



May 2010

A CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR TOWER HAMLETS

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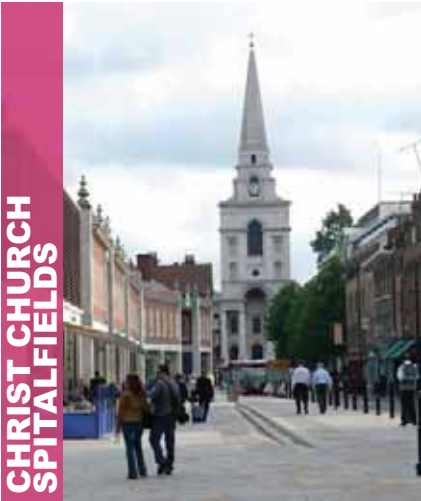
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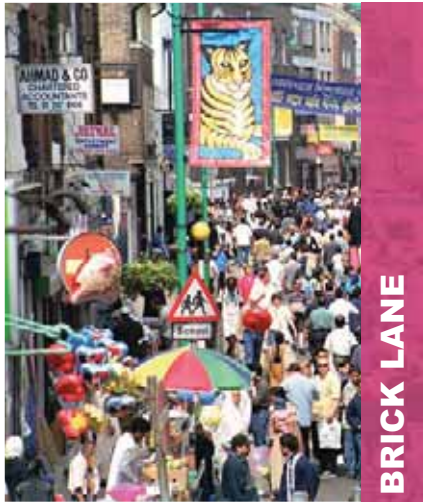
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FOREWORD

Tower Hamlets has a long, rich and distinguished history, extending from prehistory (with the earliest known Londoner buried in Blackwall approximately 5,000 years ago) to today. Our Borough is also rich in heritage resource. It has heritage of international, national and local importance, characterised by enormous diversity and variety – from the



TOWER OF LONDON WORLD HERITAGE SITE, an outstanding, internationally important example of late 11th century innovative Norman military architecture and home of the Crown Jewels, to the historic **SPITALFIELDS MARKET** that dates back to the 17th century; from the **BRICK LANE AND FURNIER STREET CONSERVATION AREA**, which includes the most important early Georgian quarter in England, to the Grade II* Listed **VICTORIA PARK**; from the **WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY**, the oldest manufacturing company in Britain and a source of world famous bells such as Big Ben and the Liberty Bell, to the Grade II* Listed **WILTON'S MUSIC HALL**, the oldest music hall in London to survive in its original form; from Nicholas Hawksmoor's **CHRIST CHURCH SPITALFIELDS**, a masterpiece of the English Baroque and a Grade I Listed Building, to the **LOCAL HISTORY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES AT BANCROFT ROAD**. The Borough contains all or part of 50% of the World Heritage Sites in London, and in comparison to averages across the London Boroughs, it has a relatively high proportion of Scheduled Monuments, Grade II listed buildings and Conservation Areas.



Maritime and trade activity, migration and change have all been important themes in Tower Hamlets' past, and these themes have had a strong influence on the development of the Borough and on its unique character today. Blackwall Yard was constructed in 1614, and became the largest private shipyard in the country, while the early 19th century West India Docks were internationally important. Many world famous ships, such as the Cutty Sark and Brunel's Great Eastern, were associated with local shipyards and docks. Today, many of the large warehouses along Wapping High Street, for example, retain their primary character and authentic fixtures, and give a sense of the scale of activity which was once prevalent in this riverside area.

Closely linked to trade and industry was immigration – there have been many waves of immigrants to Tower Hamlets, including the Flemings who introduced hops in the 14th century and the Huguenots who introduced silk weaving in the 17th century. Today, the Borough is home to a large Bangladeshi community that comprises 40% of all Bangladeshis in London, as well as to a number of other diverse ethnic communities.

This emphasis on trade, migration and change has also contributed to a tradition in the Borough of a dynamic built environment and adaptive re-use, as new communities have found new uses for existing buildings and spaces. The Jamme Masjid Mosque on Brick Lane, for example, was originally a church for the protestant Huguenot silk weavers in the late 17th century, subsequently a methodist chapel, then a synagogue for the Jewish community, before becoming a mosque in 1976. Similarly, the old Truman Brewery, once the largest brewery in London, has been transformed into a successful creative hub of London's East End.

Going forward, Tower Hamlets is due to continue undergoing significant changes, with strong focus on regeneration and housing development, significant investment in transport, and with the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Our history and heritage resource is an irreplaceable legacy, one that we are immensely proud of and that we are strongly committed to. At the same time, we are also committed to ensuring the ongoing success and vitality of our Borough, and recognise the important role that heritage can play in its sustainable development – by providing the foundation for the Borough's distinctive character and sense of place, and by contributing to social and economic development, the climate change agenda and quality of life. We have therefore developed this Conservation Strategy to continue to be proactive in managing our heritage for current and future generations – it will help ensure that the Borough's heritage is protected and enhanced within this changing environment, and also help ensure that heritage continues to actively contribute to the social and economic regeneration of the Borough.

The Conservation Strategy is the first strategy of its type in London, and the first to take an integrated view across all aspects of the heritage resource. We are very grateful to the many individuals, departments and organisations who have contributed to its development. Its implementation will help us achieve our shared vision for this exceptional and unique Borough.



SPITALFIELDS MARKET



WEST INDIA DOCKS



REGENTS CANAL

PREFACE

Preparation of the Conservation Strategy

Tower Hamlets has developed this Conservation Strategy for the Borough. At the heart of this process has been public consultation, in order for those living and working in the borough to contribute in the widest possible way to the development of this document. An interactive, collaborative and multi-staged approach was taken to the development of the Strategy, to ensure it was grounded in an understanding of the Borough's particular characteristics and challenges, and to build engagement and support among key stakeholders and community groups.

The first stage of the process involved collection and analysis of data, and development of a Baseline Audit and Key Issues Paper. The Paper set out the profile of the Borough and the broader strategic context, summarised the historical development of the Borough and the heritage resource that can be found there today, described the values and benefits of the heritage resource and how that resource is currently managed and protected, and described government and statutory body guidance for heritage protection and enhancement. Based on these findings it then identified a series of emerging issues facing the heritage. The findings and emerging issues were presented and discussed with numerous Council departments and with the CADAP (Conservation and Design Advisory Panel).

The findings from the Baseline Audit and Key Issues Paper informed the development of a draft Conservation Strategy. A number of public consultation activities were then carried out to secure input into this draft Conservation Strategy. These took a number of forms, including drop in sessions at Idea Stores, meetings and presentations, interactive workshops with young people, publication on the Council's website, and distribution of hard copies to Idea Stores and Libraries in the Borough. The aim of the consultation process was to engage with a diverse range of local community and interest groups, and with key internal Council and external stakeholders (including statutory bodies).

This document takes into account the comments and feedback received during the consultation process described above and sets out proposals in the document for further public engagements in the delivery of the strategy.

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FEEDBACK



HOW WILL THE GOVERNMENT SEE THE DOCUMENT

WILL THE PLAN STAY LOCAL OR GO NATIONAL?



A UNIVERSITY TO TEACH ABOUT THE HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION OF TOWER HAMLET



USE OF EMPTY BUILDINGS

OLD LIBRARIES + SCHOOL BUILDINGS



DON'T KNOCK THEM DOWN!



LOSS OF PIE + MASH SHOPS



WHAT ABOUT CITY FARMS?



OUR HISTORY OF CARPENTRY

TOURISM

WHERE IS THE TOURIST OFFICE?



POSITIVE HISTORY



AND PUBS!!



CRAFT MEMORIAL GARDEN

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

AND ENGAGEMENT



COUNCIL NEEDS TO SET AN EXAMPLE AND LOOK AFTER IT'S OWN HOUSING STOCK



STOP RENAMING OUR HISTORIC AREAS.

* The cartoons were produced by an artist commissioned to capture and represent the comments of those that attended the Consultation events organised for the Conservation Strategy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is the Conservation Strategy?

Conservation focuses on managing and enabling change to heritage resource in a way that preserves its significance. The Conservation Strategy aims to guide decision-making for Tower Hamlets' heritage over the next 5-10 years. It sets out the long term vision for the heritage, and the Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives to help deliver that vision. It provides strategic guidance at the Borough level – it is not a detailed assessment of individual heritage resources.

What Heritage does Tower Hamlets have?

Tower Hamlets has a long history of trade and industry, migration and change. These key themes have influenced the development of the Borough, and the heritage that can be found here. This heritage is of international, national and local importance. It is a rich resource that includes: the historic environment, buildings and archaeology; parks, open spaces and views; heritage collections and intangible heritage. This is heritage in its broad sense, and it covers both designated and non designated resources.

How does the Conservation Strategy fit with other Key Documents?

The Conservation Strategy is a key document that feeds into the Borough's Local Development Framework, and that is aligned with the Core Strategy 2025. It also actively contributes to the key priorities of the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020, which sets out an overarching aim to "improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the Borough". The Conservation Strategy particularly supports this overarching aim through the theme of "A Great Place to Live".

Strong integration with these and other Borough strategies is key to the deliverability of the Conservation Strategy, and key elements of this Strategy will be incorporated into the Local Development Framework through Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents, such as the Development Management DPD and Site and Place-Making DPD. The Conservation Strategy is also informed by the Government's recently published Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) on Planning for the Historic Environment, and by English Heritage's Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008).

What is our Vision for Heritage?

Tower Hamlets' heritage is an irreplaceable legacy. It is the foundation of the Borough's distinctive character, and it makes a significant contribution to the Borough's sense of place. It also contributes to economic regeneration and sustainability, social inclusion and community development, recreation and quality of life.

The Conservation Strategy aims to protect and enhance Tower Hamlets' heritage resource, and ensure that it can be appreciated and enjoyed by current and future generations. A key part of this is to ensure increased community engagement and involvement in the heritage, as a critical part of ensuring its ongoing sustainability. The Strategy also aims to enhance the contribution of the heritage to the other strategic priorities of the Borough – to ensure that heritage plays an active role in the Borough's ongoing regeneration and development.

The Strategy has 6 key priorities, which are reflected in the 6 Strategy Goals. These Goals address the key challenges facing Tower Hamlets' heritage. They also respond to government and statutory body guidance, and seek to actively support the Council's broader social and economic regeneration priorities. The Goals are summarised below:

1. Understanding the significance of the heritage;
2. Increasing community pride, ownership and involvement in heritage to promote community cohesion;
3. Ensuring effective governance and management of the heritage;
4. Increasing heritage's contribution to regeneration;
5. Improving the condition of the heritage; and
6. Ensuring effective protection of the heritage.

Key Challenges Facing Tower Hamlets' Heritage

The key challenges facing Tower Hamlets' heritage resource are summarised below. They focus around development and conservation, condition of the heritage, understanding and appreciating the heritage resource, its values and benefits, protection and guidance, and management and resources.

Key Challenge Area	Key Challenges
Development and Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased pressure from housing regeneration High density development impacting low density areas Pressure on setting and key views of heritage Pressure on locally important but not designated heritage Heritage resources not contributing as much as they could to the climate change agenda
Condition of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37 heritage features on Heritage at Risk Register Inappropriate works undermining heritage value Heritage resources damaged and in need of repair Street clutter and other public realm issues impacting quality of heritage resources
Understanding and Appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial heritage less widely appreciated, despite seminal role 20th century heritage less widely valued Limited appreciation of role of local streetscapes and trees Inconsistency of information Mixed community understanding of heritage needs of buildings
Values and Benefits of Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited contribution to tourism and local economy Limited interpretation and signage Limited community participation in heritage Evolving community needs impacting use of heritage and viability
Protection and Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited specificity of important characteristics for Conservation Areas Conservation Areas appear to not always include all important structures Limited protection of locally listed buildings, setting and views One of the highest tallies of spot listings of all London Boroughs
Management and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage owned by different individuals and organisations Insufficient Council resources to maintain all heritage Co-ordination within Council not optimally productive Less emphasis on monitoring condition of heritage in recent years

The Conservation Strategy

The Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives that comprise the Conservation Strategy are summarised in the table opposite.

Implementing the Conservation Strategy

The Council will need to take a proactive and strong leadership role to deliver this strategy, particularly where Council-owned heritage is involved. However, conserving and protecting the Borough's heritage will also require the involvement and contribution of a range of community, stakeholder and partner groups. It will also require prioritisation, with a particular focus on the significance of the heritage resource.

A separate Implementation Work Plan will be developed for the Conservation Strategy. The Plan will set out a summary of the key actions required to deliver the Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives, and their relative prioritisation and timescale. It will identify the key accountabilities and partners for the actions, and potential funding sources. It will also set out an approach for monitoring and evaluating progress against the Strategy.

Strategy Goals- Work Plan Objectives

1: Understanding the Significance of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1: Ensure that the significance of heritage resources is understood1.2: Build a better understanding of the significance of the intangible heritage and of local heritage, working closely with community groups1.3: Ensure that planning applications and decisions are based on an understanding of the significance of the heritage1.4: Develop up to date, integrated information systems on heritage that are easily and widely available
2: Increasing Community Pride, Ownership and Involvement in Heritage to Promote Community Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1: Increase community understanding, pride and enjoyment of the Borough's diverse heritages2.2: Increase general access to the heritage, and improve connectivity between different heritage resources2.3: Increase awareness of the heritage and its needs2.4: Provide opportunities for local communities to develop heritage related skills2.5: Increase community involvement in the ongoing management and promotion of the heritage2.6: Encourage the development of strengthened community and external stakeholder resources to participate in heritage
3: Ensuring Effective Governance and Management of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">3.1: Increase co-ordination with key internal Council stakeholders to effectively manage and promote the heritage on an ongoing basis3.2: Increase the resources available for the Borough's heritage
4: Increasing the Heritage's Contribution to Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">4.1: Work with community, stakeholder and other partner groups to secure economically viable futures for heritage resources and street markets4.2: Encourage development that is sensitive to, and that celebrates the Borough's heritage4.3: Increase the contribution that heritage can make to tourism/destination marketing4.4: Increase the contribution that heritage can make to the sustainability and climate change agenda4.5: Increase recognition of how heritage contributes to regeneration, and of the benefits this brings
5: Improving the Condition of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">5.1: Continue to actively seek to remove all heritage resources from the Heritage at Risk register5.2: Develop and implement an integrated monitoring and maintenance regime for the heritage that includes all heritage owners5.3: Proactively encourage heritage owners to use appropriate resources when undertaking works to their properties
6: Ensuring Effective Protection of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">6.1: Ensure that the key heritage resources that contribute to an understanding of Tower Hamlets' history and development are included within the Borough's designations6.2: Increase the clarity around what developments are permitted and appropriate in Conservation Areas6.3: Increase the protection available to locally important heritage resources6.4: Increase the protection for the setting of key heritage resources and key views6.5: Increase the protection available to the intangible heritage of the Borough6.6: Increase enforcement to protect the heritage

A CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR



TOWER HAMLETS



WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS?

HOW DO WE PRIORITISE AND FIND FUNDING?



FUNDING?

HOW DO WE INTRODUCE THEM TO YOUNG PEOPLE?



2000 LISTED BUILDING

WHAT PLACES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

NOT JUST BUILDINGS



YOU ARE THE EXPERTS... TELL US WHAT YOU THINK.

THE PUBLIC

PARKS AND MARKETS



HOW DO WE ATTRACT TOURISM?

HEY LOOK AT THAT

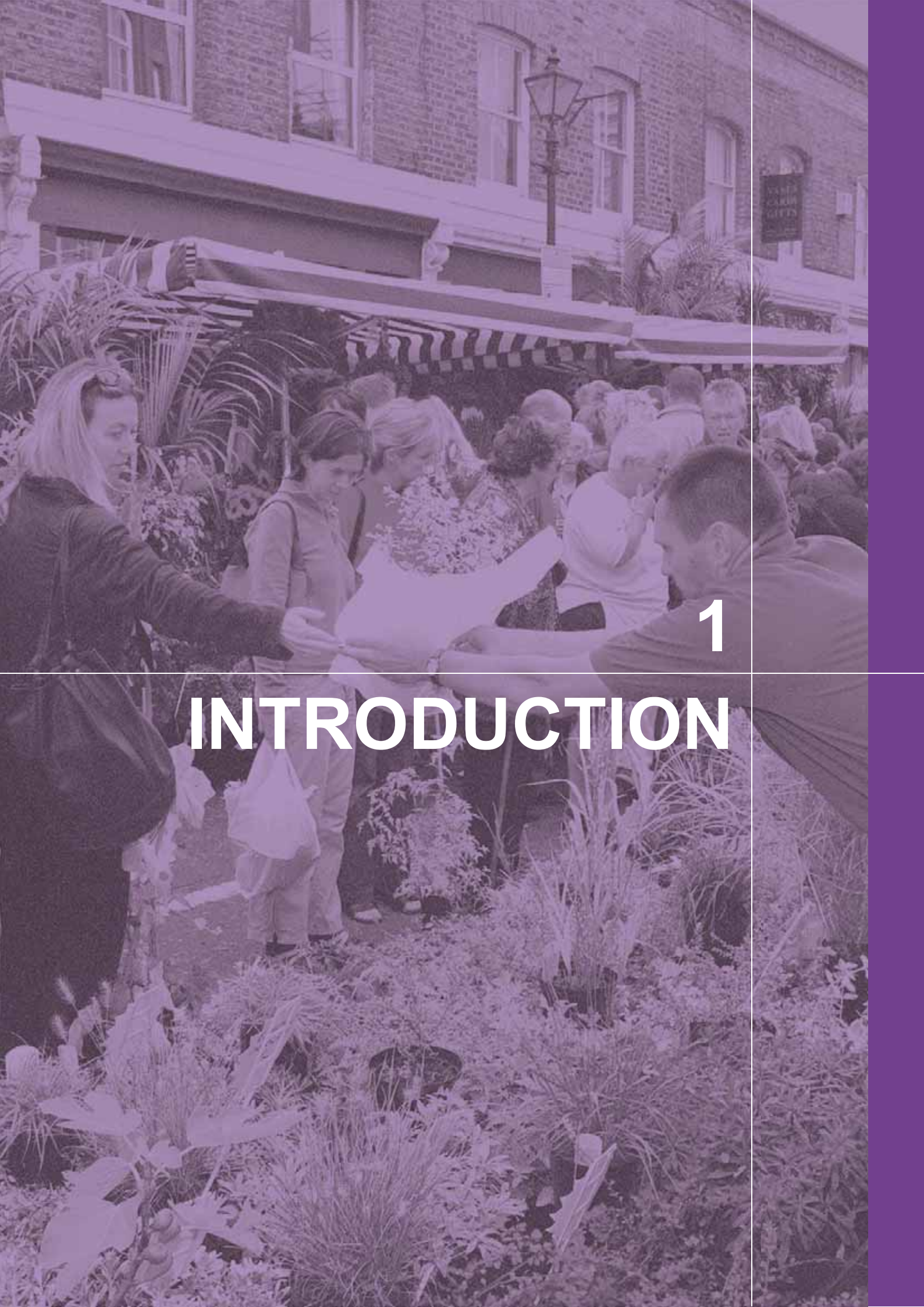
HOW TO DEAL WITH DERELICT BUILDINGS?



TREE PROTECTION

THE POSITIVE HISTORY OF TOWER HAMLETS...
... NOT JUST JACK THE RIPPER!

* The cartoons were produced by an artist commissioned to capture and represent the comments of those that attended the Consultation events organised for the Conservation Strategy



1

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

What is the Conservation Strategy?



Conservation focuses on managing and enabling change to heritage resource in a way that preserves its significance. The

Conservation Strategy aims to guide decision-making for Tower Hamlets' heritage over the next 5-10 years. It sets out the long term vision for the heritage, and the Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives to help deliver that vision.

It provides strategic guidance at the Borough level – it is not a detailed assessment of individual heritage resources.

Why does Tower Hamlets Need a Conservation Strategy?

Tower Hamlets has been undergoing significant changes over the last few years, and this is due to continue and potentially increase in the future. A strong focus on regeneration is leading, for example, to the development of 43,000 new houses, while significant investment in transport will improve accessibility to the central and eastern parts of the Borough, to the City fringe and Isle of Dogs. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, as the single largest regeneration project in Europe and the UK, is also a catalyst for change.

There is therefore need for a Conservation Strategy that can help ensure that the Borough's heritage is protected and enhanced within this changing environment, and that can also help ensure that heritage continues to contribute to the economic development and regeneration of the Borough.

In addition, the Government has also recently issued a new Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) on Planning for the Historic Environment, in line with the white papers Heritage Protection for the 21st Century (March 2007) and Planning for a Sustainable Future (May 2007). One of the recommendations in PPS 5 is for the development of a 'positive, proactive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment'.

What Heritage is Included in the Conservation Strategy?

Within this document, heritage and heritage resource is used to cover all aspects of the historic environment that result from the interaction between people and places - from visible historic buildings/structures to buried archaeology, from parks and open spaces to key views. It includes both designated and non designated resources.

In addition, the Conservation Strategy includes within its scope heritage collections - including historic archives, books, photographs, museum objects, audio-visual material and born-digital records associated with the past. It also includes the intangible heritage associated with the Borough and its populations – from historic street markets to more contemporary events and festivals, from oral histories and personal memories to different viewpoints, names and uses of a heritage resource, from performing arts to social practices and traditional skills.

This is heritage in its broad sense, because it is important to take an integrated, holistic approach to its protection and enhancement.

How Does the Conservation Strategy fit with other Key Borough Documents?

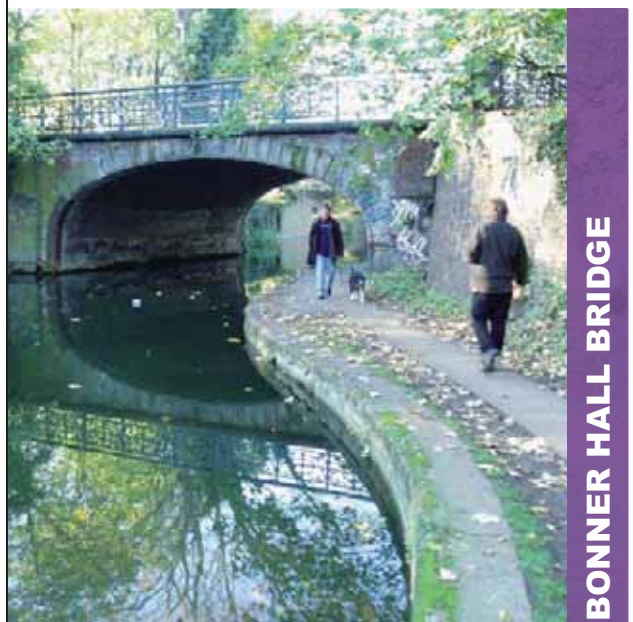
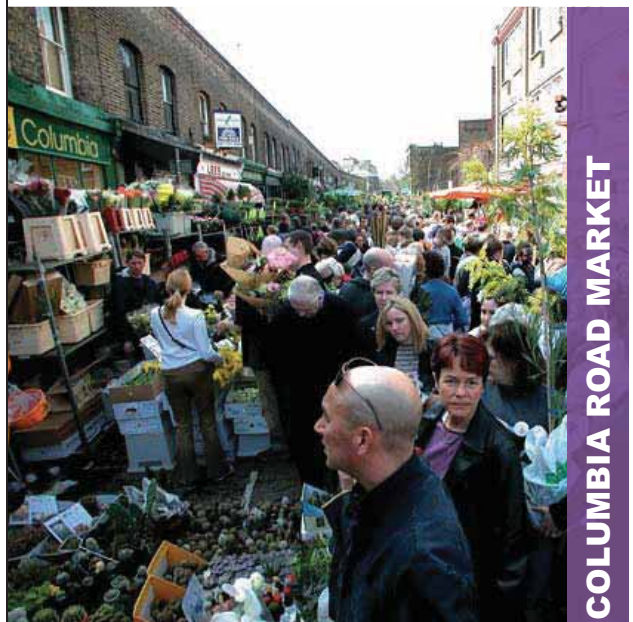
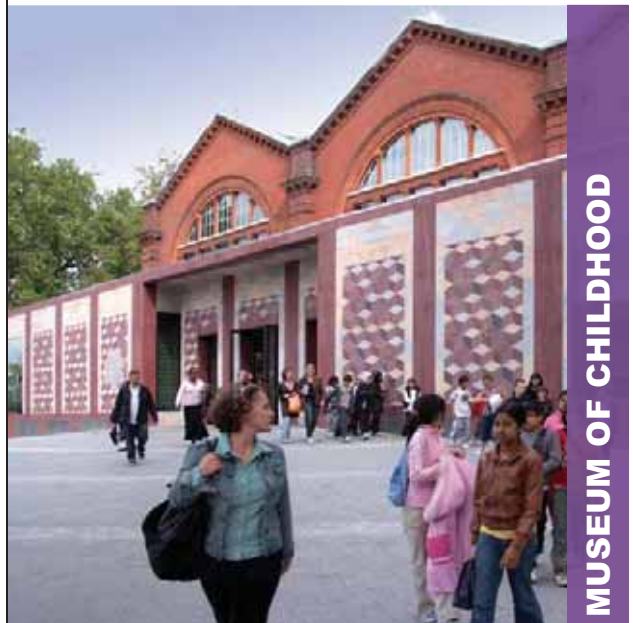
The Conservation Strategy is a key document that feeds into the Borough's Local Development Framework (see Figure 1), and that is aligned with the priorities of the Core Strategy 2025. It also actively contributes to the key priorities of the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020, which sets out an overarching aim to "improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the Borough". The Conservation Strategy particularly supports this overarching Vision through the theme of "A Great Place to Live".

Strong integration with these and all other associated key Borough strategies is central to the deliverability of the Conservation Strategy, and key elements of this strategy will be incorporated into the Local Development Framework through Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents (such as the Development Management DPD and Site and Place-Making DPD).

How is this Document Structured?

This document has 8 Sections, including this Introduction:

- **Section 2** provides an overview of the socio-economic profile of Tower Hamlets today. It identifies the nature of the local communities that the Conservation Strategy is seeking to engage, and also builds an understanding of some of the key social and economic challenges that have contributed to the regeneration priorities for the Borough going forward. The Conservation Strategy seeks to support the Borough's regeneration priorities, and these social and economic challenges have therefore informed the development of the Conservation Strategy's Goals and Objectives in Section 8;
- **Section 3** provides an overview of the history of Tower Hamlets, from prehistory to the present day. It identifies the key themes that have had a strong influence on the development of the Borough, and on the heritage that remains today. They provide the



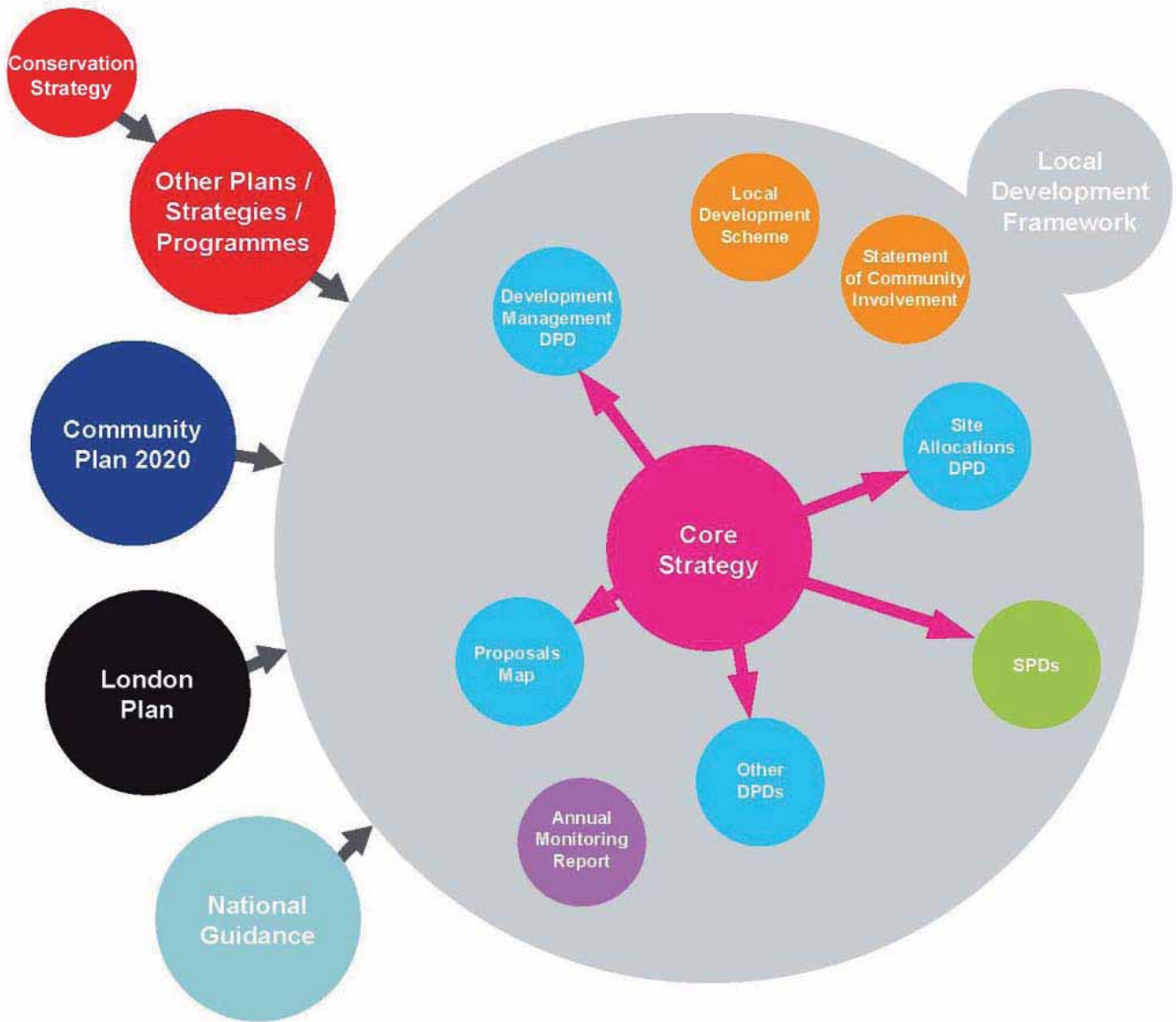


FIGURE 1
The Conservation Strategy in Context

foundation of Tower Hamlets' distinctive character, and make a significant contribution to the Borough's unique sense of place and identity. These themes inform the priorities for what needs to be protected and enhanced through the Conservation Strategy. They also identify opportunities for alignment with the broader strategic priorities of the Borough;

- **Section 4** provides an overview of the range of heritage resource that can be found in Tower Hamlets today, as a result of the historic development described in Section 3. This defines the scope of what the Conservation Strategy is seeking to protect and enhance, and also informs some of the challenges that the Conservation Strategy seeks to address (see Section 7);
- **Section 5** outlines some of the key benefits that the heritage resource already brings to the Borough and its communities. This demonstrates why there is broad value in protecting and enhancing the heritage resource, and identifies areas where the heritage resource could bring further benefits to the Borough. These areas inform the Conservation Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives in Section 8;
- **Section 6** focuses on how the heritage resource outlined in Section 4 is currently managed and protected. This informs the assessment of the key challenges associated with the heritage resource (Section 7), and the development of the Conservation Strategy's Goals and Objectives in Section 8. This Section also informs the accountabilities for delivering the Conservation Strategy, as set out in the Implementation Plan;
- **Section 7** sets out the range of key challenges facing Tower Hamlets' heritage resource, and is informed by the findings from Sections 2-6. These challenges are addressed by the Conservation Strategy in Section 8; and



WAPPING HIGH STREET



OPEN SPACE IN TOWER HAMLETS



THAMES VIEW

- **Section 8** sets out the Conservation Strategy itself. It sets out the long term vision for the heritage, together with the Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives to help deliver that vision. These are informed by the key challenges identified in Section 7, government and statutory body guidance, and the Council's broad social and economic regeneration priorities.



