

*FINAL DRAFT TEXT*

# **Beam Park Planning Prospectus**

**London Borough of  
Barking & Dagenham**

**London Borough of  
Havering**

# **BEAM PARK PLANNING PROSPECTUS**

## **Aim of the Prospectus**

The London Borough of Havering and the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham (“the Boroughs”), are working together in partnership and in close consultation with the Mayor of London to deliver the regeneration of the London Riverside area of East London.

The Boroughs are mindful of the existing planning policy situation, but in order to achieve an early and successful development wish to explore a more flexible approach to the potential redevelopment of the Beam Park site. Following recent interest from the market, it is considered that a major leisure-led project could provide the essential catalyst to secure regeneration and deliver growth in the wider South Dagenham and Rainham area within which the site is situated.

This Prospectus describes the opportunity, the reasons why the Boroughs wish to consider this form of development, key development objectives and an illustration of the planning benefits the Boroughs expect to see delivered, and a summary of planning and transport requirements including planning policy considerations.

This prospectus has been prepared as a joint statement from the two Boroughs. It does not seek to change or replace existing planning policy, but does provide an up-to-date statement of the aspirations and attitude of the authorities to achieve a successful regeneration of Beam Park.

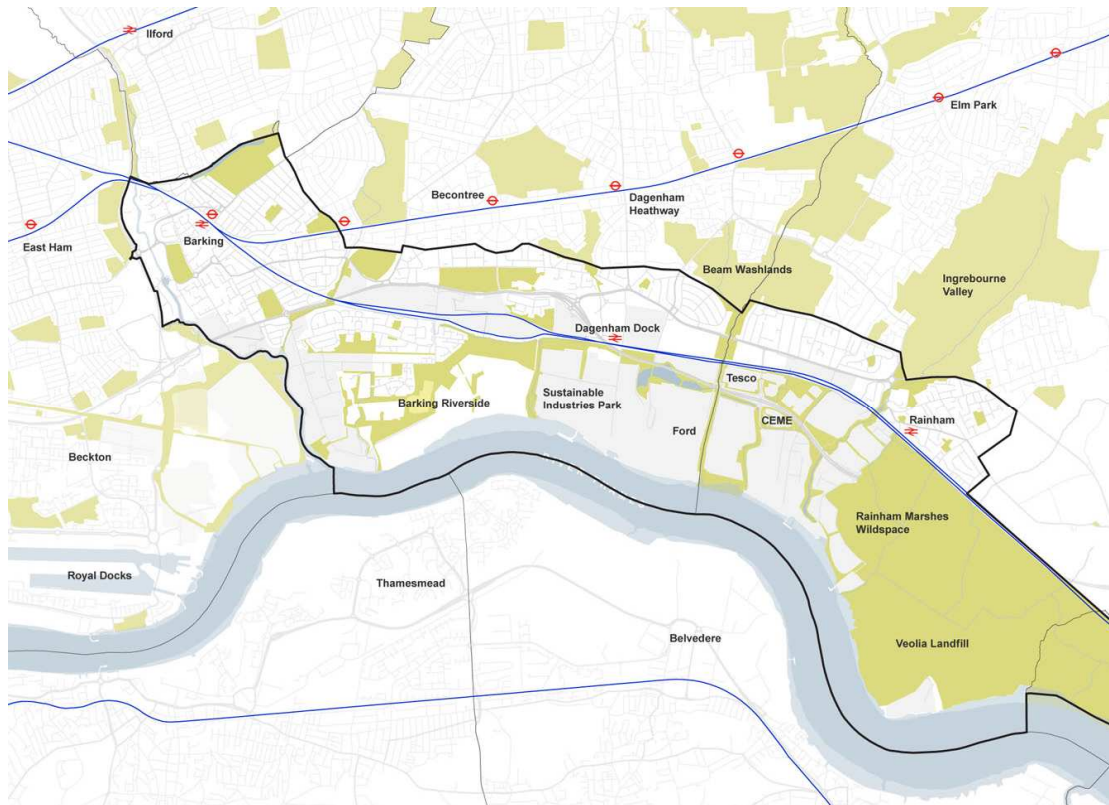
## **Context – London Riverside Opportunity Area**

*The London Plan (July 2011)* identifies 33 Opportunity Areas which provide London’s major reservoir of land for new housing, commercial and other development, linked to improvements in public transport accessibility.

