Dartford Town Centre: Overview and maps
Expression of Interest to the Future High Streets Fund
Annex A
Introduction

- In support of our expression of interest to the Future High Streets Fund, this pack sets out a series of maps, highlighting:
  - the strategic context of Dartford’s Thames Estuary location, proximity to London and growth agenda
  - the position of the town centre in relation to Dartford’s major employment and development locations
  - the town centre’s key assets, based on the strategy set out in the Development Framework
  - the key challenges and opportunities faced by the town centre, and to which our expression of interest to the FHSF seeks to respond

Our strategy is set in the context of a substantial growth agenda…

Index of population growth, 1996-2036 (1996=0)

Source: ONS, SQW
Dartford in context (i): The Thames Gateway

"From an underperforming river region to a tapestry of productive places… By 2050, the Thames Estuary will create 1.3 million new jobs and generate £190 billion additional GVA”

Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission
Dartford in context (ii): The wider urban area

Thames Gateway Kent

- Dartford Town Centre
- Bluewater
- Northern Gateway
- Dartford in context
- Crossways Business Park
- The Bridge business park
- To Stratford and St Pancras
- To Victoria and London Bridge
- HS1
- Ebbsfleet International

[Map showing various locations and connections around Dartford]
Dartford town centre (i): Overview

“Through high quality design and innovative thinking, Dartford will be a place which invests in its people and future generations, celebrating their creativity and talent to deliver on the aspiration to make Dartford a ‘Town Centre for the Future’”

Dartford Town Centre Development Framework

- Dartford town centre is the historic heart of Dartford
- It extends south from Dartford rail station to Central Park, including the town’s main retail core, a range of cultural and civic amenities and a number of major development sites
Dartford town centre (ii): Key assets

- **Orchard Theatre**: 956 seat theatre serving a regional market
- **Central Park**: 58 acre Edwardian park extending to the south of the town centre
- **Museum and Library**: Carnegie museum and library at the entrance to Central Park
- **Acacia Hall**: Historic mansion house at the centre of recently refurbished events complex
Dartford town centre (iii): Key challenges

**Local catchment with limited purchasing power**

... despite substantial growth across the Borough

**Underperforming retail**

... linked with an oversupply of poor quality retail stock and high vacancy rates

**Inner ring road (A226)**

Major road infrastructure – often heavily congested and leading to poor air quality and severance effects

**Limited non-retail employment offer**

... despite a high jobs density rate across the Borough as a whole

**Significant viability challenges**

... despite developer interest, a number of major sites have been challenging to bring forward
Dartford town centre (iv): Opportunities

Lowfield Street and Market Square
Opportunities for new development and public realm improvements

Westgate/ former Co-op site
Mixed use residential and leisure development – including Health Hub
Piecing it together

- Long term strategy and implementation plan set out in recently-adopted *Town Centre Development Framework*
- Strong support from town centre partners (businesses, third sector organisations and strategic partners)
- Early opportunity for Future High Streets Fund investment at Westgate/ Co-op site
More information…?

- [Dartford Town Centre Development Framework (2018)](#)
- [Discover Dartford](#) for more information on plans for the town centre
- [Westgate Dartford](#) for more information on plans for the Westgate scheme/ former Co-op site

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