

DRAFT ALDGATE MASTERPLAN

2006

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Aldgate Master Aldstein Alaster Polanier





1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aldgate is an area with tremendous regeneration potential. It's location close to the financial heart of London and with excellent public transport links makes it an ideal location for employment growth, new homes, education, culture and tourism. Aldgate also benefits from close proximity to some of London's key visitor attractions - the Tower of London, Brick Lane and Banglatown, Spitalfields and Petticoat Lane are all within a short walking or cycling distance.

Aldgate has suffered from under-investment in recent years and the environment is blighted by the dominance of the 1970s gyratory system, which puts the needs of vehicle traffic above those of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. An unattractive network of subways makes pedestrian movement through the area difficult creating safety and access issues. A legacy of poorly designed, large scale office blocks detracts from the quality of the public realm.



There are opportunities for change and sustainable regeneration in Aldgate, arising from a cluster of major development sites. Some of these sites are already attracting interest from developers. There is also a proposal to remove the gyratory system, close subways and introduce a new public open space in the heart of the area, part of the Mayor of London's 100 Open Spaces programme.

The draft Aldgate Masterplan aims to provide an extra level of detail to supplement policies in the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). It will provide a strategic framework to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach to renewal and help to make the most of opportunities to secure community benefits from major development proposals for everyone living in, learning in, working in or visiting Aldgate.

There are proposals for new open spaces, better pedestrian and cycling facilities, re-connecting the streets and creating an improved public realm. The Masterplan shows how new high density commercial and residential development in a highly accessible location, combined with the cultural and educational assets of the area can combine to create an attractive mixed use area with a real sense of place.

The Masterplan vision is for Aldgate to evolve as a model of high density, sustainable development in a very accessible location, linked to public transport and making the most of the cultural and educational assets of the area. There are proposals for new open spaces, better pedestrian and cycling facilities, re-connecting the streets and creating an improved public realm. The Masterplan Vision aims to make Aldgate an accessible, safe, attractive, distinctive, creative, inclusive and environmentally healthy place for everyone.



2 INTRODUCTION

Aldgate is an area at a crossroads. It is at the gateway between the City, the East End and East London, between the core of London's global economic functions and the culturally diverse neighbourhoods of the East End.

Aldgate is also at a crossroads in terms of the way it can evolve into the future. It can continue to be an area dominated by heavy traffic and traffic-related pollution, with little activity at street level, and an area overlooked by new business investment. Alternatively, it can develop into an attractive, vibrant, safe and distinctive location, a desirable place to do business and a sustainable place to live, learn, work and enjoy.

Historic Development

Originally the site of Roman and medieval settlements, the name Aldgate is derived from the name of one of the early gates to the City - Eldgate or Oldgate - under which passed one of the original Roman roads leading into London. The gate itself stood in the midst of the High Street, at the south west corner of what is now Duke Street in the City of London.

Aldgate was home of the Aldgate Pump, built in the 16th century over a much older well that had been used since the 13th century. The water from the pump was said to have had healing properties. The Aldgate Pump was the traditional point to measure distances into the counties of Essex and Middlesex.

The Bell Foundry on the corner of Whitechapel High Street and Plumbers Row, is the oldest manufacturing company in Britain, having been established in 1570. The foundry moved to its present site in 1738 and is the birthplace of Big Ben and Philadelphia's Liberty Bell.

With the industrial revolution came new streets, railways, warehouses and people. Open space made way for buildings. Aldgate thrived as a busy shopping and commercial district in the 19th and early 20th century. The area suffered as a result of bombing during World War II and from the decline in traditional manufacturing industries in the late 20th century.

During the 1970s the historic street pattern at the heart of Aldgate was dramatically altered to form a large traffic gyratory at the junction of Whitechapel High Street and Commercial Road, linking to a smaller system in front of St. Botolph's Church. Large scale office development took place on the island site at the centre of the gyratory and further south at Goodmans Fields. A network of underground subways was constructed to provide pedestrian access beneath the one-way system and link to the London underground stations. Since this time there has been very little commercial investment in the area and the public realm is starting to look tired and neglected.

The history of Aldgate is reflected in its street pattern and many of its buildings. Parts of Aldgate are now protected in the Whitechapel High Street Conservation Area and there are numerous listed buildings. This history has literally been built up layer by layer over the centuries as Aldgate has grown to become a densely developed area with very low levels of open space.

Aldgate has always been home to a culturally diverse community and has accepted successive waves of immigrants, such as the Huguenots from France, Jewish people from mainland Europe and, most recently, the Bangladeshi communities.



Aldgate's Context

Aldgate lies immediately to the east of the City of London within an area often described as the City Fringe - a transitional area between the central business district of London and the smaller town centres and neighbourhoods of the East End. Aldgate is the gateway to Tower Hamlets, at the western edge of the borough and close to the River Thames.

Aldgate is within walking distance to major tourist attractions and areas with a strong local identity, such as Brick Lane and Banglatown (a lively destination during the day and night), the Tower of London, Petticoat Lane and Spitalfields Market. However the physical barriers created by the gyratory mean that people often choose to walk around Aldgate rather than through it.

As is true for the entire City Fringe, Aldgate is a genuinely mixed use area, with a range of offices, shops, homes and community facilities. Aldgate is also home to London Metropolitan University, the East London Mosque and Whitechapel Art Gallery. Altab Ali Park is the main green space in the area.







The role of the Aldgate Masterplan

Aldgate is experiencing a great deal of development pressure, as the need for new offices and housing in Tower Hamlets grows and the city continues to expand. In addition to this, there is a significant cluster of large sites in Aldgate with potential for re-development, which combined total almost twelve hectares in area. Given this development pressure and the opportunities for environmental improvements, Aldgate has been identified by the Council in its draft Local Development Framework (LDF) and draft Area Action Plan as an area needing more detailed and specific planning guidance.

The Aldgate Masterplan provides a comprehensive framework to guide redevelopment and regeneration in Aldgate, from now until 2016. It demonstrates that by taking an overview approach, the redevelopment of individual sites, together, can address the environmental, social and economic issues across a wide area.

Without such a framework, development would continue to happen in a piecemeal way, making it much more difficult to address the issues that Aldgate faces and realise the full economic, environmental, community and urban design benefits that a future, improved Aldgate could create.

The extent of the Masterplan area is shown on the Map 2. The boundary has been drawn fairly tightly around the cluster of 14 development sites in and around the Aldgate gyratory. However the Masterplan recognises that the influence of new development and improvements in Aldgate will be experienced across a much wider area and the impact on surrounding communities has been addressed.