The Beam Park site is within London Riverside, which at 2,500 hectares is the second largest Opportunity Area in the capital, extending from Barking Town Centre and Barking Riverside in the west through to the Dagenham and Rainham development opportunities in the east. The London Plan identifies that London Riverside has the capacity for 14,000 jobs and 25,000 new homes.

The London Plan’s strategy for London Riverside, which is reflected in the Boroughs’ Local Development Frameworks, is that

- development will be focused on Barking Riverside, Dagenham Dock, South Dagenham, Beam Reach, Beam Park and Rainham West sites, with scope for intensification in other areas;



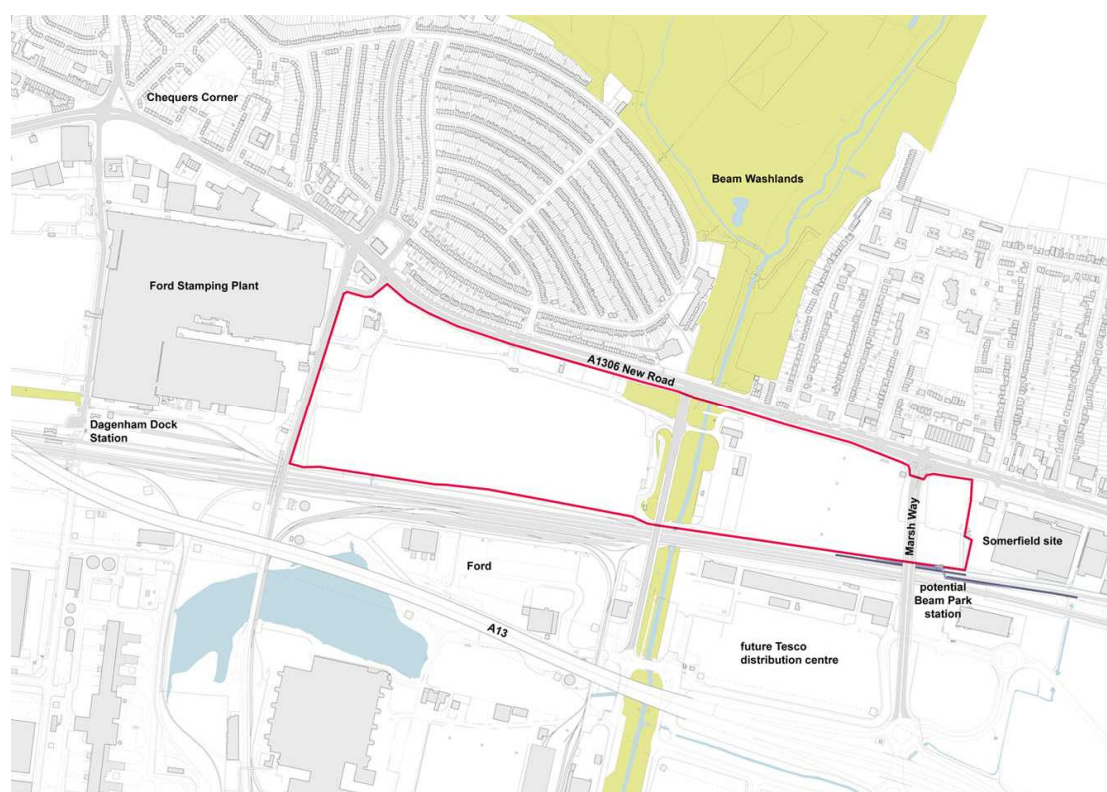
- the development strategy will include managed release of some surplus industrial land for housing and other complementary uses;
- the remaining industrial land opportunity will be consolidated, including promotion of a Green Enterprise District incorporating the London Sustainable Industries Park at Dagenham Dock;
- substantial improvements in public transport will be needed, building on plans for increased overground rail capacity, a Docklands Light Railway extension to Dagenham Dock station, a potential additional station at Beam Park, Renwick Road junction improvements, East London Transit, and extended bus services;
- improved connectivity by walking and cycling across the whole area and in particular through implementing the Green Grid;
- at South Dagenham, along the A1306 East, and in Rainham there is potential to deliver more compact, residential-led mixed urban communities;
- development should provide a good quality environment with a full range of facilities, and should create a new urban quarter with a distinct character of its own and a highly attractive place to live.