IDEA STORE



2

PROFILE OF TOWER HAMLETS



PROFILE OF TOWER HAMLETS

Overview and Key Messages



Section 2 provides an overview of the socio-economic profile of Tower Hamlets today, looking at population and age, ethnicity and religion, social deprivation and health, housing and employment. It identifies the nature of the local communities that the Conservation Strategy is seeking to engage, and also builds an understanding of some of the key social and economic challenges that have contributed to the regeneration priorities for the Borough going forward. The Conservation Strategy seeks to support the Borough's regeneration priorities, and these social and economic challenges have therefore informed the development of the Conservation Strategy's Goals and Objectives in Section 8.



Tower Hamlets is a Borough of diversity. The Borough is one of the most ethnically diverse in the country, with 110 languages spoken and 40% of all Bangladeshis in London. This diversity contributes to the Borough's evolving sense of identity and to the ongoing development of its rich heritage – whether through new uses for existing heritage resources or through the establishment of new heritage. At the same time, the relatively recent nature of the arrival of some of these communities, and the relatively young age of the population, can also lead to a lack of connectivity with the heritage that can be found in the Borough.



Tower Hamlets is also a Borough of stark contrasts and many social and economic challenges. It is characterised by great wealth, but it is also the 3rd most deprived local authority in the country, with a number of health issues including multiple disabilities and comparatively lower life expectancy. It has the 4th highest density of jobs of all the London Boroughs, but the lowest employment rate. It also has one of the highest population densities in inner London, and the population is set to increase at a faster rate than the rest of London.



Housing is one of the most significant issues in the Borough, and a target has now been set of 43,000 new homes by 2025. This will potentially increase the pressure on the Borough's heritage resource, but at the same time also generates opportunities to adapt existing heritage stock. Issues around low employment and high deprivation could also be partly addressed through greater emphasis on tourism, and the Borough's rich and diverse heritage of international, national and local importance could have an important role to play in this. Heritage could also have a role to play in addressing the health issues that the Borough faces, and the challenges associated with very high population densities - through increased emphasis and access to the Borough's historic landscapes, gardens, squares and waterways.

Location

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets covers an area of 8 square miles, and is situated on the northern bank of the River Thames, immediately adjacent to the City of London, Hackney and Newham Boroughs (see Figures 2 and 3).

Population and Age

Tower Hamlets has **one of the highest population densities in inner London**. The population is set to increase at a faster rate than the rest of London, growing from 215,000 to c.300,000 by 2025, driven by natural population growth and a number of regeneration initiatives. Tower Hamlets has a notably **youthful population**, with young people comprising 35% of those living in the Borough. The population growth is thought likely to be most marked in the under 19s.

Ethnicity and Religion

The population of Tower Hamlets is **one of the most ethnically diverse in the country**, with 55% belonging to ethnic groups other than white British. The largest of these ethnic groups is the Bangladeshi community, which represents 30% of the Borough's population and **40% of all Bangladeshis in London**. There are also significant Chinese, Caribbean and African groups in the Borough. Overall, approximately **110 languages are spoken** in the Borough, and 70% of school pupils have English as their second language. This diversity is reflected in the religious demographic, with 40% of the population being Christian and 35% Muslim.

Social Deprivation

Tower Hamlets is a **Borough of stark contrasts**. As well as containing the internationally competitive Canary Wharf, the Borough remains one of the most deprived in London, with 13 of its 19 wards being within the least prosperous 3% of wards in England and Wales. In terms of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, it is the **3rd most deprived local authority in the country**, and approximately 75% of children living in Tower Hamlets are in low income families.

Health and Disability

Tower Hamlets suffers from a number of health issues. There are high levels of obesity and smoking, which contribute to **comparatively lower life expectancy for the population**. The population also has relatively high levels of infant mortality, relatively high take up of incapacity benefits among the working age population, and a relatively high number of children and young people with multiple disabilities.

Housing

Housing need, in terms of quality, quantity and affordability, is **one of the most significant issues in the Borough**. In 2004, c.25% of households lived in unsuitable housing, and the needs of c.7,000 could not be met within current conditions. c.30% of households are registered as overcrowded and demand for housing significantly exceeds supply, but housing affordability is relatively low and there is a lack of larger sized properties to meet the needs of the population. Housing is therefore one of the key drivers for change and regeneration in the Borough, and a target has been set of 43,000 new homes by 2025.

Employment

Tower Hamlets now has the largest financial services district outside the City of London (located at Canary Wharf), and the **4th highest density of jobs of all the London Boroughs**. Despite this, Tower Hamlets has the **lowest employment rate** (c. 60% vs. 70% for London as a whole) and the highest proportion of economically inactive residents in the country (c. 35%) – local skills are not fully aligned with the available jobs. There are now twice as many jobs in Tower Hamlets as there are economically active residents. Improving employment, and improving accessibility of Borough residents to Borough job opportunities is therefore a key focus for regeneration in the Borough.

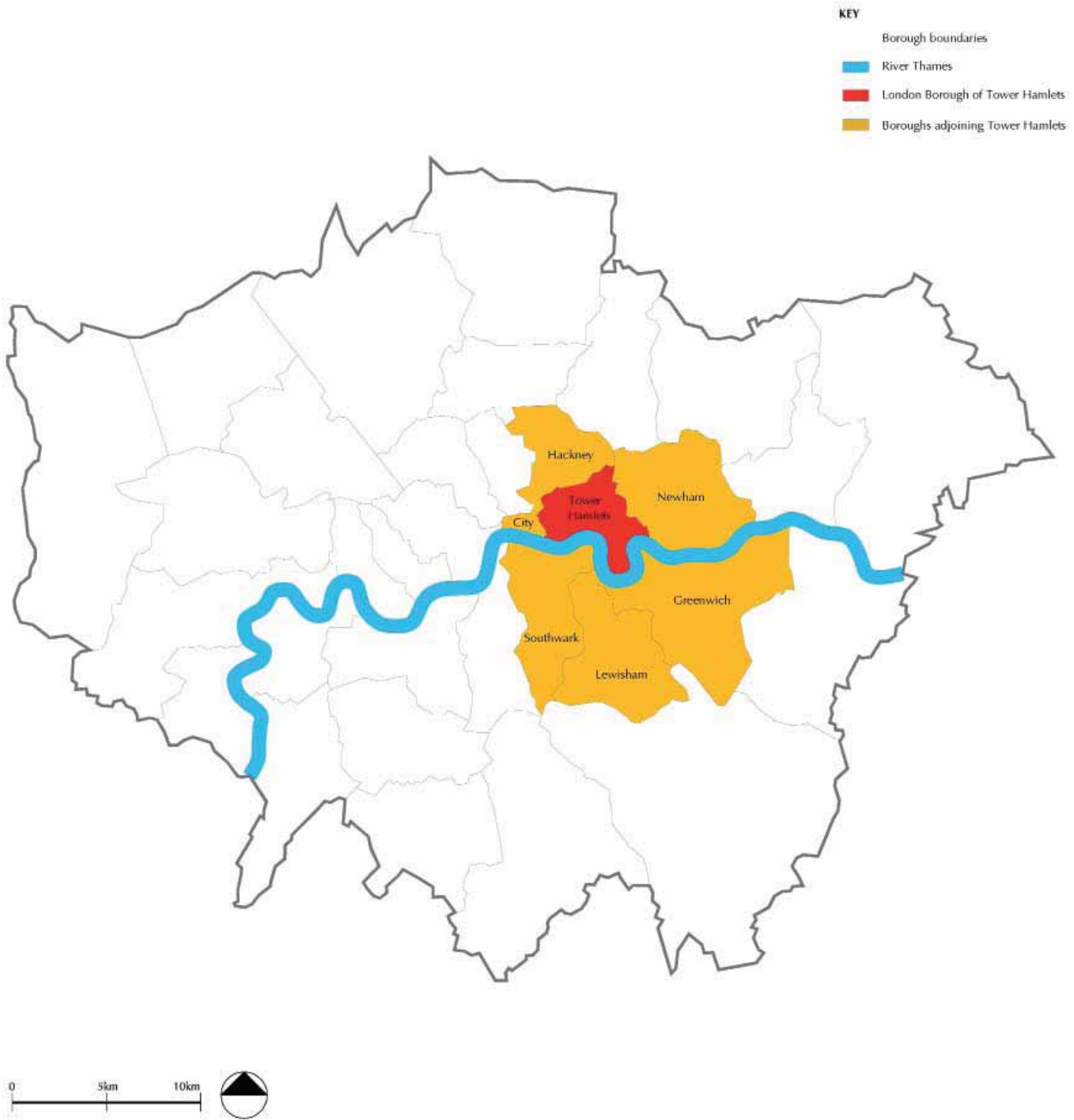


FIGURE 2
Tower Hamlets in Context

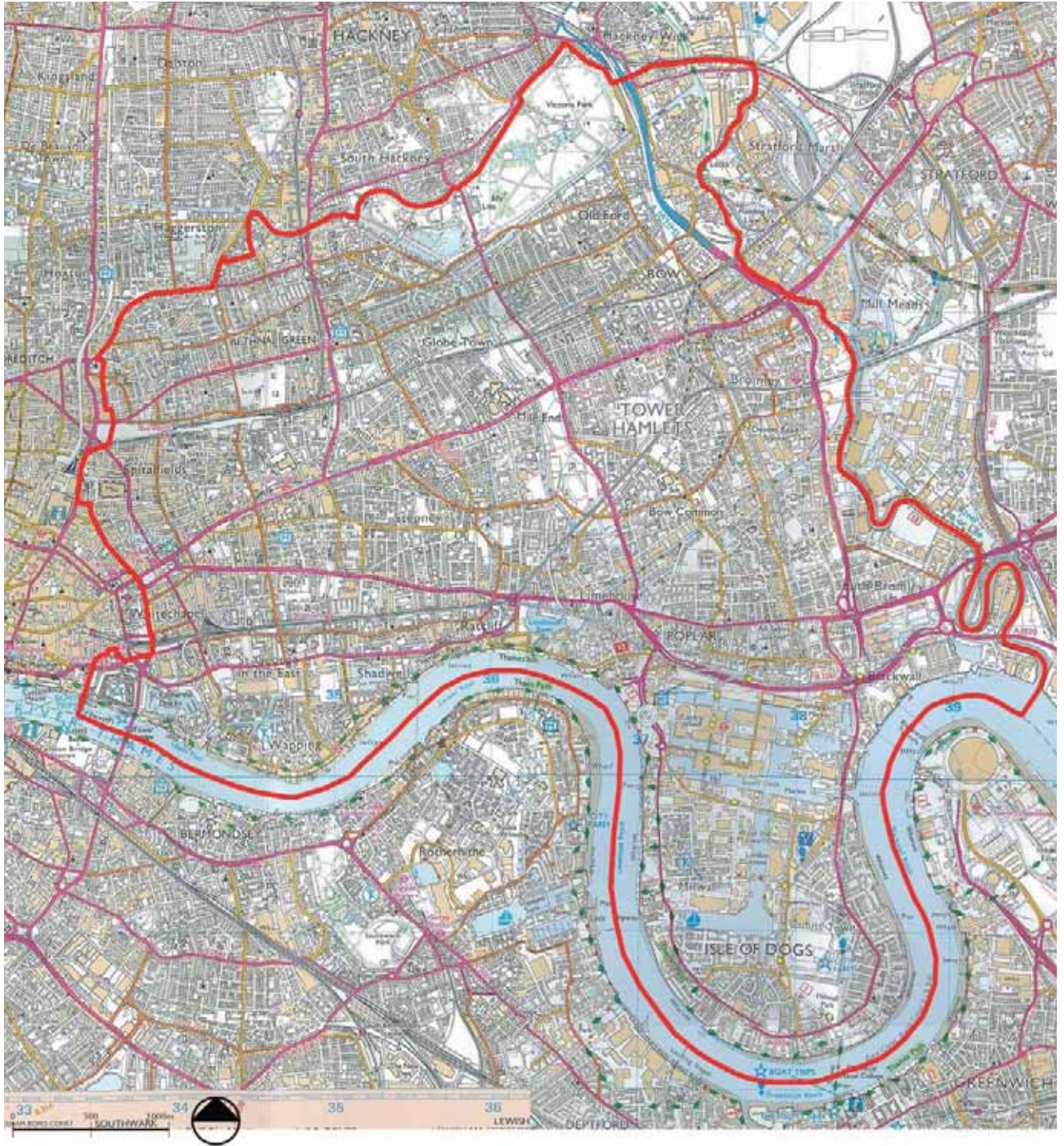


FIGURE 3

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets

LIMEHOUSE
WHARF

3

HISTORY OF TOWER HAMLETS



LIMEHOUSE
WHARF

HISTORY OF TOWER HAMLETS

Overview and Key Messages



Section 3 provides an overview of the history of Tower Hamlets, from prehistory to the present day. It identifies the key themes that have had a strong influence on the development of the Borough, and on the heritage that remains today. They provide the foundation of Tower Hamlets' distinctive character, and make a significant contribution to the Borough's unique sense of place and identity. These themes inform the priorities for what needs to be protected and enhanced through the Conservation Strategy. They also identify opportunities for alignment with the broader strategic priorities of the Borough.



Tower Hamlets has a long history of maritime and trade activity, migration and change. Shipbuilding was established here by the late 14th century, and by the 19th century the docks were of international importance. The 14th century also saw the first wave of immigration, with the Flemings who introduced hops into the area, leading to the development of the brewing industry. There have been a number of successive waves of immigration since then, including the Huguenots, the Jewish community and, most recently, arrivals from Bangladesh in the mid 20th century. Throughout these developments the Borough has been characterised by a dynamic built environment. There has been a tradition of adaptive re-use, such as at the Old Truman Brewery site, and there has also been change and redevelopment of larger areas. This is particularly well exemplified with the successful regeneration at Canary Wharf, and the establishment of the internationally competitive financial district there.



The themes of maritime and trade activity, and of immigration were critical to the character and evolution of the Borough, and it is important that the heritage associated with these is protected and enhanced if Tower Hamlets is to retain its unique sense of place and identity. The Borough is also characterised by a dynamic built environment and a tradition of adaptive re-use. Ongoing regeneration and development of the Borough, while being aligned with the pattern of its historical development, also potentially increases pressure on the very remains of this tradition, and a balance will therefore need to be found to accommodate both priorities. The tradition of adaptive re-use could be one solution to this, where the Borough's social and economic needs are delivered through existing heritage stock.

Prehistory, Roman and Mediaeval Times

Tower Hamlets is rich in prehistory. The earliest known Londoner was buried in Blackwall approximately 5,000 years ago, and later prehistoric activity took place at several sites in the Borough, including at Old Ford, Wapping and the Isle of Dogs.

The earliest known Londoner was buried in Blackwall approximately 5,000 years ago.

In Roman times, Tower Hamlets lay largely to the east of the Roman city of Londinium. Two main roads ran through the Borough from the city and, as was typical of the period, burial of the dead took place outside the city walls, with cemeteries at Spitalfields and to the south of Aldgate High Street. At that time the majority of the area would have been farmland or marshland grazing to provide food for the city's large population.

Following his victory at the Battle of Hastings (1066), William the Conqueror constructed 'The White Tower' as a firm base from which to secure and maintain the city of London. He chose the site for his castle within the ready-made defences of the existing Roman walls at the south-eastern corner of the city. In 1110, another major route east from the city was developed, and pottery and bell-founding industries were established.

In general, however, settlement in the Tower Hamlets area was very light before 1300, although early settlements are known in the vicinity of St Dunstan's, Stepney and also at Bethnal Green. Flooding continued to be a problem across much of the Borough, although embanking and drainage had created much arable land by the early 13th century. The medieval economy across the majority of the Borough was essentially rural, with a settlement pattern of

isolated farms with the beginning of ribbon development along the main routes.

Industry, Immigration and Development

The pressure of population growth in the city, and the increasing restrictions on industry and immigrants within the city walls led to the development of the area immediately outside the walls for industry and crafts. The area saw its first wave of immigrants with the Flemings, who introduced hops in the 14th century, leading to the development of the brewing industry here.

The Flemings were among the first of several waves of immigrants.

There was already a thriving suburb at Whitechapel in the 14th century, and hamlets with an industrial/commercial character developed, such as Ratcliff with its shipbuilding, and Limehouse, named after the lime kilns which processed chalk. By the mid 14th century there were small settlements at Mile End, Old Ford, Marsh (Isle of Dogs) and Poplar, though the majority of the population lived adjacent to either the city, the River Thames or the River Lea.

There was further rapid expansion in the south-west of the Borough from the 16th century, but despite this, the majority of the Borough was noted in the 16th century as a place of fresh air and rural peace, and was favoured as a location for the country houses of the wealthy. Improved drainage initiatives in the 16th century, using the skills of the immigrant Dutch engineers, allowed larger areas to become useable pasture.

Maritime Trade and Waterfront Development

Although shipbuilding had been established at Ratcliff by the late 14th century, it was not

until the mid 15th century that the waterfront to the east of the city really developed. The wharves and slipways continued to develop along the riverside, until by the 16th century the river frontage was completely filled. The increasing numbers of workers employed in the river trade led to the development of large areas of tenement housing in the hinterland of the wharves, accessed by a network of lanes, alleys and courtyards (such as at Wapping High Street).

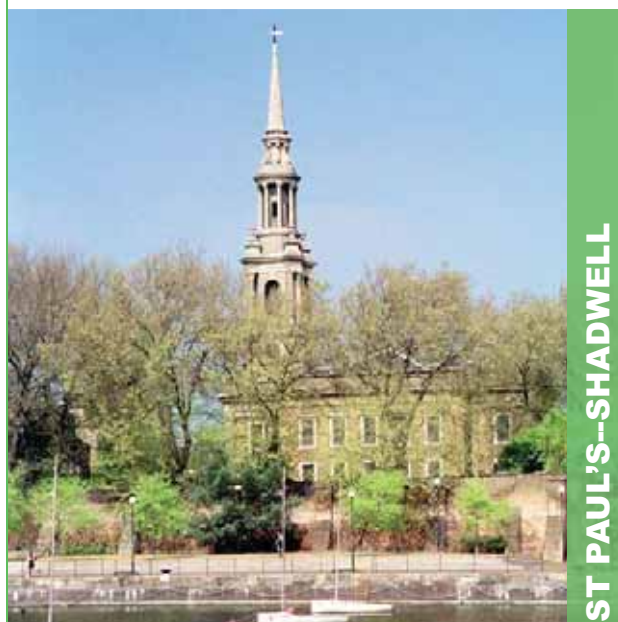
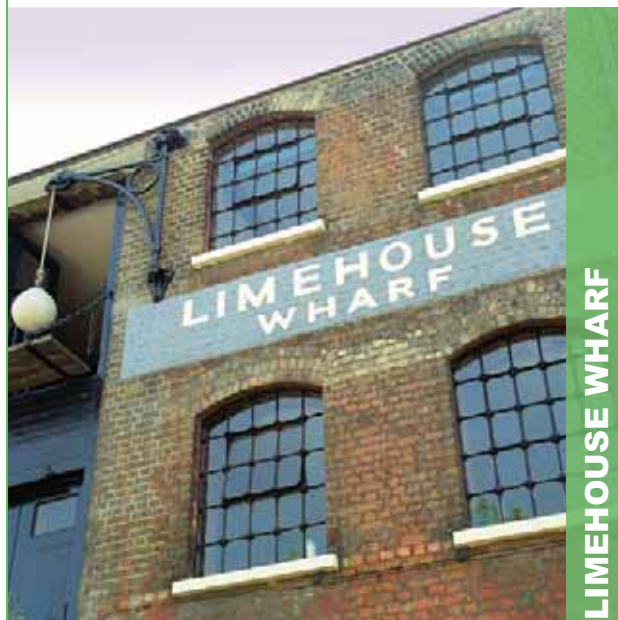
The East India Company constructed the Blackwall Yard in 1614, which became the largest private shipyard in the country, and attracted a number of associated industries and services in the hinterland to the north. This hinterland gradually became developed, with large villages supporting the maritime trade.

The East India Company constructed the Blackwall Yard in 1614, which became the largest private shipyard in the country.

The Spread of People and Industry

The spread of industry from the city increased following the break up of monastic property after the Dissolution, and was fuelled by London's rapidly rising population, which nearly trebled in the 17th century. This period also saw the arrival of the Huguenots, who established themselves in the Spitalfields area, where they introduced the silk-weaving that was to become an important industry. This period also saw the beginning of Brick Lane's important brewing industry.

The increasing affluence of the city brought people from Essex and Suffolk, and by the end of the 17th century 22% of London's population lived to the east of the city. Despite this, however, large areas of the Borough remained rural, and continued to be used as a retreat by the wealthy.



Beyond the city fringes, development continued in the form of the enlargement of the hamlets, ribbon development along the main routes, and increasing development behind this. In 1720, a total of 21 hamlets were recorded within what is now the modern Borough. New churches were constructed to serve the rising population, including 3 by the architect Nicholas Hawksmoor (see Section 4).

Radical Changes to the Borough's Character

It was during the later 18th and 19th centuries, however, that the increasing pace of development radically changed the character of the Borough. The general trend was one of the spread of urbanisation eastwards, and the displacement of the wealthy to the rural peace of the outer suburbs.

The first major development of the 19th century, which was to have a momentous impact on the Borough as a whole, was the construction of the new enclosed dock basins with large associated warehouses (including for example the internationally important West India Docks and the St Katharine Docks), to prevent delays in loading and unloading of cargoes and the associated risk of theft. These necessitated the clearance of considerable areas of pre-existing building and the displacement of significant numbers of people, which led to severe overcrowding in neighbouring areas and the development of unsanitary housing conditions.

Construction of the new enclosed dock basins, such as the internationally important West India Docks, had a momentous impact on the Borough.

The construction in 1812 of the Regent's Canal and its associated dock (now Limehouse Basin) gave access to the entire



ST KATHARINE DOCKS



POPLAR



WEST INDIA DOCKS

country's canal network, and trade through the docks soared. The riverside wharves saw a huge boom in their level of trade and activity in the later 19th century, which led to the construction of huge warehouses along the waterfront, especially at Wapping. This redevelopment of the riverside largely swept away the earlier, tighter urban grain of narrow wharves and alleys. Massive warehouses were also built along the main arterial roads, and adjacent to the railways.

Employment in the docks and associated trades also increased significantly, putting pressure on available housing, and leading to the construction of more houses. Furthermore, these houses needed to be located close to the docks given the lack of mass transport. The population was experiencing significant overcrowding and squalor in the urban areas and the docks, and the decline in the weaving industry led to significant poverty issues in the established urban areas.

The London County Council and the three metropolitan Boroughs of the area took responsibility for social housing in the Borough, and a programme of wholesale slum clearance began. The establishment of these new local authorities also led to a phase of civic buildings including town halls (such as Bethnal Green in 1909), municipal baths (such as Poplar Baths), and libraries.

Elsewhere, other developments were taking place which would also have an impact on the built environment. Several new large suburban cemeteries and noxious industries (including brewing, soap works and potash works) were built in the east of the Borough. The eastern half of the Borough, including the Isle of Dogs, had remained largely undeveloped by the mid 19th century other than along the main arterial routes, where planned estates had recently been built. However, this was set to change rapidly.

The mid century development of passenger railways into Fenchurch Street provided mass transport for workers in the city, and allowed them to live further out than was previously possible. This provided a massive

stimulus to housing development, and by the end of the century the urbanisation of the Borough was largely complete.

The population hit a peak at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, with trade through the docks at a high, industry along the river Lea continuing to develop, and a large portion of the population of Bethnal Green, in particular the large Jewish community, still employed in the clothing and footwear trades. As the increasingly middle class Jewish community moved out in the mid 20th century, they were replaced by the next major wave of immigration - from Bangladesh.

Decline and Regeneration

However, the area's fortunes started to change significantly, such that by 1930 it was the capital's poorest place. Bombing during World War Two aimed at the destruction of the docks had a catastrophic impact, and led to the need for an accelerated housing programme, with the Borough receiving every type of development in post-war social housing leaving a legacy of much innovative architecture. Almost half of the houses in the Borough were destroyed or damaged, leading to a mass exodus from the Borough. This left a population of only 45,000 in the 1960s, compared to 130,000 in 1901.

By 1930 this was the capital's poorest Borough.

The decline of the docks began with the development of part of the East India Docks as Brunswick power station in 1946. The increasing mechanisation of cargo-handling and the lack of need for large warehouses meant that these early 19th century facilities were largely obsolete. While others were modernised and continued to operate for a while, they were eventually overtaken by the container revolution, with Felixstowe, Harwich and Tilbury taking their trade. As a result, the 1960s saw the closure of East India, St Katharine and London Docks.

The riverside warehouses of Wapping and Limehouse became redundant, and the associated industries which had located here also folded, leaving a vast area of deserted or demolished buildings.

The London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) was created in 1981 to address the problems of regenerating these vast redundant areas. Early redevelopment was generally focused around small scale industrial and business estates, but this changed in the later 1980s with the successful development of Canary Wharf and its large post-modern commercial architecture – today an internationally competitive financial district.

There has been an incredible surge in population in the Borough since the 1960s, and current projections suggest that the population could increase to as much as 300,000 by 2025. Regeneration is ongoing in the Borough, with the development of 43,000 new houses by 2025, with significant investment in transport that will improve accessibility to the central and eastern parts of the Borough, to the City fringe and Isle of Dogs, and with the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games - the single largest regeneration project in Europe and the UK.

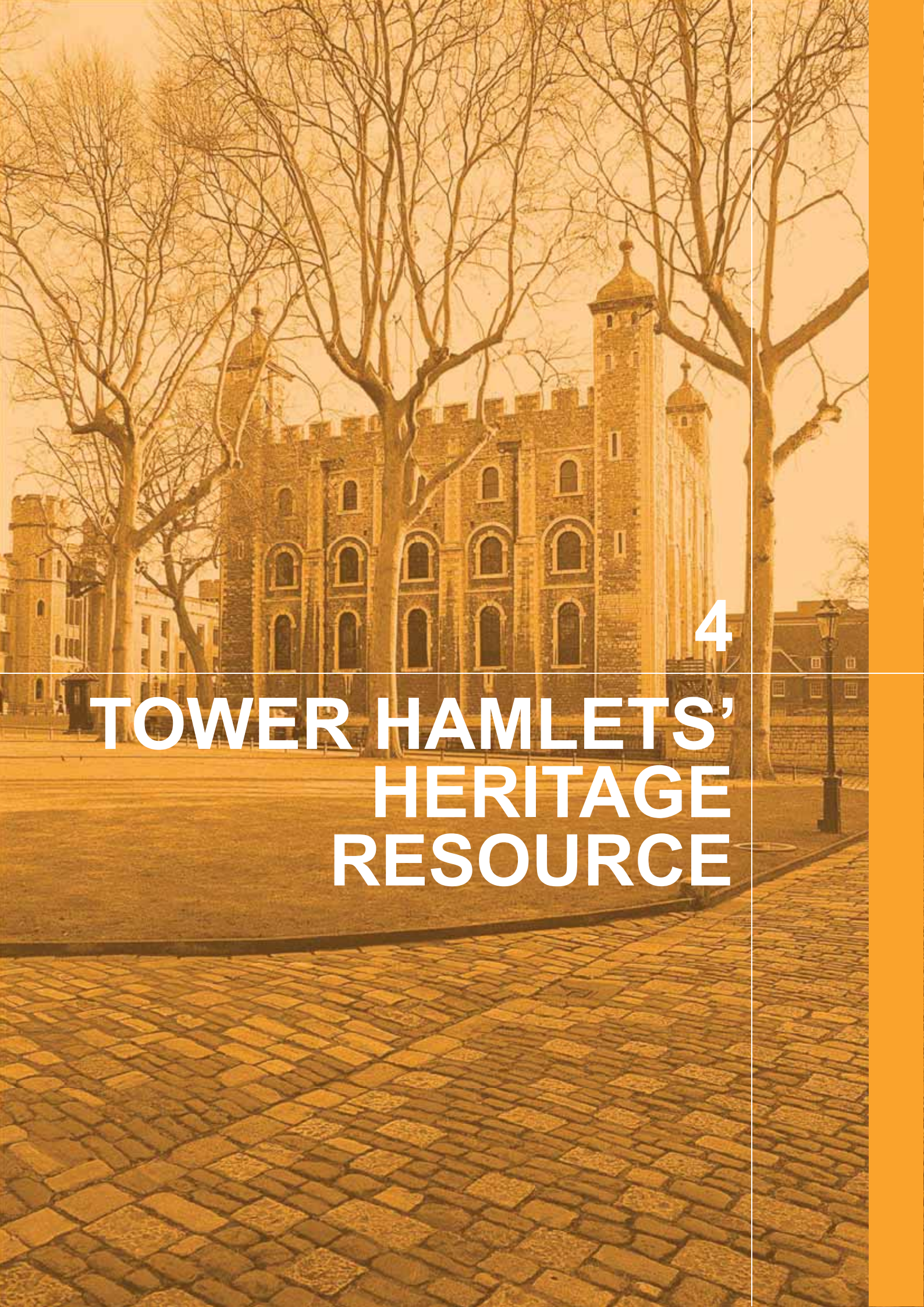
The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games – the single largest regeneration project in Europe.



CANARY WHARF



REGENT'S CANAL



4

TOWER HAMLETS' HERITAGE RESOURCE



TOWER HAMLETS' HERITAGE RESOURCE

Overview and Key Messages



Section 4 provides an overview of the range of heritage resource that can be found in Tower Hamlets today, as a result of the historic development described in Section 3. This defines the scope of what the Conservation Strategy is seeking to protect and enhance, and also informs some of the challenges that the Conservation Strategy seeks to address (see Section 7).



