





Produced by:

**Plan Making Team**

Planning and Building Control

Housing and Regeneration

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## Mayor's foreword

It is with great pleasure that I announce the production of a new draft Local Plan for the borough of Tower Hamlets. This is a critical step for our community at a time when we face some of the most significant challenges in our history. We need to respond to the cost-of-living crisis, ensure that we provide sufficient new homes and infrastructure to address the issue of overcrowding, particularly affecting our most vulnerable residents.

As the fastest growing local authority in the country, with the highest housing target and youngest average age, all within one of London's smallest geographical boundary areas (7.6 square miles), it is vital that we plan for sustainable development that is equitable and provides opportunities for future generations.

This Local Plan will provide a blueprint for the future of Tower Hamlets, enabling us to deliver new homes, infrastructure, employment opportunities, and support for our town centres while moving towards a cleaner, greener future. The new Local Plan aligns with our council's Strategic Plan and its priorities for investment in public services and improving the lives of our residents.

The process of creating the new Local Plan for Tower Hamlets began in January 2022 and has involved early engagement with our communities to gather views and opinions. This has given us invaluable insights into the hopes and aspirations of our residents for the future of our borough and what they would like to see included in a new Local Plan.

The ideas and ambitions submitted by our communities, alongside the preparation of robust evidence base documents, have informed the creation of this first draft of the Local Plan. It contains a policy framework and strategy designed to address the challenges and opportunities facing our borough and its people.

We remain committed to listening to our residents and stakeholders and encourage everyone to participate in the production of the Local Plan and share your thoughts. We welcome feedback during this consultation period where together, we can create a Local Plan that reflects the needs and aspirations of our communities and helps us build a brighter future for all in Tower Hamlets.

We have a unique opportunity to build a vibrant and successful future for Tower Hamlets that benefits all residents, regardless of background or circumstances. With the production of this new Local Plan, we are taking the lead in ensuring that we build our Borough to benefit present and future generations. Together, we can make Tower Hamlets a place where everyone can thrive.

## ময়েরে ভূমিকা

অত্যান্ত আনন্দে সঙ্গে আমাটাওয়ার হ্যামলটেস বরো-এর জন্য একটি নতুন খসড়া স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনা (লোকাল প্ল্যান) তৈরি ঘোষণা দিচ্ছি। এটি এমন একটি সময়ে আমাদের কমিউনিটিগুলির জন্য একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ পদক্ষেপে যখন আমরা আমাদের ইতিহাসে সবচেয়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ চ্যালেঞ্জগুলির মুখোমুখি হয়েছি। আমাদেরকে জীবনযাত্রার ব্যয়ের সংকটকে মোকাবিলা করতে হবে, নশিচতি করতে হবে যে আমরা যেনো অভ্যর্থনা উভি তথা জায়গার তুলনায় অতিরিক্ত লোকজনকে বসবাসজনিত সমস্যা, বিশেষত যা আমাদের সবচেয়ে ভয়ঙ্কর আর ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ বাসনিদাদে প্রভাবিত করে, সমাধানের জন্য পর্যাাপ্ত নতুন বাড়ি এবং অবকাঠামো প্রদান করি।

লন্ডনের কল্পদ্রতম ভৌগোলিক সীমানা এলাকার (৭.৬ বর্গমাইল) মধ্যে সর্বোচ্চ আবাসন লক্ষ্যমাত্রা এবং সর্বকনিষ্ঠ গড় বয়সসহ দশেরে দ্রুততম কর্মবর্ধমান স্থানীয় কর্তৃপক্ষ হিসাবে, এটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ যে আমরা টেকসই উন্নয়নের জন্য যেনো এমন একটি পরিকল্পনা করি যা ন্যায়সংগত এবং ভবিষ্যৎ প্রজন্মগুলির জন্য সুযোগ প্রদান করে।

এই স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনা টাওয়ার হ্যামলটেসেরে ভবিষ্যতের জন্য একটি চূড়ান্ত পরিকল্পনা প্রদান করবে, যা আমাদের পরচ্ছন্ন, সবুজ ভবিষ্যতের দিকে অগ্রসর হওয়ার সময় আমাদের শহর কেন্দ্রগুলির জন্য নতুন বাড়ি, অবকাঠামো, কর্মসংস্থানের সুযোগ এবং সহায়তা যোগাতে সক্ষম করবে। নতুন স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনা আমাদের কাউন্সিলের কৌশলগত পরিকল্পনা এবং পাবলিক সার্ভিসগুলিতে বিনিয়োগ এবং আমাদের বাসনিদাদে জীবনযাত্রার উন্নতির জন্য এর অগ্রাধিকারগুলির সাথে সামঞ্জস্যপূর্ণ।

টাওয়ার হ্যামলটেসেরে জন্য নতুন স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনা তৈরি প্রক্রিয়াটি ২০২২ সনের জানুয়ারী মাসে শুরু হয়েছিল এবং তা দুইটি ভিডিও এবং মতামত সংগ্রহের জন্য আমাদের কমিউনিটিগুলির সাথে প্রাথমিক সম্পৃক্ততাকে জড়িত করেছিল। এটি আমাদের বরোর ভবিষ্যতের জন্য আমাদের বাসনিদাদে আশা এবং আকাঙ্ক্ষাসমূহ এবং তারা একটি নতুন স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনায় কী অন্তর্ভুক্ত দিতে চান সে সম্পর্কে অমূল্য অন্তর্দৃষ্টি দিয়েছে।