In summary, the London Plan and the Boroughs' Local Development Frameworks envisage that regeneration of the sites along the A1306, including the Beam Park site, will be achieved through redevelopment of the existing mainly industrial sites for mixed use schemes which are predominantly residential-led, supported by concurrent improvements in public transport to help ensure that the schemes are viable and sustainable.

In December 2011, the Greater London Authority (GLA) published a draft Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) for London Riverside. The aspirations in the OAPF are broadly consistent with existing Development Plan policies but allow for a flexible approach to land uses at Beam Park if this is justified in order to secure regeneration and economic growth.

Public consultation on the draft OAPF ended on 10 February 2012. When adopted by the GLA, the document will not form part of the Development Plan, but will be an important material consideration in the preparation of future local planning policy and the determination of any planning application.

## The Beam Park Site



The site comprises 29.3 hectares (72.4 acres) of former industrial land to the north of the A13 and south of the A1306, straddling the boundary between the Boroughs which is marked by the River Beam. The site is cleared of buildings and vacant apart from a small part in temporary use for the open storage of road salt.

Marsh Way crosses the eastern part of the site, leading to a junction with the A13 trunk road only 300 metres away. The M25 (junction 30) is 5 minutes' driving distance. The Tilbury loop of the Essex Thameside railway (London Fenchurch Street to Southend) and High Speed One railway run along the site's southern boundary. The nearest existing rail stations are at Dagenham

Dock and Rainham, but Havering's Local Development Framework proposes a new Beam Park station directly serving the site.

North of the site are the established residential areas of Dagenham and Rainham. To the east and west are mixed commercial areas along the A1306. To the south beyond the railway are strategically important industrial areas which include Ford Motor Company, the London Sustainable Industries Park, the Centre for Engineering & Manufacturing Excellence, and Beam Reach where a regional Tesco distribution centre is at an advanced stage of construction and will open in mid-2012, creating over 1,000 jobs for local people.

The Beam Park site is currently owned by the London Development Agency. In April 2012 ownership will pass to the Greater London Authority.

### **The Need for a Fresh Approach**

Good progress is being made with the regeneration of key parts of London Riverside including, for example, Barking Town Centre, Barking Riverside, Rainham Village Centre, Dagenham Dock, the strategic industrial areas, and Rainham Marshes. Investment by blue-chip companies like Tesco and Standard Life demonstrates how perceptions of the area have changed.

However regeneration activity along the A1306 corridor which includes the Beam Park site has been slower to realise, for a number of reasons.

The concept of large-scale housing-led regeneration of existing industrial sites in this part of South Dagenham and Rainham was first promoted in *An Urban Strategy for London Riverside (2002)* which was adopted as Interim Planning Guidance by the Boroughs and then incorporated into *The London Plan (2004)*, but it has not been taken up by the private sector. Most of the sites are in private ownership and are occupied by existing commercial and industrial uses: remediation works, flood protection, and other infrastructure costs to make sites suitable for housing would be substantial. This can make incremental housing redevelopment of individual sites unattractive, while site assembly for more comprehensive redevelopment can be complex and expensive.

