Foreword

This Regeneration Brief addresses the potential future development of a Council-owned site in Slade Green. It is subject to and complies with the adopted planning policies applicable to the area, including Bexley’s Unitary Development Plan (2004), The London Plan (consolidated 2008) and other adopted guidance. It sets out to describe the Council’s aspirations, as land owner, for the future redevelopment of the Howbury Site.

A draft Brief was published for consultation in December 2007 to obtain views and comments and the results of this public consultation were considered in reaching a decision to revise and adopt this Brief.

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Introduction

1.1 This Regeneration Brief has been produced to guide the redevelopment of the area of land comprising the Howbury Centre Council Offices, library and buildings in community use and the adjoining unused former playing fields. It should be read in conjunction with the adopted Unitary Development Plan (2004), the London Plan (Consolidated 2008) and the Council’s Supplementary Planning Documents, including “Design for Living”. These are listed in the bibliography.

1.2 It is planned to relocate the Council Offices on the Howbury site as part of the Council’s “Bexley First” business transformation programme. The aim of Bexley First is to improve the Council’s efficiency and the delivery of services to local people. Most of the Council’s services and staff will be centralised into new offices within a new development on the site of the Civic Offices in Bexleyheath. Consequently, some of the existing outdated buildings on the Howbury site will no longer be needed.

1.3 The primary aim of this Brief is to secure a viable and sustainable redevelopment and mix of uses that is appropriate to this suburban location, that will help lead the regeneration of Slade Green. This should help to meet the needs of the local community, while creating a development of high quality design which will contribute positively to the character of the area. This development should aim to set the benchmark for design quality and regeneration for Slade Green. It should also help to provide a focus for Slade Green and break down the sense of isolation and poor accessibility the area currently suffers from.

1.4 It is not the role of the Brief to prescribe rigid development and design solutions for the redevelopment of the site. Rather it provides a flexible approach through which high quality proposals for new development on the site can evolve. A plan showing an indicative layout is included at the end of this document, for illustrative purposes only, to demonstrate how development can respond to the various constraints and influences on the site. The Brief sets out the general principles that should be incorporated into any development proposals for the site and its guidance and general approach could also be applied to development on other sites that may come forward for redevelopment in the area.

1.5 It is the intention that the overall development will secure benefits for the local area as part of the development, as mentioned within the Brief. The Council also has an emerging Planning Obligations SPD which will be of relevance to the development of this site, and will need to be considered in relation to any development proposals.

The site and its context

2.1 The Howbury Centre site covers an area of 8 hectares in the form of an L-shaped site with a frontage to Slade Green Road on both its southern and eastern edges (see Site plan). The southern part of the site is occupied by the former buildings of a secondary
school, up to three storeys high, currently occupied by the Council as offices and a training centre. Parts of this group of buildings are occupied as a local library, pupil referral unit and community uses. To the rear of these buildings is an ancillary car parking area.

2.2 The northern part of the site, including the area extending east to Slade Green Road, is currently an unused area of former school playing fields. The site is generally level, with some parts lying slightly lower than adjoining land, in an area once occupied by brick pits. Consequently Slade Green Road is built up on a higher level. The site is currently fenced and enclosed, and does not provide any through route. There is no access to the north or west. Consequently, access to Erith town centre is poor, only possible via Manor Road or foot paths alongside the railway to Queens Road. The site has little tree or shrub growth, this mostly confined to the edges of the former playing fields and a few trees on the southern frontage area and the boundary with the vicarage.

2.3 An employment area lies to the north of the site accessed from Manor Road. To the west is another employment area occupied by warehouses, industrial buildings and some vacant cleared sites, accessed from Richmer Road, which leads into Slade Green Road. To the west of the site, on the Slade Green Road frontage there is a church, vicarage and housing. In the angle of the L-shape, to the east, there is a primary school and an estate of two-storey semi-detached houses. The eastern arm of the site provides a visual break between the residential areas to the south and the industrial areas to the north. To the south of the site, across Slade Green Road, is the Slade Green Community Centre, a doctor’s surgery and a further church. The local concentration of community uses, churches, library, etc., indicates that the area is a focus for the local community.