The Masterplan will provide a supplementary level of detail to the City Fringe Area Action Plan (explained in the next section). It is being prepared as part of the LDF and will be formally adopted by the Council in spring 2008. During the interim period, the Masterplan will be known as an "Emerging Supplementary Planning Document".

3 THE POLICY CONTEXT

The Aldgate Masterplan will be part of a family of spatial plans that apply across the whole of Greater London and the Borough of Tower Hamlets. These include the London Plan 2004 (as amended), the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy 2001 and the submission version of the Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework (LDF), which is currently being finalised by Tower Hamlets Council. The role of these documents is explained here.

The London Plan, 2004

The London Plan, adopted in May 2004 by the Mayor of London, is the strategic planning framework for the Greater London area. All other planning documents prepared by London Boroughs must be consistent with the London Plan. As well as policies and directions for the entire London area, the London Plan contains specific guidance for sub-regions and certain locations where there is greater scope for change.

The Whitechapel/Aldgate Opportunity Area, along with the Bishopsgate/South Shoreditch Opportunity Area, has been highlighted in the London Plan as areas providing scope to support London's critical mass of financial and businesses services.

The London Plan also encourages making public transport and the pedestrian environment accessible to everyone, making major improvements to public transport and tackling traffic congestion.

The London plan will be reviewed and updated periodically. Further alterations were published for consultation in September 2006.



City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework

The Greater London Authority is preparing an 'Opportunity Area Planning Framework' for the City Fringe - an area that straddles four boroughs including Tower Hamlets. The Framework will provide a greater level of spatial detail than the London Plan. It will be strategic in scope and look beyond local authority boundaries to reinforce areas of common ground between the regional and local level and help address areas of difference. The City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework will be a non-statutory planning document, however as it is derived from the London Plan 2004, and is being prepared in consultation with important stakeholders, it will have some weight in influencing the dialogue between regional and local planning.



Making Space for Londoners – The Mayor's 100 Open Spaces Programme

Over the next five years the Mayor of London aims to create or upgrade 100 public spaces in London. This programme will demonstrate the difference improved public space can make, and the ways in which the highest quality design can be secured without excessive expenditure. Aldgate Union and the proposed open space at Braham Street is part of the second phase of this programme.



Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 established a new plan-making system. Under this system each local planning authority is required to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF), which will be a 'portfolio' of planning documents including a Core Strategy, Area Action Plans and other supplementary documents which collectively will deliver the spatial planning strategy for the area. Tower Hamlets has begun work on a number of key documents that will form part of the LDF.

Draft Core Strategy

The draft Core Strategy contains policies relating to themes such as sustainable communities, creating and sharing prosperity, sustainable urban neighbourhoods for residents, the environment, transport and connections and quality design. Many of these have direct relevance to Aldgate, including policies to:

- retain and create of employment is a high priority;
- maximise job opportunities available to local people;
- retain and create workspace for small businesses;
- support creative and cultural industries;
- support tourist and entertainment businesses;
- deliver new housing;
- increase the quality and quantity of open space; and
- integrate new development with public transport.

Draft City Fringe Area Action Plan

The vision for the part of the City Fringe that falls within Tower Hamlets is contained in the draft City Fringe Area Action Plan. The vision is for a dynamic urban district made up of well-connected distinct and diverse neighbourhoods. Emphasis is given to a future with a fine grain built environment and multi-cultural diversity, the strong small business sector and continuing expansion of London's 'World City' functions. The evening economy, tourism industry, new residential neighbourhoods, a high quality public realm and open spaces are all seen as important elements of the vision for the City Fringe.

Tower Hamlets Community Plan

The Tower Hamlets Community Plan is a statement of the Council's overall vision for the future. It aims to ensure that all of Tower Hamlets diverse communities benefit from improved social, economic and environmental well being. The Community Plan has five key themes to make Tower Hamlets a better place for:

- Living Safely
- Living Well
- Creating and Sharing Prosperity
- Learning, Achievement and Leisure
- Excellent Public Services.

The LDF will translate the Community Plan into tangible improvements by guiding and influencing the future development of the Borough. The Aldgate Masterplan incorporates the key themes of the Community Plan into a vision for the future.

Tower Hamlets Regeneration Strategy

The Regeneration Strategy provides a vision of Tower Hamlets as part of a thriving global centre by 2016. It aims to convey a clear vision of Tower Hamlets economy in 2016, make a strong case for investment in the Borough identify infrastructure needs, specify public sector interventions and maximise the economic impact of the voluntary and not-for-profit sector. Its four main objectives are to develop the economy, develop people, develop places and develop marketing.

The Local Development Framework will be used to implement the objectives of the Regeneration Strategy through detailed planning policies and supplementary guidance in all emerging masterplans.

4 CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Tower Hamlets is committed to best practice in community consultation and involvement and this has been integral to the process of preparing the Masterplan.

During the production of the Draft Masterplan, a number of specific non-statutory consultation events have taken place with a wide range of community groups and individuals. The events were designed to make it easier for harder to reach sections of the community, who may not normally become engaged in the planning process, to put forward their views at the earliest stage of the process.



As well as individuals, comments have been received from a wide variety of stakeholder groups with different interests in Aldgate. These include:

- Young people
- Local business people
- Local residents associations
- Public bodies, such as Transport for London
- People with disabilities.







Out of all the issues raised during the preliminary consultation phase, the four most common themes that emerged were:

- · Safety and Security Fear of crime particularly in the evenings and after dark with issues relating to street drinking, drug abuse, prostitution and anti-social behaviour in locations such as Altab Ali Park and Denning Point.
- Open Space Lack of open space in the Aldgate area has been highlighted as a major concern. A need for more children's playgrounds, more space for physical activity and more areas for quiet outdoor recreation have been highlighted.
- Access to Shopping and Local **Amenities** Lack of shopping choices and a desire to see a greater variety of shops to meet day to day needs, including a larger supermarket, and more cafes, restaurants and bars to make the area feel safer after dark.
- The Impact of Re-development on Small Businesses A concern that major re-development could undermine the existing small business economy in areas such as Brick Lane. Representatives from black and ethnic minority businesses expressed fears of being unable to absorb increased costs associated with rising land values and rents, hence being "priced out" the area.



The vision for the future of Aldgate, as set out in this Masterplan, and the principles and specific actions that will be used to achieve this vision have been shaped by the views of the local community. A full consultation report detailing the consultation methods used and responses received will be available upon request.

The draft Masterplan will be subject to a Statutory Consultation Process to enable adoption of the document as part of the Local Development Framework.



