

OBJECTIVE 4: NEW LIFE FOR OUR LOCAL HERITAGE

7.3.3 Conformity with other policies

Public Houses in Bow Neighbourhood Plan Area; Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Forum;³⁸

This document details the locally designated pubs' ages, characters and distinctiveness, as well as their architectural, historical and social significance.

Historic England, Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment, Advice Note 11

"It is for the local community to decide on the scope and content of a neighbourhood plan. They may wish to set out a specific historic environment section within the plan, drawing on the evidence gathered. There are benefits from consolidating related information in a clear, focused way." (page 18)

The National Planning Policy Framework 2019

"Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic

environment can bring;

- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place." (page 54, para 185)

Local planning authorities should "plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments" (page 27, para 92)

Debate in Houses Parliament, 12 February 2015

CAMRA have lobbied the government for pubs to be removed from the A4 use class and placed into the 'Sui Generis' category. This would require a planning application with opportunity for public representations before any change of use. A debate on this issue was held in Parliament on 12th February 2015. A concession required pubs designated as Assets of Community Value (ACV) to be subject to full applications for any change of use.

Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 (Consolidated)

Applicants are required to submit written notice to local planning authorities giving notice (fifty-six days)

before implementing change of use under permitted development. This allows time for ACV nominations to be received.

The London Plan 2020, Policy HC7: Protecting public houses

"Boroughs should:

1. protect public houses where they have a heritage, economic, social or cultural value to local communities, and where they contribute to wider policy objectives for town centres, night-time economy areas and Creative Enterprise Zones.
2. support proposals for new public houses to stimulate town centre regeneration, cultural quarters, the night-time economy and mixed-use development, where appropriate. Applications that propose the loss of public houses with heritage, cultural, economic or social value should be refused unless there is authoritative marketing evidence that demonstrates that there is no realistic prospect of the building being used as a pub in the foreseeable future. Development proposals for redevelopment of associated accommodation, facilities or development within the curtilage of the public house that would compromise the operation or viability of the public house use should be resisted." (page 344, paragraph A)

Tower Hamlets Council, Assets of Community Value, Nomination form guidance notes

This document gives detailed guidance to local groups wishing to nominate an Asset of Community Value.

Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031, Section 12, Policy D.CF4 Public houses Policy requires the provision of specific evidence where the loss of a public house is proposed (page 133).

7.3.4 Justification

Pubs are often located in attractive, prominent locations in the heart of the community and operate from buildings distinguished by the quality of their architectural design and detail. They tend to occupy reasonably large plots, sometimes with a beer garden or yard, and there is often capacity to convert or redevelop a pub to provide several new dwellings.

Tower Hamlets Local List, New Additions, 2019

In 2019 Tower Hamlets made new additions of local pubs to its local list of buildings and structures that, whilst not statutorily listed for their national importance, are considered to be of local importance. These included the Eleanor Arms and the adjacent building No.458, as together they form a single development (in the setting of Victoria Park Conservation Area), the Lord Morpeth (in the setting of Victoria Park Conservation Area) and the Victoria.

Existing pubs in the plan area also include the nationally Grade II listed The Crown, 223 Grove Rd, E3 5SN, the Palm Tree, 127 Grove Road E3 5BH, and the Lord Tredegar, 50 Lichfield Road E3 5AL.

The Cherry (formerly the Globe), The Greedy Cow (formerly the Prince of Wales) and Little Driver are locally listed buildings.

Pubs and restaurants have suffered greatly during the pandemic and struggle to survive. They represent not only some fine local buildings but are community meeting places for people who value socialising over drink and food.

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7.4 Action supporting opportunities for new types of Public House

7.4.1 Key Issue

Current planning policies discourage innovation in new forms of public house and are restrictive of locations where they might be sited.

7.4.2 Action

Action HE3: Opportunities for new types of Public House

Tower Hamlets Council to facilitate new models of pubs coming forward, and broaden the locations in which proposals might be acceptable.

7.4.3 Conformity with other policies

Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031, policy D.TC5

Drinking establishments outside the town centre hierarchy are permitted "Where they are local in nature and scale" (page 122). Paragraph 12.2, Supporting Community Facilities, states "Specific need gaps and priorities include the provision of public houses,.." (page128).

7.4.4 Justification

activities such as live music, comedy nights, pool and darts leagues, parties and celebrations, political debate, community meetings and quizzes. Some have the potential to become assets of community value.

Tower Hamlets Council; Pubs in Tower Hamlets – An Evidence Base Study 2017

"It is recommended that the Council amends its planning policies to better facilitate new models of pubs coming forward and to broaden the locations in which proposals might be acceptable. For example, the growing movement of 'micro-pubs' is conducive to being delivered outside of main town centres without harming surrounding residential amenity, so policies could be drafted or amended to facilitate such uses in such locations as appropriate." (page30)

7.5 Action for an updated Bow Heritage Trail

7.5.1 Key Issue

The area's heritage assets are poorly promoted, and the 1990 heritage trail is outdated and not easily accessible in digital format. Way marking through the area is generally poor, which discourages visitors from exploring lesser-known places, and results in local businesses missing out on potential trade.

7.5.2 Action

Action HE4: Wayfinding and Bow Heritage Trail

Implementation of the Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy, Updated 2017, to include better wayfinding and integration with TfL's Legible London signage. It will link the Roman Road shops and market with community facilities, cultural and historic places of interest, and surrounding Olympic Park, Mile End Park and Victoria Park through an updated digital Bow Heritage Trail.