2.4 Slade Green Road, which adjoins the site to the south and east, is a relatively busy borough distributor road, carrying a lot of commercial traffic and bus routes: 469, providing links to Bexleyheath and Erith, and 89 from Slade Green to Bexleyheath and Lewisham. Night bus N89 also passes the site on route from Lewisham to Erith.

2.5 The wider context of the site comprises residential areas to the south and east,
including the new residential area of Howbury Park. To the north and west, the context is mostly employment areas of industry and warehousing, giving way to residential uses closer to Erith town centre (see Context plan).

2.6 Slade Green is situated in the Thames Gateway, a major area for regeneration, and displays many of the characteristics of disadvantage found elsewhere in that area. It has a legacy of social housing development, some of which provides a poor quality environment. The local community faces typical problems of disadvantage including lower educational achievement, low skills levels and high unemployment, associated with higher levels of crime and antisocial behaviour. The Slade Green community also feels the most isolated part of the borough, leading to a sense of separation. Some residents feel that the area has lost the sense of community it once had. Redevelopment of the Howbury site presents an opportunity to address some of the regeneration needs of the area, improve the quality of the area and instil a fresh sense of confidence.

Opportunities and constraints

3.1 There are a number of opportunities for redevelopment presented by this site, whilst at the same time there are constraints that will affect the form of development. Some of the main opportunities and constraints are:

Opportunities

- The land covered by this Planning Brief constitutes an area of 8 hectares, predominantly flat site in single ownership, available for redevelopment
- The site is served by bus routes on the eastern and southern edges on Slade Green Road and is a 10 minute walk from Slade Green Railway Station.
- The site lies in the Thames Gateway regeneration area, with potential access to new and existing employment areas
- Opportunity to create a major development of high quality to play a key role in leading regeneration in the area, setting a pattern for future developments
- Potential to improve housing choice in Slade Green, both market and affordable housing, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households.
- Introduce pedestrian and cycle permeability through the site
- Improve architectural quality of Slade Green
- Opportunity to provide new public open space to overcome local deficiency
**Constraints**

- Ground contamination will need to be resolved.
- The site is noted to lie within a location of particular groundwater sensitivity in terms of the Major Aquifer located immediately beneath the site. Groundwater is approximately 3 to 6 metres below ground level.
- Parts of the site lie within zones at risk of flooding should the Thames breach the river defences. This could constrain the choice of appropriate uses and the form of development on parts of the site.
- The risk of disturbance from adjacent industrial and warehouse land uses could to some extent constrain the form and layout of the development of the site. Buffer zones may be needed.
- The northern part of the site and existing housing to the east of the site is deficient in access to public open space by UDP standards.
- Residents in new housing will require appropriate ancillary services, including school places.

**Flood risk**

3.2 The southern part of the site, around the Howbury Centre Buildings, and the north central part of the site lie in Flood Zone 2 as defined by Planning Policy Statement PPS25: Development and Flood Risk. Therefore, a Flood Risk Assessment was carried out and a Flood Risk Constraints and Opportunities Assessment was produced by specialist consultants. The Assessment identified that the Thames flood defences provide protection from flooding with a risk of flood waters overflowing the defences once in a thousand years. However, the risk due to any breach in the flood defences would represent a much higher risk and the consequences could be serious. This therefore needs to be taken into account in planning the distribution of uses and the form of development on various parts of the site. PPS25 sets out the requirement for a sequential test related to development in an area at risk of flooding. The assessment concludes that the sequential test has been met. The separate exception test required by PPS25 will depend on the form of development and mitigation measures proposed, and can therefore only be assessed once development plans have been drawn up. PPS25 suggests that developers and local authorities should seek opportunities to reduce the overall level of flood risk in the area through the layout and form of development and the appropriate application of sustainable drainage techniques. The assessment has demonstrated that the site can be developed to meet the requirements of PPS 25. This can be achieved through a risk avoidance approach to the spatial distribution of land uses and through the implementation of an integrated urban drainage system to mitigate increased runoff volumes. The Flood Risk Assessment will be made available to guide developers. A diagrammatic map, indicating areas of high, medium and low risk is shown on page 10.