Tower Hamlets has a wealth of heritage, of local, national and international importance - the Borough contains all or part of 50% of the World Heritage Sites in London, and in comparison to averages across the London Boroughs, it has a relatively high proportion of Scheduled Monuments, Grade II listed buildings and Conservation Areas. This heritage is also characterised by enormous diversity and variety (see Figure 4), covering all aspects of the historic environment (from visible historic buildings/structures to buried archaeology, from parks and open spaces to key views), as well as heritage collections and intangible heritage. It also focuses around a number of uses and purposes – residential and religious; maritime, trade and industrial; public (including town halls) and educational (including schools, libraries and learning centres); and recreation and leisure (such as music halls and festivals, public houses and pie and mash shops). Of particular importance to the area is its industrial heritage and industrial archaeology as well as much innovative post-war housing.



The very richness of the heritage resource at Tower Hamlets does, however, present its own challenges. It drives a need to prioritise, and to use human and financial resources as effectively as possible to maximise the protection and enhancement of that heritage.

World Heritage Sites

Tower Hamlets contains the Tower of London World Heritage Site (see Figure 5). This monument retains buildings of many periods, dating back to the White Tower of 1078. It is internationally important for a number of reasons: its landmark location to both protect and control the City of London; as a symbol of Norman power; as an outstanding example of late 11th century innovative Norman military architecture; as a model example of a mediaeval fortress palace; for its association with state institutions; and for being the setting for key historical events in European history. It is also home of the Crown Jewels.

In addition to the Tower of London, the Borough also contains the buffer zone of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site, although the World Heritage Site itself lies outside the boundary of the Borough. The buffer zone includes the Island Gardens on the Isle of Dogs, which is considered to have unrivalled views of the Greenwich site from across the river.

Archaeology

Tower Hamlets is rich in prehistoric archaeology. The earliest known Londoner was buried in Blackwall approximately

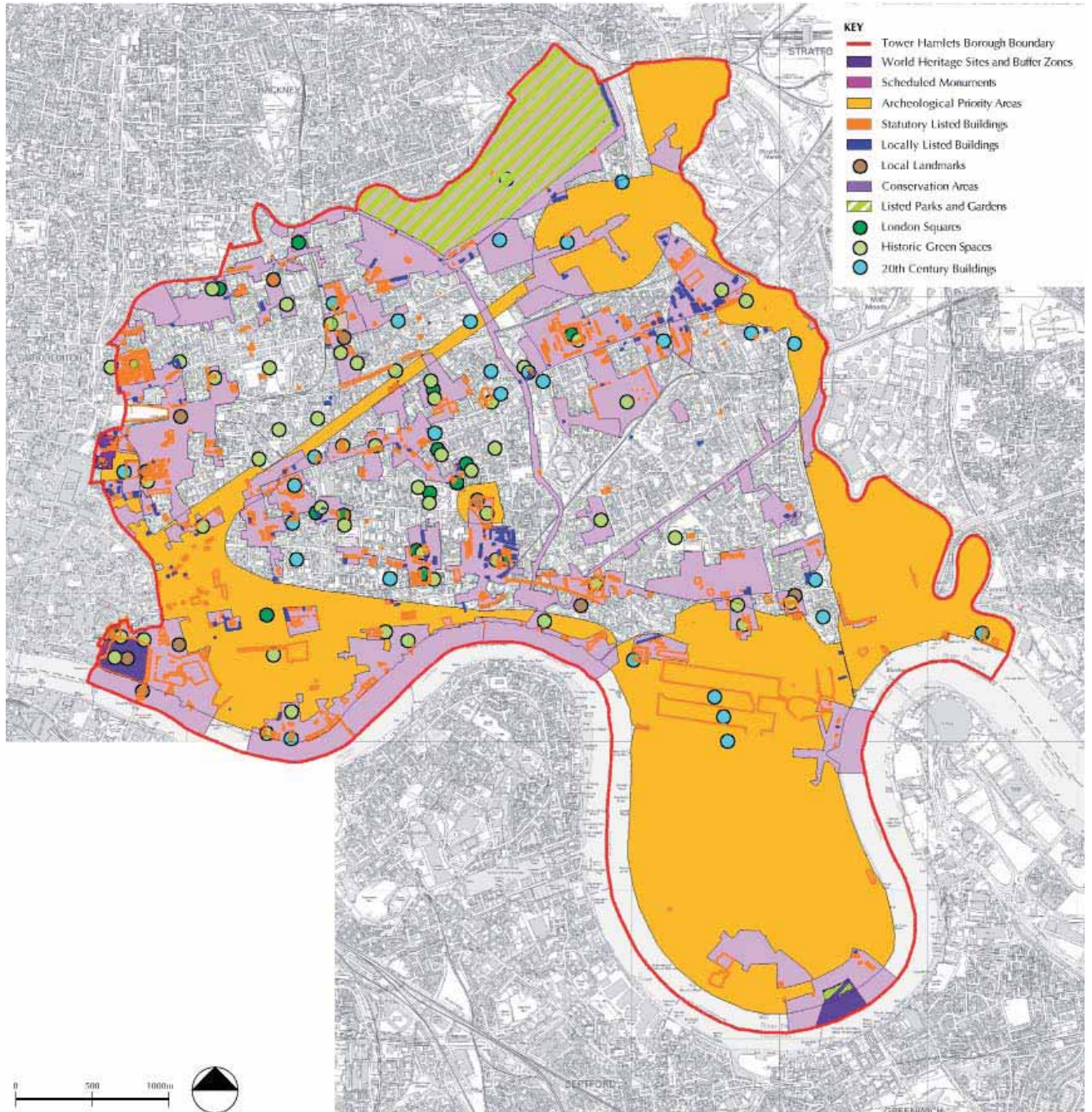


FIGURE 4
The Heritage Resource

5,000 years ago, and other evidence for later prehistoric activity has been found on several sites in the Borough, including at Old Ford, Wapping and on the Isle of Dogs, where a noteworthy Bronze Age timber structure was found. There are also important palaeoenvironmental remains in the deep alluvial deposits associated with the River Thames and Lea floodplain, which can reveal evidence of changing environmental conditions from prehistory through to the recent past.

The most impressive Roman remains found to-date in East London are the large baths recently excavated at Shadwell, together with a possible mausoleum and cemetery. A section of the Roman city wall at Tower Hill, and a section of 4th century riverside wall within the precinct of the Tower of London are the only extant Roman features of the Borough today.

Undesignated archaeology from the Saxon, early mediaeval and mediaeval periods can also be found in the Borough. There was a Saxon forerunner of St Dunstons church at Stepney, and documentary sources and excavations reveal a number of buildings pre-dating the 12th century, including: St Katharine's-by-the-Tower, swept away by the construction of St Katharine Docks; the Royal Mint to the east of the Tower, on the site of which the 14th century Cistercian abbey of St Mary Graces was built; and the Augustinian hospital of St Mary Spital to the east of Bishopsgate. Further establishments lay along the road to Colchester, including St Leonard's nunnery to the south of Bow Road, close to the crossing over the River Lea.

Other important archaeological remains include the survival of structures associated with the canals, railways, docks and other hydraulic power features -such as the Regent's Canal Dock Hydraulic Accumulator Tower.

Scheduled Monuments

Archaeological sites considered to be of national importance are sometimes included on a Schedule of Monuments (SMs) maintained by English Heritage. There are



TOWER OF LONDON

Tower of London – internationally important example of late 11th century innovative Norman military architecture and home of the Crown Jewels.



CHRIST CHURCH SPITALFIELDS

Nicholas Hawksmoor's Christ Church Spitalfields – a masterpiece of the English Baroque.

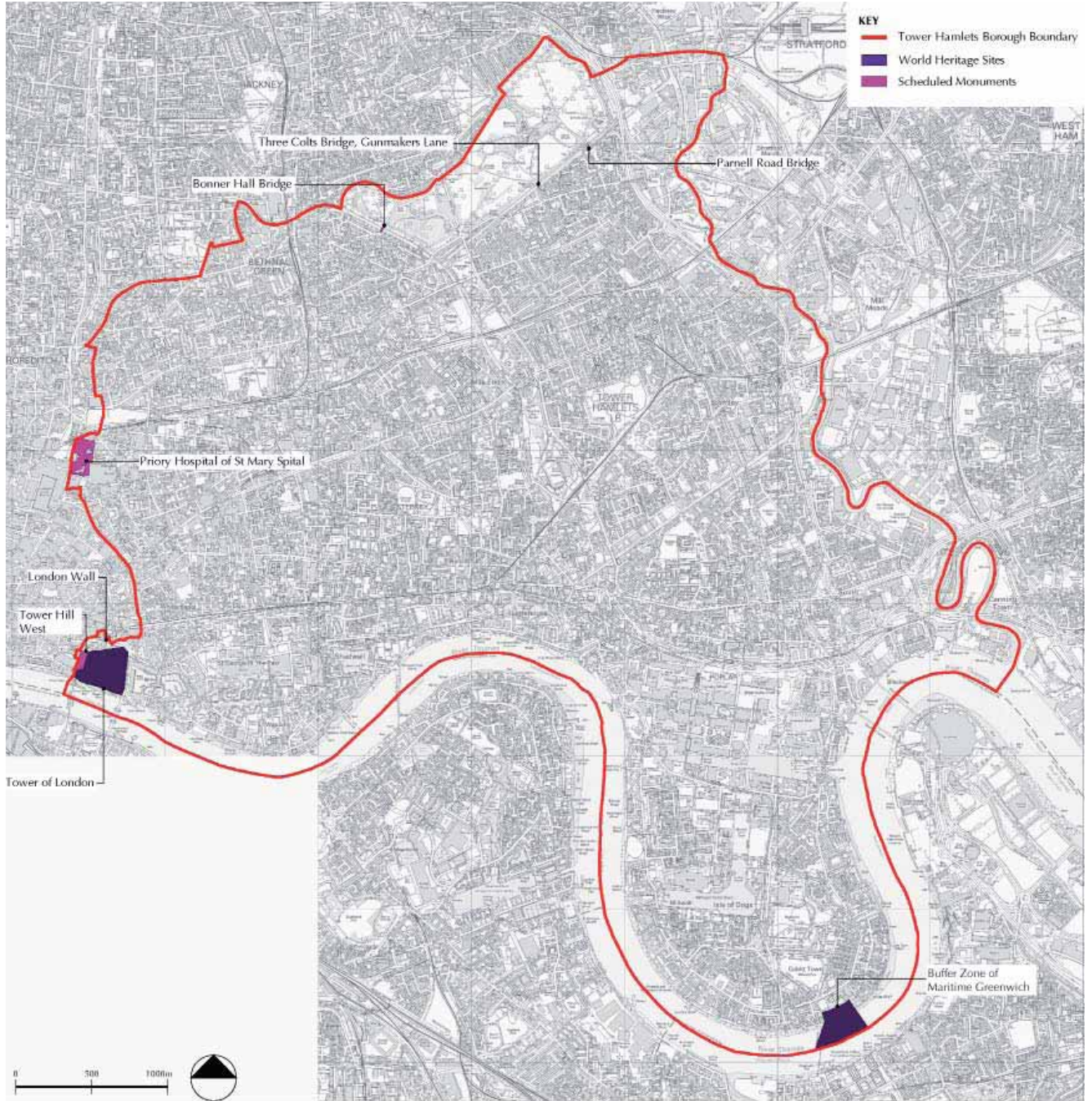


FIGURE 5

World Heritage Sites and Scheduled Monuments

151 SMs in London, of which 7 can be found in Tower Hamlets (see Figure 5):

- Tower of London;
- Tower Hill West – adjoining the Tower of London;
- London Wall – a section of the Roman city wall at Tower Hill;
- Priory and Hospital of St Mary Spital - a hospital of St Mary attached to a house of Augustinian canons founded in 1197, and refounded in 1235 on a larger scale;
- Three Colts Bridge – 1830 cast iron bridge over Hertford Union Canal;
- Parnell Road Bridge - 1830 cast iron girder and plate deck bridge over Hertford Union Canal;
- Bonner Hall Bridge – early Victorian bridge over the Regent’s Canal, in red brick with stone voussoirs, cast iron panels and granite setts.

Archaeological Priority Areas

A number of Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs), comprising either known or potential archaeological areas, have been identified in the Borough (see Figure 6). These include potential Roman burial grounds, Roman roads and the historic cores of Old Ford, Whitechapel, Stepney and Poplar. Significant archaeological remains can also be found outside of APAs.

Listed Buildings

Buildings considered to be of national importance are included on the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest compiled by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, and are graded according to their level of interest:

- Grade I buildings are of exceptional, often international interest, representing only 2.5% of all listed buildings;
- Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest; and
- Grade II listed buildings are nationally important and of special interest, representing 92% of the total.



JAMME MASJID MOSQUE



BROMLEY HALL



TOWER BRIDGE

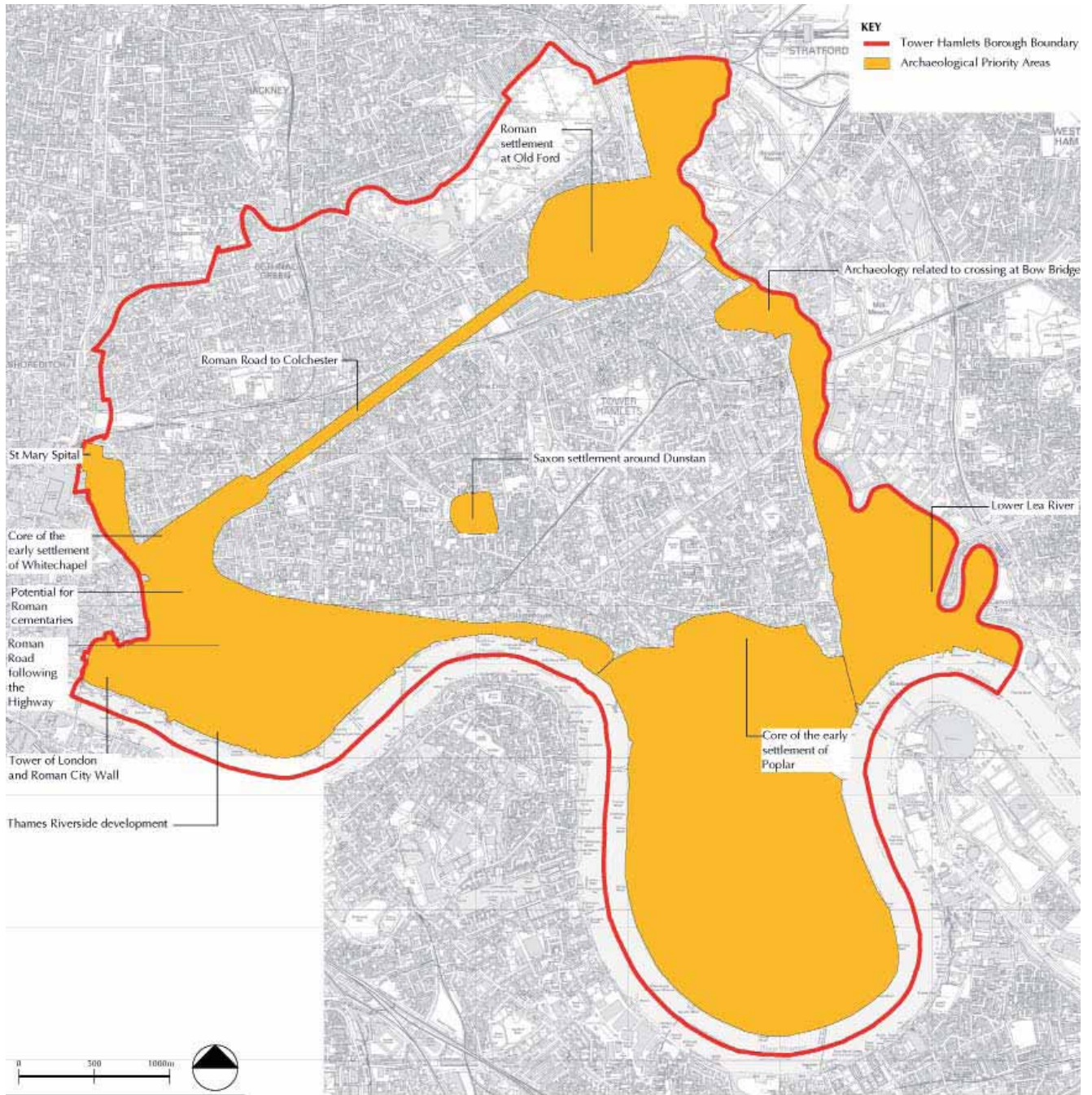


FIGURE 6
Archaeological Priority Areas

Tower Hamlets has almost 900 statutory listed buildings (see Figure 7), thought to represent approximately 2,000 individual buildings or structures (including graves). These include a diverse range of building types, dates and styles, from the medieval parish church of St Dunstan, which predates the Tower of London, Hawksmoor's Christ Church Spitalfields, a masterpiece of the English Baroque, through to Erno Goldfinger's 1960s Brutalist style Balfron Tower.

21 listed buildings are classified Grade I (and Ecclesiastical Grade A). These include:

- 6 churches - 3 early 18th century churches by Nicholas Hawksmoor (St Anne's Limehouse Parish Church, the Church of St George in the East and Christ Church Spitalfields – a masterpiece of the English Baroque), a 19th century church by Sir John Soane (Church of St John on Bethnal Green), the Saxon foundation of St Dunstan and All Saints, and the late 19th century Anglican church of St Peter in Wapping;
- 5 buildings and structures comprising parts of the Tower of London (the White Tower, the Middle Tower, outer curtain wall, the new armouries and the chapel of St Peter ad Vincula);
- 5 buildings associated with maritime and trade - warehouses, dock walls and the Blackwall Basin from the West India Docks, the Skin Floor from the former New Tobacco Warehouse and Trinity House;
- 3 structures associated with industrial heritage – Tower Bridge, Tower Bridge approach and a portion of the old London Wall; and
- Buildings and structures designed for commercial purpose (56 Artillery Lane) or public benefit (Trinity Green Almshouses and Chapel).

Grade B) listed buildings in the Borough (see Figure 8). These include the following:

- 12 religious buildings, one of which was originally built as a French Huguenot Church, converted to a methodist chapel, adapted to become the Spitalfields Great Synagogue, and is now the Jamme Masjid Mosque;
- 6 residential buildings, ranging from the early 16th century Bromley Hall to Sir Denys Lasdun's late 1950s 'cluster block' of Keeling House in Bethnal Green;
- 4 recreational buildings, including Wilton's Music Hall (the oldest music hall in London to survive in its original form), the Widow's Son Public House in Bow, the Whitechapel Art Gallery (an internationally acclaimed gallery) and the Bethnal Green Museum (re-launched as the Museum of Childhood in 1974);
- 4 industrial structures, including the 2 SM canal bridges, the Wapping Hydraulic Pumping Station and the Thames Tunnel at Wapping High Street;

Wilton's Music Hall – the oldest music hall in London to survive in its original form.

- 3 buildings or structures of public benefit, including the Merchant Seamen's Memorial, Baroness Burdett Coutts' Drinking Fountain and the Blind Beggar and his Dog bronze heraldic sculpture; and
- Buildings and structures associated with the Tower of London, with maritime and trade (including the headquarters of the Port of London Authority at 10 Trinity Square), with commerce (including the Royal Mint at Tower Hill and the Director's House in Truman Brewery) and education.

There are 37 Grade II* (and Ecclesiastical

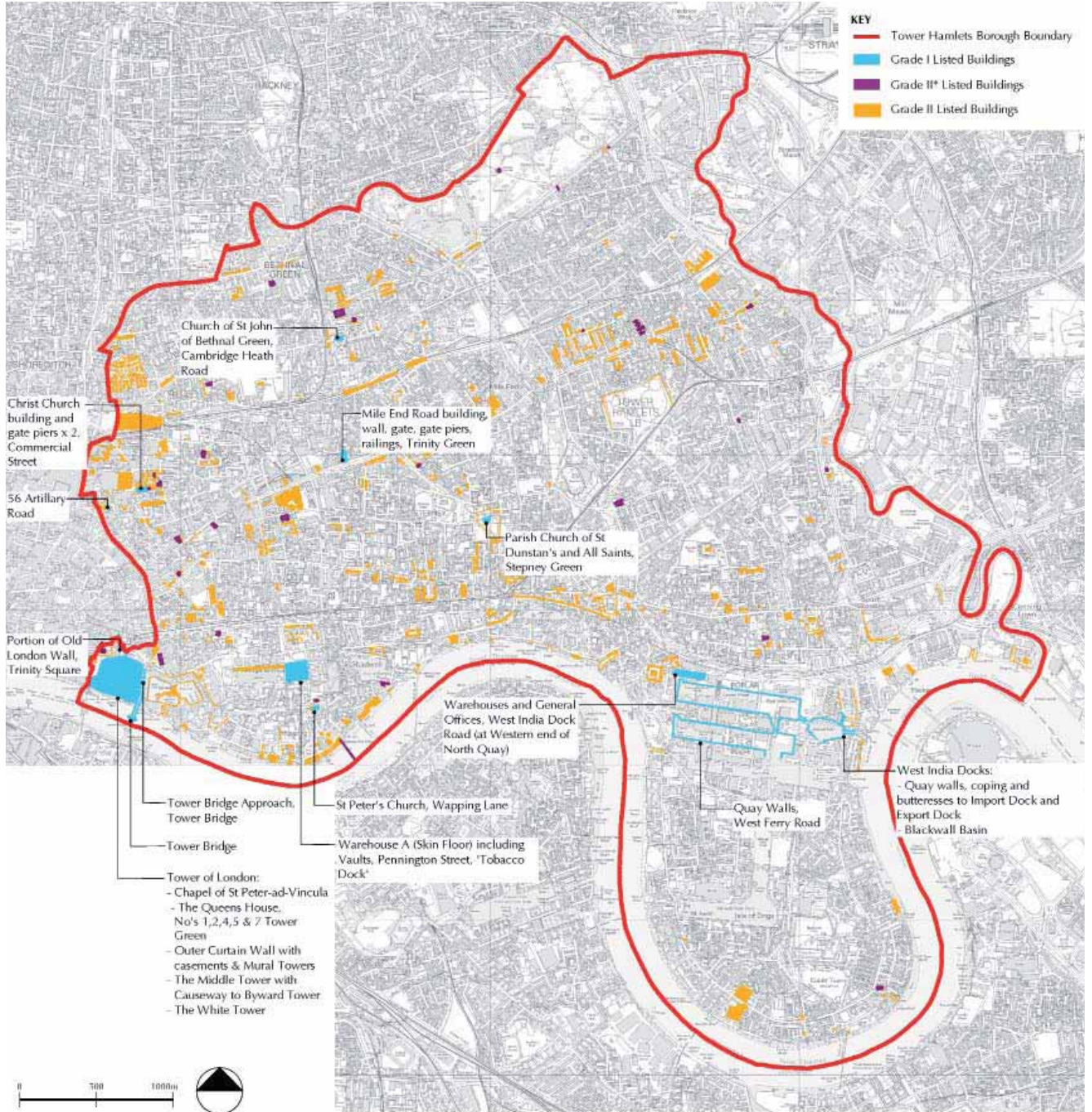


FIGURE 7
Statutory Listed Buildings Grade I

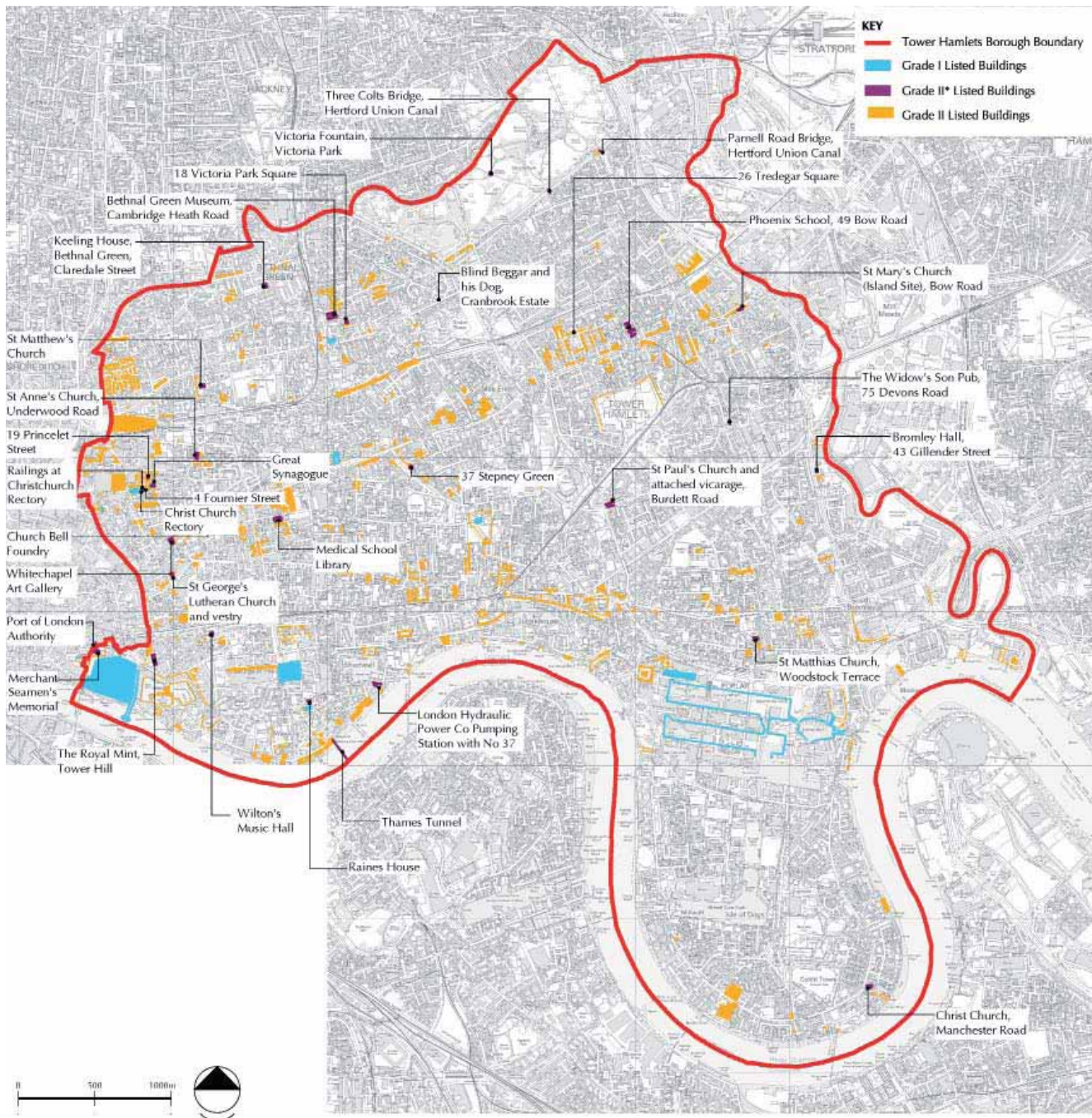


FIGURE 8
Statutory Listed Buildings Grade II*

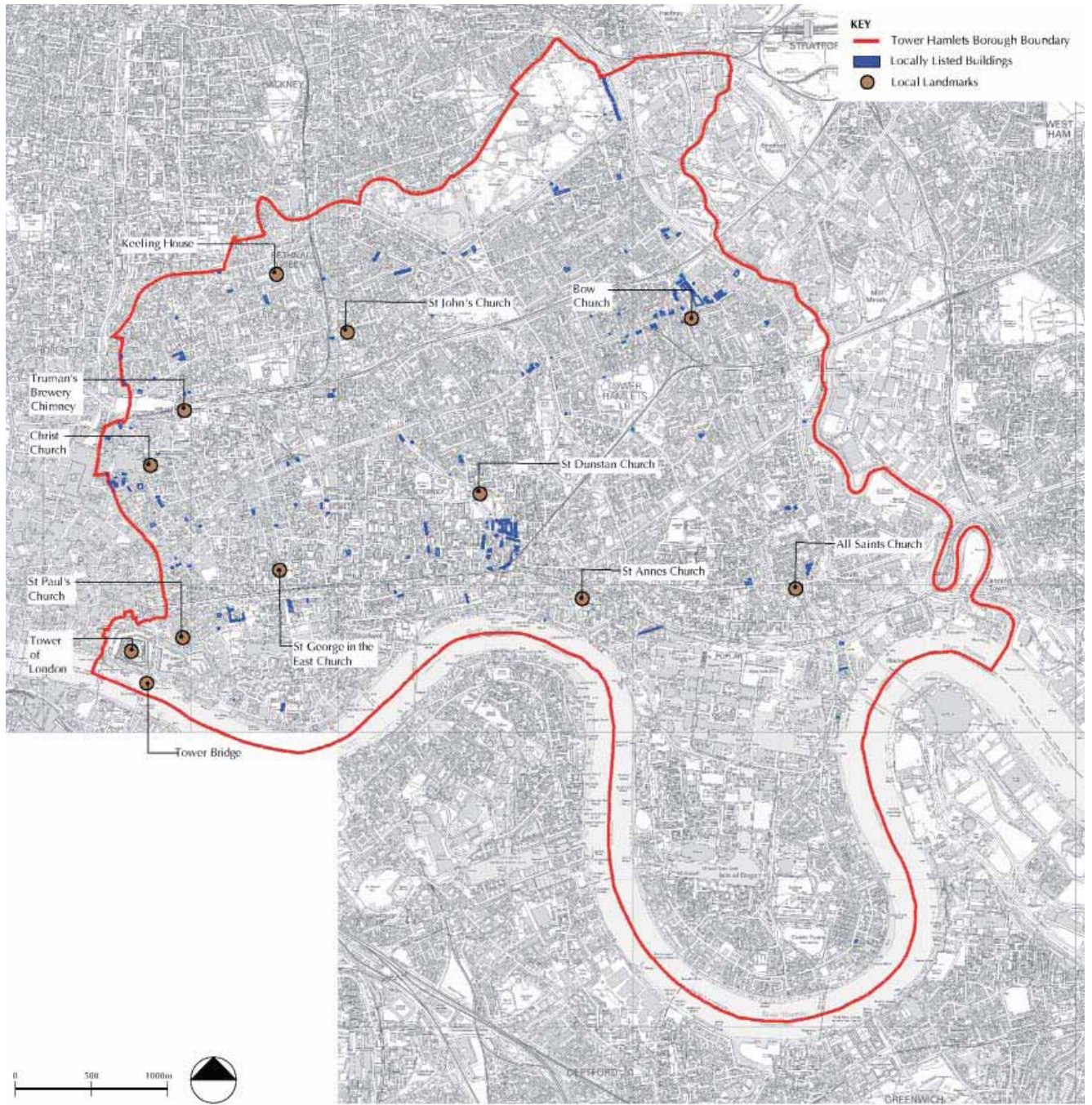


FIGURE 9
Locally Listed Buildings and Local Landmarks

There are 828 Grade II Listed (and Ecclesiastical Grade C) entries in the Borough of Tower Hamlets. In contrast to the higher grades of designation, over half of the Grade II entries relate to residential properties. Public buildings and features are the second highest category of type, with approximately 150 examples (including bollards, telephone boxes and statues).