7.5.3 Conformity with other policies

Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy 2026

One of the stated outcomes for Aim 2: 'Conserving and protecting the borough's historic environment, and capitalising on opportunities for attracting investment, conservation-led regeneration and positive place shaping' is: "Up-to-date information and guidance about the historic environment that is easily accessible." (page7).

The strategy goes on to say: "There is very limited interpretation or directional signage relating to the heritage resource onsite 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 here. 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." (page16, section 3.2.12)

7.5.4 Justification

Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy: Update 2017; Appendices Adapted opportunities from 2010 Green Grid Strategy

Section 6, Roman Road: "There is some unused space on the wider pavements, which could be used to create additional seating and associated landscaping including planters, street trees and pocket parks, as well as better signposting the rest of the Borough and city from here, so it does not feel so isolated. The area has a rich history particularly as the Suffragette heartland, which could be better celebrated through public realm interventions including art and community events." (page 20)

Transport for London, Legible London

"We work with the London Development Agency, and in partnership with London boroughs, to develop a way of providing coordinated walking information across the Capital, offering benefits for our transport system, for public health, the economy, tourism and the environment."³⁹

Bow Heritage Trail

The signposted trail through Bow with plaques giving information about places of historic interest is now defunct. The Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives at 277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ with its close proximity to Queen Mary College,⁴⁰ provides an exciting opportunity for updating the trail using digital technology.

⁶⁶ Local pubs provide valuable space to support recreation and leisure

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By 2031, new developments over the last decade are well integrated with existing communities, retaining the character of local neighbourhoods without destroying locally listed assets. A majority of the homes are low carbon homes. Roman Road CLT has pioneered a few affordable and well-designed community-led housing schemes around Bow. Incremental, small scale residential projects over time have created a greater variety of housing types. These projects reflect the local housing need and area and successfully promote community cohesion.

8.1 Summary of key issues

High property prices, unaffordable private rents, and the scarcity of land for housing make it difficult for people who have grown up in Bow to stay, and people on modest incomes to move in. This contributes to short-term stays and works against building mixed and balanced communities.

8.2 Policy on site allocations

8.2.1 Key issue

There are no large sites for significant new housing developments within the plan area NPA that might deliver much needed affordable housing for the area. The Central Area identified in the Tower Hamlets Local Plan (page 220), has there are only two allocated sites - at Bow Common Lane and Chrisp Street Town Centre. These both fall outside the plan area NPA. A pipeline of small sites will be required in order to build local affordable homes.

A 2020 technical support package through Locality enabled an initial assessment of potential sites to be made by AECOM. 8 sites were assessed, a mix of publicly and privately owned land, but 7 of these were not available for a variety of reasons. This demonstrated the challenges involved in finding suitable sites that are also available.

8.2.2 Policy

The policy identifies one sites suitable for housing development. This is land at the rear of 81-147 Candy Street E3 2LH. A slightly larger site was originally assessed, and information for the site, including location, site area, relevant planning history and development constraints, is in the **Roman Road Bow Housing Need and Deliverability Assessment document** (site 4, Wendon St.)⁴¹

A narrow strip of land on the edge of the A12 was subsequently excluded from the site as it lay within the area of the London Legacy Development Corporation. The site proposed is that contained in a joint planning application by London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Place Ltd. (PA/21/01162) of June 2021 for 16 pre-constructed modular apartments to be used as temporary accommodation for a period of 10 years. A site location plan is shown below. Site details are in the 2020 report '**Roman Road Site Options and Assessments 2020 by AECOM**'⁴²



Fig. 25: Candy Street location map

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Policy H1: Site allocation and housing development

1. The following site is allocated for housing:
Land at rear of 81-147 Candy St. E3 2LH contained in planning application PA/21/01162.

8.2.3 Conformity with other policies

The London Plan 2020, Chapter 4, Policy H2

Although larger sites are scarce, smaller sites with the potential for housing delivery are dotted throughout the area. Policy H2 in the London Plan supports the development of small sites stating that they “should play a much greater role in housing delivery and boroughs should proactively support well-designed new homes on small sites.” (page180)

Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031

Policy S.SG1 on Areas of Growth and Opportunity Within Tower Hamlets “The remaining part of the borough is defined as the Central sub-area. Whilst not having the status of an opportunity area, this area has the potential to absorb additional growth, primarily through infill and land use intensification which respects the character of the surrounding streetscape.” (page34, para 7.7) “While the majority of the borough’s future housing and employment supply is expected to come forward on allocated sites, significant

opportunities exist to bring forward development within other locations, such as small-scale infill sites within existing neighbourhoods and the intensification of existing brownfield sites. These sites (known as windfalls) have the potential to make a significant contribution to the supply of housing and employment land in the borough.” (page34, para 7.11)

Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031: Policy S.H1 Meeting housing need

“Development will be expected to contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities that respond to local and strategic need. This will be achieved through:
a. setting an overall target for 50% of all new homes to be affordable, to be achieved through:
i. securing affordable homes from a range of council-led initiatives
ii. requiring the provision of affordable housing contributions on sites providing 2 to 9 new residential units against a sliding-scale target (subject to viability).” (page76, para 2)

Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031: Policy D.H2 Affordable housing and housing mix

“1. Development is required to maximise the provision of affordable housing in accordance with a 70% rented and 30% intermediate tenure split.
2. Development is required to maximise the delivery of affordable housing on-site.” (page80, para 1.2)