3.3 The Assessment recommends mitigation and flood risk management measures to make the development of the Howbury Site safe. It identifies those parts of the site with high, medium and low risk, and identifies those uses that could be accommodated in each area. The layout of future development should locate most vulnerable uses (e.g. toddler groups or ground floor residential) away from those areas of greatest risk. Less vulnerable land uses could be located in areas at risk from flooding provided that mitigation measures are incorporated (e.g. ensuring
safe access routes, floor levels above flood level, power and phone terminals above flood levels, etc.). Developers will need to demonstrate that their proposals fully acknowledge and respond to the different flood risk on various parts of the site.

Potential land uses commensurate with flood risk

Planning and regeneration policy

3.4 The following key planning and regeneration policy issues have particular relevance to the redevelopment of the Howbury site.
National policy

3.5 Underlying the Government’s approach to planning is a commitment to the delivery of sustainable development. Planning Policy Statement PPS “Delivering Sustainable Development” provides that planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of development by:

- Making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people’s quality of life;
- Contributing to sustainable economic development;
- Protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;
- Ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design and the efficient use of resources; and
- Ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities, with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

Regional policy

3.6 Slade Green is located within the South East London and Thames Gateway sub-regions identified within the London Plan, which sets the Regional strategy for the whole of London. Proposed Alterations to the London Plan identify Slade Green as being within the Bexley Riverside Opportunity Area earmarked for an additional 4900 new jobs and 4000 new homes by 2026. The Howbury site is potentially an important contribution that will help meet these revised housing targets.

3.7 A range of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) has also been produced to support the London Plan. This includes the Sustainable Design and Construction SPG, the Housing SPG and the Accessible London SPG, which encourages an inclusive environment for the Capital. Of particular relevance to Slade Green is an emerging SPG for the East London Green Grid, which seeks to create a network of interlinked, high quality open spaces that connect town centres with public transport nodes, the Green Belt, the Thames and major employment and residential areas.

Local policy

3.8 In the Unitary Development Plan (2004), the site is allocated for Educational Buildings and Playing Fields. UDP policy COM2 sets out that the council will normally retain in educational use land designated on the Proposals Map as school buildings and playing fields, where there is a recognised need for such facilities in the area. However, this land has not been used as a school for many years, and its remote location with limited catchment makes it less suitable for education uses.

3.9 Policy ENV 20 sets the criteria to be applied to identifying alternative uses in the event of land becoming surplus to educational requirements. These include the need to relieve any deficiencies in the provision of public open space in the area, requirements for use for open air recreation or leisure and the significance of the land in providing a break in the built-up area. These issues are taken into account in the formulation of the proposals in this Regeneration Brief.
The Council is also exploring longer term opportunities for improving public transport links in north Bexley, which should serve to reduce the relative isolation of the Slade Green community and improve access from the area to Erith Town Centre.

**Proposed uses**

4.1 The identification of uses that could be acceptable on this site will be influenced by the uses currently on adjacent sites. Given the residential uses to the south and east, and the commercial uses to the north and west, development based around either of those uses could be appropriate, and the site may become a zone of transition between those uses. Any proposals for commercial activity will need to be a form of business use that would be compatible with the residential neighbours and adjoining school, without creating disturbance.

4.2 Residential proposals would need to address the relationship with adjoining uses, notably the possible need to create a buffer between houses and the commercial uses to the north and west. The relationship with the area to the west needs careful consideration as that appears to be an area in transition with aspirations to change to alternative uses, possibly residential. Some sites are vacant and cleared of buildings. Future development of these areas for different uses will be subject to review through the Local Development Framework processes, and would not occur in the short term. However, the layout of the Howbury site should acknowledge that changes may take place on the adjoining site and benefits could be gained for the wider area by carefully coordinating developments of this site with the potential evolution of adjacent sites; for example relating built forms, avoiding the need for buffer strips, and opening up through access routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

4.3 Residential development will be required to provide a balanced mix of property types including provision for smaller households and families, wheelchair accessible housing and units suitable for older people. Residential development can also include residential-type uses such as live-work units, sheltered housing for the elderly or residential care homes. These uses are generally compatible with residential areas.

4.4 Other uses which may be appropriate in a residential setting could include doctors’ or dentists’ surgeries, education uses, places of worship, community facilities, etc. Subject to there being a proven need, it may be appropriate to provide a small convenience retail shop on the site to provide for local needs, but any such proposal would need to be accompanied by a retail impact analysis to prove the demand and prove that there will be no undue impact on the nearby neighbourhood centre at Forest Road, Slade Green.