The list comprises approximately 50 each of religious buildings/components, recreational buildings and educational buildings (including Toynbee Hall, one of the first university settlements in the world, where similar activities are still taking place in the original buildings to this day). There are less than 70 examples of building types associated with maritime, trade and industry, despite the considerable significance of these activities to the Borough and its development.

Locally Listed Buildings

The Council also keeps a list of buildings considered to be of local historic, architectural or environmental interest. These designations generally recognise buildings which are considered to make a positive contribution to the townscape character of the Conservation Area within which they are situated. There are approximately 400 locally listed buildings in Tower Hamlets (see Figure 9), including Wapping Sports Centre and the Royal Cricketers Public House (now flats). These are broadly spread across the Borough, with the exception of the Isle of Dogs. The List is publicly available, but not through the website.

Local Landmarks and Strategic Views

In addition to locally listed buildings, the Core Strategy Research Report identified a number of local landmarks (see Figure 9). These landmarks were considered valuable for their contribution to the local scene. They comprise prominent buildings of townscape merit which form local landmarks and skyline features, and which contribute

to the townscape and historic character of Tower Hamlets.

9 landmarks were identified under the Unitary Development Plan (saved policy DEV8):

- St Anne's Church, Limehouse;
- Tower of London;
- Tower Bridge and elevated walkway;
- All Saints Church, Poplar;
- St Paul's Church, Shadwell;
- St George in the East;
- Christchurch, Spitalfields;
- St Dunstan's Church, Stepney; and
- Truman's Brewery Chimney, Brick Lane.

A further 3 local landmarks were identified for protection through internal consultation with the Development, Design and Conservation Team in the development of the Local Development Framework (LDF) submission policies:

- Keeling House, Bethnal Green;
- St John's Church, Bethnal Green; and
- Bow Church, Bow.

Within the revised London View Management Framework (LVMF) associated with the 2009 London Plan, only one important view in the Borough has been identified for protection - the view from Island Gardens across the river towards the World Heritage Site at Greenwich. The LVMF does, however, also identify strategic views of the Borough, notably View 25 of the Tower of London from Queen's Walk, responsibility for the management of which rests primarily with Tower Hamlets.

Elsewhere in the Borough, views and vistas are considered in all Conservation Area Character Appraisals, and views from outside the designated areas which contribute to the special character of the area have been identified for protection under the designation – for example views of St Anne's Church in Limehouse. During the development of the LDF the Council identified views of four landmarks outside the Borough that they would seek to protect:

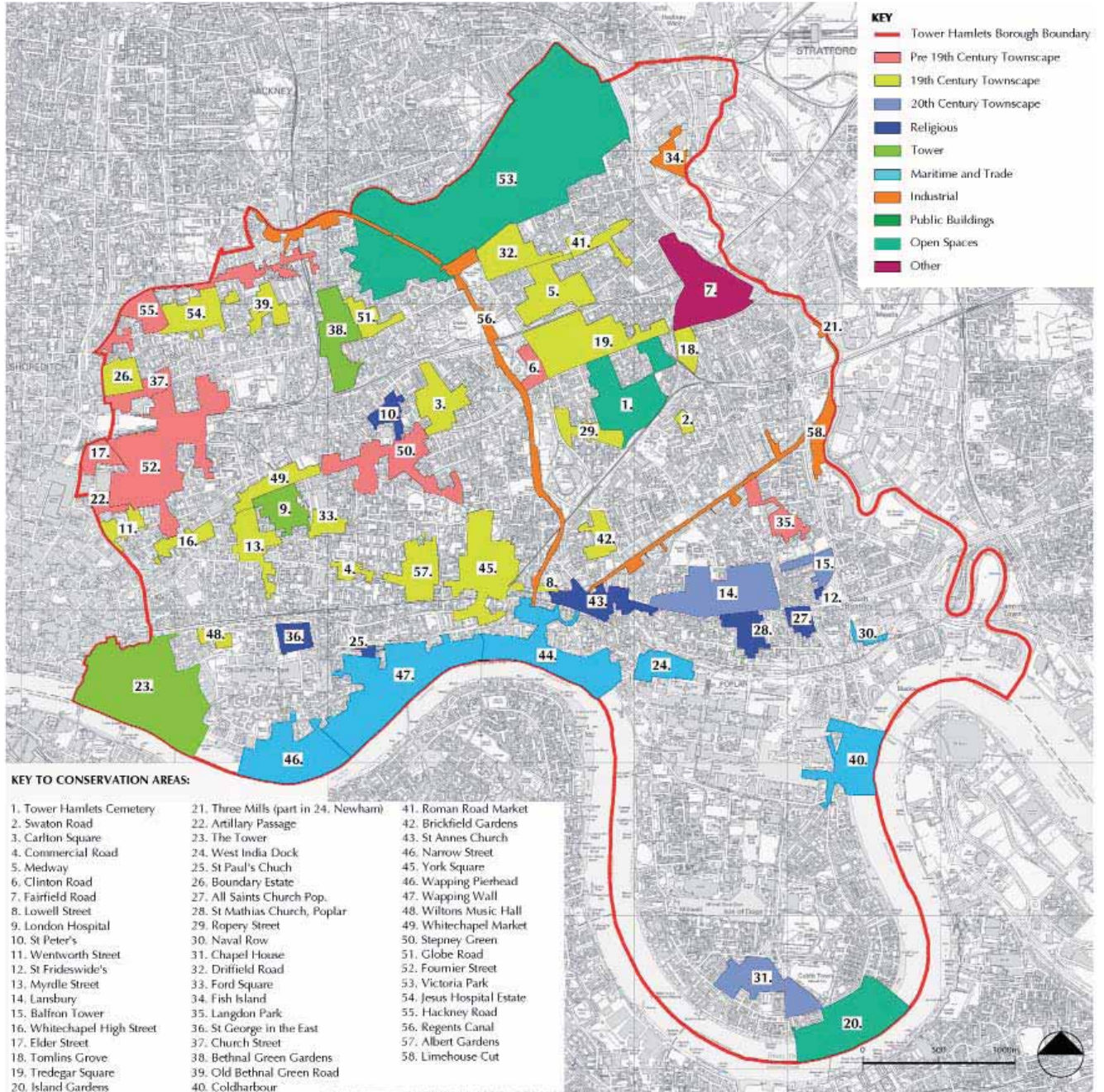


FIGURE 10
Conservation Areas

- National Westminster Tower in the City of London;
- St Paul's Church Deptford in Southwark;
- St Mary's Church, Rotherhithe in Southwark; and
- Royal Naval College in Greenwich.

In addition, the view from the General Wolfe Statue (in Greenwich) over the Isle of Dogs has also been identified as important.

Conservation Areas

Local Authorities have a duty, under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990 to designate 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Tower Hamlets has **58 Conservation Areas** covering c.30% of the total area of the Borough (see Figure 10).

The size and character of the Conservation Areas varies enormously. Some Conservation Areas are very small (such as St Paul's Shadwell which comprises only the church, its grounds and a small section of the quayside to Shadwell Basin), while others are very large (such as the extensive Victoria Park). Some have a uniform character (such as Tredegar Square), while others are more varied in character (such as Brick Lane and Fournier Street, which retains the intimate proportions of the old 17th century network of streets but also includes the most important early Georgian quarter in England). More than 30% of Conservation Areas have been designated for their essentially 19th century residential townscape character. Equally some very innovative modern buildings have been protected by Conservation Area status and Listings; for example at Balfron Tower by Erno Goldfinger and Keeling House by Denys Lasdun.

In addition to the Conservation Areas identified above, a further 2-3 areas, focused around the theme of water and water bodies (including canals), are being considered for designation in the near term.

Historic Landscapes, Gardens, Squares and Waterways

Four parks within the Borough are included on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest in England and Wales, and are therefore of national importance (see Figure 11):

- Victoria Park (Grade II*) – this was created by an Act of Parliament in 1841, following a 30,000 signature petition to Queen Victoria. The petition called for green space for healthful recreation within the overcrowded and unhealthy East End. The Council is currently applying to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for funding to restore the Park, under the Parks for People Scheme;
- Island Gardens (Grade II) - a strip of river frontage originally used for manufacturing and ship repair, this was saved by the Admiralty from redevelopment as part of the 1842 Cubitt Town, to preserve views across the river to what is now the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site;
- Boundary Gardens (Grade II) – this was laid out by LCC as the centrepiece of the Boundary Estate in the early 1900s; and
- Museum Gardens (Grade II) - part of Bethnal Green 'Poor's Land' Trust, this comprises a remnant of a former medieval green, and was opened to the public by the government in 1875. It was then joined with open space to the south that was acquired by LCC in 1895, and the combined space was called Bethnal Green Gardens.

The London Inventory of Historic Green Spaces lists **68 open spaces of historic interest** in the Borough (see Figure 11). Some comprise the remnants of medieval greens, such as Stepney Green Gardens and Mile End Waste, while other areas result from slum clearance or bomb damage, such as Weaver's Fields. A number of others, such as Poplar Recreation Ground and St James' Gardens, represent former burial

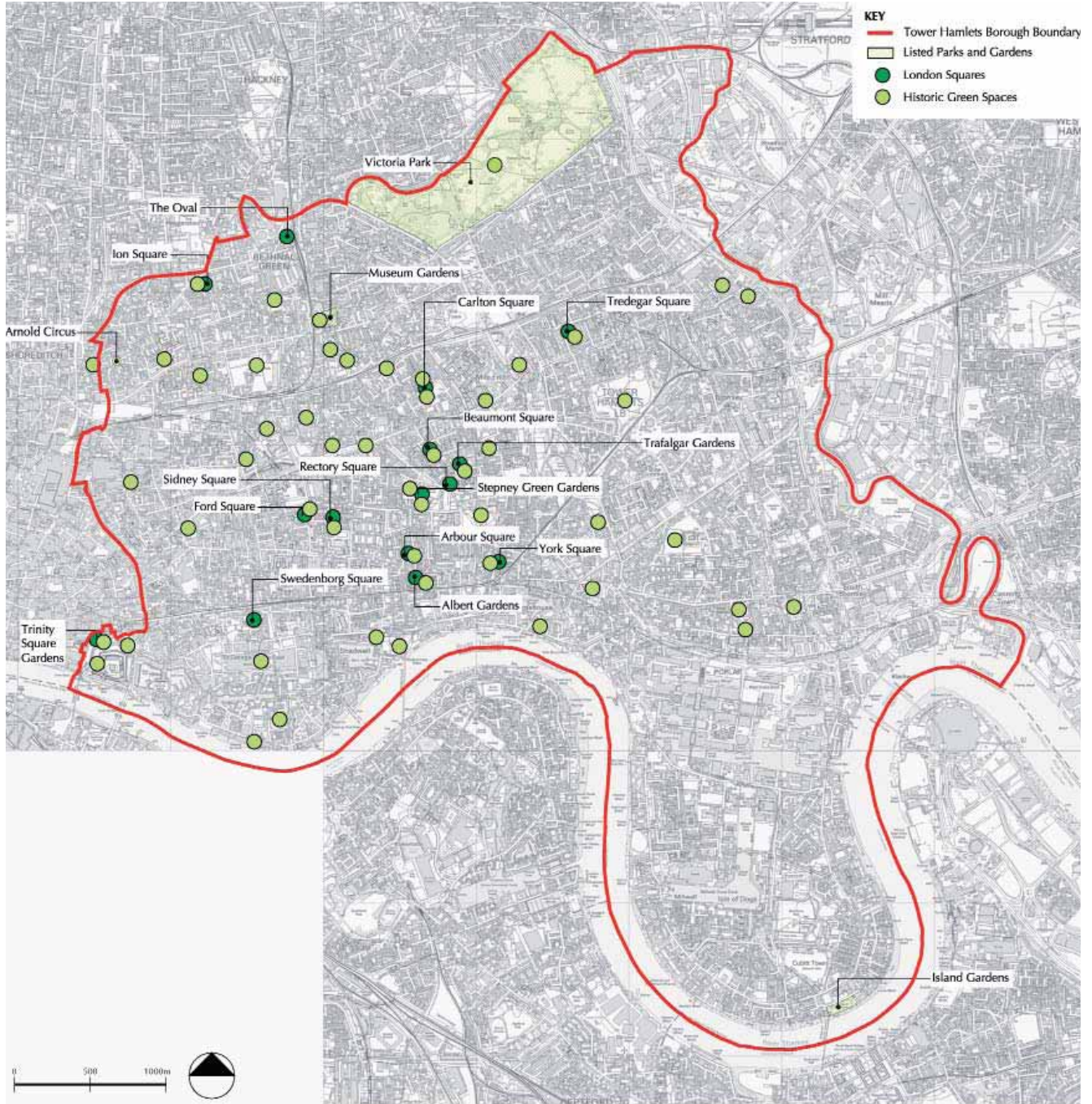


FIGURE 11
Historic Landscapes, Gardens and Squares

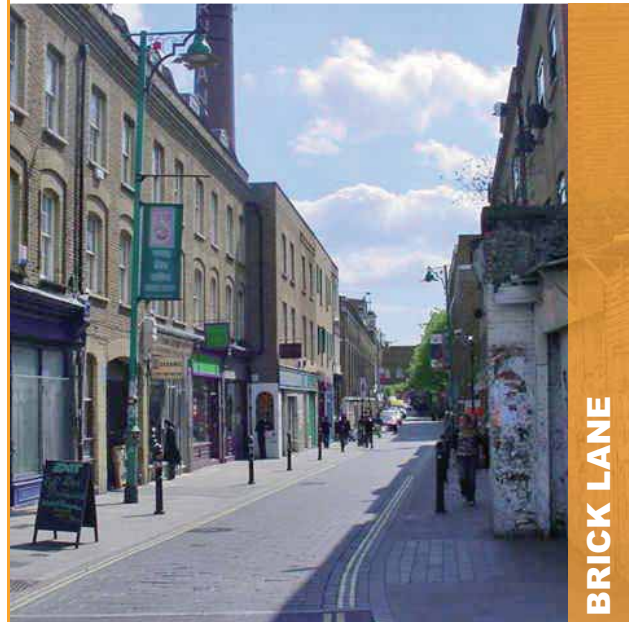
grounds which were opened as public gardens in the 19th century.

More formal urban squares, such as Carlton Square Gardens and Tredegar Square Gardens, were laid out in the 19th century in association with planned developments. Only a limited number of parks in the Borough were designed and created as such, but those that do exist include important examples such as Victoria Park and Island Gardens. The Borough also contains **16 squares that have been designated** according to the London Squares Preservation Act of 1931 (see Figure 11).

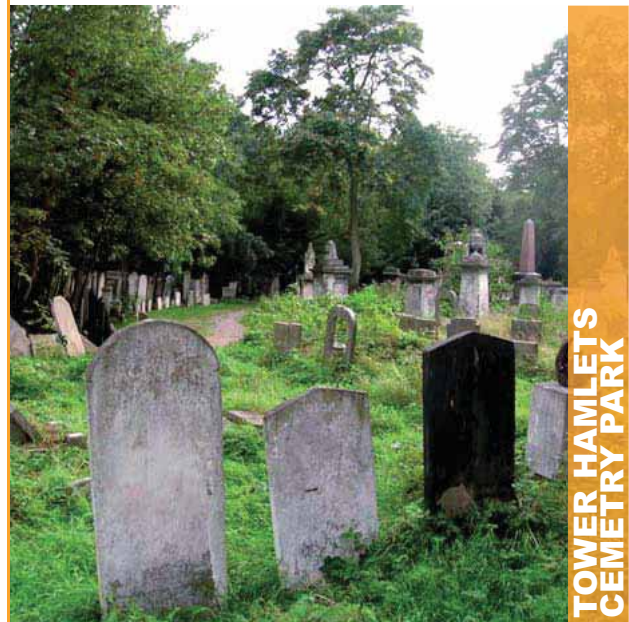
In addition to the resources identified above, Tower Hamlets also contains some important parks, gardens and open spaces that are not designated. For example, the Borough has two historic playgrounds – the Henry Moore Play sculpture in Dora Street and the playground at the foot of Balfron Towers (potentially designed by Goldfinger) – and a number of city farms. It also contains an important cemetery – the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, which was opened in 1841, and which is one of London's Magnificent Seven Cemeteries.

In addition to specific locations, it is also important to consider the broader historic landscapes that can be found in the Borough. Green infrastructure is a key component of the urban grain of the historic environment of the Borough. Street trees, for example, were an important component of planned developments, such as the Chapel House Estate at the south end of the Isle of Dogs. Tower Hamlets also contains numerous historic statues, street furniture (including street signs and street ironwork) and war memorials that form an important part of the urban landscape.

In addition to its green infrastructure, the Borough also has an important network of Blue Infrastructure in its canals and waterways. Some of these have already been designated including, for example, the Regent's Canal and Limehouse Cut, which are both Conservation Areas.



Brick Lane and Fournier Street Conservation Area – includes the most important early Georgian Quarter in England.



Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park – one of London's Magnificent Seven Cemeteries.

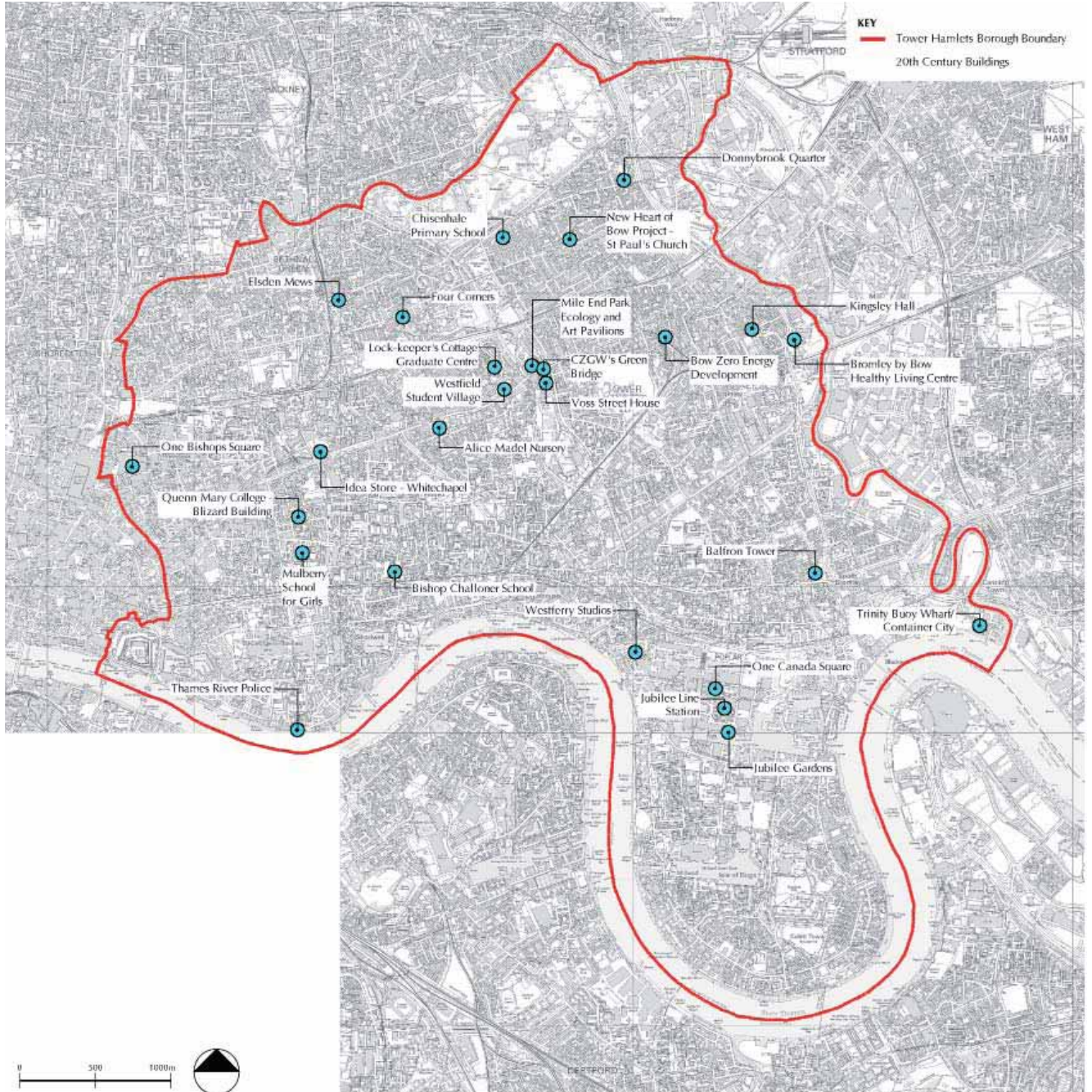


FIGURE 12
Modern Architecture

Modern Architecture

Parts of the Borough have also attracted some significant post-war developments often by important architects (see Figure 12). This particularly includes much innovative public housing developments. Many of these are not currently designated or afforded official recognition or protection, but they are an important part of the built environment and the distinctiveness of the Borough.

The modern buildings at Canary Wharf, including Cesar Pelli's iconic tower at One Canada Square, are an important group, and form a very significant component of the urban townscape – they are visible from many miles away in several directions, as well as from many places within the Borough.

Another group of high quality modern buildings are those on the Queen Mary University Campus at Mile End. These buildings, together with the Mile End Ecology Park and Pavilions and CZGW's 'Green Bridge' (which connects two areas of a green corridor over the busy Mile End Road), form an important focus of significant built heritage value.

In addition, the 'Idea Store' at Whitechapel, the new buildings and redevelopment at the London Hospital and the new Jubilee Line station at Canary Wharf are all high quality components of the Borough's modern heritage.

Intangible Heritage

UNESCO defines intangible heritage as: 'includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts'.

The significance of many places lies not in their bricks and mortar, but in the activities



Cesar Pelli's iconic tower at One Canada Square.



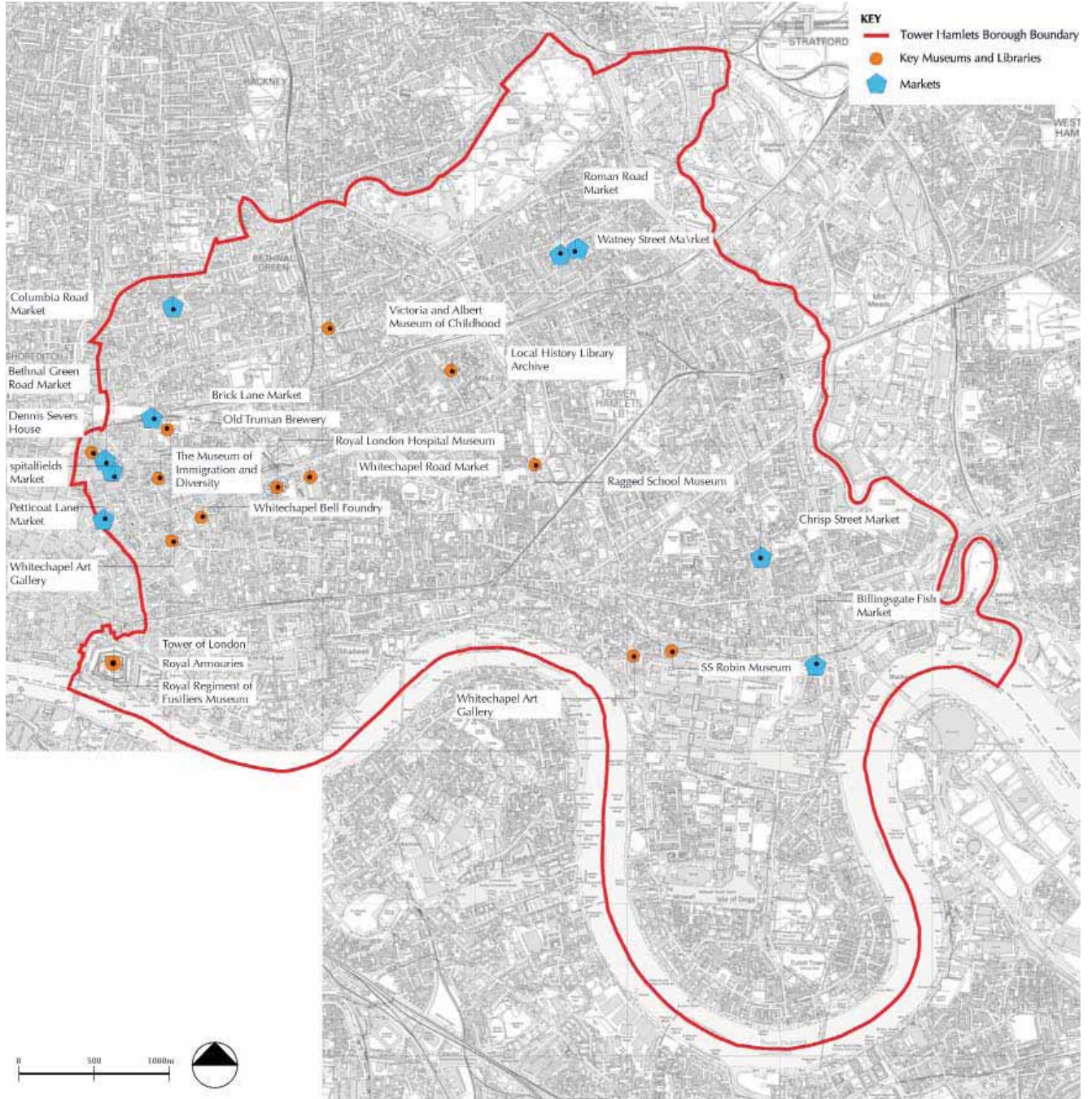


FIGURE 13
Museums, Libraries and Markets

that took place within and around them, and in the lives of the people who dwelt or worked in them. The value and interest of buildings can be far greater if their use, and the histories and different perspectives of the people who used them, both historically and today, are understood and recorded for posterity. The names of buildings and areas is also an important part of this.

Programmes of Oral History recording, such as that carried out by the Eastside Community Programme or recordings published in part in the Mile End Old Town Residents' Association Changing Places book in 2001, can add considerable value to the heritage resource of an area.

In addition, the Borough's intangible heritage also includes the range of key contemporary events and festivals taking place in the Borough today (such as the Baishakhi Mela in Banglatown in Brick Lane), and other performing arts, social practices and traditional skills (such as carpentry).

Markets

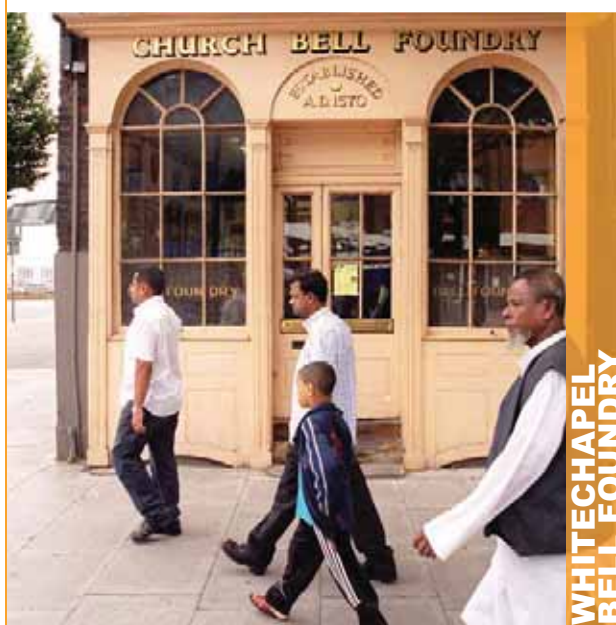
Tower Hamlets has a range of covered and street markets, which make an interesting and dynamic contribution to the Borough's townscape and to its local communities (see Figure 13). They are considered to be an important force in the promotion of social cohesion and local economies, and in the provision of affordable goods.

Covered markets include the historic Spitalfields Market, dating back to the 17th century, and the more recently established market occupying part of the Old Truman Brewery site. Street markets give considerable vibrancy to the street scene of parts of the Borough and some, such as Petticoat Lane, have considerable longevity. Others, such as Crisp Street, Roman Road and Whitechapel Market (a large vibrant market popular with the Bangladeshi community), provide an important local resource, while Brick Lane and the Columbia Road Flower Market attract large numbers of visitors from outside the area.



SPITALFIELDS MARKET

Spitalfields Market dates back to the 17th century.



WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY

Whitechapel Bell Foundry – the oldest manufacturing company in Britain and a source of world famous bells such as Big Ben and the Liberty Bell.

Heritage Collections

Museum Objects

The heritage of the Borough, together with information on its history, is preserved and celebrated through the objects and activities of a number of museums (see Figure 13):

- Museum of London Docklands – tells the history of the River Thames and Docklands, and occupies part of a Grade I listed ‘low’ warehouse at West India Docks;
- Ragged School Museum – tells the story of East London from the Victorian to present times, and includes a recreation of one of Dr Barnardo’s original classrooms;
- Royal London Hospital Museum - covers the history of health care in the East End since the 18th century;
- Dennis Severs House – a living museum which re-creates life in a former Huguenot silk weaver’s house;
- Whitechapel Bell Foundry – a small museum providing the history of the foundry, the oldest manufacturing company in Britain and a source of world famous bells such as Big Ben and the Liberty Bell;
- Museum of Immigration and Diversity (19 Princelet Street) – a museum celebrating the waves of immigration in the Borough, located in a Grade II* listed building which was formerly the house of a Huguenot silk weaver merchant and then a synagogue;

Other significant museums with more universally-themed collections include:

- Tower of London – as well as being a World Heritage Site, the Tower of London also contains important collections, including the Crown Jewels (part of the Royal Collection);

- Royal Armouries – part of the Royal Armouries’ collection is located in the Tower of London’s White Tower, including two permanent public displays on the Line of Kings and the Spanish Armoury, the personal armoury of Henry VIII and displays on more modern weapons and armours;
- Royal Regiment of Fusiliers (London) Museum – which covers the history of the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) from 1685 to 1968 and of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers from 1968 onwards;
- Whitechapel Art Gallery – an internationally acclaimed venue founded in a purpose-built, Grade II* listed Arts and Crafts building in 1901 to bring great art to the people of East London; and
- Victoria and Albert Museum of Childhood - formerly the Bethnal Green Museum, housed in an iron and glass building relocated from South Kensington, with a new entrance foyer.

Reference Libraries and Archives

The Borough also contains a number of archives that hold information on Tower Hamlets’ history and heritage – most notably the Local History Library and Archives at Bancroft Road. The Library holds records from the oldest Saxon settlement in Tower Hamlets to the present day, and part of the Library is also the oldest surviving local government building in the Borough.

Whitechapel Art Gallery – an internationally important venue.

The Library plays an important role in collecting, preserving and making publicly accessible the histories of the Borough. Over the next five years it will be redeveloped into a heritage centre for the Borough - a hub for the preservation of, and

access to the Council's archive collections, and for promoting learning and participation in local heritage, including intangible heritage.

In addition to the Local History Library and Archives, there are also a number of other archives in the Borough, including for example archives associated with the Women's Library and the Royal London Hospital Trust, and community archives such as those held by Eastside Community Heritage and the Swadhinata Trust.