Planning Obligations SPD March 2021

Major applications are defined as “10 units or more, or with a combined gross floorspace of 1,000 sqm (gross internal area) or more.” (page14)

‘Affordable Housing is being delivered through negotiations as a part of major residential schemes, as well as through a range of public initiatives and the effective use of grant funding. In line with Local Plan Policies S.H1 and D.H2, a target of 50% Affordable Housing has been set for major residential schemes. These schemes are expected to deliver a minimum of 35% Affordable Housing with a mix of tenures and unit sizes, subject to viability. The Development Viability SPD sets out the detail around securing on-site Affordable Housing provision, in line with the Mayor of London’s Affordable Housing and Viability SPG.’ (page15)

High Density Living SPD; Tower Hamlets Council; December 2020

“In particular, the SPD provides detailed guidance to help the council deliver its vision to support existing communities and welcome new residents to make their home within liveable, mixed, stable, inclusive and cohesive neighbourhoods, which contribute to a high quality of life and more healthy lifestyles.” (page10, policy context)

Central Area Good Growth SPD; Tower Hamlets Council August 2021

This document contains a character appraisal for Bow and descriptions of typical building types (pages 31-35). Future challenges and opportunities are identified: Regarding 21st century urban housing growth it states: “The variety provided through the range of building types sometimes leads to an unclear and fragmented character and there is an opportunity to improve the connection between developments and also to the

wider street environment. There is a risk that new developments may reinforce fragmentary character and lack of cohesion by following these precedents.” (page133)

Principles based on the character of different areas are then set out in the SPD out to guide future development. The guidance contains a design toolkit for small sites up to 0.25 hectares. “Each type of site and associated context is analysed, and design guidelines are provided. These are based on best practice architecture and urban design considerations that reflect the council’s aspirations.” (page151)

Design principles are also set out for residential developments: “As the emphasis of the SPD is on small-scale developments, the principles have a particular focus on overcoming usual constraints associated with this type of development in order to achieve high quality developments for existing and future residents.” (page197)

Thames Water

Thames Water responded to the Regulation 14 consultation saying: “Developers need to consider the net increase in water and waste water demand to serve their developments and also any impact the development may have off site further down the network if no/low water pressure and internal/external sewage flooding of property is to be avoided. Thames Water encourages developers to use their free pre-planning service.”

8.2.4 Justification

A review of Evidence into Local Need for Affordable Housing, March 2020 ⁴³

A 2020 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) carried out for the Roman Road Neighbourhood Forum by Arc4 indicates the area is mostly

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populated by younger, single people, or households formed as cohabiting couples with no children. Consequently, there is a greater proportion of one bedroom and two-bedroom dwellings in the area. The population projections show that the older population is set to more than double by 2041, most of whom require the ability to downsize to one-bedroom homes.

The HNA indicates that more than 75% of households are unable to afford market housing of any kind, whether private rent or private home ownership, due to the high cost of housing in the area. This has led to owner occupation becoming one of the lowest in the country and indicates a latent demand for intermediate affordable housing products such as shared ownership, discount market, or affordable starter homes. Furthermore, it has led to a high turnover of residents who are living in temporary or short-term accommodation.

This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to establish sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities that encourage longer term residents to stay and provide opportunities for new residents to stay longer term.

The HNA concluded that 'unless there is an increase in the vacancy rate, the flow of unmet affordable need is an average of 86 dwellings per annum in Bow East and an average of 97 dwellings per annum in Bow

West. This gives a total of 183 dwellings per annum across the 2 wards.' (paragraph 5.27)

Well designed homes

Good quality housing design and layout are described in the Tower Hamlets Local Plan (Policy S.D1, page 44). The importance of good design in the NPA is to enhance community interaction within new housing developments. This can be supported through the design of mixed-tenure blocks and shared semi-private communal spaces or gardens, which would provide a place for social interaction and create a sense of community.

8.3 Policy supporting community-led housing

8.3.1 Key Issue

Many new housing developments do not provide the types of housing that are needed by the community, and the local community is not given priority when units become available. Community led housing is a growing movement of people taking action and managing housing projects that build the decent and affordable homes that the country so desperately needs. Open and meaningful community participation and consent takes place throughout the process.

The community group or organisation owns, manages or stewards the homes in whichever way they decide to, but needs to be a registered affordable

housing provider. The housing development is of true benefit for the local community, a specific group of people (an intentional community), or both. These benefits should also be legally protected in perpetuity

8.3.2 Policy

Policy H2: Community-led housing

In order to ensure the provision of community-led housing that meets community need:

- a.** Where intermediate housing is proposed, developers are encouraged to work with community led housing groups, such as the Roman Road Community Land Trust, to provide affordable housing
- b.** New residential developments where intermediate housing is proposed, are to submit an offer for these homes to local community-led housing organisations before opening the developments to the market
- c.** The provision of community-led housing that meets community need is strongly encouraged

8.3.3 Conformity with other policies

The London Plan 2020, Policy H2 Small sites

"Boroughs should pro-actively support well-designed new homes on small sites (below 0.25 hectares in size) through both planning decisions and plan-making in order to:

- 1) significantly increase the contribution of small sites to meeting London's housing needs*
- 2) diversify the sources, locations, type and mix of housing supply*
- 3) support small and medium-sized housebuilder*
- 4) support those wishing to bring forward custom, self-build and*

community-led housing
5) achieve the minimum targets for small sites set out in Table 4.2 as a component of the overall housing targets..." (chapter 4, page 180)