4.5 Any proposals for other uses would need to be assessed against the criteria in the Regeneration Brief and established Council policies.

4.6 This area is deficient in access to open spaces. There is a small amenity open space to the northwest of the site in Frobisher Road but it is only accessible via a circuitous route around Manor Road, putting the Howbury site well beyond its catchment area. This part of Erith and Slade Green is also deficient in access to Local Parks (2ha or bigger, which should include children’s play provision). Therefore, redevelopment of the site will need to accommodate new open space and children’s play facility to overcome local deficiencies and meet the needs of new residents. Provision should
be made as follows:

- 0.88 hectares of public open space in the form of a single area
- 0.2 hectares of equipped children's play space in the same location as the public open space.

This provision should ideally be in one contiguous area, but consideration may be given to creating two areas with a strong green space link between. The precise details of this provision should be discussed and agreed with the Council’s Head of Parks and Open spaces.

4.7 The site currently accommodates a range of education and community uses. The library currently on site provides an essential service to residents of Slade Green, and use is likely to increase as more development takes place. The Council has decided that the library will be re-accommodated. A separate study is being undertaken to examine the current provision of community facilities in the Slade Green area, together with the identified needs. This will include studying the current provision on site. That study will aim to identify the type and extent of community facilities needed in the area, and the extent to which they should be provided in the redevelopment of the Howbury site. This Brief does not, therefore, specify the provision to be made, but that will be included in the particulars provided in due course to potential developers.

**Affordable housing**

5.1 Residential development will have to make provision for affordable housing in line with Policy H14 of Bexley’s Unitary Development Plan (2004) and policy 3A.11 of the London Plan (Consolidated 2008), which seek affordable housing as part of any development of 10 or more dwellings. Having regard to local circumstances, a target of at least 35% of units being affordable will be sought. The Council’s current policy requires the affordable housing to be provided on the basis of 70% social rented / 30% intermediate mix, in accordance with the London Plan and the Council’s Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Any application for affordable housing should comply with this mix or such other mix as may be in force when the application is submitted. The affordable element must be fully integrated within the overall scheme in terms of spatial distribution, design and materials.

5.2 Affordable housing is expected to meet the identified needs of the borough as reflected in the Housing Needs Survey. That survey identified the following mix of unit sizes which the rented affordable housing elements should reflect:

- 8% one bedroom
- 45% two bedroom
- 30% three bedroom
- 17% four bedroom

The Council is shortly to undertake a Housing Market Assessment which will include an updated needs assessment. These percentages may therefore be subject to modification in due course, and the development would be expected to provide affordable housing compliant with the mix specified at that time.

5.3 In addition, at least 10% of all affordable units must be developed to full wheelchair adapted standards as detailed in the South East London Housing Partnership’s Wheelchair Homes Design Guidelines (see bibliography on page 22 for hyperlink).
5.4 The Affordable Housing will be required to comply with the Housing Corporation’s Design Quality Standards, reach Secured by Design Quality Standards and be built to Lifetime Homes Standard. [www.lifetimehomes.org.uk](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk)

**Vision and design principles**

**General**

6. Redevelopment of the Howbury Centre site presents a rare opportunity to create a larger scale housing development scheme which will aim to be socially and environmentally sustainable, and will, in addition, help the regeneration of the wider Slade Green area. This will be achieved by improving the offer of Slade Green in terms of the quality and mix of housing, improved community facilities and establishing a new ‘heart’ to Slade Green, with a high quality public realm, including public art and improved connections to and through Slade Green. Planning applications will need to be accompanied by a Design Statement to explain the design vision and how this has been applied to the development proposal.

**Scale and density of development**

6.2 Development must achieve a well defined townscape that is compatible with the adjoining medium density low rise residential areas whilst at the same time responding to the industrial premises to the north and west. It should acknowledge the scarcity of land for development and make best use of this resource by making efficient use of the site.

6.3 Development should not exceed the maximum recommended densities for developments across different parts of the borough set out in the London Plan and the Council’s residential design guidance “design for living”. The site is not particularly accessible. Using the PTAL method in which the range extends from 1a (lowest accessibility) to 6b (highest accessibility), the Howbury Centre Buildings are Level 2 whilst the playing fields are Levels 1a and 1b. However, the introduction of an access road through the site could raise the accessibility of the playing fields area to be similar to the Howbury Centre as PTAL Level 2.