5

BENEFITS OF THE HERITAGE RESOURCE



BENEFITS OF THE HERITAGE RESOURCE

Overview and Key Messages



Section 5 outlines some of the key benefits that the heritage resource already brings to the Borough and its communities. This demonstrates why there is broad value in protecting and enhancing the heritage resource, and identifies areas where the heritage resource could bring further benefits to the Borough. These areas inform the Conservation Strategy Goals and

Work Plan Objectives in Section 8.



The benefits associated with Tower Hamlets' heritage resource are wide-ranging. The heritage resources help create a sense of place and build local pride, thereby attracting workers, residents and visitors to the Borough. It provides volunteering, learning and recreation opportunities, and thereby contributes to improved social inclusion and cohesion. It provides

important environmental benefits to local communities who suffer from high population densities and significant health issues. It has a tradition of adaptive re-use that supports the Borough's sustainability agenda, and that also contributes to the ongoing sustainability of local communities. It also contributes to tourism and economic development.



Many of these benefits are aligned with the Borough's broader strategic priorities – with the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 and the Core Strategy 2025. As a result, further realisation of these benefits has been incorporated into the Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives of the Conservation Strategy.

Sense of Place and Distinctiveness

The history and heritage of Tower Hamlets is seen as an important component of what makes the Borough a distinctive and special place. It contributes to a cohesive sense of identity and community for the Borough, and also helps attract workers, residents and visitors. This is brought out in key planning documents, promotional materials and in comments by key community and amenity groups.

The Core Strategy 2025 makes explicit reference to the potential benefits of heritage in fostering a sense of place. The key spatial vision for the Borough (Reinventing the Hamlets) is derived from an understanding of the historic development of the hamlets and the

wider Borough (as set out in the historic characterisation work), and their reinvention is seen as a key tool in protecting and enhancing the Borough's unique character.

Similarly, promotional material for London Eastside (a brand name created by the business tourism team in the Council to promote the wide range of venues and services in east London to the business community) emphasises the uniqueness of the area, with its blend of cutting edge design with some of the oldest parts of London.

The importance of retaining this special character of Tower Hamlets, and of protecting the East End heritage and the positive local identity and sense of place that it provides, also emerged during consultations on the Core Strategy 2025 and Conservation Areas during 2009.

Culture, Learning and Social Inclusion

The heritage resource can also play an important role for local residents, schools and communities, in terms of learning and volunteering opportunities, as a venue and resource for cultural activities, and by contributing to improved social inclusion. Much of this focuses at present around the Tower of London, the key museums in the Borough, and the Local History Library and Archives. A residents survey for Tower Hamlets that was carried out during 2006/7 revealed that almost 40% of respondents had visited a museum or gallery at least once during the prior 6 months – broadly comparable to inner London averages and a significant improvement on the almost 20% from 2003/4.

There are also a number of leaflets and booklets that have been developed on various aspects of the heritage of the Borough, including:

- East London Heritage Trails;
- Brief history of the Docklands, station by station on the Docklands Light Railway;
- Historic churches in Docklands and East London;
- A celebration of architecture in London's East End;
- Conservation and regeneration in London Docklands, with information on Docklands heritage.

Local history resources, such as books and maps, are for sale at the Local History Library and Archives, and also through the East London History Society website. The Council website also has listings on festivals and events that take place at a variety of venues across the Borough, and VisitLondon has a page dedicated to discovering Tower Hamlets on its website (<http://www.visitlondon.com/areas/villages/discover-tower-hamlets>).



SPITALFIELDS



MUSEUM OF THE DOCKLANDS



VICTORIA PARK

Green Infrastructure and Environmental Benefits

As well as providing cultural and learning opportunities, the historic parks and open spaces, trees and landscapes in the Borough also provide important environmental benefits to the local communities in Tower Hamlets. As a Borough with one of the highest (and rising) population densities in London, green infrastructure is a particularly valuable resource. Its generally free and open access contributes to the health and well being of individuals, and to community cohesion and social inclusion, by providing meeting places. It also enhances the visual appearance of the Borough.

Adaptive Reuse and Sustainable Development

The successive waves of development and immigration have created a tradition of adaptive re-use that supports the Borough's sustainability agenda. A number of historic buildings have been adapted and re-used for a variety of purposes – whether as premises for small businesses or creative industries, for larger commercial enterprises or recreation, or for museums, places of worship and other community uses. As well as helping to reduce the Borough's carbon footprint and increase its energy efficiency, these new purposes also contribute to the ongoing sustainability of local communities.

The old Truman Brewery site – once the largest brewery in London, and today the creative hub of London's East End.

The old Truman Brewery site is a good example of this. It was once the largest brewery in London, and the Director's House within the site is a Grade II listed building. Today, it is the creative hub of London's East End – twelve years of sensitive regeneration and investment have transformed over 10 acres of vacant and

derelict buildings, and more than 200 small, creative businesses, together with retail, leisure and unique event space, are now housed at the site.

Tourism and the Visitor Economy

The heritage resource in Tower Hamlets already contributes to tourism and economic development in the Borough, although at present most of the benefits tend to be concentrated around a small number of 'honeypot sites':

- The Tower of London is the largest heritage visitor attraction in the Borough, with nearly 2.2 millions visits/year;
- The newly extended Whitechapel Art Gallery anticipates increasing annual visitor numbers from c.250,000 to c.500,000 visits/year;
- The Victoria and Albert Museum of Childhood has over 250,000 visits/year; and
- The Museum of London Docklands has over 100,000 visits/year.

The Tower of London receives nearly 2.2 million visits/year.

In addition, the range of covered and street markets (most notably Petticoat Lane, Spitalfields and Columbia Road) also attracts visitors from beyond as well as within the Borough, as do major retail, restaurant and entertainment areas such as Brick Lane, and water associated heritage resources such as the St Katharine Docks complex.

Going forward, there is emphasis on encouraging visitors to explore more of the Borough's assets. As part of this, a link is gradually being made between the Tower of London and Spitalfields, with new public space opened up between the two. In addition, new guides and leaflets have

recently been published that promote the East End as a destination, including the Quirky Shopping Guide to London Eastside (which references the covered and street markets), and TimeOut's DIY East.

“St. Katharine Dock... in the last 40 years has proved such a successful example of heritage as a catalyst for local regeneration”
– consultation response



PETTICOAT LANE MARKET



6

**CARING FOR THE
HERITAGE
RESOURCE**



CARING FOR THE HERITAGE RESOURCE

Overview and Key Messages



Section 6 focuses on how the heritage resource outlined in Section 4 is currently managed and protected. It provides an overview of the role of the Council and other key relevant bodies in conservation management and promotion, and an overview of the current system of heritage protection in England. In doing so, it also helps to highlight any key gaps in

heritage protection and management that particularly affect Tower Hamlets and the unique heritage resource that can be found here – gaps that have been identified as challenges in Section 7, and that have informed the development of the Conservation Strategy's Goals and Objectives in Section 8. This Section also informs the accountabilities for delivering the Conservation Strategy, as set out in the Implementation Plan.



The heritage resource is owned, managed and used on a day to day basis by a variety of organisations, but the Council has a key role to play in managing and sustaining the heritage at an overall level. Within the Council, this role is carried out primarily through the

Development, Design and Conservation Team, but there are also a number of other key stakeholders that have an important role to play, including other Council departments, external stakeholders, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations. There are a number of tools already in place to protect the Council's heritage resource, particularly those of international and national importance. This includes the system of planning consents, and the recognition of some heritage resources as material consideration in planning terms. Going forward, the Government has recently issued a new Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) on Planning for the Historic Environment, which emphasises the importance of focusing on the significance of a heritage resource, and the importance of integrating conservation into sustainable development and the wider planning context.



The wide variety of organisations that directly impact, or are impacted by, the heritage resource drives a need for a co-ordinated and integrated approach to heritage, to maximise its potential protection and enhancement. Although there are a

number of systems and tools already in place to secure the protection of the Borough's heritage, there are still a number of areas where protection is currently less effective – for example, in relation to locally important heritage, and to smaller works that could incrementally degrade the special character of a heritage resource, and therefore its significance. The Government's recently issued PPS 5 encourages alignment between the Conservation Strategy and the Borough's broader strategic priorities, and further underlines the importance of an integrated approach.

The Role of the Council

The heritage resource is owned and managed on a day to day basis by a variety of different organisations, but the Council has a key role to play in managing and sustaining the heritage at an overall level. It manages the Borough's archaeology on the specialist advice from English Heritage's Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service.

The Council takes the lead role in securing the conservation of the heritage of the Borough. It handles applications for planning permission and Listed Building consent. It has the power to ensure that Listed Buildings are kept in satisfactory repair, and it can take action if unauthorised demolition or alterations take place. It designates Conservation Areas and maintains a list of buildings of Local Interest, and has an important role to play in planning enforcement.

Within the Council, this role is carried out primarily through the Development, Design and Conservation Team, which is part of the Council's Development and Renewal Directorate. The Development, Design and Conservation Team currently comprises 6 staff members, some of who have conservation and urban design qualifications. The Team's principal functions include the following:

- Heritage and conservation, including heritage improvement projects and their delivery;
- Preparation of conservation and urban design strategies;
- Providing planning application and pre-application advice;
- Development briefs, frameworks and implementation;
- Design and conservation input into corporate initiatives;
- Enabling and partnership working.

The team have focused on reducing, and dealing more efficiently with, the volume of conservation traffic that typically comes through on a day to day basis

(such as requests around grants, listed buildings, and enforcement). For example, a pre-application plan process has been established that encourages people to send emails, photos and any relevant information in advance of a meeting. This has played an important role in improving the quality of interactions with Council, and in improving the quality of the applications. In addition, a set of Frequently Asked Questions have also been put on the website.

In addition to the Development, Design and Conservation Team, there are also a number of other key stakeholders and functions within Council that have an important role to play in heritage – whether because they are accountable for managing specific aspects of the Borough's heritage, because their activities have an impact on heritage, or because heritage impacts their activities. They include:

- 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- Building control;
- Building schools for the future;
- Children's services;
- Communications;
- Corporate property;
- Cultural services;
- Development control;
- Development schemes;
- Directorate management systems;
- Economic and spatial development;
- Empty property and compulsory purchase;
- Environmental health enforcement;
- Housing;
- Inward investment and tourism;
- Local history library and archives (Bancroft Library);
- Major projects implementation, including masterplanning and town centre projects;
- Market services;
- Museums and galleries;
- Parks and play;
- Partnerships;
- Planning enforcement;
- Procurement and corporate programmes;
- Public realm;

- Public realm enforcement;
- Service integration;
- Strategy;
- Strategy – innovation and sustainability;
- Strategic transport;
- Street markets;
- Young people and learning.

The Development, Design and Conservation Team is supported by a number of Council Members. These include a Heritage Champion, whose key role is to ensure that the historic environment plays a central role in the development of all the Council's policies, plans, targets and strategies.

Government Agencies and Voluntary Organisations

English Heritage

English Heritage is the Government's lead advisory body for the historic environment, and has a statutory role in the planning system. It works in partnership with central government departments, local authorities, voluntary bodies and the private sector to conserve and enhance the historic environment, broaden public access to the heritage and increase people's understanding of the past. It meets its responsibilities by:

- Acting as a national and international champion for the heritage;
- Giving grants for the conservation of historic buildings, monuments and landscapes;
- Maintaining registers of England's most significant historic buildings, monuments and landscapes;
- Advising on the preservation of the historic environment;
- Encouraging broader public involvement with the heritage;
- Promoting education and research;
- Caring for Stonehenge and over 400 other historic properties on behalf of the nation;
- Maintaining the National Monuments



BRICK LANE



FORD SQUARE SIDNEY SQUARE



SPITALFIELDS

Record as the public archive of the heritage; and

- Generating income for the benefit of the historic environment.

Central to English Heritage's role is the advice it gives to local planning authorities and government departments on development proposals. This focuses on proposals with potential for major change or for damage to significant, nationally important heritage resources (such as Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, and Conservation Areas).

In London, English Heritage's role also includes the provision of archaeological advice (through the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service) and hosting the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (which is being developed into the Greater London Historic Environment Record).

Voluntary Organisations

Tower Hamlets has 2,500 Third Sector Organisations and Residents' Associations. A number of these voluntary groups, trusts and societies are focused on the heritage resource, and are active in the Borough. These include:

- The 20th Century Society – focusing on education, conservation and lobbying for architecture and design in Britain from 1914 onwards;
- The Bishopsgate Institute - a cultural institute that runs courses for adults and cultural events, such as music concerts and illustrated talks, debates and poetry;
- East of London Family History Society - helps people who share a common interest in furthering family history and genealogical research in the historic East End of the city of London;
- The East London History Society

- this exists to further interest in the history of East London, and is responsible for maintaining the Tower Hamlets History Online website, as well as organising a programme of talks and outings, and publishing newsletters;
- Eastside Community Heritage – seek to promote civic pride, greater harmony between people and to provide independent historical research;
- Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields;
- Friends of St George's German Lutheran Church - arrange a programme of talks;
- Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park;
- The Georgian Group – a national charity and statutory amenity society dedicated to preserving Georgian buildings and gardens, who are consulted on planning applications affecting listed Georgian heritage;
- Historic Chapels Trust – established to take into ownership redundant chapels and other places of worship in England which are of outstanding architectural importance and historic interest, to secure their preservation, repair and maintenance for public benefit;
- History of Wapping Trust – this society promotes the history of Wapping, Radcliffe, Shadwell and St George's, through books and a programme of talks;
- Island History Trust - this is a community history project dedicated to recording and preserving the history of the Isle of Dogs and the people who live there;
- Jewish East End Celebration Society – identifies, documents and preserves Jewish East End heritage for future generations both of Jews and immigrant communities in the area;
- Mile End Old Town Residents' Association - helps residents with

- local history, local tradesman and planning applications;
- Mile End Residents' Association;
 - Ocean Estate Tenants and Leaseholders Association;
 - Save Tower Hamlets' Local History and Archives at Bancroft Road Campaign Group;
 - Shadwell Local History Club;
 - Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings – the largest, oldest and most technically expert national pressure group, with a statutory role as advisor to local planning authorities;
 - The Spitalfields Trust – a charity dedicated to restoring Georgian houses;
 - Stepney Historical Trust – provides learning opportunities around the history and surroundings in Stepney by holding lectures, exhibitions and historical excursions;
 - Swadhinata Trust - a non-partisan secular Bengali group that offers seminars and workshops, expeditions and educational literature to young Bengali people;
 - Tower Hamlets Local History Society - aims to build interest in the history of the East End of London, namely the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It publishes newsletters, organises a program of talks, and also arranges coach outings.
 - The Victorian Society – the 'champion' for Victorian and Edwardian buildings in England and Wales, with a formal role in the planning system, and with a focus around conservation, public involvement and education; and
 - The Whitechapel Society - promotes the study of Whitechapel murders and the impact these murders had on the East End of London.

A number of these groups are represented on the Conservation and Design Advisory Panel (CADAP, previously CADAG). The



POPLAR



CANARY WHARF



ST MATTHAIS CHURCH

Panel has been running for more than 30 years, and meets monthly. Its role is to provide independent and professional design advice and evaluation on key developments, policies and frameworks. It comprises individuals who live or work in the Borough, with members recruited through national or local amenity societies, the building professions and by writing to residents of Conservation Areas asking for nominees. The Panel is part of a number of steps taken by the Council to ensure that development in the Borough is of the highest quality.

Ownership

The Council owns part of the heritage resource across the Borough, and is therefore directly responsible for the maintenance of that heritage. However, a significant share of the heritage resource, particularly around the periphery of the Borough, is owned by others - including public sector bodies and third sector organisations, private individuals, commercial enterprises and developers.

The Tower of London World Heritage Site, for example, is owned by the Queen 'in right of Crown' and managed by the Historic Royal Palaces, while many of the Borough's waterways and associated structures are owned and managed by British Waterways (including for example the Regent's Canal, River Lee Navigation, Limehouse Cut, and Poplar and Blackwall Basins in the Isle of Dogs). None of the museums and galleries in the Borough are owned by the Council, and so these are either privately managed or managed by other public institutions or third sector organisations (such as the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Museum of London). These owners have an important role to play in the care and protection of the Borough's heritage.

Funding and Resources

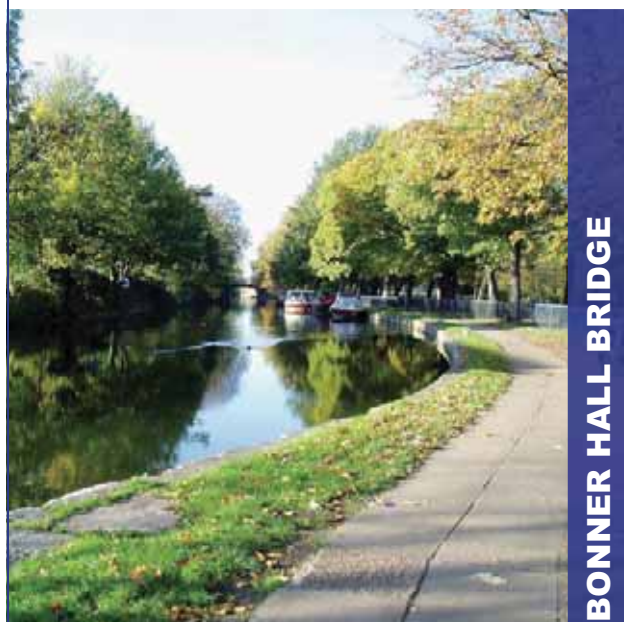
Funds for the conservation, protection and enhancement of the heritage resource come from a number of sources. The Council has its own budget that it invests in



NARROW STREET



CABLE STREET



BONNER HALL BRIDGE

these areas. This is supplemented by grant funding from English Heritage, historically in the order of magnitude of £300-400k/year. English Heritage is also supporting High Street 2012 - a joint initiative by the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Newham, English Heritage, Design for London and Transport for London to deliver significant improvements to Whitechapel Road, Mile End Road, Bow Road and High Street Stratford in time for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In addition, funding to support heritage conservation work is also secured through Section 106 agreements – for example, funding for Conservation Areas in the city fringe was secured through the Spitalfields development in Bishops Square. Since 2000, £10.1m of Section 106 contribution has been earmarked for spend on heritage, with the majority allocated to the Brick Lane and Fournier Street Conservation Area.

The Council focuses grant aid mainly on heritage with distinct public benefit – for example, on features that enhance the heritage/conservation value of an area (such as balconettes in Victoria Park), on community buildings, or on features that are included on the Buildings at Risk register. In addition, grant aid is also given for shop fronts – for example on Roman Road.

Heritage Protection

The current system of heritage protection in England has recently been revised, with emphasis on a more integrated approach and a more proportionate response to change.

System of Heritage Protection in England

A White Paper entitled ‘Heritage Protection for the 21st Century’ was published by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) in March 2007. It proposes changes to the current system of heritage protection, based around three core principles:

- Developing a unified approach to the historic environment – the creation of a single, simple designation regime focused around special architectural, historic or archaeological interest, to replace the existing listing, scheduling and registering system;
- Maximising opportunities for inclusion and involvement – involving the public in decisions about what is protected and how; and
- Supporting sustainable communities by putting the historic environment at the heart of an effective planning system.

In March 2010, the Government published a new Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) on Planning for the Historic Environment. This is the final version of the Consultation Paper on a new Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPS 15) on Planning for the Historic Environment that was launched in July 2009. PPS 5 replaces Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15) and Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16).

The policies in PPS 5 are intended to enable implementation through the planning system, where appropriate, of the Government’s vision for the historic environment - as set out in the Statement of the Historic Environment for England 2010. The policies in PPS 5 are a material consideration which must be taken into account in development management decisions.

PPS 5 emphasises the importance of integrating conservation of heritage assets into sustainable development and the wider planning context. It highlights the positive contribution that heritage can make to local character and sense of place, and emphasizes putting heritage assets to appropriate and viable use that is consistent with their conservation. It also places emphasis on increasing the contribution that heritage assets can make to the climate change agenda.

PPS 5 envisages a proportionate response

to change. It makes clear that the focus should be on what is significant in heritage terms about a place, and the value that it holds for current and future generations, rather than on protecting all of the heritage for its own sake. This significance is defined in terms of historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest. It also recognizes that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary to maintain heritage assets for the long term.

It further emphasises the importance of ensuring that adequate information and evidence bases are available to inform and enable transparent decision-making, and the importance of monitoring the impact of those decisions.

PPS 5 reflects a more modern, integrated approach, moving beyond the distinction between buildings and archaeology to embrace all of the historic environment. It defines the historic environment in terms of heritage assets to be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced. It includes within its remit both designated and non designated heritage assets.

English Heritage established guidance for managing change in the historic environment in its publication Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008). This document defines conservation as 'the process of managing change to a significant place and its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations'.

The Guidance emphasises the need to first understand the values and heritage significance of a place, and identifies a range of four high level, inter-related heritage values that may be attached to a heritage resource:

- Evidential Values – linked to the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity;
- Historical Values – derived from the ways in which past people, events and aspects



DOCKLANDS



BISHOP'S SQUARE



VICTORIA PARK

of life can be connected through a place to the present;

- Aesthetic Values – derived from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place;
- Communal Values – derived from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory;

The Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance publication also provides guidance on the application of 6 basic Conservation Principles in making decisions about change. These principles are:

- Principle 1: The historic environment is a shared resource;
- Principle 2: Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment;
- Principle 3: Understanding the significance of places is vital;
- Principle 4: Significant places should be managed to sustain their values;
- Principle 5: Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent; and
- Principle 6: Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.

Heritage is recognised as having the power to act as a catalyst for successful regeneration. There is often an optimal scenario where keeping the best of the old and introducing high quality, sensitive new development can achieve the best result for both regeneration and sustainability in the historic environment.

Safeguarding Archaeology

All known archaeological sites and find-spots in the Borough are entered on the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, which is maintained by the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service in English Heritage, London Region.

In the Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) that have been identified in the Borough, developers are required to submit an archaeological assessment of the potential

impact of their proposed development works, as part of their planning application. Developers are also required to submit desk-based assessment when development outside an APA has the potential to affect archaeological remains.

Where development is likely to affect significant archaeology, field evaluation is required to establish if archaeological remains are present, and to determine the impact of development on those remains. If archaeological safeguards do prove necessary, these would normally comprise either design measures to preserve remains in situ, archaeological excavation prior to development, or a combination of the two. The need for archaeological mitigation is often made a condition of planning permission.

Ancient monuments and archaeological areas are protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Any works affecting Scheduled Monuments require Scheduled Monument Consent in addition to planning or any other consents.

Protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage Sites

The UK Government's Planning Circular 07/09 Protection of World Heritage Sites in England recognises in national policy the need to protect World Heritage Sites as sites of outstanding universal value. It also makes more prominent the need to create a management plan for each World Heritage Site, and the need, where appropriate, to delineate a buffer zone around it.

English Heritage published Guidance to accompany this Planning Circular. This Guidance sets out the importance of the planning system and sustainable community strategies in protecting and sustaining World Heritage Sites, and explains the function of World Heritage Site Management Plans and the methods used to prepare them.

A Management Plan has been developed for the Tower of London World Heritage

Site. This Plan is a material consideration in planning policy. Tower Hamlets Council also has a statutory role in protecting the setting of the Tower of London World Heritage Site.

Protecting Listed Buildings

Buildings on the statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest are protected by legislation. Listed building consent is required for 'all works, both external and internal, that would affect a building's special interest'. There is a general presumption against the demolition of listed buildings, though there are very occasionally cases where demolition is unavoidable - mainly as a result of deterioration through neglect, fire damage, or lack of viable new use.

Where information about the building is likely to be lost or affected as a result of works for which listed building consent has been granted, it will often be made a requirement of the consent that an archaeological record is made of those parts of the building to be affected.

Caring for Heritage of Local Interest

The Core Strategy 2025 commits to protecting and enhancing locally listed buildings and local landmarks, and also other buildings and areas identified through Conservation Management Plans (SP 10). It also commits to preserving or enhancing the wider built heritage and historic environment of the Borough and enabling the creation of locally distinctive neighbourhoods, and to ensuring that development respects local views. Conditions can be attached to planning consent to secure archaeological recording of undesignated buildings (including those that are locally listed) prior to alterations or demolition, where historic significance will be lost.

Protecting Strategically Important Views

The London View Management Framework is Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the London Plan. It provides

guidance for the protection of strategically important views in London. London Boroughs, statutory authorities and other stakeholders are required to take its contents fully into account when preparing local development documents and policies, and when preparing, reviewing and responding to applications for planning permission and other consents. The SPG is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Core Strategy 2025 commits to ensuring that development respects strategic views (SP 10).

Safeguarding Conservation Areas

Conservation Area designation is an effective tool in managing and controlling works within areas of planned development, to protect the character and appearance of an area of special architectural or historic interest. Local Authorities have a duty not only to designate Conservation Areas, but also to identify the special architectural or historic interest of the area which the designation seeks to protect or enhance. This is most effectively done by the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

Conservation Area Consent is required, in addition to planning permission, for total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building in a Conservation Area. Conditions can also be attached to planning consent to secure archaeological recording of undesignated buildings prior to alterations or demolition, where historic significance will be lost.

The Council can also apply for Article 4 Direction Orders through which permitted development rights can be removed – these are rights established to help streamline the planning process. Article 4 Direction Orders are of particular use in Conservation Areas, where they can be used to control small works which would otherwise not require planning permission but which could incrementally degrade the special character of an area, including uniformity of design and detail.

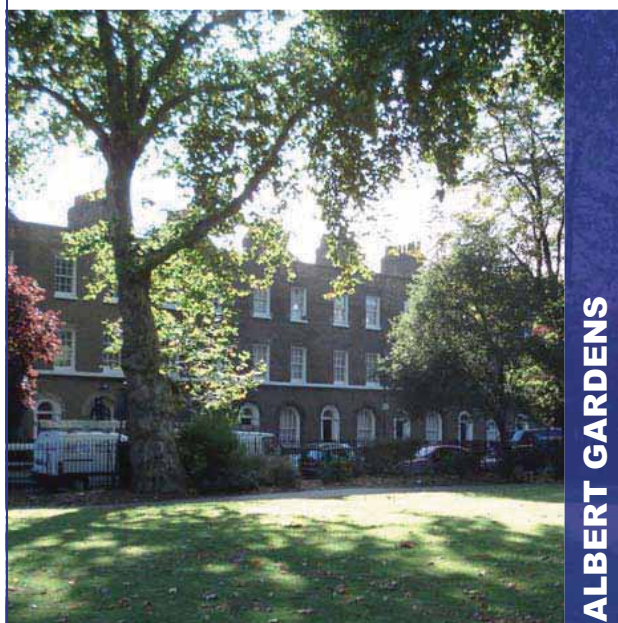
Safeguarding Historic Parks and Gardens

The inclusion of a historic park or garden on English Heritage's Register is a material consideration in planning terms. The historic interest of the site must be actively considered in any planning decisions. Local authorities are required to consult English Heritage where any planning decision affects a Grade I or II* registered site, and the Garden History Society on all applications affecting registered sites, regardless of the grade of the site.

The London Squares Preservation Act 1931 asserts that a protected square may not be used for any purposes other than as an ornamental garden, pleasure ground or ground for play, rest or recreation, and that no building or structure should be created or placed on or over any protected square, unless necessary or convenient for the use or maintenance of the square for an authorised purpose.

Safeguarding Historic Landscapes

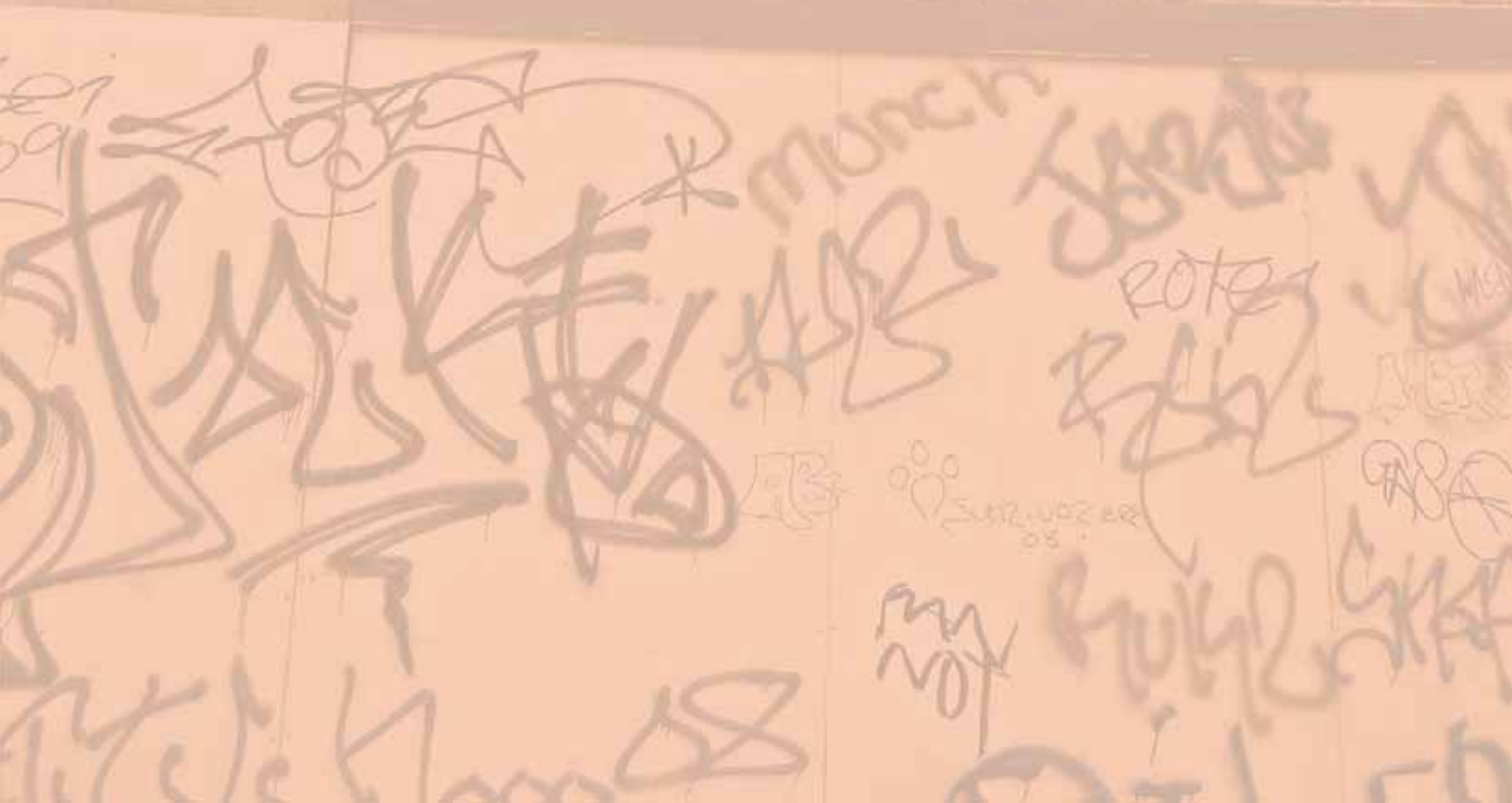
In 2006 the United Kingdom became a signatory to the European Landscape Convention. The Convention aims to encourage public authorities to adopt policies and measures at local, regional, national and international levels for protecting, managing and planning landscapes. As part of this, individual state parties undertake to integrate regional and town planning policies in their cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies.





