

Opportunity Area Portrait

Ilford



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.

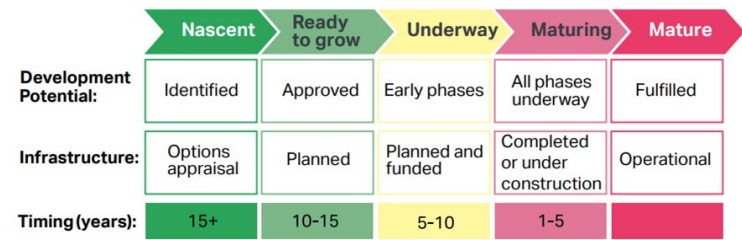
OA boundaries

- 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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and
connectivity

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Streets

Land uses

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strategies

Moving
forward

Ilford

Context

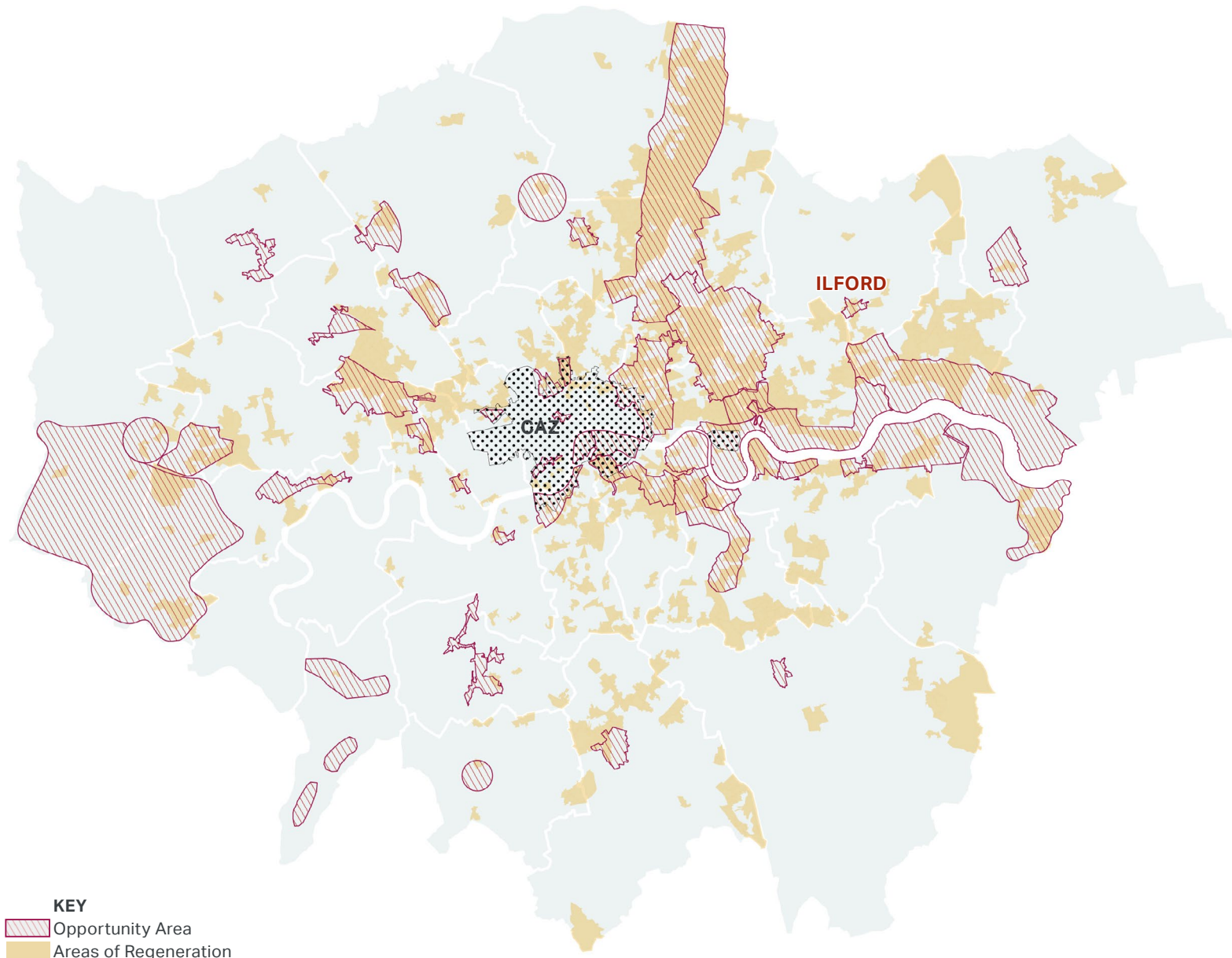
OAs in the CAZ

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

The OA is not within the CAZ.

Areas of Regeneration

Areas of regeneration in the town centre.