5 ALDGATE TODAY

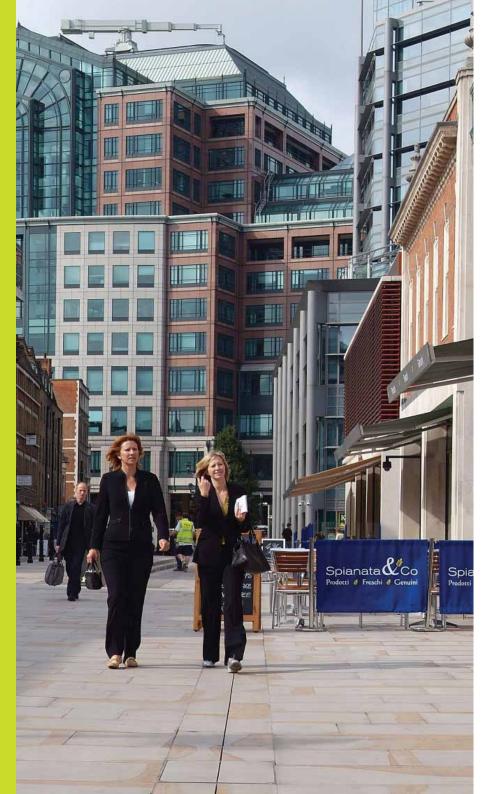
People

Tower Hamlets is home to a young, culturally diverse and growing population and has the largest proportion of 20-34 year olds in the country. Around half of the residents belong to black or minority ethnic communities. Aldgate and the surrounding neighbourhoods are home to London's largest Bangladeshi community, forming around 45% of the local community in Aldgate. Brick Lane, is a focal point for the local Bangladeshi community and is known throughout London and beyond for its vibrant collection of speciality restaurants, shops and nightlife.

Tower Hamlets also contains areas of high concentrations of social deprivation. The Borough ranks as the fourth most deprived area out of 354 local authorities in England and seventy percent of the neighbourhoods in Tower Hamlets ranking as some of the most deprived in England. Overcrowding is a key issue in housing provision as 34.5% of households in Aldgate are categorised as "overcrowded" (2001 census). Unemployment in Aldgate is at a similar rate to that of Tower Hamlets, but at 12.2% average during 2005 is almost twice as high as the national average.







Economy

Tower Hamlets is experiencing rapid economic and employment growth. In recent decades, the focus of the local economy has shifted from traditional industry and waterfront activity to knowledge based industries, including one of the UK's largest financial districts, at Canary Wharf.

Aldgate benefits from its proximity to central London, with its concentration of commercial and cultural activities. The proximity of central London provides business opportunities for small and medium businesses in Aldgate and provides residents of Aldgate with greater access to a range of employment opportunities. The cluster of large office buildings situated around the gyratory and Goodmans Fields is evidence of the role of the Aldgate in supporting the economy of central London.

Small businesses, employing less than 50 people, are also dominant in the areas to the north of Aldgate, and their continued success will be influenced by proximity to other business clients and the future supply of a range of flexible and affordable workspace.



London Metropolitan University has a major presence in Aldgate, not only as an educational institution, but as a place of employment. The students and staff it attracts to Aldgate have a significant economic impact on the area.

Brick Lane is an important area of economic activity, particularly for businesses trading in the evening. Brick Lane and the surrounding area are also a focus for many creative and cultural businesses due to the availability of workspace at relatively cheap rents.



Within Aldgate, the character of different streets and locations varies greatly. Whitechapel Road, Commercial Road, Leman Street, Osborn Street and parts of Alie Street are characterised by narrow plots, fronting the street and a building height of around 4 storeys. Retail and other commercial uses are at ground floor with storage, offices and residential accommodation on the upper floors. However, these streets include several neglected and poorly maintained buildings, which detract from the quality of the built environment.

Whitechapel High Street, east of the junction with Commercial Street, has a busy, vibrant character due to the presence of ground floor retail uses, entrances to Aldgate East Station and Whitechapel Art Gallery. However west of the junction, vibrancy decreases, due to a number of gaps where buildings have been demolished and the dominating effect of the gyratory traffic system. The visual connection between Whitechapel High Street and Brick Lane is also poor due to the presence of a large dilapidated site on the west side of Osborn Street. Other roads such as Whitechurch Lane have a more intimate feel being narrower and quieter, with lower building heights and some residential properties facing the street.



In and around the gyratory system, the quality of the built environment is generally poor. The pedestrian subway system does not feel safe and can be disorientating, leading to pedestrians making dangerous attempts to cross busy roads at street level without using designated crossing points. The large scale office blocks dating from the 1970s and 1980s have been developed as "islands" within the centre of the gyratory, have poor pedestrian access and appear disconnected from the surroundings.



The lack of active frontages at street level compounds the sense of desolation and insecurity for pedestrians, particularly at night.

Goodmans Fields occupies a large site south of Alie Street, between Leman Street and Gower's Walk. The office buildings that make up this site are set within landscaped areas, cut off from the street behind boundary walls and railings. Consequently these spaces are not accessible to the public, whilst the buildings do not address the street and contrast greatly from the more traditional building forms along Whitechapel and Commercial Road.

Denning Point part of the Holland Estate along Commercial Street is a 1960s tower block with low rise shops and flats surrounding is of poor quality and appears dilapidated due to poor maintenance. The many secluded spaces such as car parks and amenity areas are magnets for crime and street prostitution due to the low levels of natural surveillance.



Altab Ali Park is one of the few public open spaces in the area. It is well landscaped and used primarily for quiet relaxation and informal games. It has historic significance being the site of the original "White Chapel". The Park does have some problems regarding anti-social behaviour, street drinking and drug abuse, particularly after dark. There are other smaller areas of open space at Mallon Gardens (to the rear of Toynbee Hall) and behind Guinness Court west of Mansell Street.

The historic built environment includes the Whitechapel High Street as well as the Fournier Street and Wentworth Street Conservation Areas. There are 24 Listed Buildings within the Masterplan area and 4 locally listed buildings, with several more in immediate vicinity.

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Transport and Movement

The Aldgate area has excellent access to public transport, means it can support high density, sustainable development. Aldgate East and Aldgate underground stations are served by a total of four tube lines. Tower Hill underground station, Tower Gateway DLR, Liverpool Street and Fenchurch Street stations (for connections to national rail services) are within a short walk of the Masterplan boundary. London City Airport is accessible by DLR and approximately 25 minutes from Tower Gateway. Approximately 71% of all commuter journeys to Aldgate are by public transport, with 37% of by underground and light rail.

The area is also well served by day and night bus services that provide direct links to destinations across Greater London. Aldgate bus station is located just outside Tower Hamlets borough boundary, off Aldgate High Street. Convenient and easy interchange between bus services and the underground, is impaired due to the location of bus stops and the barrier created by the busy main roads. Furthermore there is no access for people with disabilities to either underground station.