"Boroughs should:

- 1) recognise in their Development Plans that local character evolves over time and will need to change in appropriate locations to accommodate additional housing on small sites*
- 2) Where appropriate, prepare site-specific briefs, masterplans and housing design codes for small sites*
- 3) identify and allocate appropriate small sites for residential development*
- 4) list these small sites on their brownfield registers*
- 5) grant permission in principle on specific sites or prepare local development orders."* (chapter 4, page 180)

Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031

In order to support a variety of housing products in the market and affordable tenures which meet local need under policy S.H1, *"Developments are expected to maximise the provision of affordable housing, having regard to availability of public subsidy, implications of phased development (including provision for re-appraising scheme viability at different stages of development) as well as financial viability which should, in particular, take account of prevailing local and regional viability guidance."* (page 78 para 9.19)

"Over the plan period, developments on small sites have the potential to contribute over 3,000 new homes and could make a significant contribution towards meeting local affordable housing need." (page 78, para 9.21)

8.3.4 Justification

Community-led housing has been

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actively promoted and funded by Central Government since 2016, to give communities control over delivering the homes that are best suited to their local needs. Whilst the movement of Community Land Trusts and community-led housing groups has only really taken hold in England since the early 2000's, they play an important role in stewarding land for building affordable homes. Roman Road Community Land Trust (RRCLT) was formed in 2019 to champion community-led housing and to work with developers and landowners to build genuinely affordable, good quality homes in Bow.

The level of housing need in Tower Hamlets as a whole far outstrips supply. *"There are more than 19,000 households on the housing register in need of an affordable home and over 2,000 households living in temporary accommodation. But each year, only 1,800 homes become available to let to applicants on the housing register.*

*More new homes were built in Tower Hamlets in 2018 than anywhere else in the UK, but with the average house price now 22 times the average salary, our residents can't afford to buy them."*⁴⁴

There are currently very few affordable housing developments underway in the area. One solution to meet the needs of the local community is to support community-led housing developments to reduce the unmet demand.

Right to Contest, Jan 2021
*"The government believes that reforming the Right to Contest and relaunching it as a new 'Right to Regenerate' could provide a quicker and easier route for individuals, businesses and organisations to identify, purchase and redevelop underused or empty land in their area. In turn, a strengthened right would support greater regeneration of brownfield land, boost housing supply and empower people to turn blights and empty spaces in their areas into more beautiful developments."*⁴⁵

Roman Road Bow Housing Need and Deliverability Assessment document⁴¹ describes in more detail the proposed local response to the HNA, including community led housing.

8.4 Policy on low carbon housing

8.4.1 Key issue

Climate change is having an impact on our lives, and urgent action is needed to slow it down. The mayor declared a climate emergency in March 2019 and the council has committed to become a net zero carbon council by 2025 and a net zero carbon borough by 2050 or sooner.

8.4.2 Policy: Low carbon housing

8.4.2 Policy

Policy H3: Low carbon housing

Proposals for significant renovation of residential properties are strongly encouraged to achieve the Tower

Hamlets Local Plan Policy D.ES7 (A zero carbon borough) requirement for new residential developments to reduce on-site carbon dioxide emissions by at least 45% beyond 2013 Building Regulations.

This includes the sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency measures in historic buildings - including the retrofitting of listed buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas - provided that it safeguards the historic characteristics of these heritage assets.

8.4.3 Conformity with other policies

A new Planning Act and Environment Act are expected that will require development to be zero-carbon ready by 2025 (the Government's new Future Homes Standard).

Local Plan 2031 Policy D.ES7 A zero carbon borough

1. Development is required to meet the carbon dioxide emission reduction standards as follows: Both residential and non-residential developments are required to improve on the building regulations 2013 standards:

Development is required to meet the carbon dioxide emission reduction standards - Zero carbon (to be achieved through a minimum 45% reduction in regulated carbon dioxide emissions on-site and the remaining regulated carbon dioxide emissions to 100% - to be offset through a cash in lieu contribution)

2. Development is required to maximise energy efficiency, and as a minimum, all self-contained residential proposals will be strongly encouraged to meet the Home Quality Mark.

3. Major residential and major non-residential development will be required to submit an energy assessment. Minor non-residential development will be strongly

encouraged to prepare an assessment.

4. The energy assessment should demonstrate how the development has been designed in accordance with the energy hierarchy.

5. The sustainable retrofitting of existing development with provisions for the reduction of carbon emissions will be supported.

8.4.4 Justification

There is currently a gap between local policy and the practical measures needed to deliver carbon reduction to target levels. The executive summary of the 2020 'Net Zero Carbon Plan' produced for the Council by Etude, says in order to achieve a net zero carbon council by 2025 'it will require decisive action starting now to reduce direct emissions by 75%. The residual emissions will have to be offset.' The report continues – 'This report also recommends that Tower Hamlets Council uses its powers, influence and leadership to put the Borough on the right track to achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2050 (or earlier if possible).' (page2)

The report emphasises the key role of policy in addressing climate change – 'Policy is critical to deliver Net Zero Carbon. The potential for policy to cause significant change within the borough cannot be understated. New policies should be bold and reflect the urgency of the changes that we need to see to avert catastrophic climate change' (page 31).