6.4 In view of its low accessibility, combined with the scale of its context, higher density forms of development will not be appropriate. The London Plan suggests densities of 150-250 hr/ha for sites with a PTAL level of 2-3 (the higher being where sites have better public transport connectivity). In Bexley’s “design for living” SPD, similar density ranges are adopted for most of the Borough, but the Thames Side Area of Opportunity, within which this site is located, is identified as having the potential for higher density ranges of 200-300 hr/ha for housing development and 300-450 hr/ha for flats. This reflects the area’s position within the Thames Gateway and the contribution higher densities can make to economic vitality and viability, integration and regeneration. The lower end of these ranges would apply in areas of low public transport accessibility, whilst the higher densities would apply in more accessible areas. In this case, the accessibility level by public transport is poor. Development is expected to be a mixture of houses and flats, but predominantly houses, to fit in with the scale and character of the area. Therefore, the density of a mixed scheme is likely to reflect the lower end of the Opportunity Area’s range of densities. i.e. between 200 and 300 hr/ha depending on the mix of houses and flats.
**Form of development**

6.5 Any development should be planned comprehensively across the whole site, in order to secure a well-planned layout for all of the uses and the comprehensive provision of infrastructure and services. As the site is likely to be released in stages, the development should however be phased in such a way that the integrity of the scheme as a whole is not compromised. Further details of the disposal process will be sent out in the marketing particulars, but it is anticipated the Howbury Centre buildings will constitute a final phase of the development. New development must acknowledge, respond to and improve on the character of the surrounding area in terms of scale, massing, height and materials. Adjacent and nearby housing is predominantly two-storey but the current buildings on the southern part of the site rise to three-storey. Development on those parts of the site closest to neighbouring houses should reflect the scale of that housing, being no higher than two-storey, but possibly incorporating rooms in the roof space. This could rise to three-storey or slightly more nearer the centre of the site. In townscape terms, it may appear appropriate to create a higher form of development along the southern edge of the site rising to three or four-storeys. However, this part of the site has some of the highest risk of flooding in the event of a breach in flood defences. It may therefore be more appropriate to create part of the open space on this frontage, with that higher development set back to create a sense of enclosure for the open space and a green setting for the most prominent buildings. The opportunity may be taken to locate community facilities in the area associated with the more prominent buildings (but outside the flood risk area) in order to create a focus of community activity, e.g. police office, local shop, etc. which could occupy the ground floor below flats.

6.6 The eastern road frontage provides a visual break between the industry to the north and the housing to the south. The development should maintain that visual break at the site’s frontage, which will be further reinforced by the access point and sight lines. This break in character could be further enhanced by tree planting.

6.7 In order to lessen the risk of disturbance from adjacent industrial/commercial areas, the layout should create a buffer zone between the new residential units and the potential source of disturbance. This could be achieved by providing the main access road close to the northern and western site boundaries to provide a buffer zone, probably with landscaping, whilst the nearest houses or flats could present a flank wall or non-habitable rooms to that direction, provided that they still create an attractive street scene. The land to the west is in transition and may come forward for redevelopment in the future. The layout should respond to that possibility and the desirability of coordinating developments so as to avoid a piecemeal approach to the evolution of this part of Slade Green.

6.8 The Council is looking for a development of high quality design which will enhance the character of the area and set an example of the expectation for any future development in the area. It will be important that the buildings, open spaces, landscaping and various uses are properly integrated to present a clear ‘readable’ environment for users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists.

6.9 Certain of the proposed uses will benefit from close integration, and therefore any layout of the site should cluster those uses. In particular, any community uses should be located adjacent to the proposed public open space, to allow for linked
activities. The final choice of location will depend on the particular layout and form of development, but it is suggested that the open space and any community facilities could help to form the buffer with adjacent uses.