7

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE CONSERVATION STRATEGY



KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Overview and Key Messages



Section 7 sets out the range of key challenges facing Tower Hamlets' heritage resource, and is informed by the findings from Sections 2-6. These challenges are addressed by the Conservation Strategy in Section 8.



Given the current social and economic issues outlined in Section 2, regeneration and housing development is a key strategic priority in the Borough. However, development will potentially drive increased pressure on the heritage resource, impacting heritage character, context and significance, and heritage that is locally important. As described in Section 6, although there is good protection already in place for much of the Borough's heritage, there are still some important gaps. There is often limited clarity on the specific characteristics that contribute to significance, and therefore on the developments that are most appropriate. There are a number of key heritage structures or types of heritage that are not well represented currently in designations – including for example industrial heritage, which remains less understood and appreciated despite its seminal role in the Borough's history and identity. There are also limitations around the protection for locally important heritage. In addition, evolving community needs are causing some buildings to cease to be fit for purpose, thereby putting their future viability at risk, and there are also issues associated with the condition of the heritage in the Borough – around general upkeep and damage, and around inappropriate works that undermine character and significance.



The very wealth of heritage that Tower Hamlets has raises a number of challenges around management of the resource – ownership is divided between a number of different types of organisations, and the Council does not have the funds and resources to manage and maintain all of it. Prioritisation of resources will therefore be key, as will increased stakeholder and community engagement. There also appears to be a general lack of awareness among the public of the conservation and management needs of heritage, and community involvement in heritage does not fully represent the demographic profile of the Borough. Although there are many values associated with the heritage resource (as described in Section 5), its contribution is not being fully realised, and communities and stakeholders are therefore not being fully engaged in it. As a result, neither the communities and stakeholders nor the heritage itself are benefiting as much as they could.

Development and Conservation

The strong focus on regeneration, and the **development of 43,000 new homes** in the Borough between 2010 and 2025 will potentially drive increased pressure on the heritage resource.

Fish Island, Leamouth, Cubitt Town, Blackwall and Millwall appear to potentially face the greatest challenges and opportunities from both regeneration and new housing targets (see Figures 14 and 15). In addition, Poplar Riverside, Poplar and Bromley by Bow also appear to face real challenges and opportunities from the new regeneration areas (see Figure 14), while Canary Wharf and Spitalfields also appear to face challenges and opportunities from new housing targets (see Figure 15). More detailed assessment would need to be undertaken to understand the actual potential impact of the regeneration and housing development on the heritage resource.

The ambitious target for increased housing in the Borough is encouraging **high density development** on available land. This could have significant impact on areas that are characterised by low density building (for example industrial heritage, or Chrisp Street Market).

Some development within the Borough has negatively impacted the **setting and key views** of the Borough's buildings – for example at the Tower of London, and at the Church of St George's in the East. Future development initiatives also include tall buildings (for example in the Aldgate area and the rest of the city fringe), which could further affect the setting and views of heritage. In addition, a number of Conservation Areas have suffered from encroachment from adjacent development (such as at the St Anne's Church Conservation Area). The heritage resource has a meaningful relationship with its physical and spatial context, as defined by its setting and key views. Where these are adversely affected the distinctive character and significance of the heritage resource is also undermined.

Development pressure is threatening buildings and areas in the Borough that are not considered significant enough to be designated (and therefore protected through the planning system), but that nevertheless contribute to **local identity and sense of place**, or that meet local community needs.

Heritage resources do not currently contribute as much as they could to the **climate change and sustainability agenda**.

Condition of the Heritage

37 heritage features in Tower Hamlets were included in English Heritage's Register of **Heritage at Risk** in 2009. This represents 4% of all the Borough's Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens in the Borough, which is comparable with the broader London picture. However, Tower Hamlets has proportionally more heritage at risk in its Registered Parks and Gardens and Listed Buildings.

	% LBTH Heritage at Risk	% London Heritage at Risk
Scheduled Monuments	14%	27%
Conservation Areas	19%	17%
Grade I and II* Listed Buildings	7%	4%
Grade II Listed Buildings	4%	2%
Registered Parks and Gardens	25%	9%
Total	4%	4%

Important public buildings in particular are over-represented on the Register, which also contains a number of Public Houses. Almost 20% of the heritage features identified are deemed to be in very bad condition, and a further 60% in

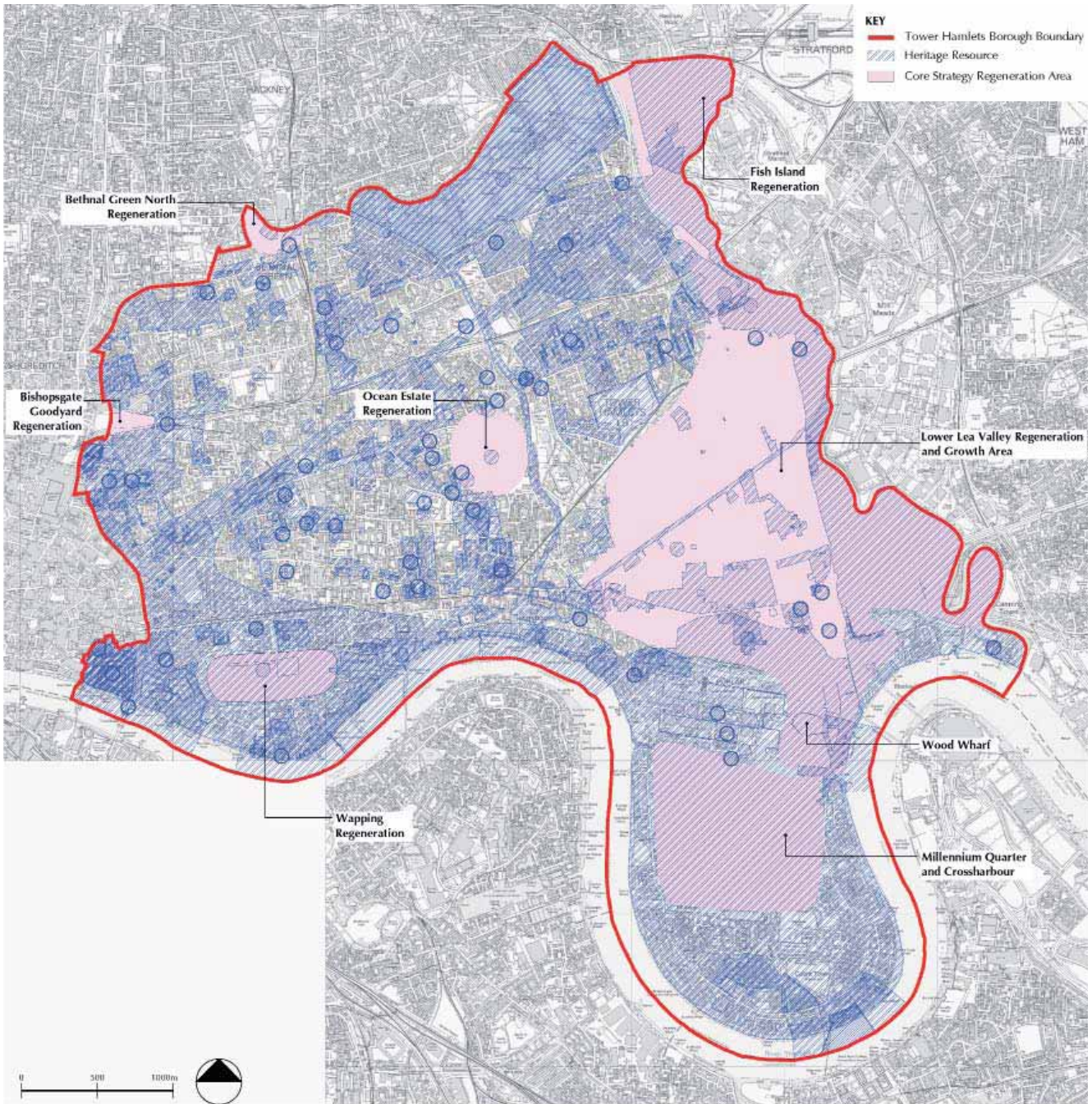


FIGURE 14
 Comparison between Regeneration Areas
 and the Heritage Resource

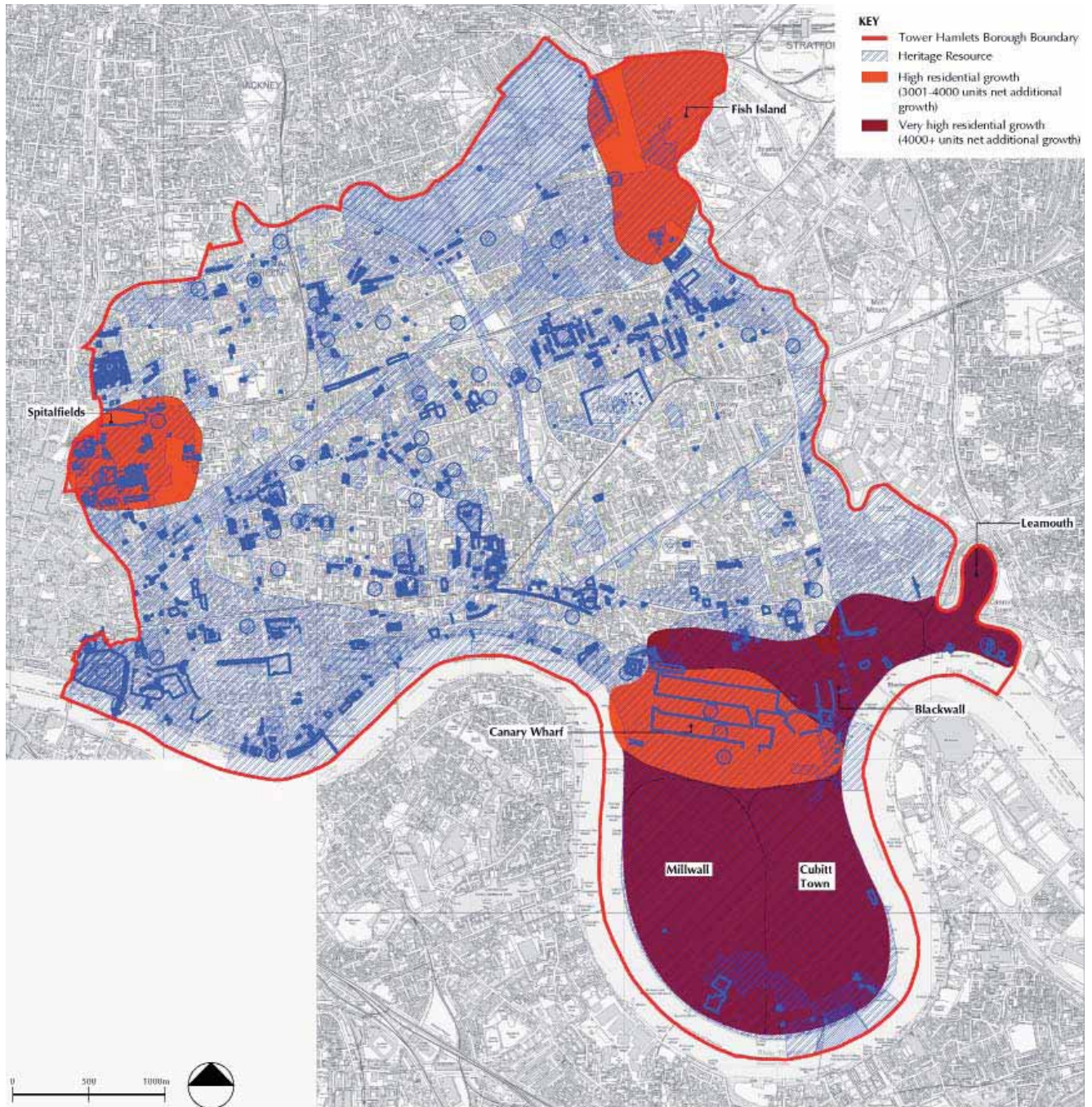


FIGURE 15
 Comparison between Housing Targets
 and the Heritage Resource

poor condition, and **c.25% of features are classified as 'A' risk** (immediate risk of loss of fabric, and with no solution identified).

Some heritage buildings and Conservation Areas have suffered from **inappropriate works**, leading to loss of architectural features or loss of uniformity, and overall loss of character and significance. Some of these works have been unauthorised, while others are permitted but are not in keeping with the overall character of the area (as at Hackney Road for example). In some cases, works have been carried out by contractors with less experience of the needs and sensitivities of heritage buildings – driven in part by the difficulty of finding appropriate contractors.

Some heritage resources are **damaged and in need of repair** (such as the Holy Trinity Church), driven by lack of maintenance or funds for maintenance. Some Conservation Areas suffer from graffiti and vandalism (for example the All Saints Church, Poplar, and Bow Conservation Areas), while the quality of others has been undermined by public realm issues, such as inappropriate materials used by statutory developers, poor signage and pavements, or street clutter (for example at Whitechapel Market or Lansbury).

Understanding and Appreciation

Despite its seminal role in Tower Hamlets' history and development, including its social history, the Borough's **industrial heritage** remains less widely understood and appreciated. This is partially due to its more robust and functional style, which can seem less aesthetically attractive. The industrial heritage appears to be relatively under-represented in designations (potentially in part due to destruction in the 1980s), and is as a result under greater pressure from development – particularly at Fish Island and along parts of the eastern boundary of the Borough (where there are good communication links with Stratford and Canary Wharf).

20th century heritage, particularly post war

housing estates, is similarly less widely understood and appreciated. As a result, there are relatively limited funds and resources invested in this area, which in turn affects the condition of the heritage.

Limited appreciation of the integral importance of the **local streetscape** (including trees) has led to gradual disintegration of the townscape in some areas (for example the Chapel Road Conservation Area).

There is some **inconsistency of information** between Council and English Heritage, particularly in the lists of Scheduled Monuments and statutory listed buildings.

There is often a **lack of awareness** among the general public of the heritage nature of the building that they are inhabiting, and of the associated conservation and management needs of that heritage.

Values and Benefits of Heritage

The potential contribution of the heritage resource to **tourism** in the Borough is not being fully realised. There are some honeypot sites and museums in the Borough that attract significant numbers of visitors (e.g. Tower of London, V&A Museum of Childhood, Brick Lane), but elsewhere in the Borough visitor numbers and the economic benefits from tourism appear to be more limited. According to London Development Agency calculations, about 3.5% of the Borough's employment in 2007 was related to tourism, compared with over 5% in Greater London as a whole. Given the comparative wealth of the heritage that can be found in Tower Hamlets, this is relatively low.

Limited opening times and high admission prices can discourage communities from visiting some heritage museums and sites.

There is **very limited interpretation or directional signage** relating to the heritage resource on-site in the Borough, and it would therefore be easy for a casual visitor to remain unaware of the breadth and

diversity of the heritage that can be found there. There is also limited information on the heritage resource on the Council's website, no Borough map made available to visitors or residents, and no central Tourist Office or other resource where visitors can access information about the Borough's heritage.

At present, **community engagement** in decision-making on heritage does not fully represent the demographic profile of the Borough. The Conservation and Design Advisory Group is more representative of local amenity groups than local community groups, and public consultation events involving heritage typically attract small numbers of people. This is driven in part by a sense that it is the role of the Council (and not of the local community) to manage the heritage, and also by a degree of transience in the local community. In addition, over time there has also been a reduction in contacts between planners and Residents' Associations.

Evolving community needs are causing some buildings to cease to be **fit for purpose** (for example schools, public baths, wharf warehouses). Unless buildings can be adapted appropriately, or alternative uses found, their future viability is at risk.

Protection and Guidance

The Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Guidelines have **limited detail** (visual or written) on the specific architectural and townscape characteristics that contribute to significance and that are of primary importance, and of the specific views that need to be protected. They also do not always fully address the issues specific to the historic parks within the Conservation Areas. This lack of clarity can result in inappropriate developments, and can limit the effectiveness of the Conservation Area Appraisals as Supplementary Planning Documents. Greater specificity would also act as a valuable benchmark for future monitoring.

Some Conservation Areas appear to have

key structures missing. For example, the West India Dock Conservation Area includes the quay walls, general offices and two warehouses, but not the dock basins themselves. Similarly, the Coldharbour Conservation Area includes the entrance locks to Blackwall Basin and Poplar Dock, but not the basins themselves.

The planning process for both Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings references the importance of preserving the **setting of an area or heritage building**, but the lack of clearly defined and delineated settings undermines the ability to control development that may impact these heritage resources.

There is limited specificity on the **key priority views** within the Borough that should be protected – views are identified in the Core Strategy Research Report and in Conservation Area Appraisals, but there is currently no consolidated centralised priority list, and no detailed definition on what the views comprise. Protection and guidance for views is currently being developed through the emerging Development Management Development Plan Document, and a policy has already been drafted on this. The forthcoming Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Guidelines for Fish Island will identify relevant view cones, and this approach may be rolled out to other Conservation Area Appraisals.

The criteria for assessing **locally important buildings** are relatively high level in nature, and therefore undermine the clarity and transparency of the selection process. There are also currently no overarching decision-making frameworks or principles to balance development and conservation needs for locally important and distinctive, but undesignated buildings and areas. Decisions are currently made on a case by case, and relatively reactive basis.

Over the last couple of years Tower Hamlets has had one of the highest tallies of **spot listings** of all the London Boroughs. The existing statutory heritage protection within the Borough may not be

as comprehensive as in other Boroughs where the government have reviewed their statutory Lists more recently.

A significant share of the Borough is already covered by Conservation Areas and other designations. Consultations have indicated a concern that such **coverage may be difficult to manage**, or encourage an overly permissive approach to development in areas that are not designated but that are still locally important.

Management and Resources

Tower Hamlets has a rich heritage resource, but inevitably there are **insufficient funds and resources** to manage and sustain all of it – an issue that will become exacerbated as the profile of the heritage is raised.

Ownership of the heritage resource is divided between a number of different types of organisations – public, private and commercial. Some of these owners do not have the resources, or sometimes even the interest in enhancing and protecting the heritage resource they are occupying. This has been seen as an issue particularly for small businesses on high streets.

Interaction and engagement within Council, between the different stakeholder departments related to heritage, currently tends to be reactive and on a case by case basis, rather than proactive and strategic.

Heritage and its conservation/protection can be seen by some Council departments as an **impediment to delivering their objectives**, rather than an advantage.

In response to regeneration and development pressures, there has been a greater emphasis in recent years on identifying and designating new Conservation Areas, than on **monitoring the condition** of existing Conservation Areas. There is no clear timeframe and accountabilities for delivering the actions identified in the Conservation Area Appraisals.



BOW

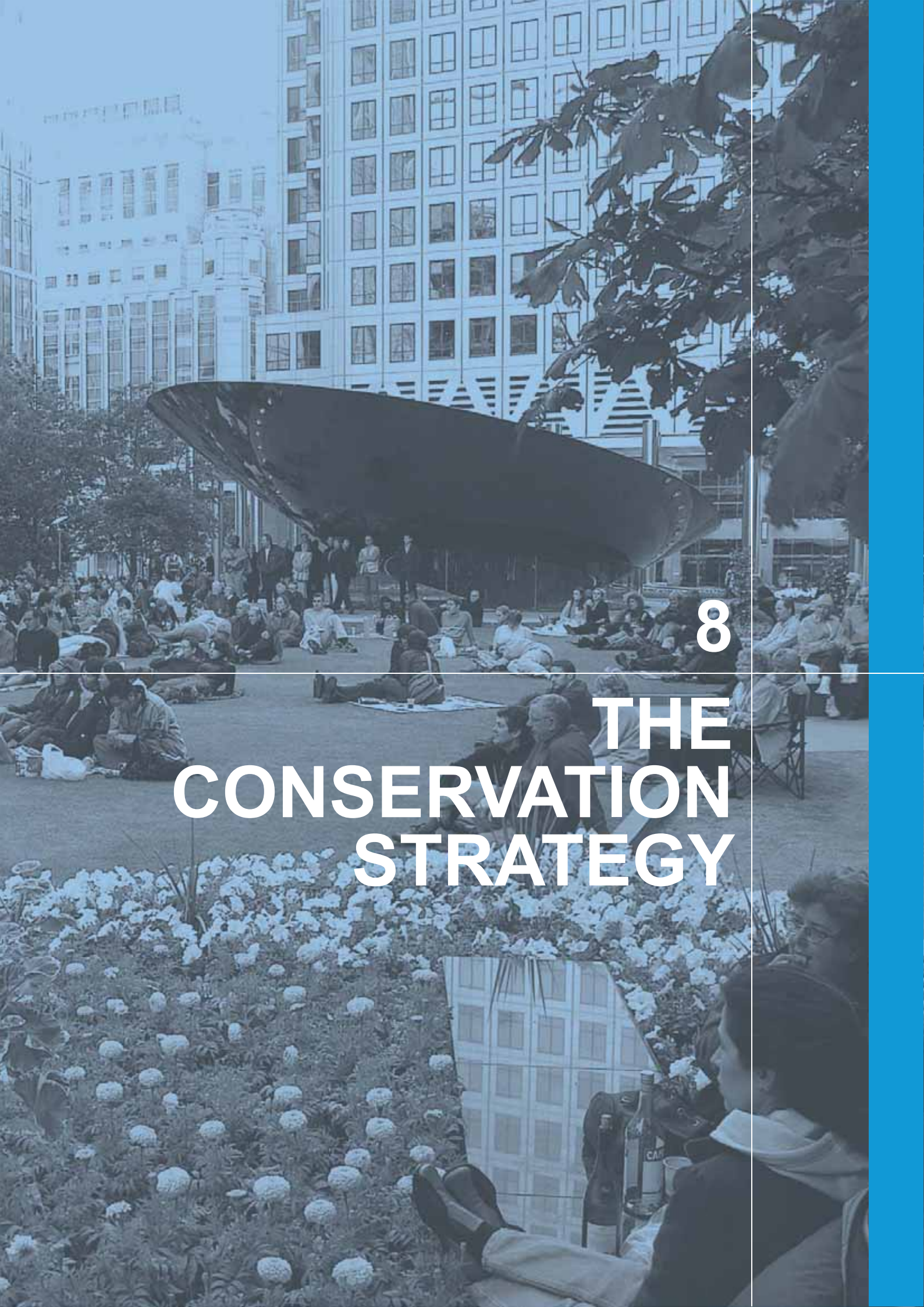


HACKNEY WICK



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8

THE
CONSERVATION
STRATEGY



THE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Overview and Key Messages



Section 8 sets out the Conservation Strategy for Tower Hamlets' heritage resource. The Strategy focuses on managing and enabling change to heritage in a way that protects and enhances its significance. It addresses the key challenges facing the heritage resource described in Section 7, responds to government and statutory body guidance, and seeks to actively support the

Council's broader social and economic regeneration priorities. It aims to guide decision-making for Tower Hamlets' heritage over the next 5-10 years, and sets out the long term vision for the heritage, together with the Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives to help deliver that vision. It provides strategic guidance at the Borough level - it is not a detailed assessment of individual heritage resources. It focuses on future planning, and is therefore not a summary of existing policies and actions focused around heritage.



As described in the Preface, a collaborative, multi-staged approach was taken to the development of the Conservation Strategy, to ensure that the Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives were grounded in an understanding of the Borough's particular characteristics and challenges. This began with the

development of a Baseline Audit, which built an understanding of the profile and strategic context of the Borough (see Section 2), and of the heritage and its current management and protection, including government guidance (see Sections 3-6). Based on the findings from the Baseline Audit, the key challenges facing the Borough's heritage resource were then identified (see Section 7), and these challenges in turn informed the development of the Conservation Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives set out in this Section. Input into the emerging findings and the draft Conservation Strategy was secured through consultation with the general public, internal Council stakeholders, key external stakeholders and community organisations (see Figure 16).

Vision and Key Priorities

Tower Hamlets' heritage is an irreplaceable legacy. It is the foundation of Tower Hamlets' distinctive character, and it makes a significant contribution to the Borough's sense of place. It also contributes to economic regeneration and sustainability, social inclusion and community development, recreation and quality of life.

The overall aim of the Conservation Strategy is to protect and enhance Tower Hamlets' heritage, and to ensure it can be appreciated and enjoyed by current and future generations. A key part of this is to

ensure increased community engagement and involvement in the heritage, as a critical part of ensuring its ongoing sustainability. The Conservation Strategy also aims to enhance the contribution of the heritage to the other strategic priorities of the Borough, to ensure that it plays an active role in the Borough's ongoing regeneration and development.

The Strategy has 6 key priorities, which are reflected in the 6 Strategy Goals. These Goals address the key challenges facing Tower Hamlets' heritage. They also respond to government and statutory body guidance, and seek to actively support the Council's

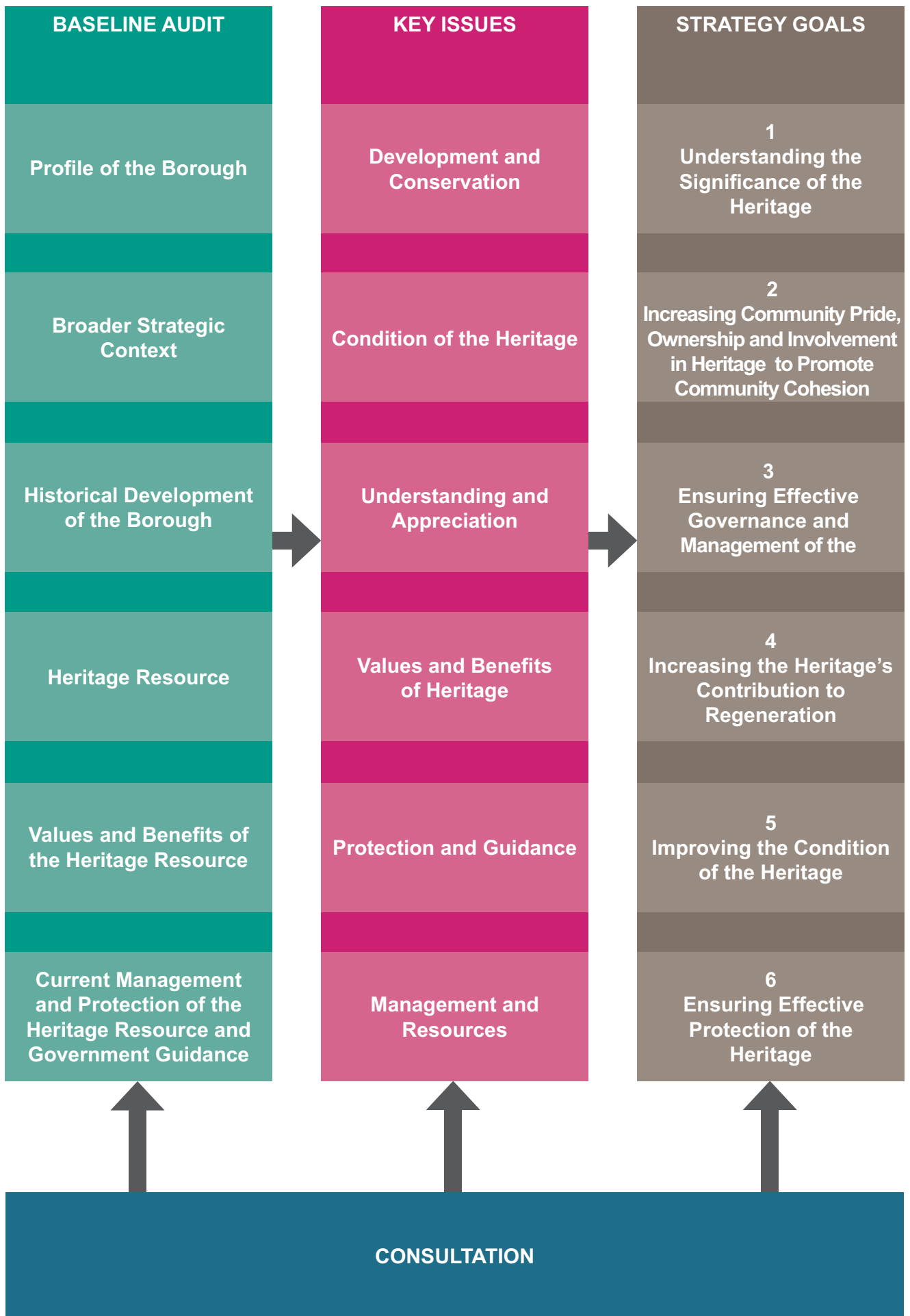


FIGURE 16

Process for Developing the Strategy Goals

broader social and economic regeneration priorities. The Goals are set out below:

- **Strategy Goal 1:** Understanding the significance of the heritage;
- **Strategy Goal 2:** Increasing community pride, ownership and involvement in heritage to promote community cohesion;
- **Strategy Goal 3:** Ensuring effective governance and management of the heritage;
- **Strategy Goal 4:** Increasing the heritage's contribution to regeneration;
- **Strategy Goal 5:** Improving the condition of the heritage; and
- **Strategy Goal 6:** Ensuring effective protection of the heritage.

Each of the Strategy Goals is supported by a number of Work Plan Objectives. These are summarised in the table overleaf.

The heritage included in the Strategy is of international, national and local importance. It is a rich resource that includes: the historic environment, buildings and archaeology; parks, open spaces and views; heritage collections including archives and museum objects; intangible heritage including personal memories and traditional skills, markets and festivals. This is heritage in its broad sense, and it covers designated and non designated heritage resources.

The sheer volume and breadth of heritage that can be found in the Borough is too great to be effectively managed in its entirety, and will therefore require prioritisation. This prioritisation will need to focus around the following aspects:

- Resources that have been designated as being of international, national and local importance;
- The particular significance and values that give heritage resources their importance, and the specific

characteristics (architectural, visual, other) that contribute to that significance;

- The heritage collections and intangible heritage of the Borough, to ensure there is sufficient recognition of the diverse and changing character of the Borough, and the strong history of immigration and trade;
- Areas where regeneration and housing development initiatives are most concentrated, and where the heritage is most at risk; and
- Initiatives that also help to deliver the Council's broader strategic priorities.

The Council will need to take a proactive and strong leadership role to deliver this strategy, particularly where Council-owned heritage is involved. However, conserving and protecting the Borough's heritage will also require the involvement and contribution of a range of community, stakeholder and partner groups.