Aldgate is within walking and cycling distance of many important destinations and areas for work and leisure. However, the core of the Masterplan area - the Aldgate gyratory - is at the junction of two main arterial roads and the Inner Ring Road, as well as being at the edge of the central London Congestion Charge Zone. As a result the area is dominated by heavy flows of traffic. This creates problems for people trying to cross busy streets, creates noise and traffic pollution and means that the streets are less appealing places to be.

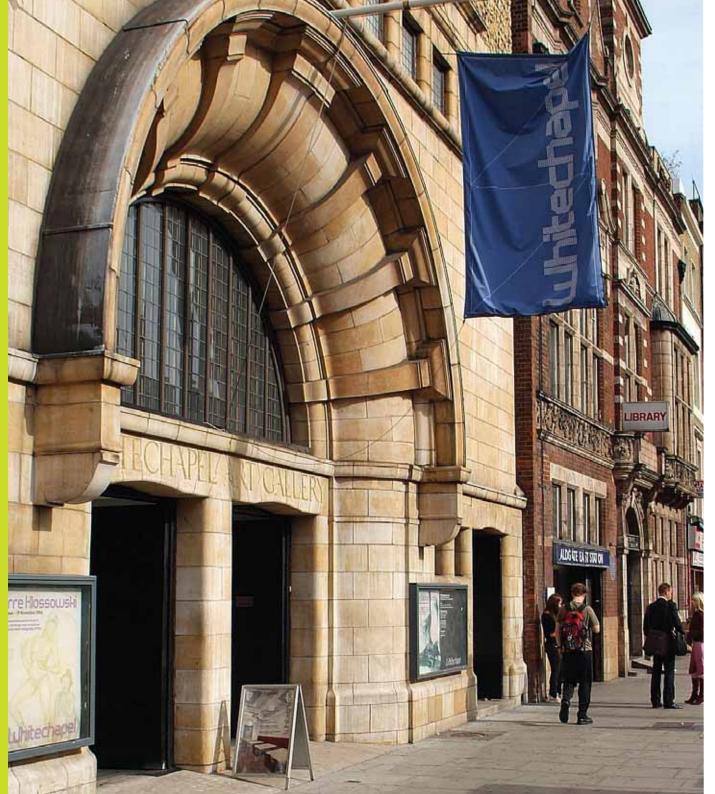
The gyratory subways make walking or cycling through the area unpleasant, disorientating and discourage people from visiting or travelling through Aldgate on foot. The size of some of the existing office buildings with large footprints and poor relationship to the public realm reduces the choice of routes for pedestrians. Despite this a high proportion of people (16%) walk to work in Aldgate.

Existing designated cycle routes along Whitechapel High Street and Braham Street provide east and west links through the Masterplan area, although there is no direct north-south cycle link.









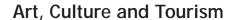














The Aldgate area contains a range of art and cultural attractions that have local, national and international significance.

Whitechapel Art Gallery founded in 1901 originally founded to bring art to the east end, is now associated with innovative contemporary art. The Gallery has acquired the former public library building next door and has plans to extend into it, to provide increased exhibition space, education and community facilities. The presence of the Gallery and the availability of former industrial and warehouse buildings has resulted in a high concentration of creative industries in the areas around Brick Lane.

Brick Lane, the heart of Banglatown, has a unique character due to the eclectic and vibrant mix of Bangladeshi and Indian restaurants, alongside new coffee shops, bars and traditional east-end pubs. Brick Lane has become an important tourist destination in its own right, attracting visitors from Britain and around the world.







Crime and Safety

Aldgate, as with many locations in inner London, experiences problems with crime. Police statistics indicate that between October 2005 and September 2006 there were 147 reported crimes within the Aldgate Masterplan area (this includes crimes within the home as well as in public places). However there are certain issues that are specific to Aldgate.

Through the first stage consultation process residents and business people within the area indicated that crime and fear of crime is a major concern and have highlighted issues such as anti-social behaviour and public drinking in Altab Ali Park, drug abuse and prostitution in the secluded areas around Denning Point. The narrow alleyways running off the north side of Whitechapel High Street are poorly lit and also attract problems of drug abuse and prostitution.

The subways around the gyratory system are perceived as being unsafe and confusing. With no natural surveillance they can feel particularly threatening at night.

Opportunities for Change in Aldgate

- Aldgate's highly accessible location creates opportunities for new and sustainable high density forms of development, linked to public transport and deliver benefits for the community.
- Removal of the gyratory, creation of new pedestrian crossings and improvements to the public realm could help to re-connect the heart of Aldgate, deliver new public open space and make pedestrian and cycle movement easier and safer.
- Improvements to the public realm throughout the area could strengthen nort-south and east-west links between Aldgate and surrounding destinations.
- New high quality architecture in and around the gyratory and at key focal points will create landmark buildings, to help make Aldgate an exciting, memorable destination and gateway to Tower Hamlets.
- Improvements to existing open spaces and provision of new open space could provide a network of linked green spaces within Aldgate and beyond.
- Large sites could be re-developed to provide smaller scale street blocks creating new streets and squares.
- New development can provide accommodation for small businesses and boost the local economy.

6 THE VISION FOR ALDGATE



The main principle underpinning the vision for regeneration in Aldgate is for a sustainable community, reflecting the Government's national planning priorities and the Tower Hamlets Community Plan.

The Masterplan vision is that Aldgate will evolve into a model of sustainable development with the clustering of high density commercial and residential uses linked to excellent public transport facilities, along with improvements that will encourage walking and cycling.

The diversity of the Aldgate community will be recognised and valued. New development will build upon the variety of activities in Aldgate by increasing the variety of shops, employment opportunities, public spaces and community facilities, serving all members of the community.







New buildings will be designed to contribute to the identity of Aldgate - both as a place with a rich history and a place with a promising future. The new shops, cafés, office buildings and open space around the existing gyratory will become the new 'Heart of Aldgate'. Links between this and other new open spaces will create a unique and positive sense of place and help to meet the demands of a growing residential population.

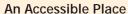
Economic growth will be balanced with the needs of the entire community so that everyone can benefit from a range improvements associated with new development. Growth will also be balanced with the need to enhance the environment and to use resources responsibly, so that future generations can also have the opportunity to be a part of a sustainable Aldgate.



This section takes each of these six themes in turn and summarises the key issues to be addressed, the principles that will guide future change and the action points that will deliver the Masterplan.