6.10 All residential development will be expected to provide useable amenity space accessible to residents. For houses this would be in the form of private gardens, while for flatted developments it would include balconies, decks and roof gardens. In flatted developments the amenity space should represent at least 45% of the plot area. Only in exceptional circumstances could lower levels of amenity provision be acceptable, notably for sites within a short walk of a range of recreation and leisure facilities. For ground floor units, well designed amenity space can provide essential defensible space to separate the flat from public circulation areas. For further guidance on amenity space provision, see “design for living”.

Local materials and style

6.11 The detailed design of the Howbury site development should avoid the prevalent blanket design typical of volume housing development in favour of a more bespoke approach that respects the character of this part of north Bexley and Kent. A limited palette of materials should be agreed with the Council in order to reflect the bespoke design approach, adding to the coherence of the development and taking inspiration from both traditional and modern materials and colours. The local vernacular combines red brick with render, timber and red-brown roof tiles, as found within many of the older buildings in Slade Green and Erith.

A new centre for Slade Green

7.1 Slade Green suffers from a lack of community focus. There are existing shopping parades in Forest Road near the station, Bridge Road and Northend Road/Nursery Road on the opposite side of the railway, all some distance from the Howbury site (see table below and Context plan). Although these offer basic goods and services, none acts as a centre for the area. Bringing community uses together with a limited amount of new shopping could provide an opportunity to create a heart for Slade Green.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of shops</th>
<th>Range of shops in 2006/7</th>
<th>Distance from centre of Howbury site</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest Road</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bakery &amp; gifts, newsagents, takeaway, pharmacy and supermarket</td>
<td>600m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge Road</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mini-market &amp; off-licence, dry cleaners, newsagents and takeaway</td>
<td>1km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northend Road / The Nursery</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Newsagents, hair dresser, mini-market &amp; off-licence, fish &amp; chip takeaway, dental surgery and mini-market</td>
<td>800m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2 The location of this focal point of uses should relate to a focus in built form to create a true focus for community activity. The location should respond to the appropriate flood risk areas and relate carefully to the uses going on around the site. The new buildings must present an attractive and inviting appearance, set within good quality public realm treatment, with retained and new trees, so as to create a place which people
will want to visit, and so increase community interaction.

Access and parking

8.1 The development on the site can be served by 2 access points. The position of any access at the north east edge of the site onto Slade Green Road will be affected by the need to meet highway standards which require a separation of at least 20m between the centre line of any new access and the centre of the Howbury Park access on the opposite side of Slade Green Road. The other potential access point would be the existing access road into the site off Slade Green Road east of the junction with Bridge Road which currently serves the Howbury Centre Buildings. There is no opportunity for intensification of use of the existing access road off Slade Green Road, west of the junction with Bridge Road that currently serves MCCH offices and a Resource Centre, and this could beneficially be closed.

8.2 In view of the difficulty of access between this site and Erith town centre, the Council would look for opportunities to work in partnership with owners of adjacent sites in order to improve accessibility and help reduce the sense of isolation that some residents experience. This may eventually enable the creation of a cycle route away from Manor Road.

8.3 Within the site there is a question of whether these two accesses to the south and east should be linked. If they are to be linked, thereby creating a through route, it will be important that the route be indirect and incorporate traffic calming measures in order to deter rat-running. If they are not to be linked in this way, provision must be made to ensure emergency vehicular access between the two access roads.

8.4 Slade Green Road is designated a Borough Distributor Road so is designed to carry through traffic. It carries commercial traffic as well as cars and buses. It is therefore important that access points are properly designed to maximise visibility and public safety.

8.5 Proposals must create a place that is easy to get to and move through, in vehicles, on foot or on cycles. Routes and spaces should be clearly defined and unambiguous, so as to enhance the safety of users and avoid any risk of vehicles dominating the area. Any proposal for the site will need a Transport Assessment to address issues of access and parking provision. An Access Statement will also be required.

8.6 As well as considering pedestrian, cycle and vehicular movements within the site, the developer should also consider improvements to pedestrian and cycle movements to and from Slade Green Railway Station and to bus stops in the area. Such movements may be affected by increased traffic flows by various modes resulting from the development. Improvements to the current crossing facilities on Slade Green Road should be considered.
Sustainability

9.1 The Council is committed to achieving sustainable development. The creation of a sustainable environment where people can live, work and play, is fundamental to the effective regeneration of Slade Green. The scheme must incorporate a range of considerations to minimise resource consumption and encourage green lifestyles. It is the Council’s expectation that any development of this site should:

- adopt forms of design, layout, orientation and construction that minimise adverse impacts on the environment and protect and enhance biodiversity;
- enhance the quality of life for everyone in the area now and in the future;
- be designed and constructed to minimise running costs and create a high quality living or working environment; and
- ensure the design of the development is sustainable and incorporates environmentally friendly techniques and materials.