The neighbourhood plan is limited in what it can do, but it can support national, London and local policies. To help meet climate change targets we wish to encourage a wider range of developments, including proposals for significant renovation of residential properties, to achieve the Tower Hamlets local plan requirement for new developments in policy D.ES7.

OBJECTIVE 6: RESILIENT AND WELL-NETWORKED COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

By 2031 funding from new developments has enabled the creation of new places for young people to meet and there is an established and financially stable network of community groups running activities and facilities supporting the diverse population in the area. Grassroots organisations, children's and youth groups, arts and performance organisations and places of worship are part of a community consortium, working together identifying and agreeing funding opportunities for provision of new or expansion of existing facilities or activities across the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

9.1 Summary of current issues

Community facilities are facing reduced access to public funding and increased pressure from higher land value uses, as well as competing with demand for housing and employment use. Some existing facilities, such as Chisenhale Gallery and Holy Trinity Church need major capital investment, others like the Arts Pavilion are under-used. There are insufficient facilities for young people, particularly teenagers, across the neighbourhood plan area.



76 Fig. 25: Chisenhale Gallery



Fig. 26: Arts Pavilion

Grassroots community organisations play an important role supporting local residents and businesses. Many of these groups have been active in the area for a number of years identifying and solving local problems, but also face challenges of competing for limited funding.

A mapping exercise was carried out to identify all the local grassroots groups and community facilities, by sector, that fall within the neighbourhood plan boundary. See **Community groups mapping and analysis; Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Forum.**⁴⁶

9.2 Policy to develop new and improved sports and play facilities

9.2.1 Key issue

The Local Plan 2031 Section 12, Supporting Community Facilities acknowledges the borough has specific gaps and priorities, including youth centres and indoor sport facilities and community halls (page 128). The policy in the Local Plan is reliant on developer contributions to ensure these additional or improved facilities

will be provided.

9.2.2 Policy

Policy CF1: developing new and improved sports and play facilities

In order to meet the needs of the growing population of children and young adults in the neighbourhood plan area, space should be found for additional sports and play facilities, either as part of new development or from CIL funding allocated in the area. Planning applications that propose the provision of sports and play facilities for children and young people will be viewed favourably. New residential developments will be expected to demonstrate that they have assessed the likely needs of the new resident under-16 population, and have sought, where possible, to address these needs.

Proposals to improve the quality of existing sports and play facilities at Mile End Climbing Wall, Roman Road Adventure Playground and other existing facilities will be strongly supported. Where appropriate, developer contributions will be used to address these needs.

9.2.3 Conformity with other policies

See photos of proposed sites for improvement for play and recreation in **Potential sites for improved spaces for play and recreation; Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Forum document.**⁴⁷

Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031; Policy D.CF3 New and enhanced community facilities

“Proposals involving the provision of community facilities located outside the borough's town centres will be permitted where an up-to-

date and robust local need can be demonstrated.” (page131)

Indoor Sports Facilities for the Future 2017-2027 Appendix 3, Action plan

“Investigate any opportunities to develop indoor sports provision as a joint venture with partners, including neighbouring councils. (page78)

Tower Hamlets Planning Obligations SPD March 2021

‘It was agreed by Cabinet on 6 December 2016 to allocate 25% of received CIL funds in all circumstances to the ‘neighbourhood portion’. In LBTH this ‘neighbourhood portion’ goes into the Local Infrastructure Fund (LIF) which residents are then consulted on to determine how this fund should be used to improve the local area.’ (paragraph 1.16)

9.2.4 Justification

Indoor Sports Facilities for the Future 2017-2027; Section 4.3.1 Current and future needs for sports halls

“Geographical distribution of public and dual use sports halls across the borough is relatively good, with only small areas of the borough outside the catchment distance of 1,200 metres. One such area is in the north of the borough and broadly covers the northern parts of Bethnal Green, Bow West and Bow East wards.” (page24)

Morpeth School pupil survey findings; Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Forum; July 201649

The under-provision of sports and play facilities is reflected in the survey carried out with Morpeth pupils aged between 12 and 15 in 2016, where respondents highlighted a desire for more or better youth leisure provision and 65% of surveyed students mentioned leisure facilities as important.

OBJECTIVE 6: RESILIENT AND WELL-NETWORKED COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Community groups mapping and analysis; Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Forum ⁴⁶

Only two out of the 40 mapped facilities in the area were for sports and play - Mile End climbing wall and Roman Road adventure playground.

Health and Social Care in the North East Locality Research Briefing, 2019 ⁴⁸

This document identified one of the challenges as “*Unequal availability of leisure centres and exercising facilities, with Bow East and some parts of Mile End being further away from a leisure centre than other parts of the locality.*” (Page 2)

In 1999 a planning application (PA/99/00968) was permitted for “*New sports hall, incorporating changing rooms, offices and incorporates Caxton Green and the disused railway cutting as part of a Fitness Trail leading to new all-weather 5-7-A-side football pitch to the south of Four Seasons Green.*” This facility was never built.

For a neighbourhood adjacent to the Olympic Park, it is a poor legacy that the plan area has no widely available sports hall for community use throughout the week. Future developments in adjacent areas of the London Legacy Development Corporation will provide opportunities for partnership working by Tower Hamlets Council through contributions to new sports facilities for the Bow community.

9.3 Action to develop new and improved youth facilities and

support

9.3.1 Key Issue

Whilst there are good youth services and facilities across the borough, there is a deficit within the NPA with a strong perception that more facilities should be provided: 22% of pupils who took part in the Morpeth School survey stated they wanted more youth provision in the area.