The Conservation Strategy is aligned with the Borough's Core Strategy 2025, and actively contributes to the key priorities of the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020. It helps to make Tower Hamlets a great place to live, by: managing and sustaining the heritage, and thereby reinforcing the distinctive identity and unique sense of place of the Borough; and also by increasing community enjoyment of the Borough's heritage. It also contributes to a prosperous community in Tower Hamlets, by supporting the further development of the Third Sector, by offering diverse learning opportunities, and through the potential to use historic buildings as premises for local businesses. Through this, it supports the One Tower Hamlets vision by helping improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the Borough.

Strategy Goals- Work Plan Objectives

1: Understanding the Significance of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1: Ensure that the significance of heritage resources is understood 1.2: Build a better understanding of the significance of the intangible heritage and of local heritage, working closely with community groups 1.3: Ensure that planning applications and decisions are based on an understanding of the significance of the heritage 1.4: Develop up to date, integrated information systems on heritage that are easily and widely available
2: Increasing Community Pride, Ownership and Involvement in Heritage to Promote Community Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1: Increase community understanding, pride and enjoyment of the Borough's diverse heritages 2.2: Increase general access to the heritage, and improve connectivity between different heritage resources 2.3: Increase awareness of the heritage and its needs 2.4: Provide opportunities for local communities to develop heritage related skills 2.5: Increase community involvement in the ongoing management and promotion of the heritage 2.6: Encourage the development of strengthened community and external stakeholder resources to participate in heritage
3: Ensuring Effective Governance and Management of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1: Increase co-ordination with key internal Council stakeholders to effectively manage and promote the heritage on an ongoing basis 3.2: Increase the resources available for the Borough's heritage
4: Increasing the Heritage's Contribution to Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1: Work with community, stakeholder and other partner groups to secure economically viable futures for heritage resources and street markets 4.2: Encourage development that is sensitive to, and that celebrates the Borough's heritage 4.3: Increase the contribution that heritage can make to tourism/destination marketing 4.4: Increase the contribution that heritage can make to the sustainability and climate change agenda 4.5: Increase recognition of how heritage contributes to regeneration, and of the benefits this brings
5: Improving the Condition of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1: Continue to actively seek to remove all heritage resources from the Heritage at Risk register 5.2: Develop and implement an integrated monitoring and maintenance regime for the heritage that includes all heritage owners 5.3: Proactively encourage heritage owners to use appropriate resources when undertaking works to their properties
6: Ensuring Effective Protection of the Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1: Ensure that the key heritage resources that contribute to an understanding of Tower Hamlets' history and development are included within the Borough's designations 6.2: Increase the clarity around what developments are permitted and appropriate in Conservation Areas 6.3: Increase the protection available to locally important heritage resources 6.4: Increase the protection for the setting of key heritage resources and key views 6.5: Increase the protection available to the intangible heritage of the Borough 6.6: Increase enforcement to protect the heritage

Strategy Goal 1: Understanding the Significance of the Heritage

The Government's recently published Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) on Planning for the Historic Environment emphasises the importance of understanding what is significant in heritage terms about a heritage resource. This enables a proportionate response to change – a focus on conserving and protecting those aspects and attributes that contribute to significance, rather than a focus on all of the heritage for its own sake. It also helps ensure that decision-making is evidence-based, and therefore more transparent. Understanding the significance of the heritage also informs priorities around learning and interpretation, and around building community understanding and interest in the heritage. This Strategy Goal plays an important role in the delivery of all the Strategy Goals in the Conservation Strategy.

Objective 1.1: Ensure that the significance of heritage resources is understood

The significance of a heritage resource can be defined in terms of historic, archaeological, architectural, artistic or community interest. It articulates those aspects that have the greatest value to people, now and in the future, and that are therefore the most important to conserve.

To ensure that the significance of heritage is placed at the heart of decision-making that affects the heritage resource, it will be necessary to develop clear statements of significance for heritage resources. These statements will need to specify the particular characteristics (architectural, urban, visual and functional) that actively contribute to the significance of a particular resource, and that are priority requirements for conservation. In developing these statements, the views of community groups should also be obtained as appropriate. Once developed, these statements could also lead to a refinement of heritage boundaries.

Objective 1.2: Build a better understanding of the significance of the intangible heritage and of local heritage, working closely with community groups

Tower Hamlets is characterised by key themes of trade and industry, migration and change that continue to this day. This has resulted in a rich fabric of intangible heritage and local heritage that is experiencing an ongoing process of development and evolution.

There are a number of different aspects to the intangible heritage, from historic street markets to more contemporary events and festivals, from oral histories and personal memories to different values and uses of a heritage resource, from performing arts to social practices and traditional skills. It is as important to protect the intangible heritage as it is to protect the more tangible heritage resources. It is also important to protect local heritage as well as designated heritage resource. To do so, a better understanding will need to be built both of what intangible and local heritage exists in the Borough, and also of the significance of that heritage.

Objective 1.3: Ensure that planning applications and decisions are based on an understanding of the significance of the heritage

PPS 5 also emphasises the importance of using significance to inform local planning decisions and consents. Applicants should be required to consider the impact on significance in their applications – this will help ensure a greater chance of applications being accepted, and reduce the burden of time and cost on both applicants and the Council. Decisions need to be based on an understanding of the nature, extent and level of significance. Applications for consent where the extent of impact on significance cannot be fully understood from the application should ideally not be accepted. An understanding of the significance of the heritage will also assist in making robust decisions where the Borough's heritage needs to be balanced against other key Council's objectives.

Objective 1.4: Develop up to date, integrated information systems on heritage that are easily and widely available

Good understanding of heritage significance needs to be supported by good quality information systems. At present, while there are many sources of information about the heritage resources, they tend to be held in different locations within Tower Hamlets, and not all Council officers are aware of what resources are available or of how best to access them.

There would therefore be significant benefit in developing an up-to-date and accurate centralised electronic database of heritage information that would be integrated and easily accessible. This database needs to include information on historic landscapes and green infrastructure (including parks, open spaces, squares, trees, statues and street furniture), as well as information on the built heritage (including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Locally Listed Buildings and other built heritage resources).

It should include statements of significance as well as information on location. It will need to be updated in the most timely and efficient way as changes are made to the status of heritage resources (for example as local or statutory lists are updated) or as new information emerges from planning applications and development works. It would further be beneficial to develop and maintain a centralised catalogue of all collections relating to the Borough's heritage.

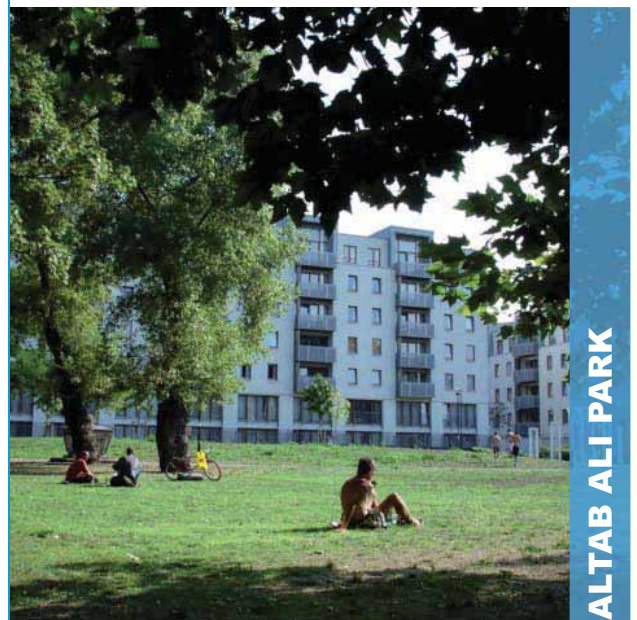
The database is separate from the Historic Environment Record (HER), which is maintained by English Heritage, but it will be important to ensure that information in the database is consistent with, and connected to the HER and other information held by English Heritage and other key stakeholders, advisors and organisations (including adjacent boroughs). This will help ensure consistency and prevent duplication of work. The database should also be linked with the Borough website.



BRICK LANE



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Strategy Goal 2: Increasing Community Pride, Ownership and Involvement in Heritage to Promote Community Cohesion

Tower Hamlets is a Borough of diverse communities and diverse heritage. Much of that heritage is owned, managed and used by organisations and individuals other than the Council. Increasing community understanding and enjoyment, pride and ownership of the breadth of heritage in the Borough (including the heritage of more recent communities), awareness of its significance and needs, and involvement in its ongoing management and maintenance is critical. It helps to promote mutual interest and respect for the Borough's diverse heritage, and to encourage wider and informed participation in sustaining it - which in turn has a significant impact on its overall condition and protection. Young people are an important part of this. As part of this, increased engagement, pride and ownership of the heritage will promote wider community cohesion.

Objective 2.1: Increase community understanding, pride and enjoyment of the Borough's diverse heritages

Increasing community understanding, pride and enjoyment of the Borough's heritage is a key first step in building engagement and involvement. Achieving this requires increasing the information that is made available about that heritage – but doing so in a fun and informative way that appeals to and has meaning for all sections of the community, including those that have historically been harder to reach (such as young people, diverse ethnic groups, the less affluent and people with disabilities). This will require tailoring the messages that are conveyed, and the media tools that are used to convey those messages. This could include, for example:

- Interpretation panels and heritage inspired public art, orientation and signage;

- Fun informal learning opportunities – including heritage trails for adults or children (such as the Millennium Pathway at the Archbishop's Park in Lambeth that celebrates people, places and events that have made Lambeth special between 1,000 and 2,000AD, or the guided trail delivered through visitors' own mobile phones at the Roman town of Caistor near Norwich), learning DVDs and exhibits in libraries and museums, and festival activities that relate to the heritage of the Borough, potentially connected to the Festival of British Archaeology;
- Formal educational activities and resources specifically tailored to the National Curriculum for school pupils and teachers;
- Outreach activities with schools and community groups, including lectures and 'show and tell' sessions;
- A green or brown plaque scheme commemorating interesting and notable past local residents, as has proved very popular in the London Borough of Southwark;
- Activation of the waterspace within the Docklands, through moorings and other water-based activities;
- A heritage portal/micro-site (potentially linked to IZWE) where information and downloadable resources relating to the Borough's heritage are consolidated in one easy to find location, and are freely available to the community. This should also be a tool for two-way communication and consultation, including online forums and discussion groups, as well as being a source of information. It should also contain links to other relevant websites, including for example the East London History Society website, the Tower Hamlets Grid for Learning, the This Borough website, and social network sites.

Increasing community enjoyment of the Borough's heritage in this way can help

further build local pride in the heritage, which in turn can lead to greater sense of local ownership and greater care and protection. Initiatives here should build on the resources already in place and the successes already achieved, for example through the work of the Local History Library and Archives, and through the Beauchamp floating classroom that already navigates the waterways of East London.

Objective 2.2: Increase general access to the heritage, and improve connectivity between different heritage resources

A key part of increasing understanding and enjoyment of the heritage is increasing access to it. Opening hours and admission prices should be reviewed to optimise access and the cost of providing access, and physical accessibility reviewed to ensure reasonable alignment with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

In addition, to encourage both local communities and visitors to the Borough to explore more than the traditional ‘honeypot’ sites (such as the Tower of London or Brick Lane), it will also be important to improve the connectivity between different heritage resources – for example by emphasising historic links in interpretation and learning materials, or by improving physical links through pedestrian and cycling routes (including leveraging canal towpaths). Routes should ideally be developed in accordance with Legible London principles.

Objective 2.3: Increase awareness of the heritage and its needs

Achieving increased understanding and enjoyment of the Borough’s heritage also requires building increased awareness of that heritage. Increased awareness of the heritage and its needs also helps ensure that proposed works to existing heritage resources and new planned developments are aligned with and protect the heritage significance, and the attributes closely associated with that significance.



ROMAN ROAD WORKSHOP



* The cartoons were produced by an artist commissioned to capture and represent the comments of those that attended the Consultation events organised for the Conservation Strategy



TOWER HILL

Increased awareness will happen in part through activities related to interpretation, learning and education (see Objective 2.1), but will also need to be supported by an active programme of marketing and promotion (inside and outside the Borough), including outreach activities and roadshows.

This could include, for example, supplements in newspapers (such as a bilingual column in the history pages of East End Life) or other community publications, or information on heritage events/activities in listings sections. A communications campaign could be launched where heritage is put at the top of the agenda across the Council media for a dedicated week or month, similar to the approach taken to the Healthy Borough and Safer Street campaigns. Production companies could also be encouraged to film in the Borough, making use of the Borough's distinctive heritage.

Outreach and roadshow activities could focus in particular on those groups who own key heritage resources or who are likely to have most impact on the physical development of the Borough, while marketing activities could be undertaken by heritage owners and managers as well as by Council.

Objective 2.4: Provide opportunities for local communities to develop heritage related skills

There are many advantages to supporting community skills development around heritage – by providing tangible benefits, it encourages local communities to engage more and take a more active role with the heritage; it also helps to build the necessary capabilities to support the sustainability of the heritage on an ongoing basis.

Opportunities here could include supplementing any heritage grant with advice and skills training around ongoing maintenance, establishing a heritage or conservation apprentice scheme for local

young people (potentially as part of a Future Jobs Fund application), and incorporating heritage skills as part of intensive training programmes that already exist, such as Skillsmatch. A range of heritage related skills (both traditional and new) could be promoted through these schemes, including research, interpretation, conservation, carpentry and crafts. If sufficient demand were established, a heritage skills training or community education centre could be established, potentially in a converted historic building.

Objective 2.5: Increase community involvement in the ongoing management and promotion of the heritage

The more involved that communities become in heritage and its ongoing promotion and management, the greater the sense of engagement and ultimately ownership of that heritage - and the increased likelihood of its long term sustainability. This is particularly important given that the Council neither owns all of the heritage, nor has the management time and financial resources to safeguard it all for current and future generations.

Increased community involvement will include proposals to seek community engagement – from financially supporting heritage conservation, to identifying appropriate re-uses for obsolescent buildings; from nominating locally important buildings and areas for designation, to leading on their restoration, renovation and maintenance; from providing a venue for presentations and activities to supporting promotion through publicity material and grass-root activities; from designing heritage trails to organising programmes of activities and events to celebrate the Borough's heritage; from contributing to local history records, oral history projects or interpretation material to setting up and managing heritage websites and online discussion forums. This will also involve participation in the Council's management of the heritage, for example at the 'You Decide' event, where residents will be invited to vote for a possible heritage

related improvement project. Greater public consultation on the future of heritage and measures to engage the widest range of Borough residents will also be promoted in the detailed Strategy Implementation Plan.

In the historic town of Richmond in North Yorkshire, for example, locals undertook to restore and renovate the old local railway station, and have now created a successful community and visitor destination which earned top prize at the National Rail Heritage Awards in 2008.

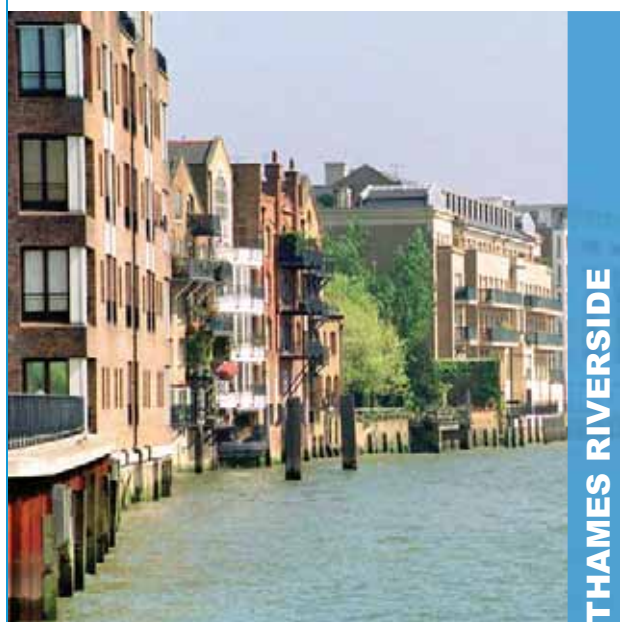
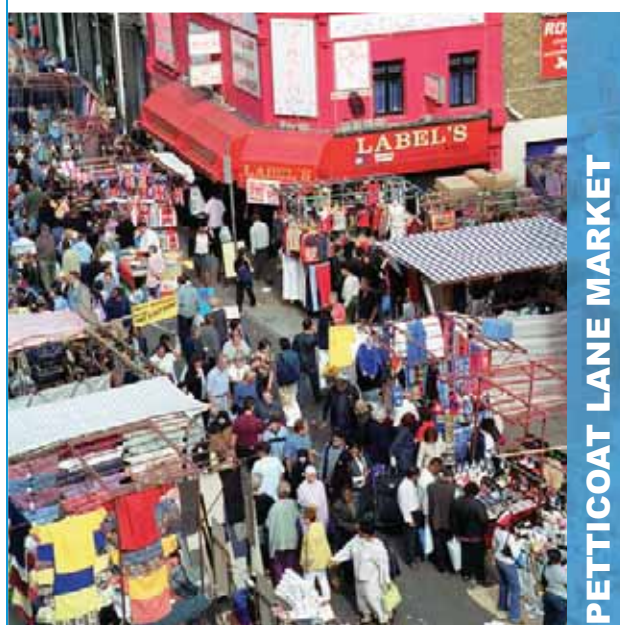
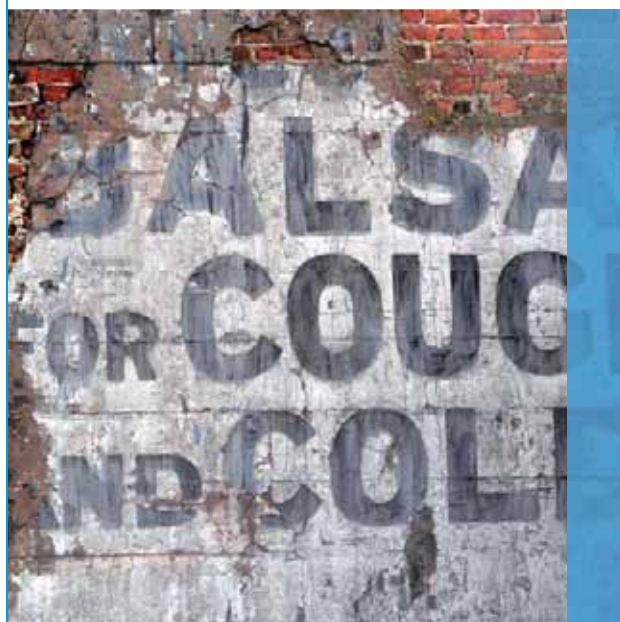
This involvement would build on community consultation that already takes place today around heritage, and that will continue in the future - such as consultation on designation, character appraisals and management guidelines of Conservation Areas, and consultation on the Conservation Strategy itself. A variety of community groups could be involved in these initiatives, such as local schools, youth groups, youth forum, third sector organisations including local history groups, residents' associations, diverse ethnic community groups, and volunteers.

In the London Borough of Lambeth, for example, local residents of a Conservation Area artisans dwelling estate contributed to a comprehensive residents' design guide and history of the estate which was delivered to all of the community.

In addition, heritage owners could be encouraged to place more emphasis on regular monitoring and maintenance, and to ensure they use appropriate experts and resources when undertaking works to their properties (see Strategy Goal 5 for more details). In support of increased community involvement, it will be important to ensure timely Council response to community communications and initiatives.

Objective 2.6: Encourage the development of strengthened community and external stakeholder resources to participate in heritage

In order to increase involvement in heritage and its ongoing management, there is



PETTICOAT LANE MARKET

THAMES RIVERSIDE

a need to strengthen the resources that community and external stakeholder groups can contribute – both in terms of time and also skills. For existing large organisations (such as Canary Wharf or Tower Hamlets Schools Ltd), this could take the form of nominating a consistent point of contact for heritage (such as a Heritage Advisor) that the Council could build a productive, collaborative relationship with.

For other bodies (such as British Waterways or heritage societies), this could involve forming a partnership to leverage in-depth knowledge and contribute to the development of site specific assessments and plans – such as Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines.

Partnerships could also be developed with neighbouring Councils to jointly address heritage on Council boundaries – including, for example, joint initiatives or pilot projects with Hackney to apply for funding and address buildings at risk in areas adjacent to the City (such as Shoreditch).

Opportunities could also be identified to strengthen the voluntary sector for heritage – whether through existing organisations extending their remit, the establishment of new organisations, or by further promoting the Conservation and Design Advisory Panel (CADAP). The CADAP could also broaden its membership to include, for example, community representatives such as Residents' Associations.

In addition, community resources could provide further support for the Council's Heritage Champion – for example in the form of a Young Heritage Champion and/or a Community Heritage Champion. These champions would play an important role in helping to create a bridge between local communities, the Council, and heritage conservation and management.

Ensuring that the Conservation Strategy is effectively implemented, and that the Borough's heritage resources are conserved, enhanced and protected so they

can be enjoyed by local communities, will require strong and integrated governance and management within the Council.

Strategy Goal 3: Ensuring Effective Governance and Management of the Heritage

Objective 3.1: Increase co-ordination with key internal Council stakeholders to effectively manage and promote the heritage on an ongoing basis

Management responsibility for the breadth of Tower Hamlets' heritage is divided between a number of Council departments and functions (such as development, design and conservation, local history library and archives, and parks and open spaces). In addition, many of the heritage resources are impacted by, or have impact on a further range of Council departments (including for example strategic transport, public realm, housing regeneration, children's services and cultural services).

Effective delivery of a Conservation Strategy that incorporates the broad range of heritage in its remit, and that seeks to actively contribute to the Borough's strategic priorities, will require increased and effective coordination between these key internal stakeholders. For example, the Development, Design and Conservation team could be more integrally involved in decision-making on heritage related planning cases.

It will also require more integrated planning. The relevant key strategies, policy documents and programmes that the various departments have developed (such as the Core Strategy 2025 and Development Management DPDs; Public Realm, Street Markets, Third Sector and Local History Library and Archives strategies; Town Centre Implementation; Team Plans; and the Building Schools for the Future programme) need to be aligned and mutually reinforcing with the Conservation Strategy.

The quality of the public realm, for example, can have a significant impact on the historic environment and the overall condition of a Conservation Area. Low level intervention such as removal of street clutter could have significant value, and a tree strategy for the Borough (which also reviews the role of the London Plane Tree) could also benefit the historic environment.

In addition, there needs to be a good understanding among relevant Council stakeholders not only of the Conservation Strategy itself, but also of the key principles and documents that underpin it - such as the Government's recently published Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) on Planning for the Historic Environment, and English Heritage's Conservation Principles. As part of this, there would be benefit in providing newly elected members with heritage information as part of their information packs. This increased awareness and understanding will help encourage Council stakeholders to make decisions that also benefit the Borough's heritage.

Objective 3.2: Increase the resources available for the Borough's heritage

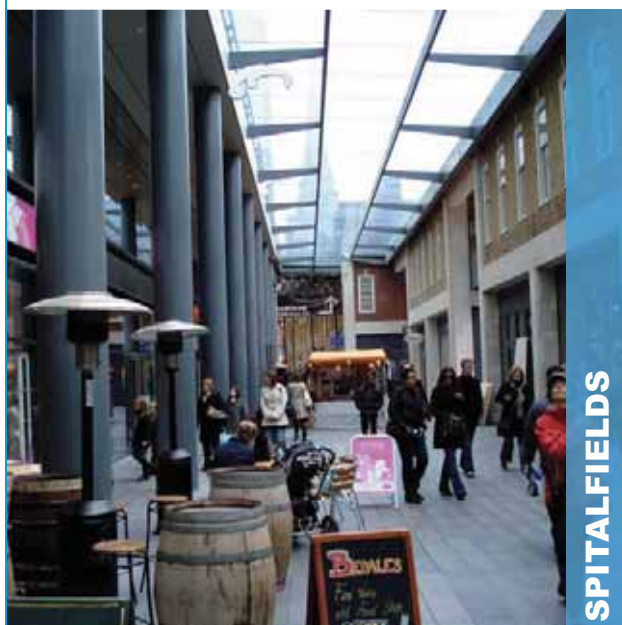
In addition to increased community involvement and closer collaboration within Council and with other stakeholders, delivery of the Conservation Strategy will also require an increase in resources, both management and financial.

Within Council, there would be benefit in recruiting a Community Development and Engagement Officer with the necessary skills and experience to deliver the increased emphasis on community understanding, engagement and involvement. In addition, there would also be benefit in reviewing, and potentially enhancing the role of the Heritage Champion, in line with increased focus on more integrated and proactive working within the Council, and on closer partnership with external stakeholders and other voluntary organisations.

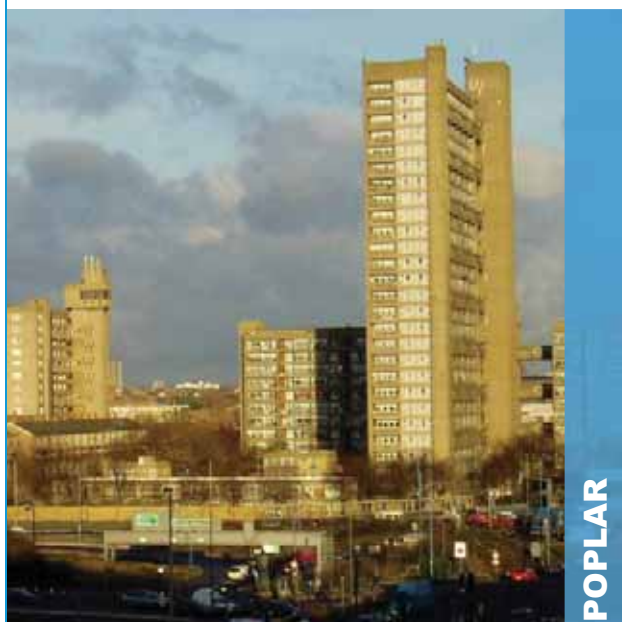
In addition to increased management resources, it will also be important to



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continue to explore opportunities to increase the financial resources available to support the Borough's heritage.

These opportunities could include both public funding sources (such as the Heritage Lottery Fund) and also opportunities for increased contribution from the commercial sector, for example through the Community Infrastructure Levy or Section 106 agreements – although the potential from Section 106 agreements is inevitably more constrained in the current economic climate (see the Implementation Plan for fuller discussion of potential funding sources). As part of this, there would be benefit in maintaining a register of funding sources to enable co-ordinated action and funding applications. In taking this forward the Council will evolve a detailed local heritage at risk register to set priorities for resources.

Tower Hamlets' heritage already plays an important role in the Borough's ongoing development and regeneration, and in contributing to the Borough's sustainability agenda.

The distinctiveness of the Borough's history and development gives Tower Hamlets a unique identity and sense of place, while the historic parks and open spaces, trees and landscapes provide important environmental benefits and access to green infrastructure. The successive waves of development and immigration have created a tradition of adaptive re-use in the Borough that continues to this day, with a number of historic buildings successfully brought back into economically or socially viable use (such as the old Truman Brewery). A number of key heritage resources (such as the Tower of London and Whitechapel Art Gallery) actively contribute to tourism and the visitor economy, and also contribute to social inclusion, education, culture and recreation agendas.

Continuing to increase the contribution of heritage to regeneration and sustainable development will not only support delivery

of some of the key strategic priorities for the Borough and for London more broadly, it will also help to ensure the ongoing protection and conservation of the Borough's heritage.

Strategy Goal 4: Increasing the Heritage's Contribution to Regeneration

Objective 4.1: Work with community, stakeholder and other partner groups to secure economically viable futures for heritage resources by reusing historic buildings

Heritage resources are often most effectively managed and sustained over the long term if they are being actively used, and if that use is at least economically self-sustaining.

For those heritage buildings that are currently empty and whose future sustainability is at risk because of lack of occupancy (such as schools for example), it will be important to identify opportunities for sensitive adaptation and re-use that are economically viable, in keeping with the significance and value of the building, and aligned with community needs. As well as effectively protecting the heritage, successful re-use of historic buildings also actively contributes to regeneration priorities by, for example, helping address issues around housing shortages or by providing premises for local businesses. Here we will work with all building owners and housing providers in a pro-active project.

The issue of economic viability is also relevant to the Borough's street markets. As well as being an important part of the Borough's history, these markets also play an important role in meeting community needs and contributing to the visitor economy. For those that are not currently performing well, it will be important to identify opportunities to increase their use, vibrancy and ongoing sustainability (see Street Markets Strategy for more details).

Objective 4.2: Encourage development that is sensitive to, and that celebrates the Borough's heritage

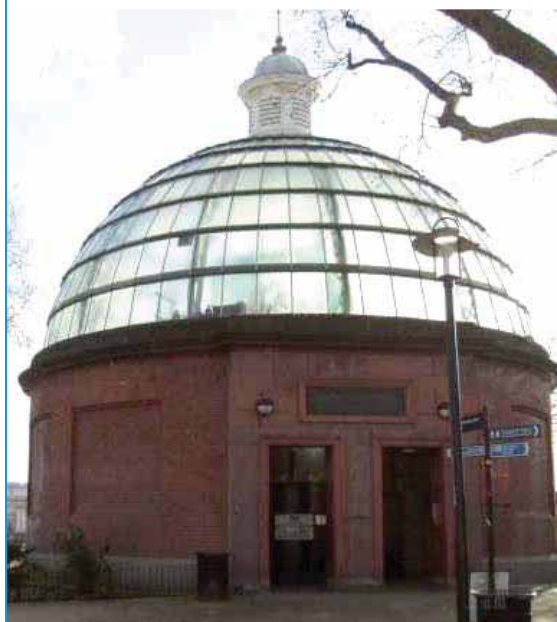
Significant new development is a reality of Tower Hamlets' regeneration over the next few years. Development that is sensitive to, and that celebrates the Borough's heritage will not only protect that heritage, it will also support the unique sense of place and identity that the heritage provides. As part of this, developers, Registered Social Landlords, and community and regeneration organisations could be encouraged to bring forward high quality and imaginative schemes that deliver wider objectives for the local area, but that also have identifiable benefits for the Borough's heritage and significance, and that respect and harmonise with the setting of the heritage.

In addition, a prioritised list of public realm improvements (including removing street clutter from Conservation Areas, or introducing public art) could also be identified that would provide the most integrated benefits to the Borough – conservation and enhancement of the heritage, and improved quality of life for communities and visitors to the Borough. This would be in alignment with the Council's Public Art Policy for Tower Hamlets and its planned Public Realm Strategy.

These initiatives could be further supported by the establishment of heritage and design awards to recognise best practice in this area. Aberdeenshire Council, for example, run the Aberdeenshire Design Awards, which aim to stimulate and develop a deeper and broader interest in traditional architectural surroundings. In 2008, an award was given to The Walking Way in Fraserburgh, an art and landscape intervention that included as its key central element a curving sculptural structure inspired by the town's rail and maritime history.

Objective 4.3: Increase the contribution that heritage can make to tourism

Tower Hamlets has a wealth of internationally, nationally and locally



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ENTRANCE**



VICTORIA PARK



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important heritage resources which are broadly distributed across the Borough. Despite this, tourism activity and focus is currently concentrated on a small number of 'honeypot' sites (for example the Tower of London and Brick Lane). There would be benefit in dispersing tourism activity more broadly across the Borough - this would help spread the benefits from tourism (both economic development and heritage conservation benefits) more evenly, and also relieve the pressure and impact on the 'honeypot' sites themselves.