Source: Areas of Regeneration as per London Plan 2021

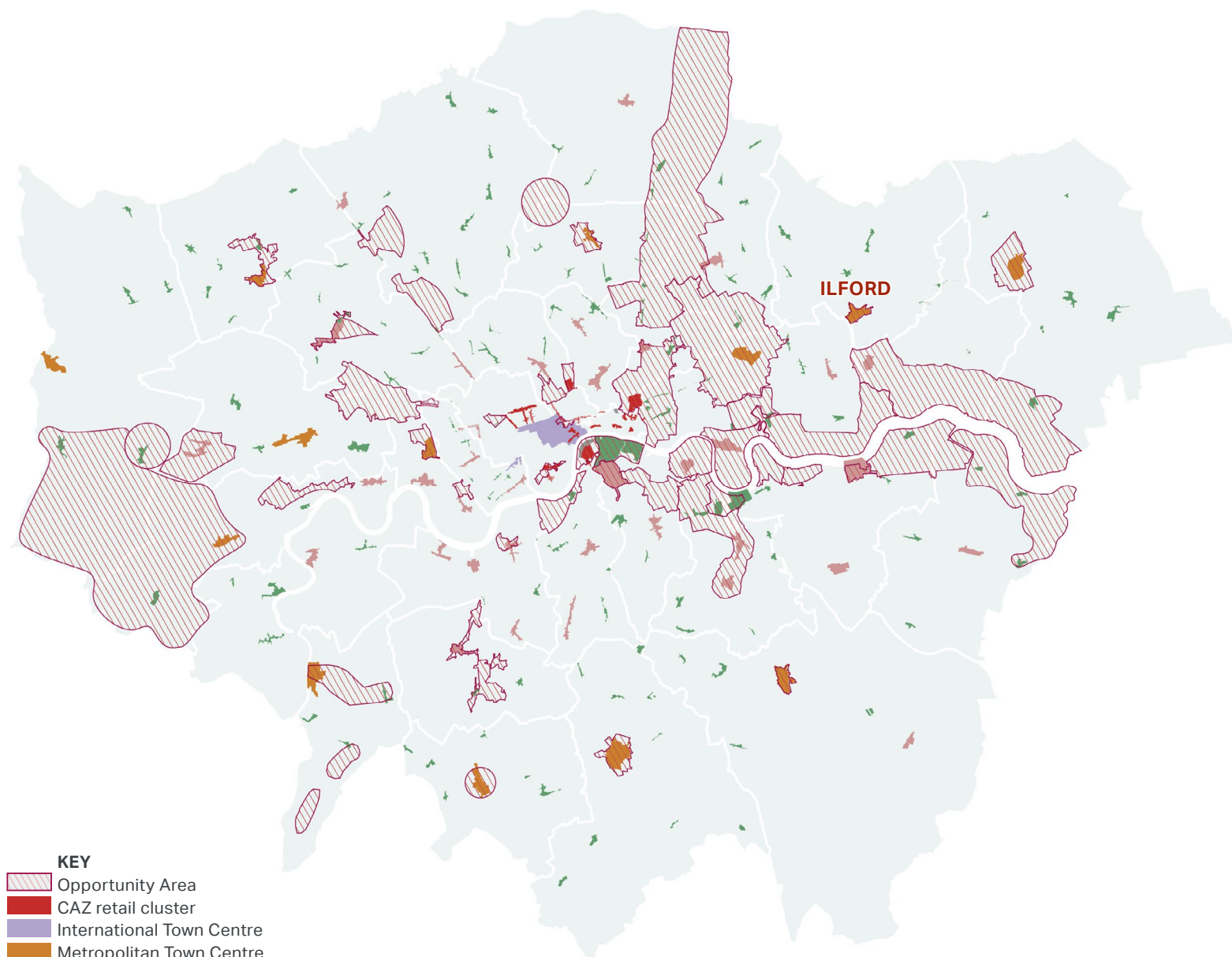
Ilford

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)

Ilford is a metropolitan town centre.



KEY

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

Source: Planning Data Map

Ilford

Key info

London Plan Designation Year**

2004 2008 2011 2016 2021

Borough

LB Redbridge

Area

Tottenham
Court Road
19 ha

Ilford
55 ha

Lee Valley
3,926 ha

OA specific plans

Ilford Town Centre AAP (2008)

Local Plan status

Not started. Current local plan adopted in 2018.

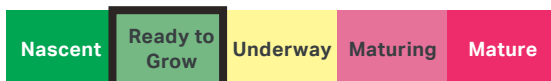
Growth Corridor

Elizabeth Line East

Housing Delivery Test

Presumption

OA status (LP 2021)



London Plan capacities by 2041



KEY
Opportunity Area

*Note that the LESD (2021) increased the capacity to 700 new jobs

** The OA was designated as an intensification area in the London Plan 2004

Ilford

Transport and connectivity: Growth Corridors engagement

- Stakeholder engagement for the Elizabeth Line East Growth Corridor was carried out as part of the Planning for London Programme.
- Ilford was discussed as part of this workshop.
- Growth Corridors Engagement Summaries were published on our [Planning For London Programme stakeholder page](#).

How to enable growth in the corridor

The role of town centres and green infrastructure

- Some participants wondered whether the **strength of Stratford may be counterproductive to other town centres** along the Elizabeth Line corridor.
- It was suggested that a future plan **could encourage the town centres to operate more as a constellation across the growth corridor** and in the sub-region more generally. There was consensus that each needs to be **differentiated in terms of offer**.
- People cited **environmental conditions in town centres** as one of the challenges in promoting growth in the corridor such as dominant road infrastructure, noise and air quality.
- One participant felt that places like Bromley could be a counter example suggesting that **'outer east London town centres could be as attractive as Bromley'**.
- When discussing about Ilford, people felt that **growth could be supported with enhanced access to existing greenspace**. For example, improved connections to Wansted Park, and improved connectivity over river Roding.
- Overall, participants felt that future plans and strategies could do more to **maximise existing blue and green assets, including the river Roding** and the green spaces within the river corridor.
- **Some participants mentioned that the London Plan should strengthen support for the Green Grid and other strategic green space initiatives**. This could help support the collection of financial contributions for the Roding Valley Park - Wansted and Fairlop Park, contributing to water infrastructure and its appeal as a leisure destination.

There are no noise barriers in Ilford - who would want to live there? Southern boundary of Ilford is an inner circuit road with a gyratory at both east and west ends.

Build a bridge over the Roding and improve connections to Wanstead Park.

In Ilford sites all have their own unique challenge. Viability of tall buildings is a key issue. Overall, it's not an attractive destination for developers.

Site assembly could be helpful to accelerate delivery. London plan could help with this.

In places like Rainham uncertainty around transport infrastructure has caused delivery to stop. There is need to lobby with network rail to unlock delivery challenges.

Ilford

Transport and connectivity

- ① **Elizabeth Line** opened in 2022.
 - ② As part of Network Rail's station upgrade programme for Crossrail, **Ilford station had a significant station upgrade**, concluding with the opening of a new modern northern entrance building in September 2022.
- The refurbished northern entrance onto the existing footbridge is complemented by a smaller enhanced southern entrance, which serves passengers alighting from buses on Ilford Hill.



Ilford

Transport and connectivity

③ Superloop SL2 route:

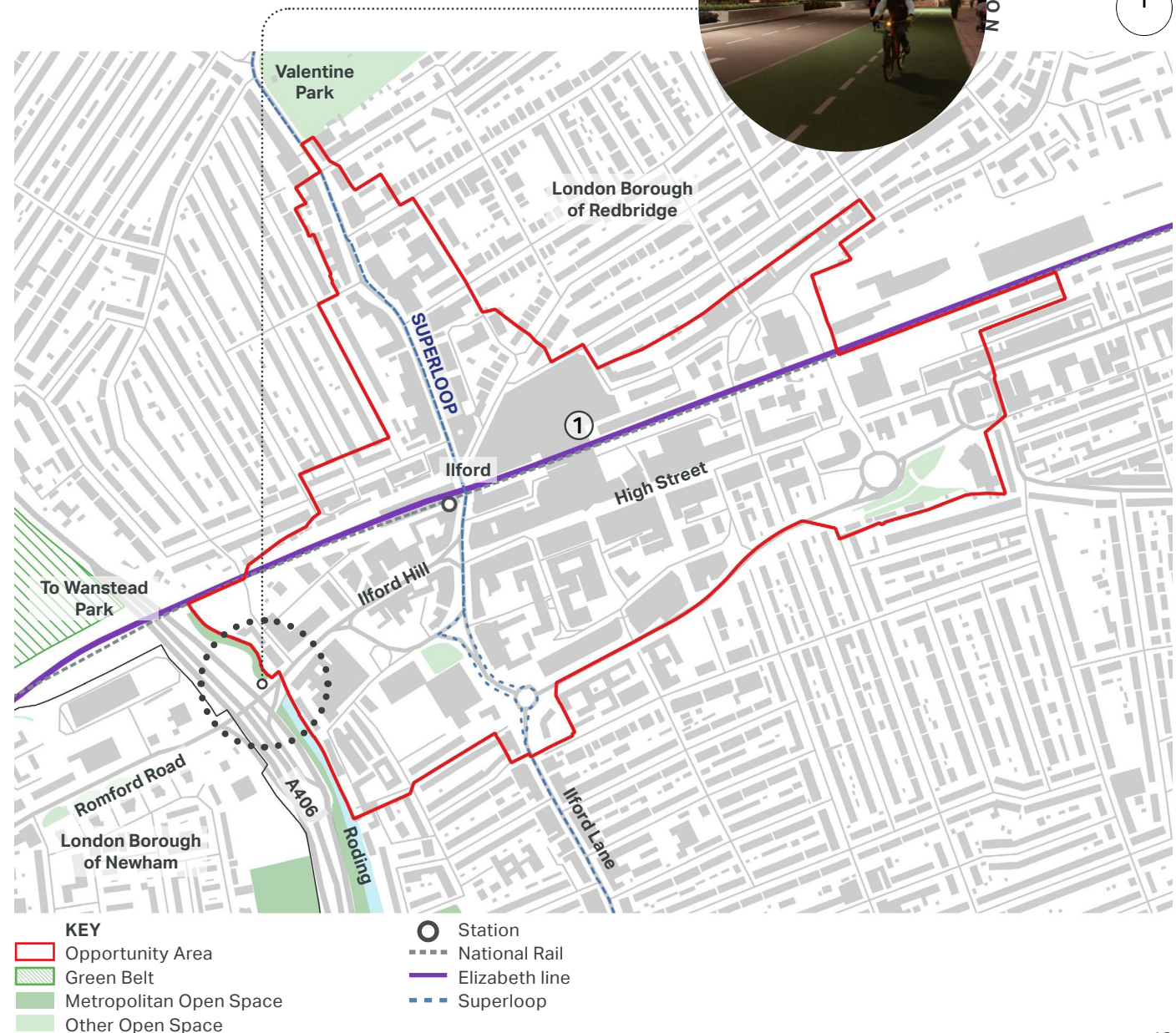
- In March 2023 the Mayor announced plans for the Superloop network of limited-stop express bus routes, connecting outer London town centres, railway stations, hospitals and transport hubs.
- The SL2 route linking Walthamstow and North Woolwich was launched in March 2024. Its total journey time is one hour and eight minutes and includes a total of 14 stops including Ilford station.



