Challenges facing our town centres and the need for a flexible future

Jon Rouse - CEO Croydon Council
South London Conference
10th September 2012
To create thriving and sustainable town centres the challenge is providing an holistic offer

- Residential Balanced Community
- Community Development infrastructure
- Kick start stalled schemes
- Inward Investment Generating Value/viability
- Commercial/Office Market, skills = business needs
- Integrated partnerships delivery

The experience
- Day & night Culture

Retail Core
- High Streets

Public realm
- Connectivity Accessibility

Infrastructure Sustainable Growth

offer for

Communities Businesses Investors
The context – spending power

Unemployment in the UK 1992–2011

Unemployment: September 2.62m
Claimant count: October 1.6m

Source: ONS
The context - increasing population by 2031

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater London</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorks &amp; Humber</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The context – the office market

• Despite reductions in availability, still large amount of non-prime vacant stock
• Capital values of office stock currently declining
• Prime growth vs secondary value properties
• When recovery does come, how far will it stretch?
The context – housing demand and supply

Dwelling Completions (England)

Source: CLG
Changing Housing Needs

Trends in UK Housing Tenure 1980 to 2009-10

If these trends continue, there could be over 5.5m Private rented households by 2016

Source: CLG
The context – financing

### Infrastructure Funding Gap (£M) - Core Projects - 5 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LBC CIL supporting evidence March 2012
The Real Impact
The reality of structural change

- Impact of technology of working patterns
- Impact of technology on retail patterns
- Impact of planning reforms
- Drag of historic land holding positions
- Role of State – balance between responsive negotiation and proactive intervention to accelerate change
- Balance will differ from place to place.
Building in flexibility to deliver through changing environments

Flexible policies, plans & strategies

To deliver new build, conversions, change of use, public realm & infrastructure

Innovative funding packages

Public & private sources

Building new residential communities - phasing

Economically active first? – support shops & businesses

Phased provision of public realm & infrastructure

Phased provision to reflect availability of inward investment

Flexible Tenures

Tenure changes to adapt to market requirements

Flexible housing designs

Adaptable for single people, couples, families
Croydon’s Response

Ready for Business…
Clear shared vision, integrated & flexible policy & plans
Opportunity Area Planning Framework

- Joint planning document prepared by Croydon Council and the Mayor of London
- Guide the significant growth in residential, renewed office offer and expanded retail offer
- There is app. 600,000 sqm. of commercial space in the COA with a 30% vacancy rate. The OAPF seeks to reduce this vacancy rate and attract higher office space rentals
- The OAPF proposes to concentrate new commercial space at New Town & East Croydon, and to strip commercial space from the other areas by promoting conversions and redevelopment
- Promoting 95,000 sqm. of new commercial space focused in New Town & East Croydon
Measured retail growth

- Consolidated growth of the retail sector
- Whitgift and Centrale will continue to be the primary retail core with capacity for retail intensification along with other uses including residential and public realm improvements.
- The High Streets will act as secondary retail areas, offering greater variety of retail choice and a more varied and improved character.
The public realm, Connected Croydon strategy proposes 3 types of interventions, focusing on the town centre:

1. Regular maintenance and gradual upgrade of existing connections

2. Substantial transformation of existing connections

3. Provision of missing connections supporting existing desire lines and to improve movement options
Master plans

The Five Masterplans

Wellesley Road

East Croydon

West Croydon

College Green

Mid Croydon
Residential capacity

- 7,300 new homes by 2021
- 17,000 new residents
- 10% affordable housing on-site
- Housing typologies
- 1,460 new three-bed homes within the COA
- New infrastructure & community facilities
Case Study – Ruskin Square
application of flexible & interconnected plans
Supporting Ruskin Square Infrastructure, Sustainability, Connecting, Generating value
Making it Happen
Flexible & Joined up - assets, revenue, powers, skills, delivery

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