A key opportunity here is the development of a tourism/destination marketing strategy that would identify a number of additional heritage tourism clusters across the Borough, and that would identify opportunities to connect those clusters and encourage visitor movement between them. This could involve the development of a centralised Tourist Office where locals and visitors could access information about the Borough and its heritage. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games also present significant opportunities, and could drive a significant increase in the numbers of visitors to the Borough.

Objective 4.4: Increase the contribution that heritage can make to the sustainability and climate change agenda

Sustainability and the climate change agenda has increased in prominence over the last few years, and now forms a key part of national, regional and local agendas. The historic environment already makes a contribution to the sustainability agenda in a variety of ways. The focus on adaptation and reuse of heritage resources, which has long been a characteristic of Tower Hamlets, reduces the consumption of building materials and energy, and reduces waste. Conservation of historic buildings with appropriate materials and labour from local sources also reduces emissions, the costs of transport and its harmful impact on the environment.

However, there is a need and opportunity to increase this contribution further – by

ensuring that all applications for works to the Borough's heritage resource include consideration of sustainability impacts and opportunities as appropriate, and by establishing a grant scheme to encourage owners of heritage resources to make appropriate adjustments to improve the carbon performance of their building - on the understanding that any such improvements do not significantly undermine the significance associated with those buildings. The development of an SPD in this area would help provide further guidance.

These principles could also be showcased through a pilot project where, for example, a historic building or Conservation Area is renovated to improve its eco-performance without compromising its historic interest. This pilot approach has worked successfully in the London Borough of Camden (Eco-House Project) and in the London Borough of Lambeth (Sustainable Conservation Area Initiative).

Objective 4.5: Increase recognition of how heritage contributes to regeneration, and of the benefits this brings

As described above, heritage already plays an important role in contributing to Tower Hamlets' ongoing development and regeneration, and this contribution in turn helps to protect and sustain that heritage over the long term. Increasing understanding and recognition of this contribution, and the benefits that it brings, will facilitate an increase in the scale of contribution – as partner, stakeholder and community groups become more receptive to the value of integrating heritage within their own priorities.

Key here will be to undertake: a baseline study and ongoing monitoring of the role of heritage in attracting investments, residents, businesses or tourists to the area; an assessment of the contribution of heritage to the public realm, quality of life and leisure; and an assessment of the contribution of heritage-led regeneration to the rejuvenation of town centres. This will

need to be integrated with other ongoing studies around local market economics. Findings could then be actively promoted and celebrated, for example through features in general newspapers, on the Council website/heritage portal, and in presentations to stakeholders.

There have been limited comprehensive surveys on the condition of the heritage in the Borough, but there are indications that in some areas the heritage has suffered from inappropriate works, lack of maintenance, graffiti and vandalism. Heritage whose condition has been allowed to deteriorate too far runs the risk of irretrievably losing its value, and it is important therefore to focus on maintaining the condition of the heritage on an ongoing basis.

Strategy Goal 5: Improving the Condition of the Heritage

Objective 5.1: Continue to actively seek to remove all heritage resources from the Heritage at Risk register

The Heritage at Risk register identifies those heritage resources of national significance that are most in danger of losing their value. Continuing to address the issues associated with these resources needs to be a key priority action. Given the nature of some of the issues facing the heritage, and given also that many of the resources are not under Council ownership or that resolving the issues may require working with partners, this is likely to be a multi year process. Where there are Conservation Areas at risk, efforts should be linked to the Public Realm Team's service projects of graffiti removal and fly posting in Conservation Areas.

As part of this, if limited progress is being made on addressing the issues, the Planning Enforcement team will need to be actively involved (and also the Public Realm and Environmental Health Enforcement Teams, as appropriate), and a range of enforcement measures considered



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(including, if appropriate, compulsory purchase of heritage resources). There would also be benefit in publicising the Heritage at Risk register more broadly and prominently both locally and nationally. This will help increase awareness of those resources that are at risk, and could also help prompt further support in resolving the issues that they face, as well as matching new uses with heritage at risk.

Objective 5.2: Develop and implement an integrated monitoring and maintenance regime for the heritage that includes all heritage owners

In parallel with addressing the immediate conservation priorities that are identified through the Heritage at Risk register, a key step in improving the condition of the heritage more generally is to establish a regular monitoring and maintenance regime. This needs to take into account the findings from the Conservation Area Appraisals, and should link to the 'Total Place' pilot project, where the Council would provide 3-5 service standard commitments to residents in return for an agreement to follow set 'management guidelines'. Regular monitoring and maintenance will enable any issues related to the condition of the heritage resource to be identified and addressed early on, before they become prohibitively large scale or complex to address.

In addition, systems and processes can be established to facilitate a quick response to heritage owners (e.g. by letter) if inspections reveal that a particular heritage resource is in need of maintenance. Heritage owners can also be encouraged to build monitoring and maintenance into construction contracts, so that maintenance regimes are formally established, and also encouraged to contribute to a 'Maintain our Heritage' service. 'Maintain our Heritage' was first launched as a pilot scheme in Bath, and focused on providing an inspection service for historic buildings in return for a small fee from owners. Where appropriate, heritage owners can also be encouraged to develop a Management Plan for their heritage resources.

Objective 5.3: Proactively encourage heritage owners to use appropriate resources when undertaking works to their properties

Some of the issues relating to the condition of the heritage resource are driven by inexperienced contractors carrying out inappropriate works. Works carried out on heritage resources require a good understanding of the significance of that resource, and therefore of what works would be appropriate. Heritage owners have sometimes found it difficult to source appropriate contractors or crafts people, so there would be benefit in developing an easily accessible centralised database of appropriately qualified companies/individual practitioners, together with a database of outlets where appropriate materials and fixtures for heritage resources could be found.

In addition, the use of appropriate resources could be further encouraged by the establishment of an awards scheme that recognises high quality works and that helps to foster pride in the heritage of the property, and by continuing to offer grants for works.

In addition to increasing community understanding and involvement in the heritage, and to increasing the contribution of heritage to regeneration, the future sustainability of heritage will also need to be safeguarded by increasing its protection through the planning system - to ensure that its significance is conserved and sustained within the context of development and a changing built environment.

Although there is good protection already in place for much of the Borough's heritage, there are still some important gaps – there is limited detail on specific characteristics that contribute to significance, which can result in inappropriate developments; there are key heritage structures or themes that are important to the Borough's history and sense of identity that are not currently included in designations; and protection for locally important heritage is not currently as strong as it could be.

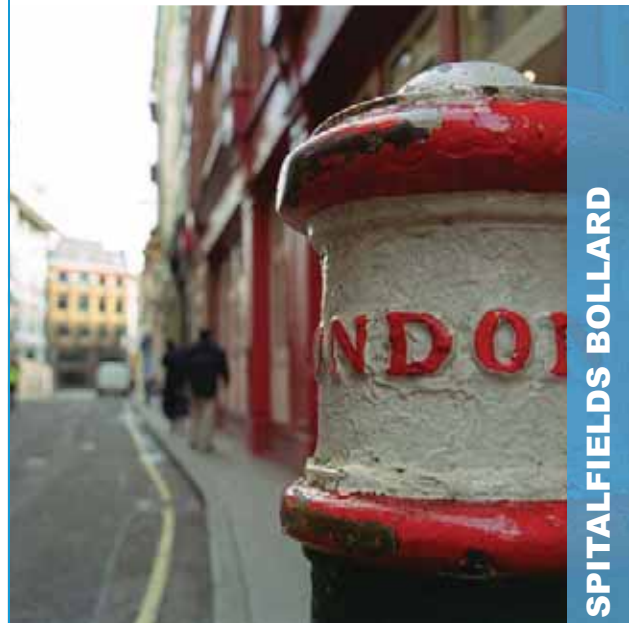
Key elements will also need to be incorporated into the Local Development Framework through relevant Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) - including for example through a Development Management DPD, Site and Place-Making DPD, and Urban Design SPD.

Strategy Goal 6: Ensuring Effective Protection of the Heritage

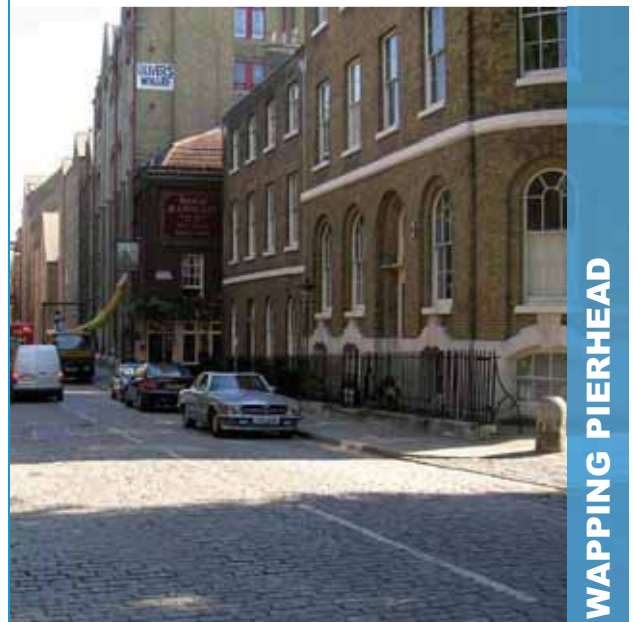
Objective 6.1: Ensure that the key heritage resources that contribute to an understanding of Tower Hamlets' history and development are included within the Borough's designations

The heritage that is designated and recognised through the planning system should include resources that are considered to be of international and national importance, and also resources of local value that play an important role in the history and (ongoing) development of the Borough. An initial view of the range of heritage resources that have been designated suggests that there may be some areas currently under-represented by the designations (including for example the dock basins in the West India Dock Conservation Area, and the basins in the Coldharbour Conservation Area).

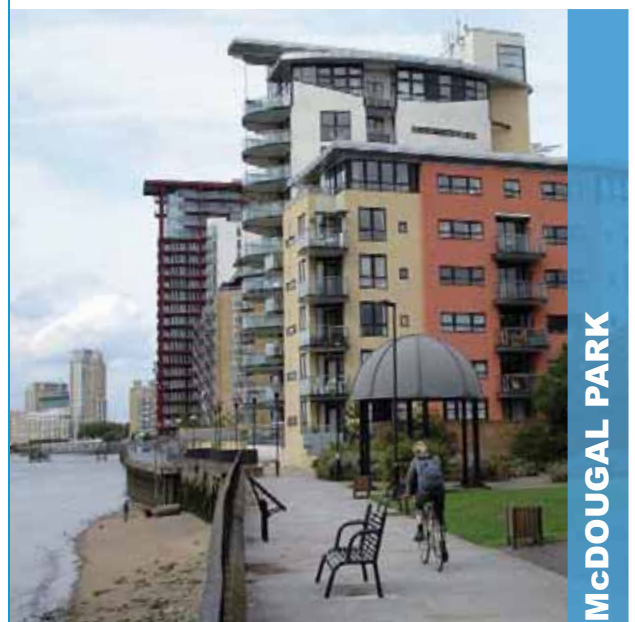
A thematic study should therefore be undertaken to identify whether there are any key gaps that should be addressed by additional designations/listings, and to determine whether Conservation Areas include within their boundaries all heritage resources that contribute to their significance. This study should take into account the historic characterisation work used to inform the Core Strategy 2025. Themes that this study could focus on include, for example, industrial heritage and factories, modern heritage, urban townscapes and street signs, art deco heritage, pubs and pie and mash shops, and historic schools, libraries and learning centres.



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Objective 6.2: Increase the clarity around what developments are permitted and appropriate in Conservation Areas

One of the key challenges facing the Borough's heritage resource is inappropriate works. Continued inappropriate works can have a damaging impact on the heritage resource, and can significantly undermine its significance and values (such as at Hackney Road for example).

Increasing specificity and clarity around what works are appropriate and permitted (for example by developing more detailed Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines, in line with the approach being taken for Fish Island and that address issues specific to the historic parks contained within the Conservation Areas, or by developing more detailed lists of permissive development and tailored design guides) should help to address this issue, as should engaging more proactively with developers.

It should also help to reduce the burden on both applicant and Council management time – by increasing the likelihood of planning submissions proposing appropriate works, and by reducing the need for enforcement against inappropriate works.

Objective 6.3: Increase the protection available to locally important heritage resources

Although internationally and nationally important heritage resources in the Borough are clearly recognised for protection in the planning system, it is also important to ensure that locally important heritage is also fully recognised and protected. Locally important heritage is defined as either heritage that contributes to understanding and appreciation of the history and development of the Borough, or heritage that is important to local community groups. It is therefore an important part of supporting the 'One Tower Hamlets' Vision that is set out in the 2020 Community Plan. This is the type of heritage that is often most at risk when significant development takes

place in an area, and there are significant changes to the built environment.

Protection for locally important buildings could be strengthened through the establishment of policies as part of the Development Management DPD (see Figure 1). In addition, a new designation for 'Locally Distinctive Areas' could be established that recognises areas that are distinctive and that actively contribute to the local environment, but that are not considered significant enough to be designated as Conservation Areas (such as the Isle of Dogs for example).

This approach has proved successful in elsewhere in the UK – the London Borough of Croydon, for example, has designated Areas/Neighbourhoods of Special Character (ASCs), while the concept of Areas of Local Distinctiveness was introduced in the Coventry Development Plan 2001, with Supplementary Planning Guidance produced for designated areas.

Objective 6.4: Increase the protection for the setting of key heritage resources and key views

Views and visual relationships (within, into and out of Tower Hamlets) are an important part of both the heritage and the modern experience of the Borough. They enhance the experience of understanding the history of Tower Hamlets, and also help orientation around the Borough. In addition to challenges surrounding protection of locally important heritage, Tower Hamlets also faces issues around the setting of the heritage resources and key views, with developments already encroaching and impacting on the physical and visual context (for example at the Tower of London, and at St Anne's Church Conservation Area).

Statements will need to be developed that clearly delineate the setting of a heritage resource, and that specify what type of development would be most appropriate there. A hierarchy of key views also needs to be established. Protection for the setting and key views will then need to be

strengthened through the establishment of policies as part of the Development Management DPD.

Objective 6.5: Increase the protection available to the intangible heritage of the Borough

In addition to protecting the physical heritage resource of the Borough, and the setting and key views associated with that resource, it is also important to ensure that the intangible heritage is protected through the spatial planning process – that no changes take place to the physical structure of the Borough that would undermine the existence or viability of the various markets, contemporary events and festivals, performing arts, social practices, traditional crafts, and other aspects of intangible heritage. There would therefore be benefit in establishing policies as part of the Development Management DPD for the protection and enhancement of markets, festivals and other components of the intangible heritage.

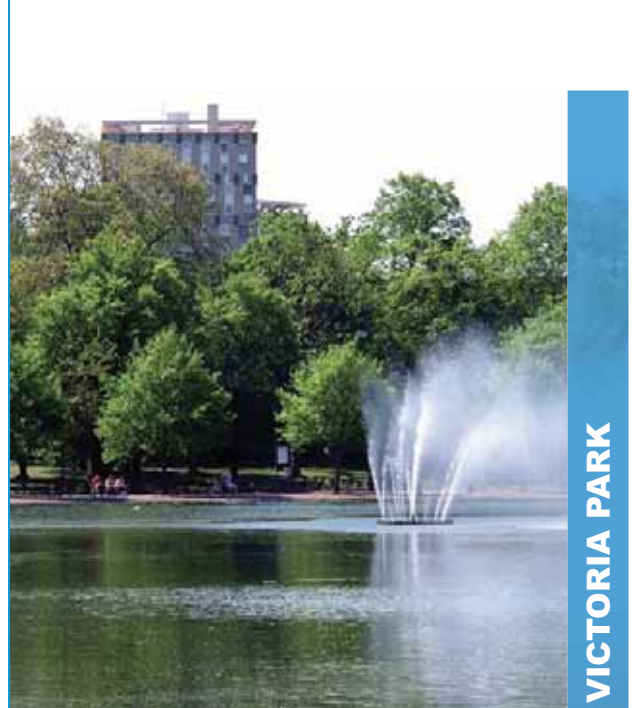
Objective 6.6: Increase enforcement to protect the heritage

Strengthening protection through the planning system and through planning policies is an important part of protecting the heritage resource. At the same time, however, it is also important to ensure that those planning policies are well enforced. At present, anecdotal evidence suggests that inappropriate and unauthorised works continue to take place to heritage resources.

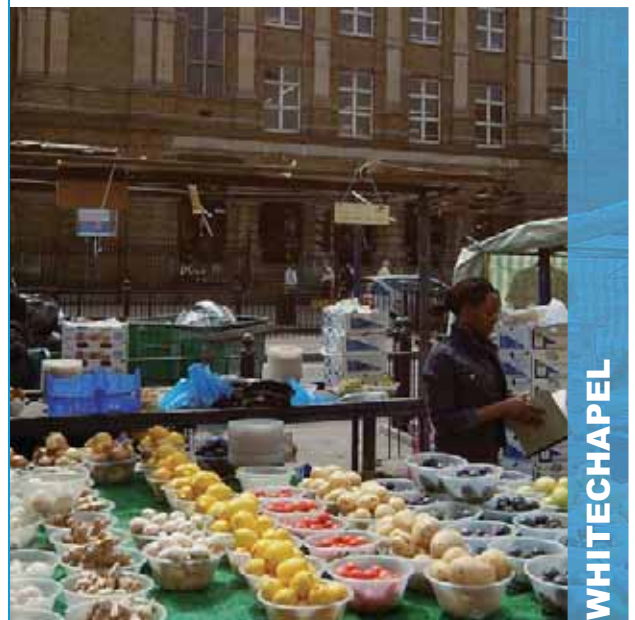
A new and more regular monitoring system will help to deter owners from undertaking unauthorised works, but it will also be important to publicise enforcement actions more strongly, for example on the Council website/heritage portal and in letters to owners of heritage resources, and to ensure that enforcement actions, including removal of unauthorised works, are prominently carried out as appropriate. In addition, for larger scale works, or works to particularly sensitive heritage resources, the Council



HISTORIC SIGNAGE



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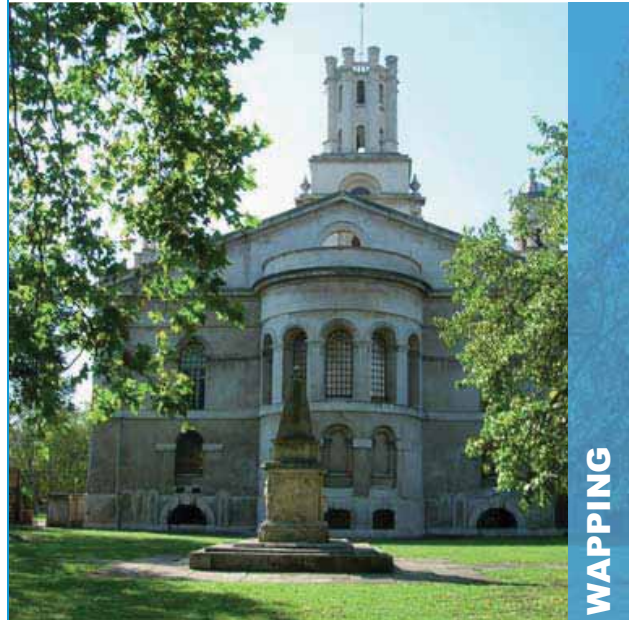
WHITECHAPEL

should consider making planning permission subject to the use of appropriately skilled contractors.

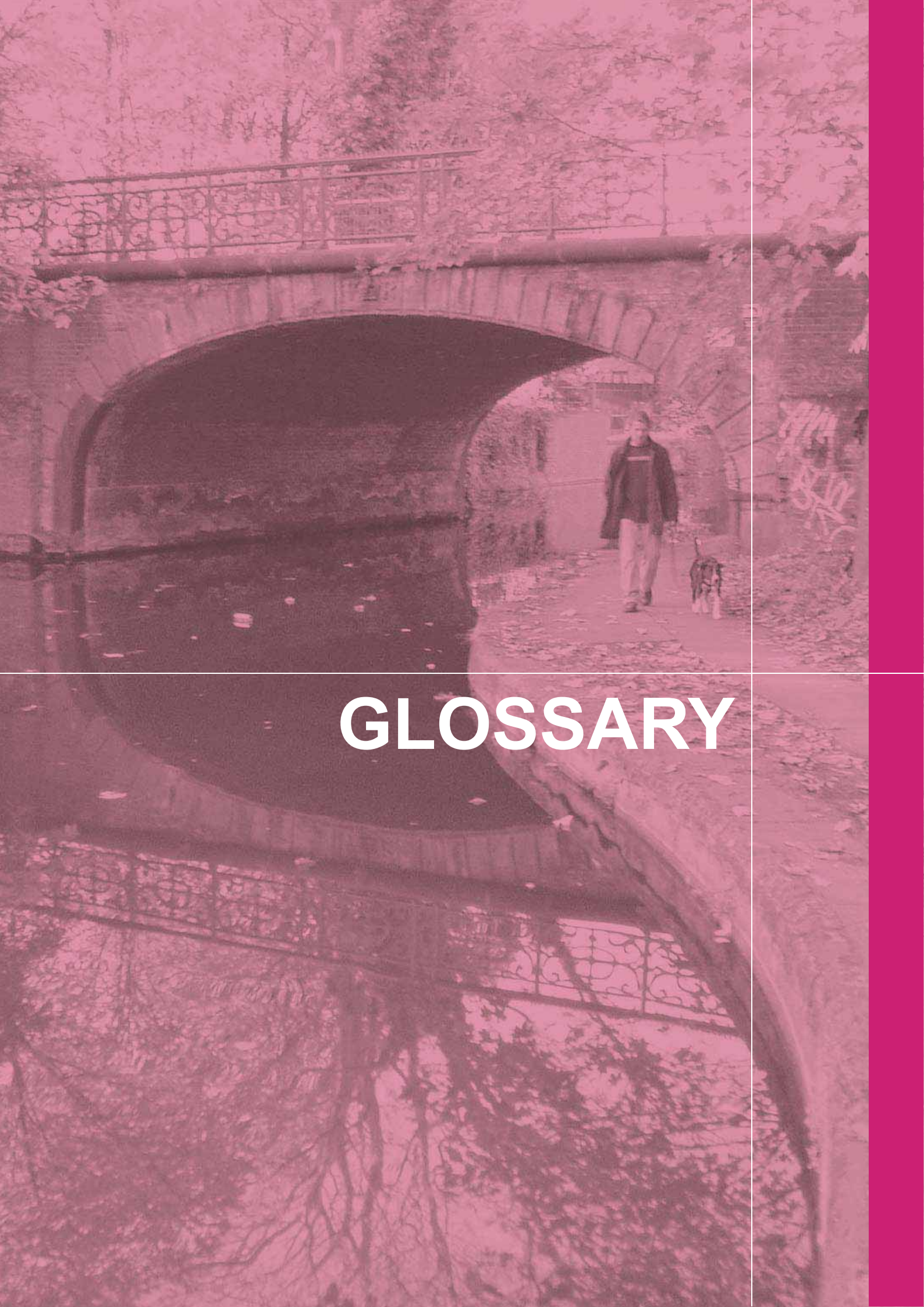
Implementing the Conservation Strategy

A separate Implementation Delivery Work Plan will be developed for the Conservation Strategy. The Plan will set out a summary of the key actions required to deliver the Strategy Goals and Work Plan Objectives, and their relative prioritisation and timescale. It will identify the key accountabilities and partners for the actions, and potential funding sources. It will also emphasise the importance of updating the baseline information on the heritage resource and the key challenges facing it on a regular basis, and set out an approach for monitoring and evaluating progress against the Strategy.

The Work Plan will be developed with public and stakeholder involvement through consultation as it will require the co-operation and assistance of many individuals and organisations. All organisations that commented on the Conservation Strategy and assisted with its evaluation will be consulted on the Work Plan which will be the very next step in implementing the strategy.



WAPPING



GLOSSARY



GLOSSARY

Archaeological interest – derives from the potential of a heritage resource to yield evidence about past human activity.

Architectural and artistic interest – derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a heritage resource – from its design, construction, craftsmanship, decoration and general aesthetics.

Article 4 direction orders – designations imposed locally which restrict some of the permitted development rights which householders would otherwise enjoy under planning regulations. Article 4 direction orders do not in themselves prohibit any action, but they mean that a landowner is required to seek planning consent for relevant actions.

Community interest – derives from the meaning of a heritage resource for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

Conservation – the process of managing and enabling change to a heritage resource in a way that preserves its significance, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce that significance for present and future generations.

Core Strategy 2025 – the key spatial planning document for Tower Hamlets, setting out the vision and key issues for the Borough and how these will be addressed.

Designation – formal status under law or policy intended to sustain particular heritage interests and resources. Designated heritage resources include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas.

Development Management DPD – forms part of the Local Development Framework, builds on the Core Strategy 2025 and sets out more detailed policies for managing development.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – form part of the Local Development Framework and support the Core Strategy 2025. They set out the Council's policies for managing development.

Heritage – all inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility.

Heritage collections – objects and materials associated with the past, including archives, books, photographs, museum objects, audio-visual material and born-digital records.

Heritage resources – all aspects of the historic environment, and also heritage collections and intangible heritage.

Historic environment – all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity (whether visible, buried or submerged) and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Historic environment record – a public, map-based data set, primarily intended to inform the management of the historic environment.

Historic interest – derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a heritage resource to the present.

Intangible heritage – includes inherited traditions or living expressions, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, and traditional knowledge, skills and practices.

Local Development Framework (LDF) – statutory plans produced by the Council that comprise a portfolio of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, Statement of Community Involvement, Local Development Scheme, Annual Monitoring Report and others.

Permitted development rights – allow landowners to undertake minor development under a deemed grant of planning permission, therefore removing the need to submit a planning application.

Planning Policy Statements (PPS) – set out the Government's national policies on different aspects of spatial planning in England.

Public realm – the space between and surrounding buildings and open spaces that are accessible to the public and include streets, pedestrianised areas, squares, river frontages.

Section 106 – section of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner in association with the granting of planning permission. These agreements are a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. They are increasingly used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing.

Setting – the surroundings in which a heritage resource is experienced. Its local context, embracing past and present relationships to the adjacent landscape.

Significance – the value of a heritage resource to current and future generations because of its heritage interest. This could be historic, archaeological, architectural, artistic or community interest.

Site and Place-Making DPD – forms part of the Local Development Framework and allocates specific sites for specific land uses, such as housing.

Spot listing – emergency procedure where individual threatened buildings are assessed and, if they qualify, are added to the statutory list.

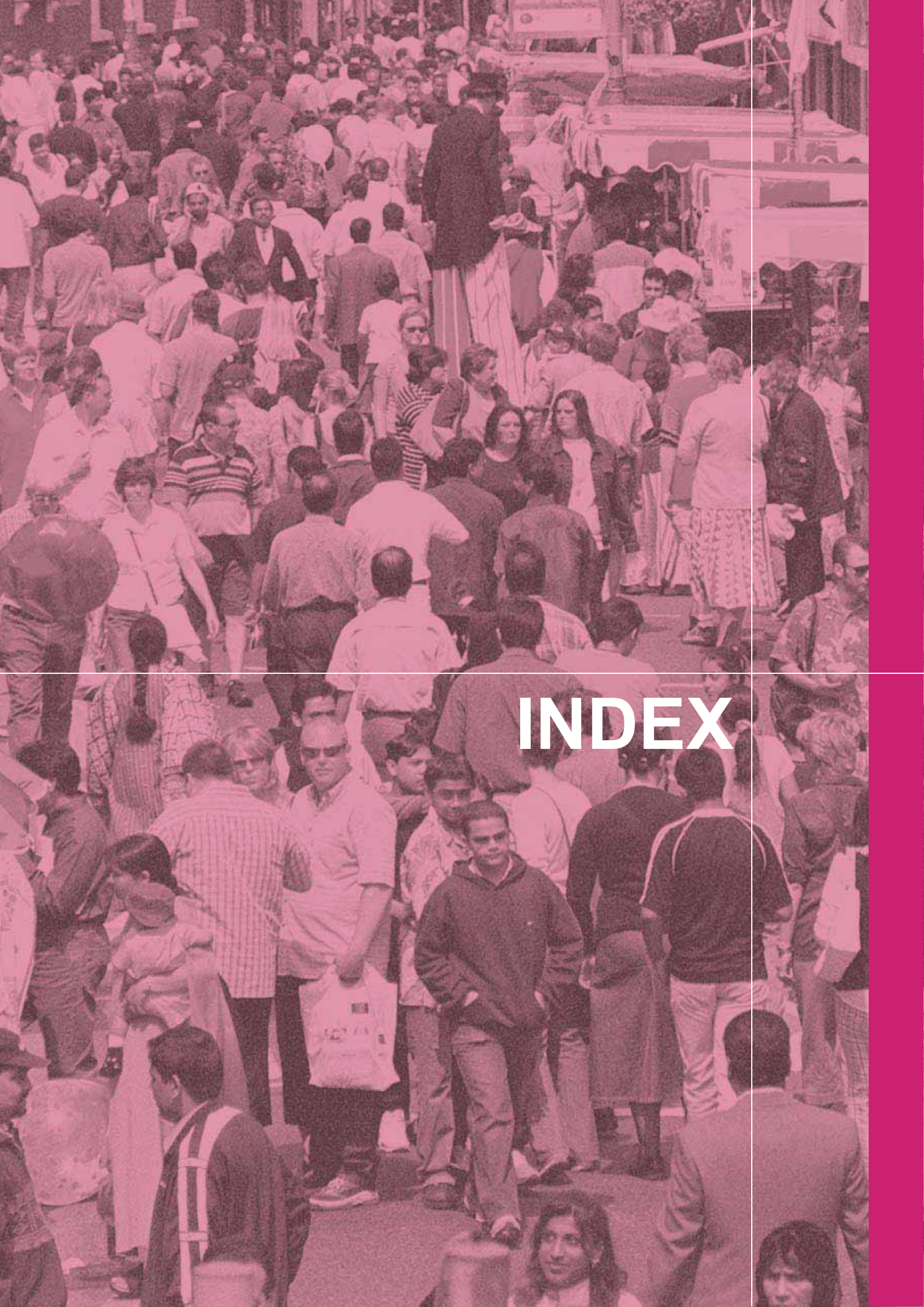
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – form part of the Local Development Framework, and are intended to provide detailed guidance on how policies in the Core Strategy 2025 will be implemented.

Strategy – what an organisation is seeking to achieve and how it will achieve it.

Sustainable – capable of meeting present needs without compromising ability to meet future needs.

Third sector – non-governmental organisations that are value driven and which principally reinvest their surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives. It includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals.

Unitary Development Plans (UDPs) – old style development plans prepared by some unitary local authorities that set out long-term strategic goals for land use, together with the planning policies and standards that will be used to make decisions on planning applications.



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