Ilford

Transport and connectivity: Ilford Gyratory

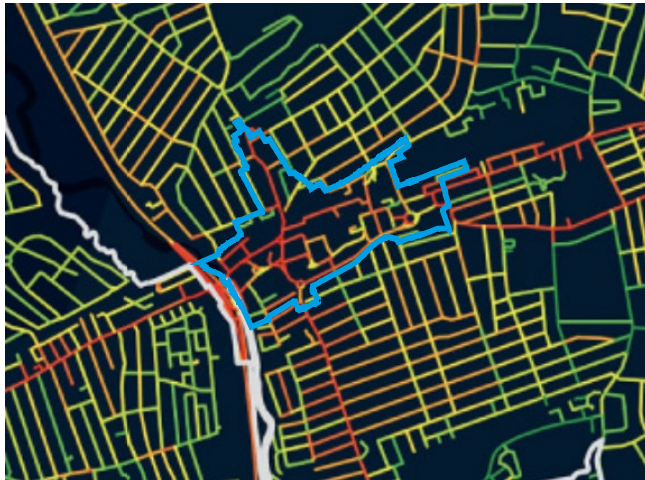
- Designed by Momentum Transport and Planning Consultancy who developed a **preliminary design which has been subject to traffic modelling audited by Transport for London** and presented to the Road Space Performance Review Group on 29th April 2022
- Stantec developed an outline business case.** The purpose of this intervention is to progress the approved preliminary design into a detailed design that includes the **Ilford Garden Junction proposals and fully integrate with the London Borough of Newham's Romford Road proposals** that is currently being modelled.
- The detailed design will then be used to secure tenders so that a contract price can be secured enabling the business case to be finalised.
- In undertaking, this work, **an interim cycle route solution along Ilford Hill and into Ilford town centre is required** that can be delivered before the Gyratory and Garden Junction are implemented.



Ilford

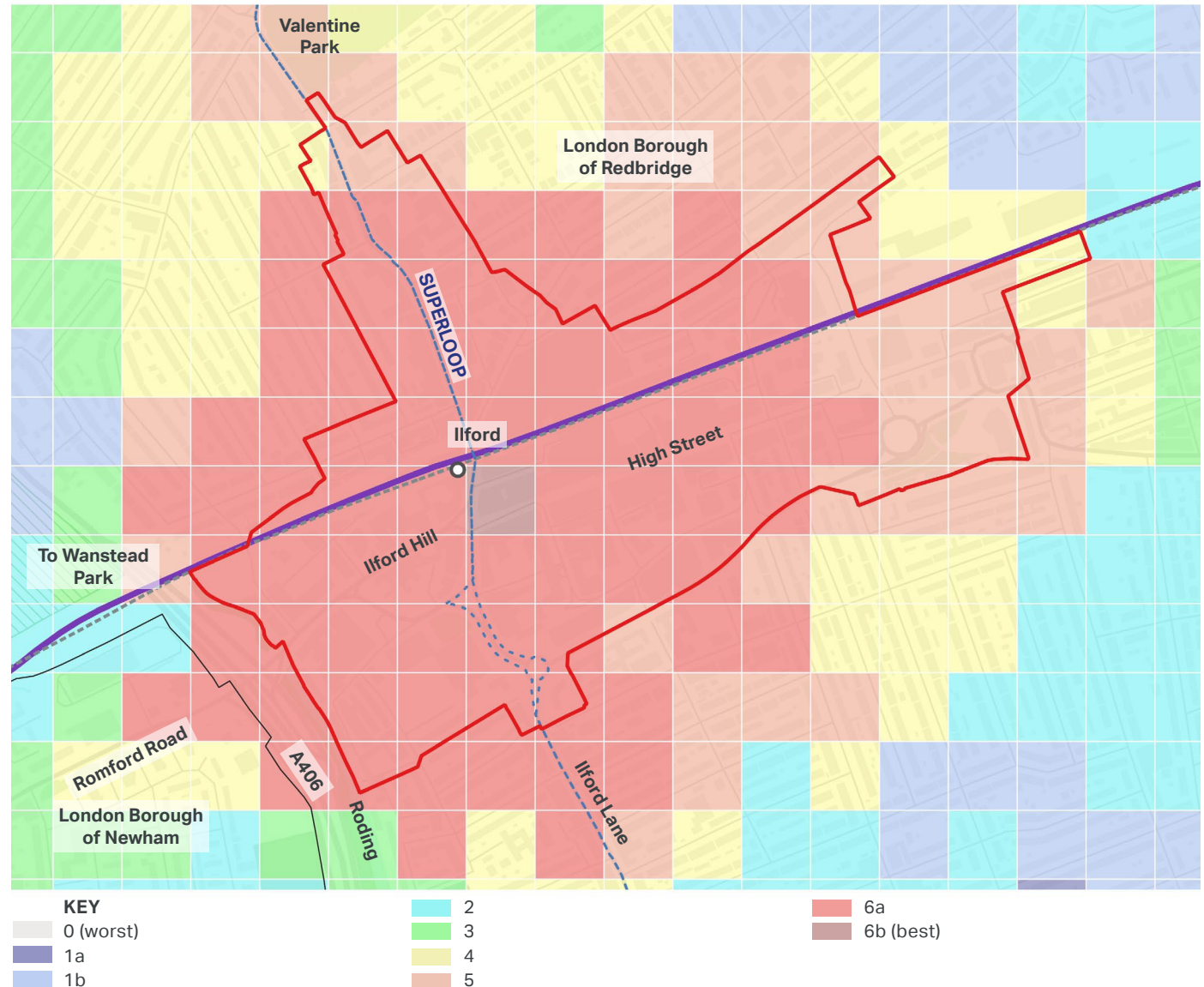
Transport and connectivity: PTAL 2031

- Well-connected OA.
- Challenges: Car dominated public realm unsafe and unpleasant for walking and cycling.



