

4. Issues and opportunities

This section sets out the issues and opportunities identified for the Sutherland Road area, as highlighted by the urban design and analysis as well as the extensive research that has been undertaken to inform the IPPF and this brief.

4.1 Key issues

Key issues for the Sutherland Road area

1. Land assembly

The site is currently fragmented. Ownership will need to be rationalised and a unified, coherent and deliverable vision for the site needs to be formulated.

2. Access arrangements

The incremental nature of much of the industrial/commercial development on the site, and the irregular shape of many of the component plots, means that it is difficult to access many of the individual sites within the estate, or to traverse the site. However, the proposed new east-west access road through the current Webbs site in the south-western portion of the Sutherland Road area, will improve access in this area in the future and help to separate industrial and residential traffic (see Policy INB5 in the 2006 Waltham Forest UDP). Access arrangements must be addressed as part of a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to the redevelopment of Sutherland Road.

3. Poor quality of the industrial area

Buildings in the Sutherland Road industrial area are of a low quality and the area includes parcels of under-utilised land. The street environment is also poor and cluttered with waste bins and goods vehicles parked on both sides of the road and on the pavement. Overall, the industrial area provides a negative contribution to the amenity value of the surrounding residential areas in terms of streetscape and traffic.

4. Relocation of existing occupiers

The site currently provides accommodation for a significant number of local businesses, which provide services in the local area and beyond, whilst providing a range of employment opportunities. It is important that existing occupiers are helped to stay within the local area, to ensure they continue to provide employment opportunities and service provision into the future.

5. Surrounding residential uses

There is some conflict between residential and industrial/commercial land uses on the site, particularly with regard to heavy goods vehicles entering the residential area. Making improvements to this interface would have to be prioritised if other land uses such as residential were to be introduced onto the site.



Sutherland Road - cluttered streetscape



Poor quality industrial units

4.2 Key opportunities

Key opportunities for the Sutherland Road area

1. An opportunity to create a new residential quarter with a high quality public realm

The introduction of residential accommodation within the Sutherland Road industrial estate would benefit both the immediate locale and the wider neighbourhood, particularly by improving the quality of life by removing 'bad neighbour' industrial uses and low quality industrial buildings. New development would provide contributions to local infrastructure through Section 106 agreements, whilst new residential accommodation would make valuable contributions to the borough's affordable housing stock. It is important that any new development should also contribute towards the provision of a high quality, unified public realm and public spaces in the Sutherland Road area, again potentially through Section 106 agreements.

2. Position within an already well-established residential area

The residential character of the surrounding area would ease the introduction of residential uses on the site, as residential amenity levels would only be enhanced. The new access road proposed through the current Webbs site to connect Blackhorse Lane to Sutherland Road would also serve to enhance the existing residential areas as well as the new development, by removing industrial traffic from the northern portion of the Sutherland Road area.

3. Potential to enhance existing pedestrian connections through area

In addition to the new road proposed to connect Blackhorse Lane with Sutherland Road, the local area would benefit from enhanced pedestrian access through the Sutherland Road industrial area. This would afford greater permeability and would re-connect the residential areas surrounding the industrial site.

4. Potential to consolidate the industrial area

Given that IPPF Policy BHL7 changes the boundary of the Strategic Employment Location so that it extends to the east to cover the southern portion of the wider Sutherland Road area (see Figure 2.4), this clearly represents an opportunity to consolidate industrial/workspace accommodation to the south of this planning and design brief site, in order to separate it from the new residential quarter to the north.

5. Proximity to Blackhorse Road transport node

Sutherland Road is within easy walking distance of the Blackhorse Road transport interchange, which provides access to central London, Walthamstow Town Centre and locations on the Barking-Gospel Oak route. This invaluable resource would be further enhanced by a new Neighbourhood Centre, providing local services in and around the station site, which could potentially include retail, leisure, food/drink, and residential land uses (see planning brief for the station hub and waterfront site).

6. Proximity to areas undergoing major transformation

Tottenham Hale is located immediately to the west of the reservoirs which bound the western edge of the wider Blackhorse Lane area, and is identified in the London Plan as an Opportunity Area. As such, it is expected to undergo significant redevelopment in the next five to ten years which will also benefit local people in Waltham Forest. There may also be benefits from the Olympic Park site which is under construction for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games to the south, in the Lower Lee Valley, as well as the development of Stratford City.

Overall, the Sutherland Road site presents an excellent opportunity to bring forward a comprehensive scheme with mutual benefits from the different parts of the site. A new dedicated industrial access road serving industrial premises in the southern part of the area would facilitate development of a new high quality business park. The new business park could accommodate displaced firms which would enable the existing poor quality industrial premises in the northern part of the area to be replaced by residential use. This new residential use would also benefit from the access road in terms of an improved environment secured by the elimination of industrial traffic from the northern part of the road.