Residential values are not currently at a level which sufficiently incentivises the acquisition and redevelopment of the existing commercial and industrial properties. Because of public expenditure constraints and other priority requirements, the area has not seen the hoped-for public transport improvements which would be needed to support higher density housing. The few residential schemes which have come forward in recent years have generally been promoted by Registered Providers of social housing, but the reduced level of grant now available for social housing makes it unlikely that further schemes of this type will be feasible in current conditions.

## **Objectives for the Beam Park Site**

In the light of the progress made over the last 10 years and in the current economic climate, the Boroughs therefore consider that a fresh approach is justified in order to achieve early regeneration of the site. This could see a different form of development on the Beam Park site than that currently envisaged in adopted planning policy in order to reinvigorate the market and increase the momentum for the regeneration of the remaining A1306 sites and the wider area of South Dagenham and Rainham.

Beam Park is seen as a unique proposition because of its scale, location and single ownership. There is an opportunity to capitalise on market and development interest in strategically significant leisure proposals which, in conjunction with transport improvements and further appropriate development, could provide the catalyst to unlock the potential of this area.

The Boroughs envisage that the whole Beam Park site could be comprehensively redeveloped with a scheme which incorporates the following key features:

- a large scale visitor attraction of regional and national significance as an anchor use, which would boost the image and perception of the area and provide a major catalyst to the economy;
- complementary leisure and entertainment facilities, potentially including community leisure provision to meet the needs of local people;
- retail floorspace, both for specialist sports and leisure shopping and to increase the choice and convenience of shopping available locally, provided that it is demonstrated that this would not impact unacceptably upon established town centres;
- residential and hotel development if compatible with the overall concept and design of the project;
- development that creates high levels of employment across a range of skills;
- safeguarding and contributing to a new railway station at Beam Park;
- improved links from Dagenham Dock station, and bus service improvements to serve the development including services from Dagenham Heathway (LUL) station;
- road improvements and car parking to accommodate additional traffic coming to Beam Park, without undermining efficient land use;
- a high quality design which makes a positive contribution to the urban environment, with development on the A1306 frontage supporting the creation of a vibrant and stimulating public realm, and pedestrian routes through the site which provide good relationships with the proposed Beam Park station;
- a good standard of environmental sustainability;
- safeguarding of space for other employment or housing uses.

The direct benefits of such a proposal would include the redevelopment of a large derelict site in a highly visible strategic location within a global city; significant job creation and contribution to economic growth; access to high quality leisure and retail uses; funding contributions for a Beam Park railway station; and other improvements to the public transport system and roads.

The successful redevelopment of the Beam Park site would provide a renewed impetus for the regeneration of the wider South Dagenham and Rainham area. This, together with the infrastructure improvements, would assist the earlier development of the remaining sites within the strategic industrial areas, and the regeneration of the other A1306 industrial sites. The potential creation of a 'day-out' visitor destination at Beam Park could be linked with the opportunities in Rainham Village and Rainham Marshes as part of the wider development of the visitor economy in the area.

## **Transport**

Good public transport and road access will be essential for a successful development of Beam Park, given the scale of regeneration being promoted.

A new Essex Thameside railway station has been proposed at Beam Park and the approval process is under way. This new station would be ideal to serve regional visitors travelling by public transport. A major leisure-led development of the Beam Park site would be expected to strengthen the business case for a new station and to contribute to its funding. Improvements in off-peak service frequencies are also likely to be required in conjunction with the development.

The site is well located for the A13, which would be the principal route of access for any regional traffic generated by a development. The performance of the A13, in particular through the junctions with Renwick Road and Lodge Avenue, will need to be considered in some detail, and necessary measures implemented to ensure the A13 will function effectively with the additional traffic volumes.

More local impacts will also need to be considered, especially for those elements of a development with a more local catchment. Local traffic is more likely than regional traffic to approach via the A1306 and the need for alterations to the A1306 will need to be considered.