KEY
Low performance High performance

Source: [Healthy Streets](#)

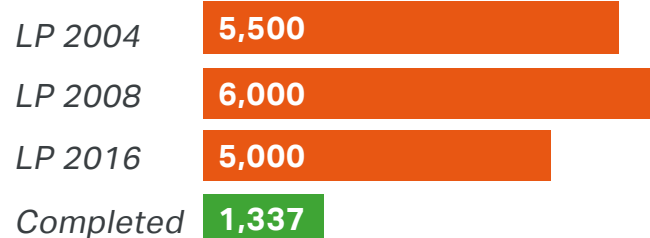


Ilford

Delivery of homes

Delivery pre-2019

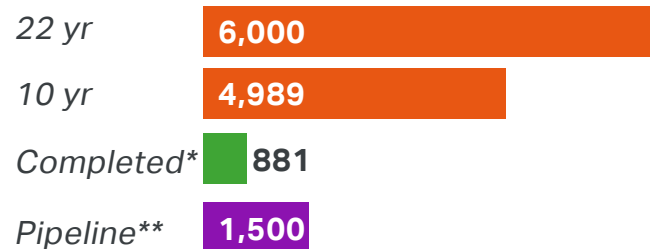
Completions since designation against capacity



The OA delivered 1,337 homes since designation and prior to 2019. This accounts for 25 per cent of the capacity identified in the LP 2008.

Delivery post - 2019 (London Plan 2021)

Progress against 22yr, 10 yr capacity



The OA is delivering at a rate of 176 homes/year, against an indicative rate (London Plan 22 yr) of 272 homes/ year. Planning Data Hub (PLD) suggests a pipeline of 770 homes in 2023/2024. Another 872 units were approved in September 2024, which are not captured in the PLD approvals.



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

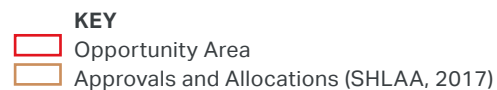
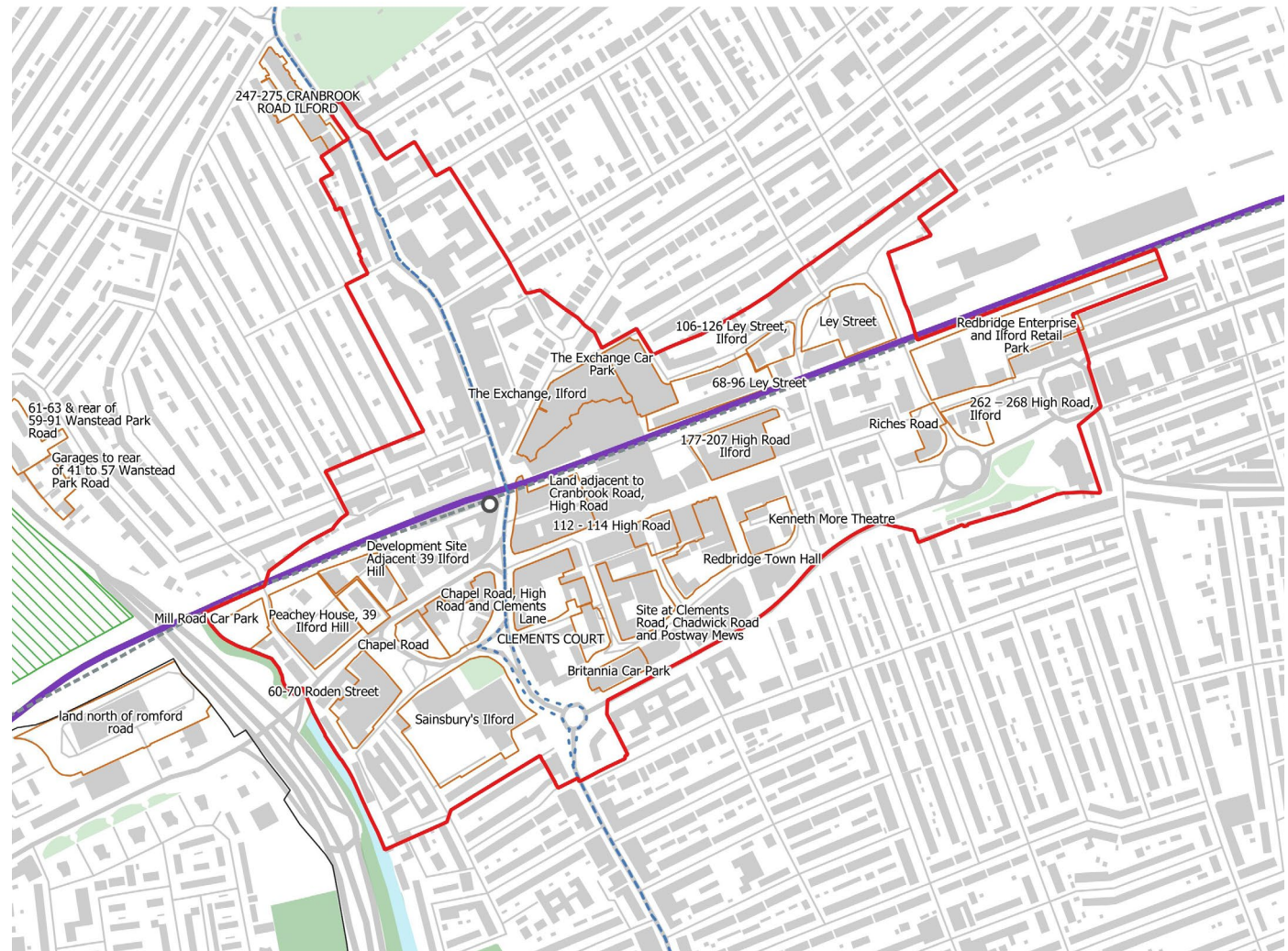
*[Completions](#) account for all types of supply between 2019/2020 to 2023/2024.

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

Ilford

SHLAA 2017: Approvals and allocations

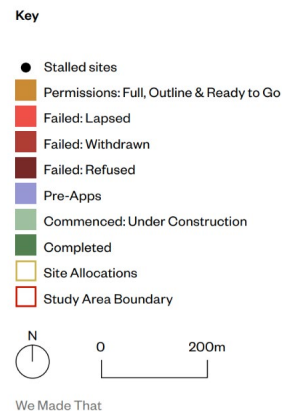
- High number of sites allocated for development.