Council funded youth services have suffered from a series of reorganisations over the past 20 years, with a consequential lack of consistency in services and frequent changes of senior personnel. The updated youth service delivery model agreed in July 2020 shows only one Council youth work hub in the plan area and relies substantially on the community and voluntary sector to fundraise and enhance the offer. ⁴⁹

9.3.2 Action

Where it is possible for developer contributions to provide new youth facilities, for example, on the Chisenhale Art Place site, and on the Malmesbury and Lockton estates, these will be supported.

Proposals to improve the quality of existing youth facilities at Eastside, Green Light Youth Club and St Paul's Old Ford will be strongly supported. Where appropriate, developer contributions will be used to address these needs.



Fig. 27: Green Light Youth Club



Fig. 28: Eastside Youth Centre

9.3.3 Conformity with other policies

Revised planning obligations supplementary planning document, March 2013; London Borough of Tower Hamlets; Chapter 2: Council's approach to planning obligations and CIL

“Following the introduction of CIL, the intention is that the Council will cease to mitigate the impact of development on the borough's community facilities through S106 Agreements. The following types of community facilities will instead be delivered through CIL receipts; Multi-use community facilities; Youth facilities; Leisure centres; Idea Stores, libraries and archives.” (page8-9, para 2.12)

9.3.4 Justification

Tower Hamlets Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2016-2019

The provision for youth activity groups in the NPA is under-represented compared to the borough as a whole. (page11)

Community groups mapping and analysis; Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Forum ⁴⁶

The neighbourhood plan area has only three youth focussed facilities out of the 40 mapped facilities: 31 Squadron Air Cadets, Green Light Youth Club and Eastside Youth and Community Centre.

Morpeth School pupil survey findings; Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Forum; July 2016 ⁵⁰

The Morpeth pupil survey identified only 6% of respondents as using youth clubs; however, 22% said they wanted more youth facilities in their neighbourhood.

Tower Hamlets Cabinet Meeting minutes of 29 July 2020, Youth Service Delivery Model

“*In modelling the new youth service officers are of the opinion that an additional Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings of £100,000 for 2021/22 could be achieved in support of reducing the council's budget pressure. Support for this approach was given by the council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). It is intended that any agreed saving will be achieved through a reduction in the number of targeted workers in the internal Youth Service.*” (page2)

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At a time when there is emerging evidence of the negative impact of the pandemic on some young people's mental health⁵⁰ and wellbeing, funding for the youth service is being cut. At the Young People's Question Time in March 2019, 60 young people from Tower Hamlets were invited to question senior leaders from the community, local government and police. One questioner commented: "Tower Hamlets is a very young borough, but I don't think lots of our services are particularly well designed to suit the needs of young people."⁵¹

Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan 2020-2023; Outcome 2

The Council will "Engage with Schools, the Youth Service and the Voluntary Sector on how to strengthen access to high-quality activities outside of school for children and young people making the best use of our partnership approach." (page 14)

To secure new and improved facilities with well qualified, experienced youth workers, a firm commitment to prioritise investment for our young people will be required.

9.4 Action to improve existing community centres

9.4.1 Key Issue

The Local Plan 2031 Section 12, Supporting Community Facilities acknowledges the borough has specific gaps and priorities, including youth centres and indoor sport

facilities and community halls (page 128). Some existing community spaces in the NPA are under-used and poorly maintained.

9.4.2 Action

Action CF3: to improve existing community centres

Purpose-built community centres in housing estates in the neighbourhood plan area (such as the Ranwell Community Centre) are underused and need better maintenance and upkeep.

Proposals to replace the present Caxton Grove community centre with a higher quality building suitable for a wide range of community activities alongside improved play and sports facilities, will be encouraged. In order for these and other facilities, such as the Arts and Ecology Pavilions, to continue to provide useful meeting space for community groups and to sustain themselves into the future, CIL funding should be allocated is needed to support, maintain and improve these facilities.



Fig. 29: Caxton Community Centre

9.4.3 Conformity with other policies Tower Hamlets Local Plan, chapter 7,

S.CF1: Supporting community facilities

- "1. Development which seeks to protect, maintain and enhance existing community facilities will be supported.*
- 2. Development will be required to contribute to the capacity, quality, usability and accessibility of existing community facilities, particularly where development will increase demand.*
- 3. Development should maximise opportunities for the provision of high quality community facilities to serve a wide range of users. Where possible, facilities or services should be accessible to the wider community outside of core hours and co-located or shared to encourage multi-purpose trips and better meet the needs of different groups.*
- 4. New community facilities will be directed towards the borough's centres in accordance with the town centre hierarchy and/or to locations which are accessible to their catchments depending on the nature and scale of the proposal." (p128)*

9.4.4 Justification

Pressure on the Council to reduce expenditure, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, will require imagination and determination to improve existing facilities over the next decade. Communal meeting places are likely to assume greater importance following lifting of restrictions on movement and mixing. Leveraging additional investment

from national government, the private sector and charitable sources to supplement the Council's resources will be needed. Major developments on the outside edge of the plan area, such as on Wick Lane, provide opportunities for contributions to be made to community infrastructure in the nearby plan area in partnership with the London Legacy Development Corporation.