The vision for a sustainable Aldgate will be based on the following six themes:







A Safe Place



An Attractive and Distinctive Place



A Creative Place



An Inclusive Place



An Environmentally Healthy Place



An Accessible Place

Aldgate is a highly accessible location, close to London's financial district, and the centre of a major public transport hub. Aldgate has excellent links to the tube, rail and bus network. However there are barriers to walking and cycling through the area and interchange between trains, buses and taxis is not easy.

The vision of a more **accessible Aldgate** will be achieved through the following principles:

- Improved pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the area and beyond.
- Safe and convenient pedestrian crossings at street level.
- Strong north-south and east-west links to connect destinations within Aldgate and the wider area.
- Improved opportunities for public transport interchange with bus stops relocated closer to station entrances.
- Improved access to Aldgate East Station including a new station entrance on the south side of Whitechapel High Street.
- Explore options to change the name of Adgate East Station to include reference to Brick Lane, acknowledging the increased significance of the station as an arrival point for Banglatown.
- New development will be accessible to all, adhering to the policies in the development plan documents.

	ACTIONS						
AC1	Work with Transport for London and developers to design and implement the proposed changes to the Aldgate gyratory including closure of Braham Street to through traffic, provision of a new open space, closure of redundant subways and provision of new street-level crossings for pedestrians.						
AC2	Develop and implement a package of traffic calming and environmental improvements to give increased priority to pedestrians and cyclists along Alie Street and Leman Street, strengthening north-south and east-west links.						
AC3	Include a designated cycle route through the new Braham Street open space as a quieter alternative route to Whitechapel High Street.						
AC4	Support proposals for a "20 mile per hour zone" in residential streets to the north of Whitechapel High Street.						
AC5	Develop a signage strategy for pedestrians and cyclists that promotes the links between Aldgate and surrounding areas (such as the Tower of London, Brick Lane and Spitalfields Market) so that Aldgate becomes part of a strategic network that links important destinations in the City Fringe.						
AC6	Work with Transport for London to investigate options for improving access to Aldgate East underground station, and making changes to the name to include "Brick Lane".						

A Safe Place

Aldgate, as with many locations in inner London, experiences problems with crime. The concentration of new development sites and the opportunity to re-design the whole gyratory system presents a unique opportunity to address those aspects of Aldgate's physical environment that can lead to crime and anti-social behaviour.

The vision for a **safer Aldgate** will be achieved through the following principles:

- New street-level pedestrian crossings will replace redundant subways.
- Retained subways will be made safer with better lighting and camera surveillance.
- The design of new development will maximise natural surveillance, through active uses facing streets, squares and public spaces.
- Lighting and security will be improved in secluded alleys on the north side of Whitechapel High Street.
- Lighting will be improved in Altab Ali Park to discourage anti-social behaviour at night.
- Major re-development proposals will maximise opportunities to design out crime.

Ì		ACTIONS
	SA1	Implement closure of redundant subways and provision of safe and convenient surface crossings (links to action AC1).
	SA2	Implement the subway environmental improvement project identified through Aldgate Union first phase proposals for subways that need to be retained.
		Develop and implement a strategy for making secluded alleyways along Whitechapel High Street safer, without detracting from their historic character.
	SA4	Implement proposed lighting and landscape improvements to Altab Ali Park to discourage anti-social behaviour after dark.

An Attractive and Distinctive Place

The quality of the public realm varies considerably throughout Aldgate and the Masterplan Area. The heart of the area is dominated by the presence of the gyratory which creates an unattractive environment that does not encourage people to stay. Elsewhere the quality of the environment is affected by buildings that have not been well maintained, commercial development carried out in a piecemeal way and poor quality design is apparent in some of the larger commercial blocks. There is very little open space in Aldgate, with Altab Ali Park being the main piece of green space.

The vision for a more attractive and distinctive Aldgate will be achieved through the following principles:

- New development will embody high quality architecture that integrates with the public realm to create a sense of place.
- The historic environment will be retained and revitalised where appropriate with sensitive additions or conversions.
- The positive aspects of local character and local landmarks such as the Whitechapel Art Gallery, the Bell Foundry and the East London Mosque will be promoted.
- New, high quality open spaces of different sizes, form and character will be provided.
- Green links between existing and new open spaces with landscaping, signage and public art will be provided.
- New streets and open spaces will respect and enhance views of important landmarks.
- The scale, height, design and appearance of new buildings reflect the local context.

	ACTIONS
AT1	Design and implement comprehensive public realm improvements in and around the gyratory with new surfacing, landscaping, lighting, street furniture and better signage (links to Actions SA1 and AC1).
AT2	Support and contribute to Transport for London proposals for environmental improvements on Whitechapel High Street and Commercial Road.
AT3	Ensure community involvement in the design and implementation of the proposed Braham Street open space.
AT4	Work with the developers of Aldgate Union to establish a robust mechanism for the future maintenance of the proposed Braham Street open space.
AT5	Implement proposed landscape, lighting and footpath improvements to Altab Ali Park (links to Action SA4).
AT6	Design and implement public realm improvements to mark Osborn Street as the southern entrance to Brick Lane on Osborn Street.
AT7	Work with key developers and the Council's Business and Investment Team to develop marketing strategy to promote Aldgate as a destination.

A Creative Place

Art and culture can help to create a sense of place by making an area more memorable, exciting and distinctive. The Masterplan seeks to capitalise on existing cultural assets by creating new opportunities for public art and exhibition space linked to Whitechapel Art Galley and at locations such as the new open space planned for Braham Street. Work is already underway, in partnership with Whitechapel Art Gallery to develop an Art and Culture Trail through Aldgate as part of a Borough Gateway initiative to link the various places of interest in Aldgate and the surrounding area using public art, signage and street-scene improvements.

Creative industries have established in the areas around Brick Lane and Commercial Street. New evening and night time uses such as cafes and bars can make a positive contribution to the culture of Aldgate, particularly when they create places for people to socialise or new venues for live music and the performing arts.

The vision for a more **creative Aldgate** will be achieved through the following principles:

- An extended Whitechapel Art Gallery will continue to be an important cultural asset and visitor attraction.
- New development will be designed to ensure that it does not adversely affect the functioning of the Gallery.
- Land outside the gallery will be safeguarded for future public art initiatives that highlight the Gallery as a destination.
- Venues for visual and performing arts will be encouraged in locations where there would be no significant harm to residential amenity.
- New development will include public art as an integral part of the design of new development.
- An art and culture trail linking Aldgate East Station, Whitechapel Art Gallery and other cultural destinations will be developed.