Ilford

Development progress: Overview

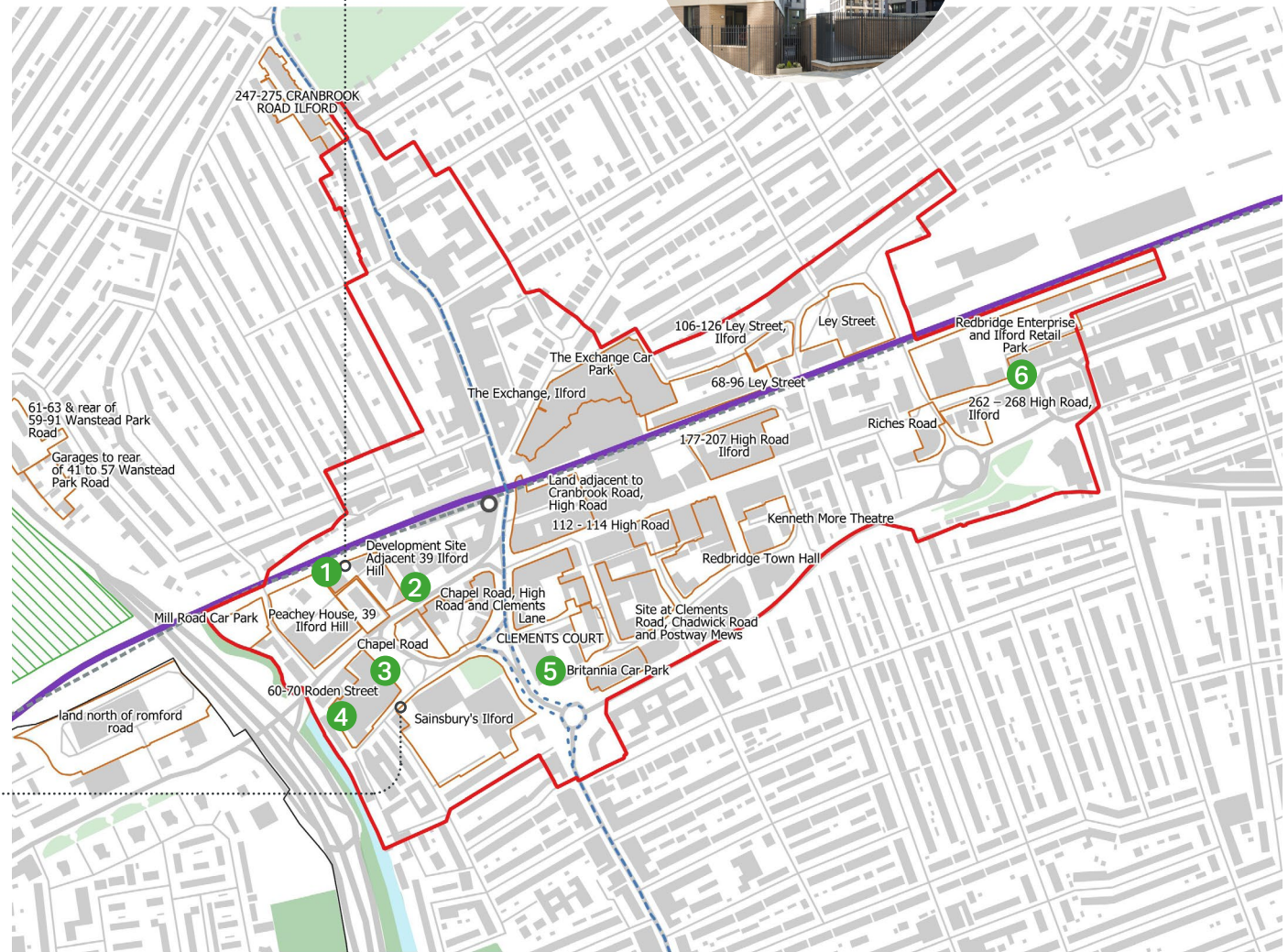
- The Place Unit (GLA/TfL) is working in partnership with LB Redbridge on the development of an evidence base for an Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) to unlock development and guide growth, including new homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure.
- We Made That were commissioned in January 2025 through the Architecture and Urbanism Framework to deliver the evidence base.
- A development audit (See diagram to the right) was produced as part of the commission.
- The following pages provide some further detail on schemes.



Ilford

Development progress: Completed

- 1 The Paragon: 141 units. Completed in 2019.
- 2 Horizon: 120 units. Completed in 2018.
- 3 The Picture House: 340 units. Completed in 2020.
- 4 Becketts House: 170 units. Completed in 2020.
- 5 Pioneer Point: 290 units. Completed in 2012.
- 6 Vision 20: 154 units. Completed in 2010.



KEY
 Opportunity Area
 Approvals and Allocations (SHLAA, 2017)

Ilford

Development progress: Approved developments - not started

- 1 74-76 High Road: 117 units.
Application 0337/19 has gained full planning permission in 2021.
- 2 One Station Road (Bodgers of Ilford): 370 units across the two sites, retail and office, buildings up to 42 storeys. Approval granted in September 2020. No start on site.
- 3 Ilford Plaza / Harrison Gibson: 330 residential units: 227 private BTR, 103 affordable. Approved 2020 but not started.
- 4 Ilford Eastside (Ilford Retail Park): 672 residential units: 474 private, 198 affordable. Approved May 2022 but not started. Pre-app proposals in Aug 2024 to amend consent to provide 372 BTR residential units, 550 student rooms, 300 co-living units and no school.

