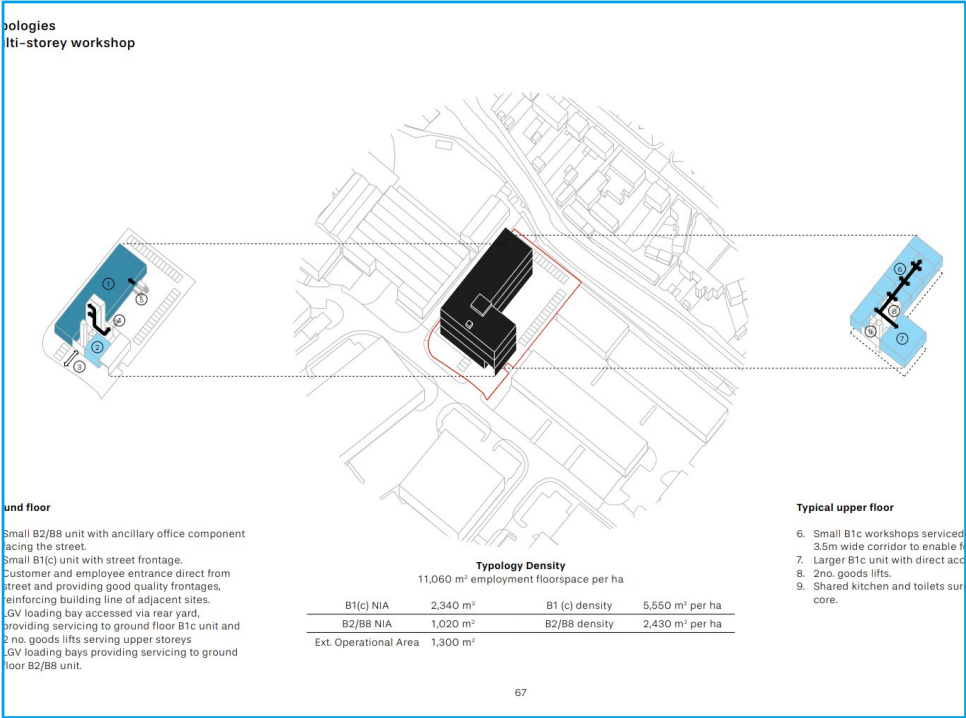
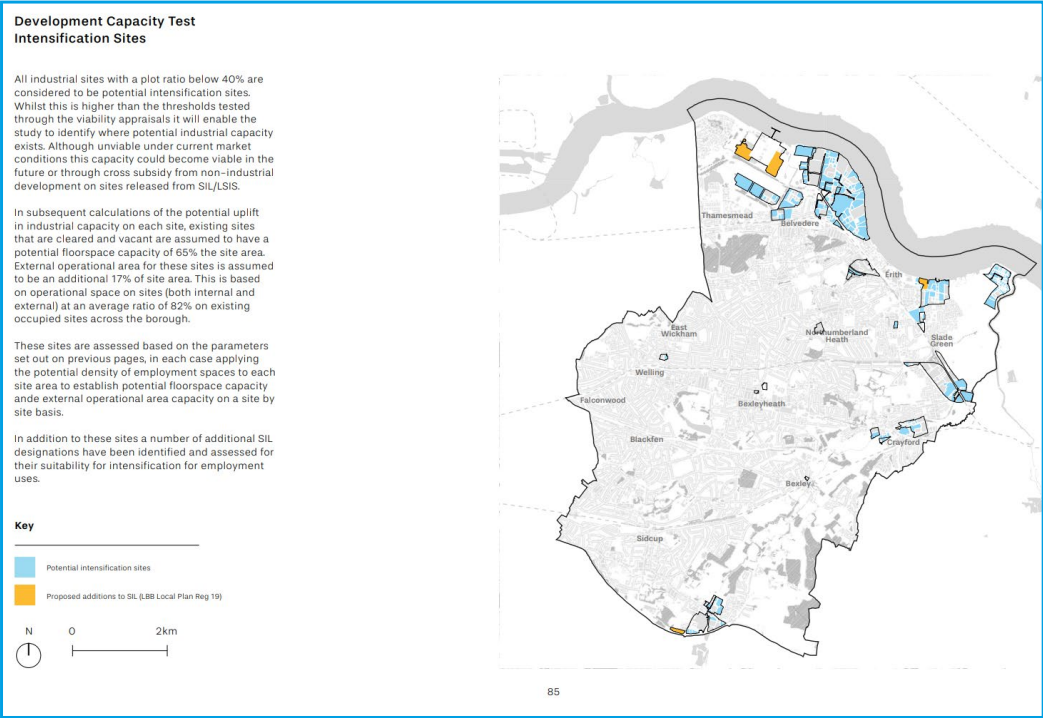