In February 2021 Tower Hamlets Council began a public consultation over proposals for the present Caxton Grove community centre. The proposed development is for a high-quality mixed-use scheme to replace the existing community centre and ball court at the northern end of the site adjacent the railway line. The proposed design is a six-storey building including a new community centre on ground floor level and 24 residential units above, providing a mix of dwellings for affordable rent and private sale homes. The public open space area to the south of the proposed building will be upgraded with new landscaping, including a children's dedicated play space alongside a new ballcourt with an area of the equivalent size of the existing ball court to be replaced.

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Fig. 1.30: Caxton Grove. Aerial view from the south-east

9.5 Action to form a consortium of community groups

9.5.1 Key issue

Limited public funding for local grassroots groups and community facilities will be further restricted by the pandemic for years to come. This highlights the importance of active local community involvement in the planning and commissioning of community facilities.

9.5.2 Action

Action CF4: Forming a consortium of community groups

The formation of a consortium of groups and organisations in the neighbourhood plan area will enable better use of limited resources, and allow future funding for community infrastructure to be allocated where it is most needed, looking across the range of activities and facilities. The

Council working with Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service and local groups would be one means of facilitating a local consortium.

9.5.3 Conformity with other policies LBTH Community Engagement Strategy 2018-2021

Outcome 1: Communities lead the way in making Tower Hamlets a great place to live

“Co-production [...] offers an approach for sharing power ‘in an equal and mutual relationship, bringing together professionals, service users, their families and neighbours to design and deliver public services’ (see reference 9). This approach has increasingly been adopted by public sector organisations, who recognise that when power is shared, services are more responsive, and any solutions reached better reflect the needs of communities.” (page 11)

Tower Hamlets Local Plan, section 12, S.CF1: Supporting community facilities

1. Development which seeks to protect, maintain and enhance existing community facilities will be supported.
2. Development will be required to contribute to the capacity, quality, usability and accessibility of existing community facilities, particularly where development will increase demand.
3. Development should maximise opportunities for the provision of high quality community facilities to serve a wide range of users. Where possible, facilities or services should be accessible to the wider community outside of core hours and co-located or shared to encourage multi-purpose trips and better meet the needs of different groups.
4. New community facilities will be directed towards the borough's

centres in accordance with the town centre hierarchy and/or to locations which are accessible to their catchments depending on the nature and scale of the proposal.” (p128)

9.5.4 Justification

Building a sense of belonging and identity through local social networks and shared community experiences are important foundations for communities. This is particularly true for areas such as Bow, where there are a diverse mix of new and existing residents of different ages and ethnicities.⁵²

Many places of worship in the neighbourhood plan area provide important outreach to the local community and support the communities' diverse ethnicities. Examples include Holy Trinity Church and its arts programme, St Paul Old Ford with its youth work and Ability Bow gym, the Bow Muslim Community Centre's Arabic and Bengali classes for children and the Gurdwara Sikh Sangat teaching Punjabi and Gatka (an Indian martial art) classes. The Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service could provide the means of facilitating a local consortium.

9.6 Action to encourage Community Asset Transfer

9.6.1 Key issue

Bow Arts Studios and Nunnery Gallery, Chisenhale Gallery and Dance Space, and The Arts and Ecology Pavilions, are all within the Roman Road Bow NPA. They reach beyond the immediate neighbourhood, attracting visitors into the area and upholding Bow's reputation as a neighbourhood that supports the creative arts.

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Issues with council funding and historic lease arrangements of buildings owned by the Council but managed by local groups, detract from these some buildings being well maintained or developed for the benefit of the community.

9.6.2 Action

Action CF5: Community Asset Transfer and Assets of Community Value

In order for Chisenhale Art Place Trust, Gallery and Dance Space to continue sustainably and control adaptation and development of existing facilities more directly, means should be sought to transfer ownership of the building from Tower Hamlets Council, using Community Asset Transfer. As a separate matter, the potential benefit of listing more Assets of Community Value in the plan area is recognised. The community is strongly encouraged to nominate facilities that are of value to them as assets of community value.

9.6.3 Conformity with other policies Understanding Community Asset Transfer; Locality

“Community Asset Transfer is the transfer of a publicly owned asset (usually land or buildings) to a community organisation at less than market value, or at nil consideration (no cost).” (page3)

General Disposal Consent (England) 2003, The Consent

Local authorities have the power to dispose of land and buildings at less than market value where they are able to demonstrate that doing so will result in local improvements to social, economic or environmental well-being. Local authorities are permitted to dispose of local authority land valued at up to two million pounds below market value or less without the need to obtain specific consent from the Deputy Prime Minister and First Secretary of State. (page6, para 8)

A plain English guide to the Localism Action, Nov 2011; Community right to bid

“The Localism Act requires local authorities to maintain a list of assets of community value which have been nominated by the local community. When listed assets come up for sale or change of ownership, the Act then gives community groups the time to develop a bid and raise the money to bid to buy the asset when it comes on the open market.” (page9)

London Borough of Tower Hamlets assets of community value – nomination form guidance notes⁵⁴

9.6.4 Justification

Chisenhale is a prime example, where transfer of ownership of land and buildings on the Chisenhale site by Community Asset Transfer at less than market value could be of great

benefit. The purpose of the transfers would be to help secure the industrial heritage of the site, and strengthen its sustainability and long-term use for the arts and other community uses.

Chisenhale Gallery has occupied part of the ground floor of a former veneer factory on Chisenhale Road since 1982. Adjacent to the gallery on the ground floor, as well as on the upper floors of the building above the Gallery, are 38 artists' studios run by Chisenhale Art Place Trust, and next door, Chisenhale Dance Space occupies the top floor of a former brewery building. The three organisations, now run as separate charities, began life together when artists took on a lease to the then derelict site from Tower Hamlets Council in 1980.