Local bus services will be important for local residents accessing the sites, for leisure, shopping or employment, and some enhancements will be required. Good facilities for cyclists and pedestrians will need to be incorporated.

Local road accesses will need to be agreed, with a view to minimising the impact of generated traffic on the local community. In particular, access to/from the A13 should ideally occur without traffic utilising the local road network, so a principal access to/from Marsh Way would be preferred with only secondary local access taken from the A1306.

## **Relationship to Planning Policies**

Both Boroughs have adopted their LDF documents fairly recently and, although reviews are scheduled to take place, they are unlikely to be fully completed in the short term. Public sector partners are committed to delivering an early and successful redevelopment of this important site in the London Riverside Opportunity Area. It is a key objective to achieve the regeneration of London Riverside and to bring forward the redevelopment of other sites and transport improvements in accordance with the London Plan and the Boroughs' Local Development Frameworks. Accordingly, the Boroughs consider that a departure from the development plan may be justified if it offers exceptional benefits.

Any proposal that represented a significant departure from current planning policy would need to be fully justified. This could require a robust statement regarding the uniqueness of the proposal; the specifics of the site which meant that, when judged on a sequential basis, no reasonable alternative sites were available; and/or the scale of benefits that could be delivered.

The Boroughs recognise that the judgement whether a departure is justified must be made on the merits of specific development proposals for the Beam Park site, by the planning authorities (the Mayor of London and the Boroughs). The decision would need to take account of the responses to public consultation on those proposals, representations by interested parties and other material planning considerations. The outline of development objectives and illustration of benefits in this Prospectus will not prevent or inhibit the planning authorities from deciding whether or not to approve any planning application for the Beam Park site on its individual merits.

## **Planning Process**

Developers who wish to submit proposals for the comprehensive redevelopment of the Beam Park site, including justification for any significant departure from the development plan, are invited to contact the Boroughs at the earliest opportunity to discuss their proposals.

Developers who progress beyond the initial discussion stage will be requested to provide, where relevant, the following to aid detailed discussions:

- Detailed schedule of proposed uses
- Statement providing justification for any significant departure from the Development Plan
- Summary Business Case and 'Local Economic Benefit' Statement
- Design principles including indications of scale of proposed buildings, their layout, the local movement network and public spaces
- Draft transport impact assessment
- Draft retail impact assessment



- Draft scope of environmental impact assessment
- Proposals to address site constraints including flood risk management, gas pipeline hazard mitigation, and biodiversity
- Community involvement strategy (residents, businesses and local politicians)
- Consultation strategy (statutory and non-statutory consultees)

Working with key stakeholders and interested parties, the Boroughs may decide to seek the preparation of a development brief for the site. This could set parameters within which any future planning application proposals would be determined.

The process for dealing with any planning application including pre-application requirements, scope of submission and detailed timescales would be agreed through a Planning Performance Agreement.

### **Planning Obligations**

The following planning obligations are likely to be sought in connection with the development, depending on the nature of the proposed uses:

- Public Transport Improvements:
  - Contribution to Beam Park Station
  - Improvements to bus services
  - Promotion of public transport
- Provision of Community Facilities
- Training and Employment opportunities
  - Construction training programme
  - Employment opportunities for local unemployed
- Environmental Improvements
- Highway and Access Improvements, including provision for pedestrians and cyclists
- Biodiversity Enhancements
- Flood Defence Improvements
- Proportion of affordable housing in any residential development
- Education contribution from any new residential development
- Provision of Public Art

In addition a CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) contribution will be payable to the Mayor of London to support the financing of Crossrail. Should either of the Boroughs also introduce a CIL before a planning application for Beam Park is determined, that levy will be charged in place of some of the non-site-specific obligations outlined above.

The Boroughs will consider the viability of any scheme proposals and the ability to provide a full range of CIL payments and obligations. This will be judged against the wider benefits that any exceptional proposal might deliver.

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