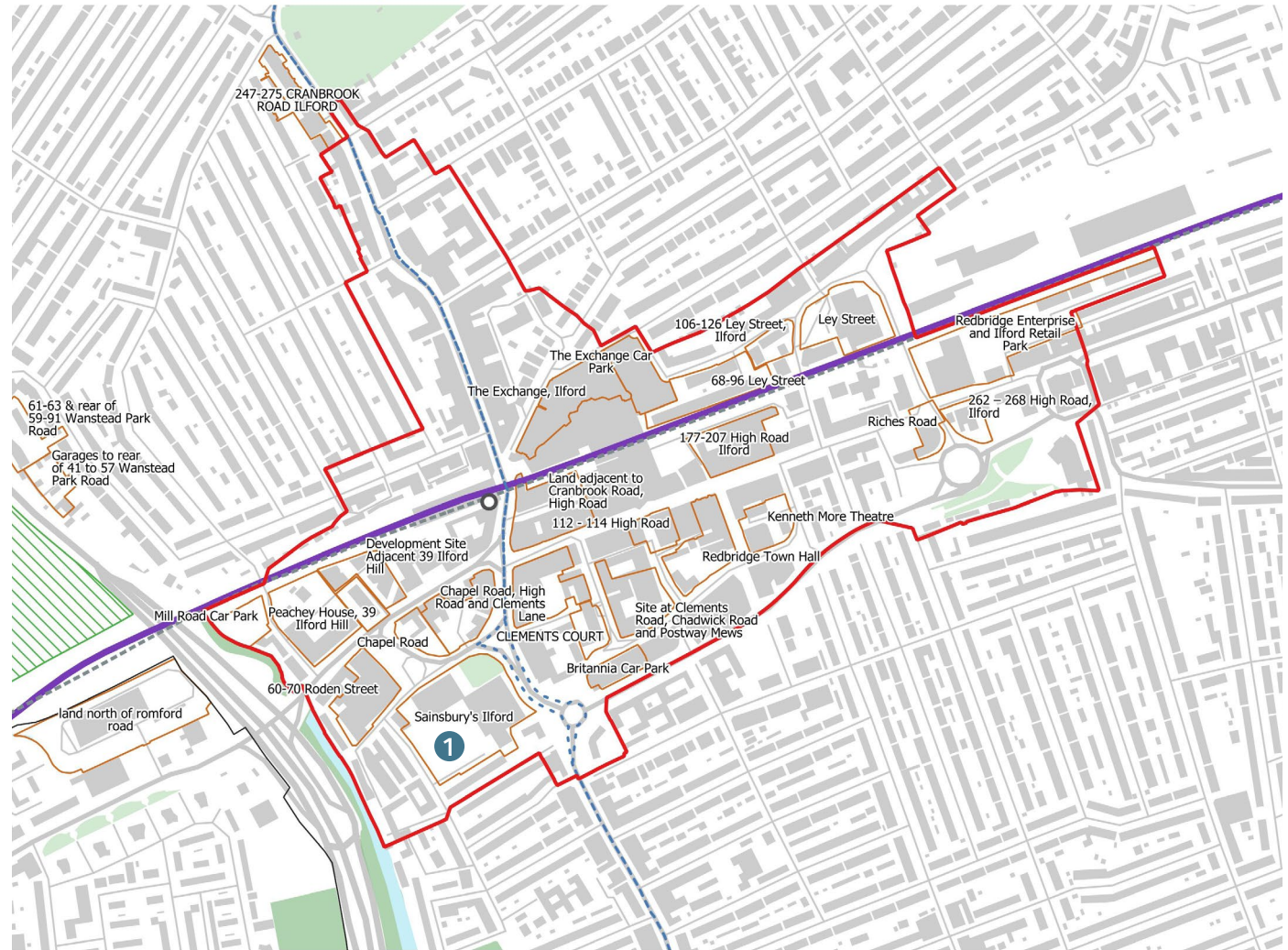


- KEY**
- Opportunity Area
 - Approvals and Allocations (SHLAA, 2017)
 - Back at pre-app

Ilford

Development progress: Recently approved major scheme

- 1 Sainsbury's Chapel Place (55 Roden Street): 837 residential units, student accommodation and replacement food store. Permission granted in September 2024 (Telford/ Sainsbury's).



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



Ilford

Development progress: Pre - Planning (no recent activity)

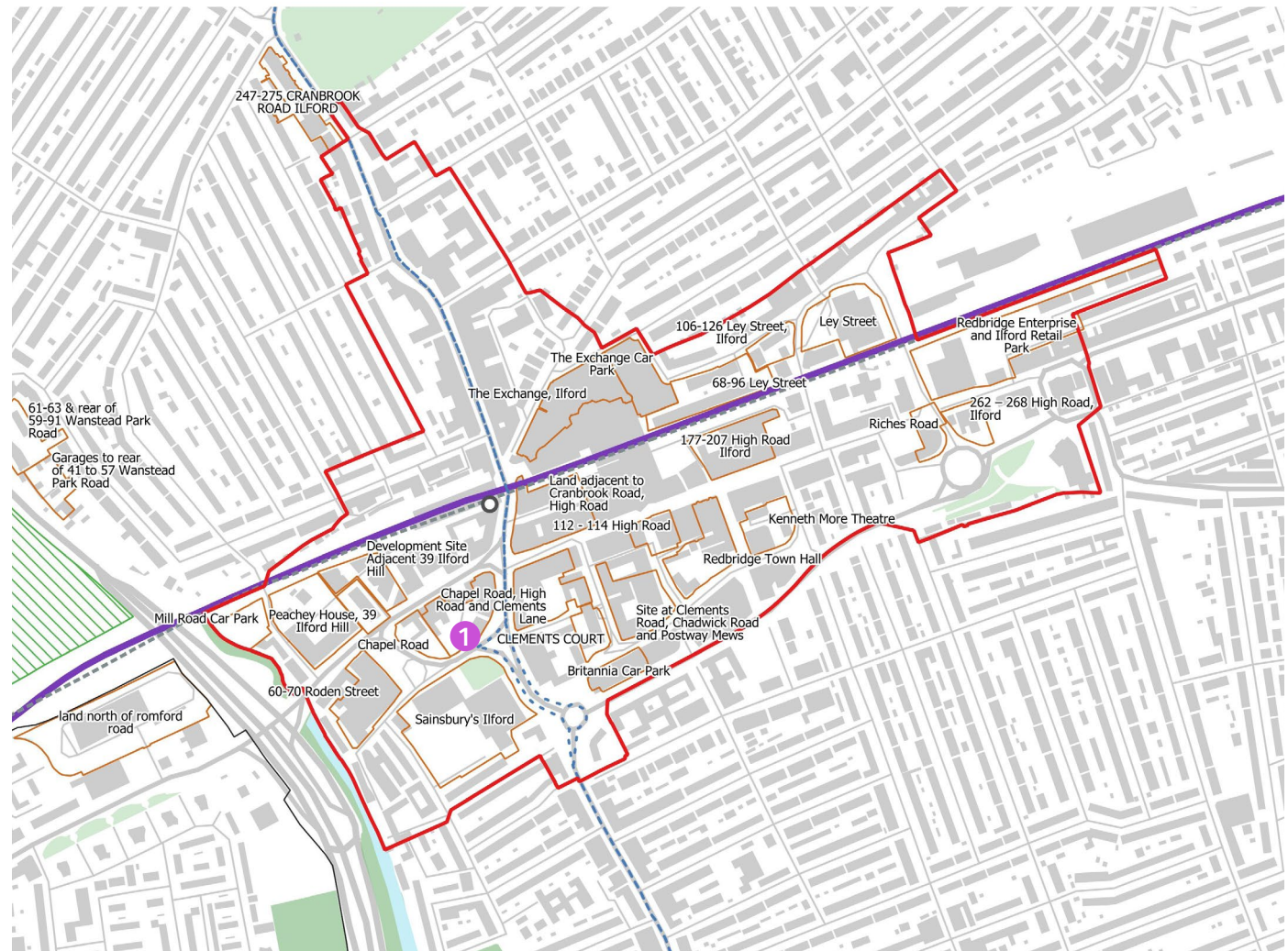
- The Western Gateway is made up of opportunity sites identified in the Local Plan, but sites are in multiple ownership and have not come forward despite being identified over 15 years ago.
- To avoid sub-optimal piecemeal development the Council has pro-actively advanced a procurement of a Joint Venture Development Partner, where the Council will be required to assemble land and property and inject 50% of financial equity.



Ilford

Development progress: Pre - Planning (no recent activity)

- 1 Ilford Western Gateway (c.1,000):
No activity recently/ no planning applications so far. A development at 42 Ilford Hill (part of the site) came to the GLA in 2022 as a pre-app.
- It would have compromised the comprehensive development of the site, as described in the Western Gateway Framework.



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

Ilford

Development activity 2021



Source: vu.city

KEY

- Consented
- Under construction
- Completed

Ilford

Development activity 2024



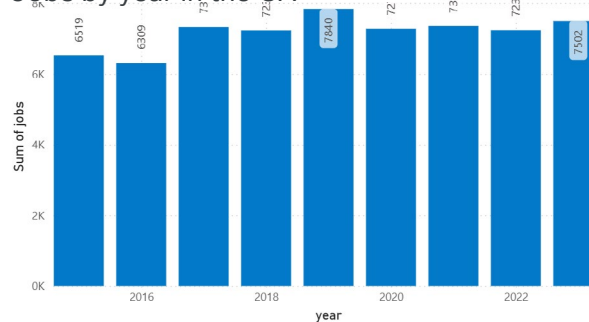
Ilford

Jobs

- Hotspot of higher jobs densities in the east.
- In 2023, the OA had more than 7,502 jobs which accounts for 11 per cent of total jobs in the Borough.



Jobs by year in the OA



KEY
jobs in sqkm

- 0 - 1,900
- 1,900 - 4,000
- 4,000 - 13,000
- 13,000 - 60,000
- above 60,000

Source: Census, Business Register

Ilford

Town Centres and High Streets

- Benchmarking against other town centres reveals Ilford has **limited spaces for young people**, despite its youthful demographic.