	ACTIONS
CR1	Develop and implement a proposed Art/Culture Trail linking Whitechapel Art Gallery, Old Truman's Brewery and the Rich Mix Arts Centre, via Brick Lane, Petticoat Lane and Spitalfields Market.
CR2	Ensure that new development in Aldgate maximises opportunities for public art, through the development control process.
CR3	Investigate options for providing new low-cost workspace for new and existing small to medium creative industries.

An Inclusive Place

With substantial re-development and investment in Aldgate over the next ten years it will be important to ensure that the benefits are realised by all sections of the community. An inclusive place will offer a mix of community, education, health, leisure, retail, choice of housing and employment facilities that are accessible to everyone. Residential development will be expected to contribute to towards improvements to existing schools in accordance with policies in the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The Primary Care Trust has identified a need for a new health facility to replace existing surgeries south of Aldgate. Retail uses that support new office functions and/or existing tourism focuses and provide active ground floor frontages will be encouraged.

The vision for a more **inclusive Aldgate** will be achieved through the following principles:

- A new Primary Care Trust health centre and doctor's surgery will be developed in a location that has good access on foot, by public transport or bicycle.
- New public open spaces will be designed to benefit all members of the existing and new communities and be accessible to all.
- Retail development of an appropriate size and scale will provide active frontages to enliven Alie Street, Braham Street, Commercial Street, Commercial Road, Leman Street, Whitechapel High Street and Whitechapel Road and meet local needs.

ACTIONS					
IN1	Work with Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust and the developers of Goodmans Fields to deliver a new health centre and doctor's surgery in the vicinity of Alie Street as part of the wider development of this site.				
IN2	Design and manage new open spaces at Braham Street, Goodmans Fields and other development sites to ensure they are accessible and provide recreational opportunities for all, including children's play facilities in new open space at Goodmans Fields.				
IN3	Support proposals that bring forward active ground floor uses (such as shops,				

cafes, bars and restaurants) on Alie Street and Leman Street.

- A mix of house types and tenures, including affordable life-time and car free homes will cater for a balanced, sustainable community
- New local employment opportunities will be available for people with a range of different skills and interests and will benefit the whole community, through appropriate legal agreements with developers.

An Environmentally Healthy Place

The residential and working population of Aldgate will grow over the next 10 years and will impact on the environment through energy consumption, use of materials, production of waste, increased demand for transport and increased demand for public open space. The key to achieving a sustainable future for Aldgate will rely on managing the adverse affects of growth and mitigating these wherever possible.

The Sustainability Appraisal for the draft Aldgate Masterplan sets out how the principles and actions have been refined to mitigate any adverse environmental effects that may arise from implementation of the vision for Aldgate.

The vision for an **environmentally healthy Aldgate** will be achieved through the following principles:

- Walking, cycling and using public transport in and around Aldgate will be safe and easy.
- Open spaces and other recreation facilities will encourage participation in sport and healthy lifestyles.
- New development will be designed to improve energy efficiency, include sustainable waste management, reduce impact on air quality and use environmentally friendly materials.
- Existing and new open spaces will provide appropriate habitat for native species and sustainable forms of environmental management.

	ACTIONS					
EH1 Design new open spaces to provide opportunities for rainwater infiltration and where possible, additional habitat for local species.						
EH2 Minimise the impact of a growing local population on traffic congestion and air and noise pollution by encourage car-free agreements for new residential development.						
EH3 Require new development to contain built-in measures to reduce energy a water consumption.						
EH4 Encourage new development to include methods for production of energy from renewable sources.						
EH5	Encourage green spaces within new development, including, for example, landscaped roof spaces and forecourts.					

7 LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Linked Areas of Activity

The predominant land uses for each development site in Aldgate are set out in the submission draft of the City Fringe Area Action Plan (AAP). In practice most development sites will be mixed use, to make efficient use of land and create a level of vibrancy that meet the principles set out in section 6. The City Fringe AAP also recognises that other uses may be acceptable on development sites, where they would comply with more general planning policies set out in the Local Development Framework.

The proposals in the City Fringe AAP will lead to a focus of different activities particular parts of the Masterplan area giving an overall mix that will help create a sustainable community. These are set out below and indicated on Map 11.

The vision for an environmentally healthy Aldgate will be achieved through the following principles:

- Commercial and office uses will be focussed in the area west of the Commercial Road and Whitechapel High Street junction, with an emphasis on active ground floor uses facing the street and public spaces.
- Higher education uses associated with London Metropolitan University will be focused in a new campus the area north of Commercial Road and south of Whitechapel Road.
- Residential development will be mainly focussed on the area south of Commercial Road and east of Leman Street, with the largest opportunity site being Goodmans Fields.
- Cultural and tourism uses will be focussed on the area around Altab Ali Park, Whitechapel Art Gallery, Osborn Street and northwards along the Brick Lane corridor, towards Banglatown.

A comprehensive process of pre-application discussion with developers will ensure that the principles described below will be implemented in new development.



The Heart of Aldgate

The highest concentration of new development will be focussed in and around the existing gyratory system, between Aldgate and Aldgate East Stations. This area will be a focus for new high quality office development, supporting the continued expansion of London's financial and business district. Uses which compliment this function such a support services, hospitality and conferencing will also be appropriate here. A commercial property study is in the process of being commissioned to inform the likely future supply and demand of commercial floor space in Aldgate.

The proximity to tall buildings in the City and highly accessible nature the Aldgate provides an appropriate context for tall buildings in this location. Further guidance for tall buildings is provided below.

Outline planning permission has been granted for office and retail development in the centre of the current gyratory system which will dramatically improve the public realm by delivering high quality landmark buildings and new public open space including the closure of Braham Street. The new open space will provide an amenity for workers and residents to become the new "heart of Aldgate". This space will feature hard and soft landscape areas and spaces for public art, events and exhibitions. Detailed design will be subject to a further "reserved maters" planning application and community consultation.

As part of the public realm improvements, a new entrance to Aldgate East Station will be provided within a plaza on the south side of Whitechapel High Street.

Whitechapel High Street and Surroundings

The character of Whitechapel High Street provides a transition between the commercial development pressures from the City and the historic east end communities.

New development provides opportunities to strengthen the built form by in-filling gaps, with development of an appropriate height and scale that reinforces the fine grain character of the area by sub-dividing larger plots to provide narrow and deep plots. Development at the Central House site also presents an opportunity to strengthen the high street character with retail and complimentary uses at ground floor.

New development will provide opportunities to strengthen the built form by in-filling gaps, with development of an appropriate height and scale that reinforces the fine grain character of the area and sub-dividing larger sites to provide narrow and deep plots. Development at the Central House site also presents an opportunity to strengthen the high street character with retail and complimentary uses at ground floor.