9.2 Sustainability is an important consideration which needs to be addressed in major new developments such as this. Redevelopment of this site provides an opportunity for an exemplar development in terms of sustainability, which will not only provide high standards of sustainability and ensure compliance with emerging government standards, but also make the scheme more marketable to an increasingly green-conscious public. Developers must have regard to a wide range of issues including construction, transport, local materials, biodiversity, social, environmental and economic impacts. They should also address the issues of location and orientation relating to solar gain, energy use and efficiency, alternative power sources, water conservation, pollution, waste minimisation, construction materials from renewable, sustainable and local sources, landscape and ecology, accessibility, personal safety, etc.

9.3 The development will be expected to include a Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme. Developers should consider the risks associated with surface water run-off from buildings and hard surfaces, and include measures to minimise such risks, including green roofs. Consideration should be given to including rainwater harvesting and a grey water recycling system within the development.

9.4 Developers should take note of the guidance set out in the London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance on Sustainable Design and Construction (May 2006) and Bexley’s recently adopted Sustainable Design and Construction Guide (2007). Elements that should be considered include utilising passive solar gain, making maximum use of natural ventilation and shading, ensuring building materials are renewable and locally sourced, reducing carbon emissions in the construction and supply process, exploring the potential for on-site renewable energy generation, and incorporating design measures to encourage behavioural changes in the use of electrical appliances, the use of transport, waste collection, recycling, etc.

9.5 All residential buildings will be expected to meet the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 standard, whilst non-residential buildings should meet BREEAM ‘Very Good’ rating. All buildings should meet the current target of achieving at least 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions through use of renewable energy as specified in the London Plan. Opportunities should be taken to incorporate technology related to energy efficiency...
and renewable energy as an integral part of the development, not as a late add-on to the design.

9.6 The residential units within the development will be expected to meet Lifetime Homes standards, so as to ensure future usability and adaptability.

9.7 Applications for planning permission should be accompanied by a Sustainable Design and Construction Proposal (see London Borough of Bexley’s Sustainable Design and Construction SPD for more details) to explain how the sustainability issues outlined above have been addressed. For further guidance on other documents which will need to accompany any planning application, see Smarter Developments – Working Together on Major Planning Applications (2004).

9.8 Local Sourcing of Labour - The Council is keen to encourage sustainable travel patterns and ensure that the redevelopment of this site brings economic and employment benefits for local people. To this end, developers will be asked to agree that any jobs created during the construction phase of the development and as a result of subsequent maintenance of the development, are notified to the Council’s “Resources Plus” local labour scheme, with a view to recruiting locally where possible.

**Open spaces, trees and landscape**

10.1 A landscape strategy will be required as an integral part of any proposal for the site. This should also cover the proposed open space and play area, together with pedestrian links to the community facilities and other parts of the site. The proposed new open space has the potential to be a small but attractive well-used park and the layout should seek to exploit this potential. The strategy should include consideration of the creation of new habitats and encouragement of biodiversity. The site is situated a short distance from the Crayford Marshes, which form part of the East London Green Grid. A Green Grid Sub-Area Framework has been prepared that contains proposals for a number of projects to enhance the Crayford Marshes and improve pedestrian and cycle routes from residential areas into the Green Grid. The Landscape Strategy should have regard to these proposals and acknowledge pedestrian routes from the site into the paths linking to the Green Grid.

10.2 Any small pockets of landscaped space should form an integral part of the development and should, in their positioning, orientation and size have regard to designing out crime. It is important that private and public amenity areas are clearly demarcated to preserve security and provide clear responsibility for maintenance.

10.3 There are no Tree Preservation Orders on the site. However, there are some areas of trees and shrubs which help to create a visual barrier along the edges of parts of the site. Existing shrubs and hedgerows at the boundaries of the site should be protected and enhanced with planting of, for example, native hawthorn, blackthorn and elder shrubs to provide
a screen to adjacent industrial estates and contribute to the biodiversity of the site. Species should be selected on the basis that they are characteristic of the area and have low maintenance requirements.