Ilford High Street



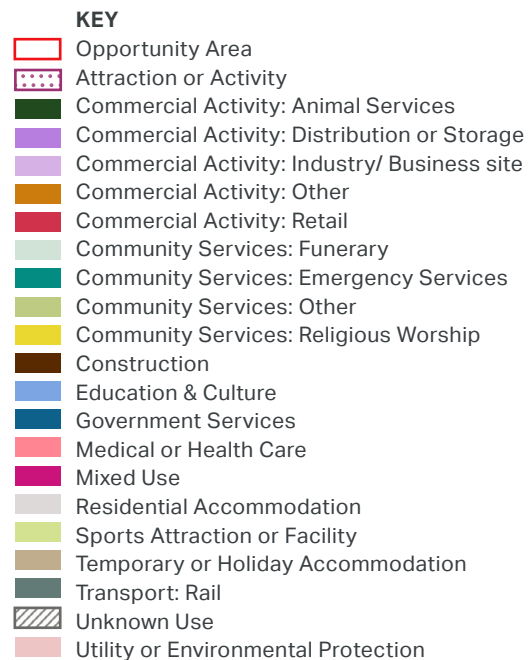
KEY	
	Town Centre
	High street
	Business Improvement District



Ilford

Land uses

- Ilford has a **mixed offer of retail and cultural uses**. Vacancy rates are low but the retail offer could be improved.

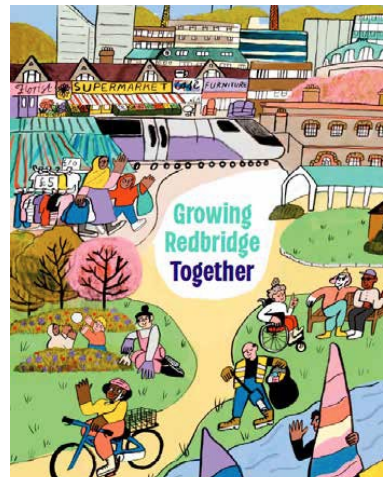
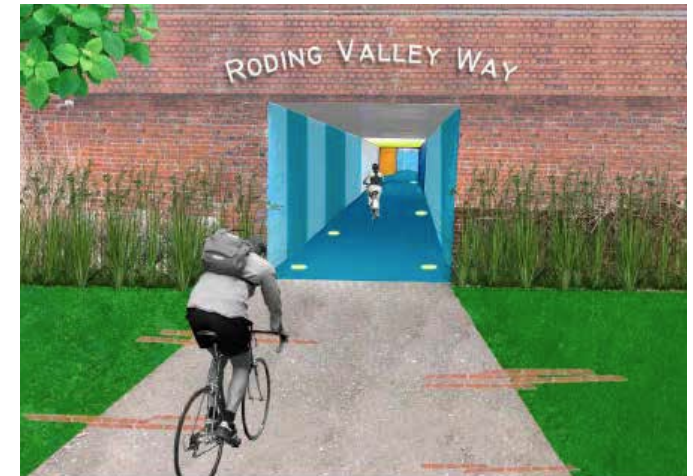
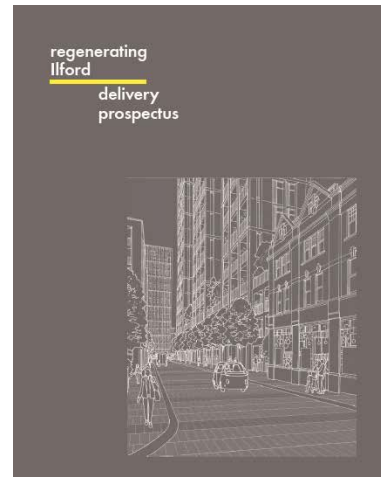
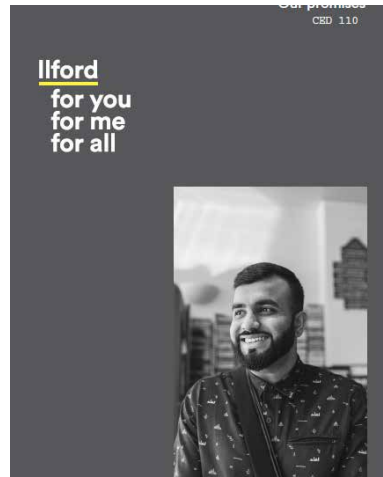


Source: OSNGB, City Intelligence Unit (GLA)

Ilford

Place strategies: Overview

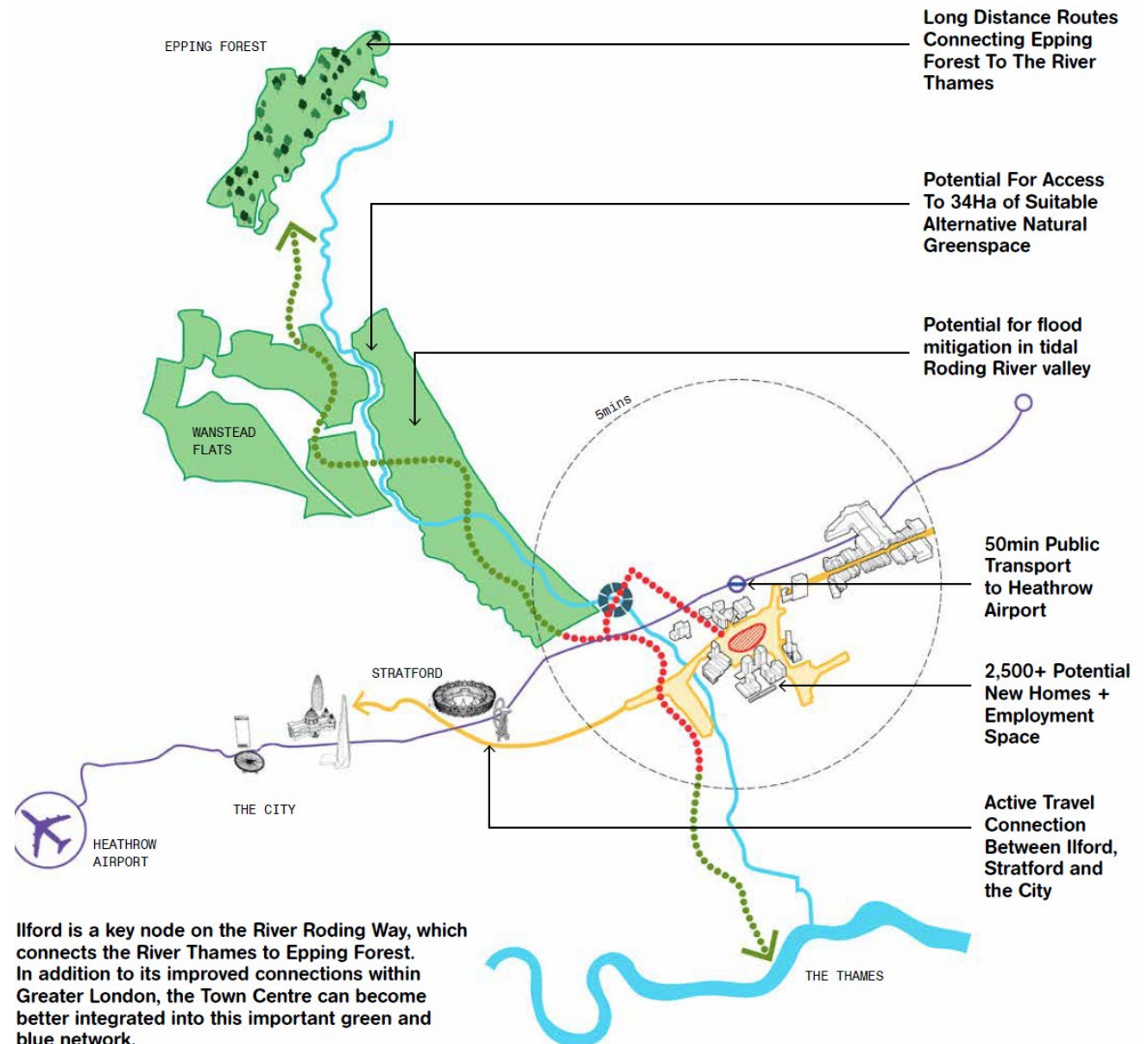
- Previously completed strategies include:
 - Lower Roding Valley Cycling Route
 - Ilford for All Manifesto
 - Ilford Garden Junction
 - Regenerating Ilford: Delivery Prospectus
 - Growing Redbridge Together
 - Ilford Gyrotory Removal
- There's been a lot of work done in this area.
- Most recent Ilford Arrival Strategy as part of the Civic Partnership Programme (GLA).