Source: London Industrial Supply Study

# Bexley Riverside

## Industrial Land: LB Bexley - Industrial Intensification Study (2021)

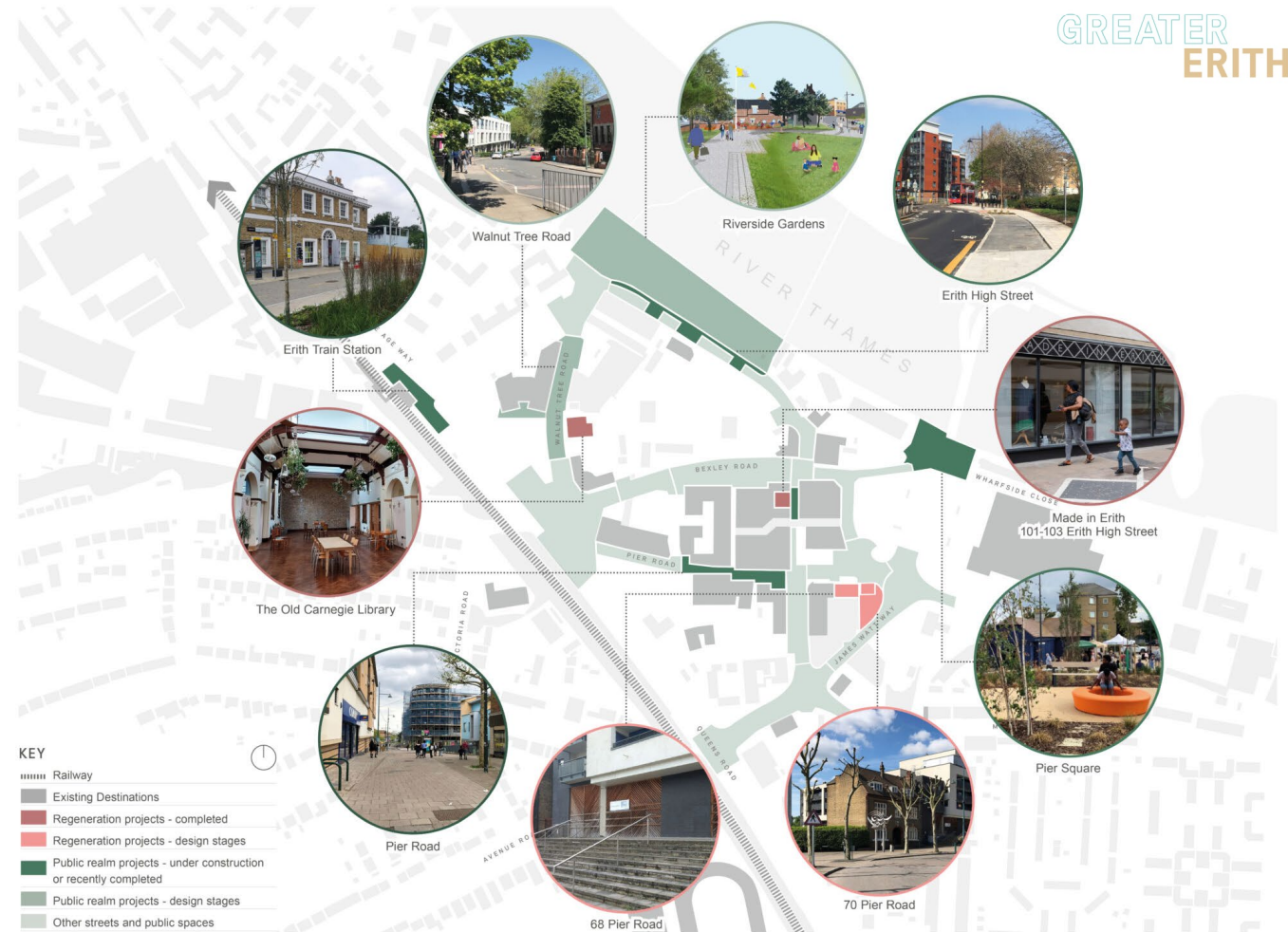
- Completed in 2021; evidence base for the Local Plan refresh, and supporting study for a future OAPF.



# Bexley Riverside

## Place strategies: Greater Erith Programme

- LB Bexley's Greater Erith programme is harnessing the entrepreneurial and creative spirit in the town to bring opportunities for regeneration and growth in Erith town centre.
- LB Bexley secured funding for the following projects within the programme through The Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund:
  - **Riverside Gardens** - Re-landscaping of community green space for residents to use. Completion due Spring 2025.
  - **68 Pier Road** - Mixed use community space under construction, completion due Spring 2025
  - **70 Pier Road** - Existing heritage building enhancement while providing new office space and residential units. In pre-construction phase.
  - **Pier Road public realm**
  - **Riverside Centre**



Source: [Greater Erith Programme](#)

# Bexley Riverside

## Moving forward

### Sustainable location for growth

- LB Bexley in their recently adopted Local Plan (2023) identify their ambitions for the Bexley Riverside OA:
  - **Sustainable development of existing settlements at Belvedere, Erith, Slade Green and Crayford**, through the securing of infrastructure, to enable the creation of high-quality places able to provide an estimated 23,000 new homes and 7,500 new jobs by 2050.
  - The LPA acknowledges that growth in the OA will take time and it is expected to be delivered incrementally over the next 30 years.
  - They also acknowledge that the potential for this OA will not be realised in the plan period (transport not in place to drive growth).

### OA boundary - role of this OA

- The OA originally focussed on the large swathe of industrial land at Belvedere. The indicative boundary increased in size to reflect the aspirations of the London Thames Gateway.

- The recent local plan review requested an OA boundary review as the current one is not fit for purpose.
- The LPA planning framework states that the OA should **reassess the suitability of the boundary** and provide further detail and guidance for land released for other uses, and for land remaining in industrial use.

### Industrial land - productive estuary

- 35 per cent of the OA is industrial land, (26 per cent of the OA is Strategic Industrial Land).
- LB Bexley already did a comprehensive industrial intensification/ co-location study to support a future OAPF.
- **What is the productive landscape and synergies across the River Thames;** relation to London Riverside (wider Thames Estuary vision), movement of people, goods and circular economy potential (Beckton, Thames Road).

### Proposition

- Boundary review (linked to the character of the OA) in collaboration with the GLA.
- Any review should consider the importance of this OA in providing industrial land.



Source: Riverside Gardens, Erith. Source: Erect architecture (project is under construction).