Osborn Street is the southern entrance to Brick Lane and Banglatown with a vibrant mix of shops, restaurants, cafes and bars stretching northwards to Bethnal Green. New development should reinforce the strong character including opportunities to re-develop "gap sites" such as the dilapidated buildings set around Osborn yard at the rear of Whitechapel Art Gallery.

The areas either side of Brick Lane have a growing cluster of creative industries. This area should continue to develop as a focus for art, culture and tourism. New development that compliments Whitechapel Art Gallery will be supported. Proposals that support or provide new work-space for creative industries will also be appropriate in this area.





Commercial Road

Commercial Road developed in the mid 19th century to link the docks to the City and a number of older warehouse buildings that once lined this road are still evident. There is a cluster of listed buildings within the Masterplan area including the former St. Georges brewery at 33-35 Commercial Road and the Gun-proofing House opposite.

The group of development sites on the north side of Commercial Road, including Central House at the junction with Whitechapel High Street will be developed as a focus for higher education, accommodating the various functions of London Metropolitan University (LMU) to consolidate and strengthen LMU's presence in Aldgate.

Development should be designed to preserve or enhance the setting and appearance of the listed buildings and to ensure that there is no overbearing impact on Altab Ali Park.

Open Spaces and Green Links

The Masterplan vision for a more attractive and distinctive Place notes the importance of providing new green spaces, improving existing ones and creating green links between them. The new development at Aldgate Union will provide an important opportunity to establish an east-west green link through Aldgate, parallel to Whitechapel High Street, stretching from Altab Ali Park in the east, through new development proposed by London metropolitan University, along a pedestrian arcade between blocks within Aldgate Union and the new Braham Street open space and continuing west towards the City of London at Little Somerset Street. Pedestrian links to the south would feed in as proposals for sites in Alie Street and Goodmans Fields are developed. Links to the north will feed in when the proposed Art and Culture Trail is developed.





Tall Buildings

Aldgate has been identified as an appropriate location for tall buildings to mark the gateway to Tower Hamlets, reflect the proximity to similar development in the City and make the best use of the excellent public transport accessibility that can support high density development. The proposed cluster of buildings between Whitechapel High Street and Braham Street should represent the apex of building heights in Aldgate. Planning permission has recently been granted for a group of three buildings in the centre of Aldgate Gyratory, the tallest of which will be 22 commercial storeys (102 metres). Building heights in the remainder of the Masterplan area should decrease away from this central cluster of buildings.

Tall buildings will also be appropriate in certain locations outside of the gyratory area, where they play a role in design terms to mark street junctions, arrival points or assist with legibility, but must be subservient to the building heights within the gyratory.

Tall buildings will not be appropriate in locations where they would harm the character or appearance of the Whitechapel High Street Conservation Area, would have an adverse or overbearing impact on Altab Ali Park, or would harm the setting and appearance of Listed Buildings.

Tall buildings will not be appropriate in areas outside of the Aldgate Masterplan core boundary.

In all cases, tall buildings must be of the highest architectural quality and materials given their high visibility. They must also be designed to integrate positively into the public realm with active uses open to the public at ground floor and be accessible to all.

All proposals for tall buildings will be assessed against the detailed policies set out in the LDF Core Strategy document and the Mayor of London's City Hall to the Tower of London View Framework.

Goodmans Fields

Goodmans Fields is a large existing office site and at 3.87 hectares is the largest single development site within the Masterplan area. The site is allocated for residential and commercial use in the City Fringe AAP and therefore presents and opportunity to deliver a number of benefits and Masterplan objectives.

Proposals for the site should demonstrate that the following principles have been included.

- Divide up Goodmans Fields to create new pedestrian north-south and east a finer grain, with a height and scale that relates to the surrounding context.
- Provide new open space or spaces to meet the needs of new and existing residents with a variety of functions - relaxing, recreation and children's play.



- Provide a small urban square with lively ground floor uses at the junction of Leman Street and Alie Street, to form part of a network of open spaces proposed within the site redevelopment.
- Provide spaces for ground floor active uses such as shops, cafes and bars along Leman Street and Alie Street.
- Provide space for a new primary health care facility, possibly on Alie Street.
- Deliver a mix of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of the area, with between 35 and 50% affordable hosing in line with policies in the LDF Core Strategy.

8 IMPLEMENTATION

An Implementation Strategy for Aldgate

Implementation of the full vision of the Masterplan will take approximately 10 years to achieve and will be achieved in a number of ways:

- Site specific elements such as affordable housing or new open space provided by private or public developers and secured using planning conditions or planning obligations.
- Improvement projects delivered by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets using pooled planning obligations.
- Projects delivered through partnership working between the Council and other agencies or organisations such as Transport for London, the Greater London Authority and Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust.
- Using the Masterplan as a tool to secure resources from funding bodies in support of the projects identified.

Planning Obligations

Many of the projects and improvement strategies in the Masterplan will be delivered through planning obligations: legally binding agreements entered into by a landowner to carry out certain works, contribute to the provision of measures that will mitigate adverse effects or contribute to a wider area programme of improvements identified in a planning document, such as a Masterplan. Planning obligation agreements are often referred to as Section 106 Agreements.

The local authority will be seeking contributions from any development proposal coming forward within or adjacent to the Masterplan area. These contributions will go towards the costs of preparing and implementing the Masterplan. Such costs might include production of the Masterplan; consultant fees; support fees and project management costs associated with the on-going delivery of Masterplan documents.

A list of priorities for planning obligations within Aldgate is set out below. The list is intended to identify priorities but is not exhaustive. The capacity for developments to deliver these objectives will be assessed on a case by case basis.

- Affordable housing
- Contributions to education and childcare facilities
- Provision of healthcare and other community facilities
- Public transport improvements and travel plans
- · Highway and infrastructure improvements
- Cycleway improvements
- Public realm improvements
- · On-site recycling facilities and sustainable waste management
- Public Art and Culture Trail
- Community safety initiatives
- Public open green space
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Managed / serviced workspace for local small and medium enterprises (SME's)
- Employment training and jobs brokerage

Consultation and Partnership

In order to ensure that the Masterplan remains a "living" document and the aims and objectives are realised, the implementation process needs to be underpinned by consultation and partnership.

It is therefore proposed that an Implementation Group be established to meet regularly with a remit to monitor, guide and oversee the implementation of various projects across the Masterplan area. It is envisaged that the Implementation Group will draw together members of the Steering Group established to guide preparation of the Masterplan and key developers. The Implementation Group will therefore represent the interests of key stakeholders in Aldgate including the Council, Local Area Partnerships, Transport for London, the Greater London Authority, Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust, developers, landowners, residents associations and the business community.