Ilford

Place strategies: Civic Partnership Programme

- £3m grant secured
- £2m match
- Work to secure a further £2m investment
- This strategy will address severance that disconnects Ilford from Little Ilford, by taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by the Roding Valley, the Elizabeth Line and the 'lost space'.



Ilford

Moving forward

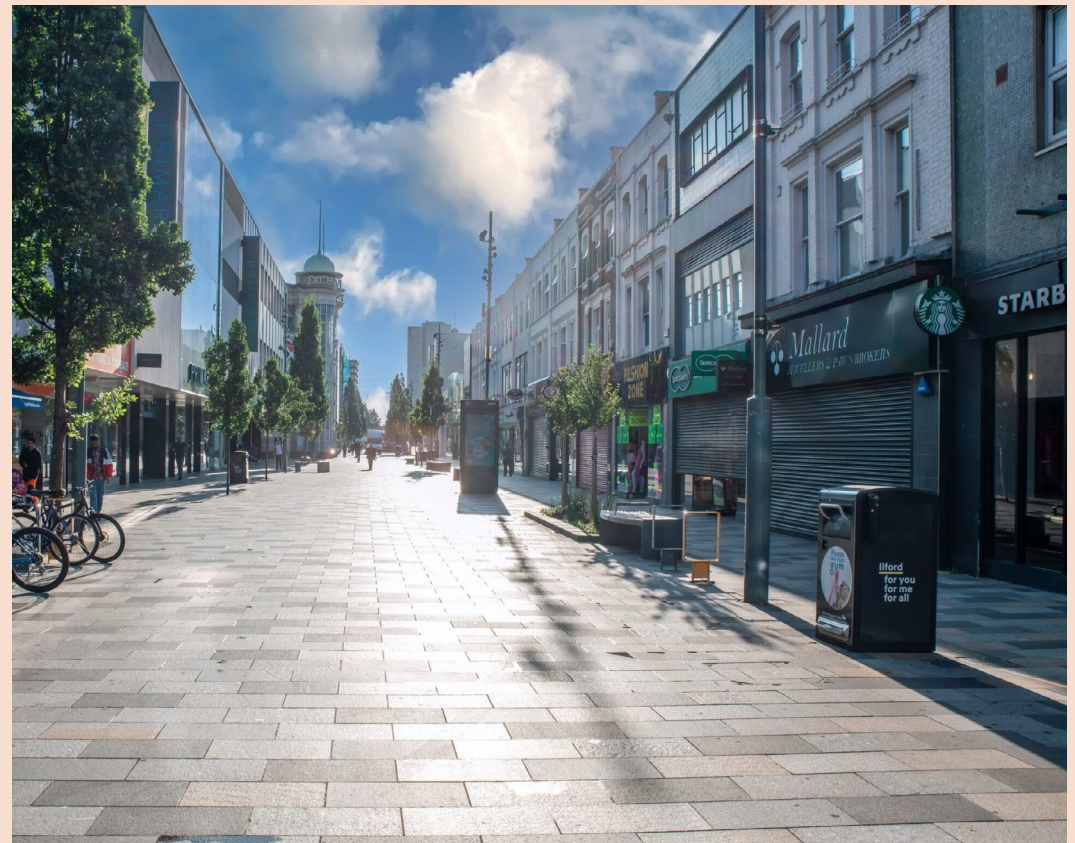
- Ilford Town Centre was designated as an Opportunity Area (OA) in 2004, with the opportunity of delivering 6,000 homes and 700 jobs by 2041. However, **Ilford remains far from meeting its current potential**, with only 10 per cent of the pipeline homes delivered to date.

Challenges/ barriers to development and placemaking

- The borough has shown willingness to issue approvals for major residential schemes in Ilford, including transformative schemes with tall and very tall buildings. However, some of the approved schemes in the last few years have lacked design quality, and suffer from a lack of comprehensive vision/ masterplanning for the town centre.
- Lack of up to date Local Plan.
- No credible developers - land speculation that leads to stalled sites.
- A high number of sites (the whole town centre) allocated for development.
- Permeability, access and ownership of some sites hampers delivery.
- Outer London values with inner London construction costs.
- Tall buildings and high density schemes on small sites are challenging to deliver in Ilford.
- Poor public realm and deficiency of open space/ access to open space.
- Road severance/ car oriented town centre.

Proposition

- To be retained as an OA; strategic potential for new homes with continued support from designation in the London Plan
- OAPF, or strategic framework opportunity to establish key design moves and principles for growth in alignment with communities/ demographic needs.
- Explore a wider zone of influence beyond the town centre boundary (and potentially a wider OA boundary) to ensure the OAPF addresses Ilford Lane, Albert Road and surrounding neighbourhoods with high climate risk.
- Redouble efforts to identify a viable and feasible way forward for the Council's Western Gateway initiative.



Ilford

Moving forward

Opportunities

- **Underway CPP project**; Ilford Arrival, with an emphasis on linking Ilford Town Centre to River Roding.
- **Town Architect** to champion placemaking and take a 'sober' approach to development potential and deliverability.
- **GLA in partnership with Redbridge have started working on an OAPF for Ilford**: There is no masterplan/SPD for Ilford, and the area would benefit from a masterplanning document that sets out a comprehensive approach to development in the town centre, including expected development capacities/uses, a tall buildings strategy, approach to movement/public realm, and developer contributions.
- **Explore land assembly powers** to reduce risk, create a more diverse range of development opportunities, and leverage publicly owned land to generate momentum.
- Ensure Ilford can adapt to a **young and mixed population through appropriate facilities and 'soft' and informal infrastructure**, as well as boosting green infrastructure provision.
- Investigate **adaptive re-use of key sites** including the BT site (or alternative office buildings) to feed into a **wider approach to retrofit** across the OA.



Source: Karakusevic Carson Architects; Gyrotory framework