10.4 The site may contain ecological habitats and the potential presence of protected species should be assessed prior to any disturbance of the site. A Habitat Survey is recommended, which should also cover the presence of wildlife, notably bats and reptiles.

**Designing out crime**

11.1 The development should be designed to achieve Secured by Design standards. Developers are recommended to contact the local police Crime Prevention Design Officer for further advice on the application of secured by design principles.

11.2 The development should create defensible space related to dwellings and the clear separation of private and public space. Care is needed to avoid creating hidden corners or left-over areas without any defined purpose. The layout should avoid rear alleyways and avoid them linking to cul-de-sacs, and should avoid creating garage courts or remote parking areas. The development should provide active frontages with windows facing onto roads, footpaths and areas of public open space, to create visual interest and encourage natural surveillance to aid security.

**Refuse and recycling collection**

12.1 Bexley sets high standards for door-to-door collection of waste for recycling. Therefore, besides the normal requirements for refuse collection, the development should make provision within units to allow occupants to segregate their waste into refuse and recyclables and store it temporarily before it can be transferred to external bins. Where flats are proposed, appropriately located communal areas should be provided to house bins for recycling and composting as well as refuse, easily accessible to collection vehicles.

**Archaeology**

13.1 The site does not fall within a defined Area of Archaeological Search. There are no scheduled ancient monuments or listed buildings within or adjacent to the site. Prior to the development of the Howbury Buildings as a Secondary School in the late 1950s, the southern part of the site appears to have been mostly occupied by orchards. Brick pits were present on the north central and eastern parts of the site, with brickworks extending from the site’s northern boundary into what is now Manor Road Industrial Estate. Parts of the site have therefore been significantly disturbed and it is not considered that any prior archaeological investigation would be required. Developers should note the guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning, and the potential need to monitor ground works during construction.

**Services and Utilities**

14.1 The developer will be expected to ensure that all the proposed development will
have satisfactory connections to all utilities in accordance with existing regulations. Developers should liaise closely with service providers to determine the extent of demand generated by the development related to the capacity of the system. This applies not only to power/service supplies but also to the drainage system, both foul and surface water runoff, to ensure the development would not potentially create problems by overloading the drainage network downstream.

14.2 Thames Water has previously advised that there will be a need to reinforce the existing mains network to accommodate any future development along Slade Green Road. The developer would be expected to contribute towards the costs of any necessary works.

Demolition and construction

15.1 The occupancy of the current premises at the Howbury Centre may require development to be phased commencing at the north eastern part of the site.

15.2 The demolition and construction methodology must take into account the results of soil testing and materials within the building, in order to safely dispose of any identified contaminants. Appropriate allowances to cover cost and programme implications of chemically imported residues which are likely to remain, should be allowed for. Potential developers will be advised of the results of contamination studies and the need for any further investigation. The extent of remediation will depend on the form of development proposed.

15.3 The developer is recommended to liaise with Bexley Council’s Building Control Department at design stage, on the matter of monitoring of elevated land gases. It is likely that some building protection may be required.

15.4 Other impacts will need to be addressed through a demolition and construction methodology statement, indicating how the amenity of nearby residents and users will be safeguarded, particularly with regard to dust and noise. It should also address the recycling of demolition and construction waste. The construction methodology will need to indicate details of site enclosure, fencing and hoardings, which should be attractively designed and resistant to vandalism, graffiti and fly posting.
Indicative site layout

For illustrative purposes only
Bibliography

Developers should take account of the policies and guidance set out in the following publications as referred to in this Brief.

**London Borough of Bexley’s Unitary Development Plan (2004)**

**Bexley Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents:**
- Affordable Housing (2006)
- Bexley’s Planning Obligations (2008)

**Other Bexley documents:**
- Bexley’s Open Space Strategy (draft 2008)
- Smarter Developments - Working Together on Major Planning Applications

**The London Plan (Consolidated 2008)**

**The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance:**

**Housing**

**Accessible London**

**East London Green Grid Framework**

**South East London Housing Partnership’s Wheelchair Homes Design Guidelines**