The Implementation Group will be charged with securing funding and ensuring the delivery of the projects identified in the Aldgate Masterplan.

The following table lists the actions identified to implement the Vision, with likely time frames, organisational responsibility, delivery and indicative funding.

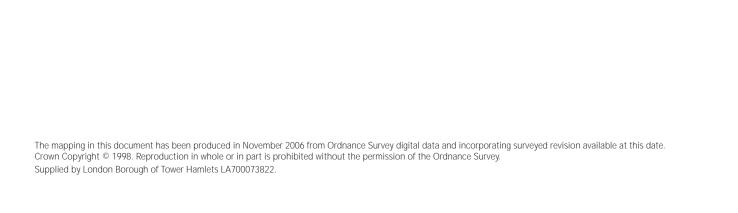
Implementation Table

The Masterplan aims to provide a framework that sets out priorities for planning contributions focussed on the needs of the Aldgate area. An implementation table of key projects, along with the timescales and mechanisms for their delivery is also provided.

	Action	Phasing	Responsibility	Delivery Mechanism	Funding secured
GEN1	Establish Masterplan Implementation Group.	Short term	London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Planning obligation funding	Within existing Masterplan budget
GEN 2	Commission commercial property study to provide base line and projected information on Aldgate's property market.	Short term	London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Planning obligation funding	Within existing Masterplan budget
AC1 SA1 AT1	Work with Transport for London and developers to design and implement the proposed changes to the Aldgate gyratory including closure of Braham Street to through traffic, provision of a new open space, closure of redundant subways, provision of new street-level crossings for pedestrians, comprehensive public realm improvements, lighting, landscaping and signage.	Short-term	 London Borough of Tower Hamlets Aldgate Union site developers Transport for London Greater London Authority 	Development control process Planning obligations	Approx £5m to be secured through Aldgate Union development
AC2	Develop and implement a package of traffic calming and environmental improvements to give increased priority to pedestrians and cyclists along Alie Street and Leman Street, strengthening north-south and east-west links.	Medium-term	London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Planning obligations	Nil
AC3	Include a designated cycle route through the new Braham Street open space as a quieter alternative route to Whitechapel High Street.	Short-term	Developers of Aldgate UnionTransport for London	Development Control process Detailed design stage	Nil
AC4	Support proposals for a "20 mile per hour zone" in residential streets to the north of Whitechapel High Street.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Planning obligations and Transport for London funding	Nil
AC5	Develop a signage strategy for pedestrians and cyclists that promotes the links between Aldgate and surrounding areas (such as the Tower of London, Brick Lane and Spitalfields Market) so that Aldgate becomes part of a strategic network that links important destinations in the City Fringe.	Medium-term	London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Pooled planning obligations	Nil
AC6	Work with Transport for London and other partners to investigate options for improving access to Aldgate East underground station and changes to the name to include reference to Brick Lane (links to IN2).	Longer-term	London Borough of Tower HamletsTransport for London	Pooled planning obligations	Nil

	Action	Phasing	Responsibility	Delivery Mechanism	Funding secured
SA2	Implement the subway environmental improvement project identified through Aldgate Union first phase proposals for subways that need to be retained.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower HamletsAldgate Union 1& 2 site developers	Development design and control process Planning obligations	£100,000 secured from S.106 agreement
SA3	Develop and implement a strategy for making secluded alleyways along Whitechapel High Street safer.	Medium-term	London Borough of Tower HamletsWhitechapel Art Gallery	Detailed design Planning contributions	Nil
SA4 AT5	Implement proposed lighting and landscape improvements to Altab Ali Park to improve the open space and discourage anti-social behaviour after dark.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Planning obligations Neighbourhood Renewal Funding	£140,000 secured from Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, LBTH Capital budget and S.106
AT2	Support and contribute to Transport for London proposals for environmental improvements on Whitechapel High Street and Commercial Road	Medium-term	London Borough of Tower HamletsTransport for London	Pooled financial contributions -planning obligations	Nil
AT3	Ensure community involvement in the design and implementation of the proposed Braham Street open space.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower HamletsAldgate Union site developers	Development Control process	n/a
AT4	Work with the developers of Aldgate Union to establish a robust mechanism for the future maintenance of the proposed Braham Street open space.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower Hamlets Aldgate Union site developers	Planning Contributions	Nil
AT6	Design and implement public realm improvements to mark Osborn Street as the southern entrance to Brick Lane on Osborn Street.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Planning obligations	Nil
AT7	Work with key developers and the Council's Business and Investment Team to develop marketing strategy to promote Aldgate as a destination.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower HamletsDevelopers		Nil
CR1	Develop and implement a proposed Art/Culture Trail linking Aldgate East Station, Whitechapel Art Gallery and other cultural destinations.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower HamletsWhitechapel Art Gallery	Partially through planning obligations and partially through other sources	Nil

	Action	Phasing	Responsibility	Delivery Mechanism	Funding secured
IN1	Work with Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust and the developers of Goodman's Fields to deliver a new health centre and doctor's surgery in the vicinity of Alie Street as part of the wider development of this site.	Short-term	 London Borough of Tower Hamlets Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust 	Planning obligations	Nil
IN2	Design and manage new open spaces at Braham Street, Goodman's Fields and other development sites to ensure they are accessible and provide recreational opportunities for all, including children's play facilities in new open space at Goodman's Fields.	Ongoing	London Borough of Tower HamletsDevelopersTransport for LondonGreater London Authority	Development design Development control process Management of open space	n/a
IN3	Support proposals that bring forward active ground floor uses (such as shops, cafes, bars and restaurants) on Alie Street and Leman Street.	Ongoing	London Borough of Tower HamletsDevelopers	Development design and control process	n/a
EH1	Design new open spaces to provide opportunities for rainwater infiltration and where possible, additional habitat for local species.	Short-term	London Borough of Tower HamletsDevelopers	Development design Development control process	n/a
EH2	Minimise the impact of a growing local population on traffic congestion and air and noise pollution by encourage car-free agreements for new residential development.	Ongoing	London Borough of Tower HamletsDevelopers	Development design Development control process	n/a
EH3	Require new development to contain built-in measures to reduce energy and water consumption	Ongoing	London Borough of Tower HamletsDevelopers	Development design Development control process	n/a
EH4	Encourage new development to include methods for production of energy from renewable sources.	Ongoing	London Borough of Tower HamletsDevelopers	Development design Development control process	n/a
EH5	Encourage green spaces within new development, including, for example, landscaped roof spaces and forecourts.	Ongoing	London Borough of Tower HamletsDevelopers	Development design Development control process	n/a



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