Apart from providing revenue to the Council, there seems little rationale for the local authority to retain ownership of this valued community asset. Major repairs are needed to areas such as roofs and windows, and part of the former brewery is derelict. The current ownership structure hampers long-term initiatives to improve and bring back into use large empty, derelict spaces. This is connected with financial restrictions and the complexities associated with raising funds for capital works on a building which they don't own.

London's Cultural Infrastructure Plan calls on local authorities to develop long-term community asset transfer policies. and the GLA Cultural Infrastructure officers support the suggestion to explore the transfer of ownership of the buildings. The GLA's Artist Workspace Data Note said there were 11,500 studios in London,

but only 13% have secure freeholds. Preservation of Chisenhale Artists' Studios would lead to increasing the long-term stability of London's studios. The transfer could include the gallery space, dance space and studios.

9.7 Action to improve accessibility to health and social care facilities

9.7.1 Key Issue

The mapping of community facilities in Community groups mapping and analysis; **Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Forum**; ⁵⁵ shows that health and social care facilities are not easily accessible for residents in some parts of the neighbourhood plan area, in particular, those living in the eastern part of the Fairfield neighbourhood area are approximately 12 minutes' walk from the nearest doctor's surgery.

A research briefing on health and social care in the north east locality of the borough found that there were “Poorer availability of GP appointments than in the South of the Borough, with 35% of patients saying that they wait for more than a week for an appointment.” (page2)

9.7.2 Action

Action CF6: Improving access to health and social care facilities

Tower Hamlets Council, NHS and other service providers, using the principles of co-design and co-production described on page 17 of the Tower Hamlets Plan 2018-23, *“to ensure the community and local partners have a voice in shaping the design of local services. to work towards more equal*

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access to health and social care services across the neighbourhood area."

9.7.3 Conformity with other policies Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2017

The delivery plan seeks to ensure appropriate policies are in place for creating Healthy Places (page 45), as well as to provide providing new facilities where need is identified (page 47-48). There are no proposals in the current plan to provide additional health facilities in the Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-20; chapter 1 Communities driving change

In the first 12 months, the programme aims to *"Implement a 'health creation' programme in which residents: : identify issues impacting on health and wellbeing that matter to local people; recruit other residents who have the energy and passion to make a difference; develop and lead new ways to improve health and wellbeing locally."* (page13)

The programme operates in 12 of the most deprived neighbourhoods in Tower Hamlets, including Bow East/Old Ford Road, selected on health data, and the need to strengthen assets supporting health and wellbeing in those areas.

A new five year Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being developed by the council's Health and Wellbeing board, with the central objective of tackling health inequalities.

9.7.4 Justification Health and Social Care in the North East Locality Research Briefing, 2019

The North East Locality comprises five wards: Bow West, Bow East, Bromley North, Bromley South and Mile End.

"Residents of the North East locality fared consistently worse than all the other localities across all indicators. In particular, they were more likely to find that they are poorly supported to make healthy lifestyle choices, that air quality is poor, that health and social care services don't work well together and that the neighbourhoods they live in are unsafe. They felt significantly more disenfranchised in relation with how their local community was run, and less satisfied with their homes and where they lived." (Page 6)

Dentists: *"According to the Tower Hamlets North East Locality Profile, access to dentists is mixed across the North East locality with the western side of the locality generally having good access (including to dentists with addresses in the North West locality) and the eastern side of the locality having some of the furthest distance to travel to a dentist in the Borough."* (Page 14)

GP surgeries: *"According to the Tower Hamlets North East Locality Profile, access to GP practices is unequal across the North West locality, with parts of Mile End and Bow East having some of the furthest distance to a nearest GP within Tower Hamlets."* (Page 16)

The future of healthcare for the people of north east London, August 2020

The report advocates the 80-20 principle: *"Our basic principle of 80:20 is in recognition of the fact that decisions about health and care will take place as close to local people as possible. Local partnerships will decide how best to use resources in the best interests of patients."* (page8)

In October 2020 the GP members of all seven North East London Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) passed proposals to form a new North East London CCG with strengthened local borough partnerships. This new, enlarged group provides a major opportunity to address the unequal geographical distribution of primary care services in Tower Hamlets and in the neighbourhood plan area.

The Bromley By Bow Centre,⁵⁷ although outside the plan area, provides an excellent model of holistic neighbourhood primary health care, combined with wider community development work. It has pioneered social prescribing, and implemented the Communities Driving Change programme in the Old Ford area. It organised a Community Voting Day

in November 2020 in Old Ford, which gave an opportunity to local people to pitch for small grants to carry out projects to improve public health in the area.

10 Priorities for Community Interest Levy (CIL) funding

The following policies and actions have been identified as suitable for delivery through CIL funding. The order follows that of the plan, and does not signify priority between the different themes.

Green Streets: Policy GS1 and Action GS2 to improve safe cycling and walking

Public Spaces: Policies PS1 to enhance public spaces, and PS2 to designate local green spaces.

Heritage: Action HE4 to improve Wayfinding and develop a new Bow Heritage Trail

Community Infrastructure: Policy CF1 to deliver new and improved sports and play facilities.

Actions CF2 and CF3 to provide new and improved youth facilities, and to improve existing community centres.

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