আমাদের কমিউনিটিগুলির দ্বারা জমা দেওয়া ধারণা এবং উচ্চাকাঙ্ক্ষাসমূহ, শক্তিশালী

প্রমাণভিত্তিক নথিপত্র প্রস্তুত করার পাশাপাশি, স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনার এই প্রথম খসড়া তৈরি বিষয়ে তথ্য প্রদান করেছে। এতে একটি নীতি কাঠামো এবং কৌশল রয়েছে যা আমাদের বরো এবং এর জনগণের মুখোমুখি চ্যালেঞ্জ এবং সুযোগগুলি মোকাবিলা করার জন্য উপযোগী করে সাজানো হয়েছে।

আমরা আমাদের বাসনিদাদে এবং স্ট্রাইকহোল্ডারদের (শরিকানদের) কথা শুনতে প্রতশ্রুতবিদ্ধ এবং সবাইকে স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনা তৈরিতে অংশ নিতে এবং আপনার চিন্তাভাবনা ভাগ করে নিতে উত্সাহিত করি। আমরা এই সলাপরামর্শ তথা কনসালটেশনের সময়কালে সাড়ামূলক মতামতকে স্বাগত জানাই যেখানে একসাথে, আমরা একটি স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনা তৈরি করতে পারি যা আমাদের কমিউনিটিগুলির চাহিদা এবং আকাঙ্ক্ষাগুলিকে প্রতফিলতি করে এবং টাওয়ার হ্যামলটেসে সকলের জন্য একটি উজ্জ্বল ভবিষ্যৎ গড়ে তুলতে সহায়তা করে।

টাওয়ার হ্যামলটেসেরে জন্য একটি প্রাণবন্ত এবং সফল ভবিষ্যত গড়ে তোলার জন্য আমাদের এমন একটি অনন্য সুযোগ রয়েছে যা পটভূমি বা পরিস্থিতি নির্বিশেষে সকল বাসনিদাদে উপকৃত করে। এই নতুন স্থানীয় পরিকল্পনা তৈরি মাধ্যমে, আমরা বর্তমান এবং ভবিষ্যৎ প্রজন্মদের উপকারের জন্য আমাদের বরো গঠনে নেতৃত্ব দিচ্ছি। একসাথে, আমরা টাওয়ার হ্যামলটেসকে এমন একটি জায়গায় পরিণত করতে পারি যেখানে সবাই সাফল্য আর সমৃদ্ধ লাভ করতে পারে।



**Lutfur Rahman**

Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets







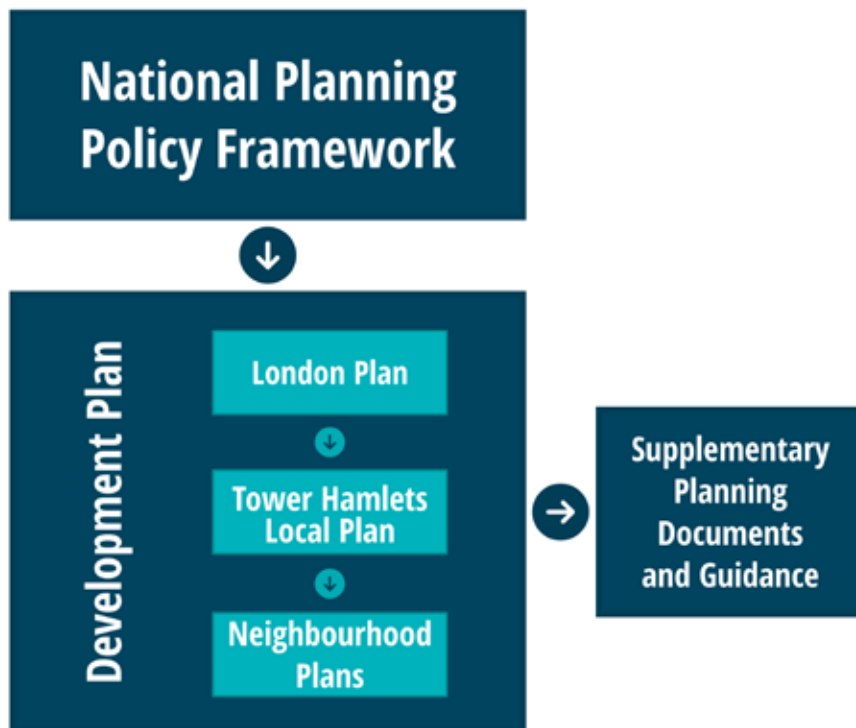
# Introduction



This is the first draft version of a new Local Plan for Tower Hamlets that is being consulted upon in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended.

## 1. What is the Local Plan?

Figure 1: The Local Plan in relation to other planning documents



1.1 A Local Plan is a spatial strategy that sets out a vision and objectives, planning policies, and site allocations that respond to the challenges that local communities are facing and promote sustainable development in the borough. It is a planning policy framework that guides and manages development in the borough over a period of 10-15 years.

1.2 A Local Plan will be prepared by a Local Planning Authority and must be developed in line with planning policy requirements set out by national and regional government as well as in consultation with the local community.

1.3 An up-to-date local plan with a clear vision, objectives, and planning policies will ensure the most appropriate development decisions and address the needs and opportunities of an area. In practice, the Local Plan will provide a guide as to what can be built where, how infrastructure investments should be shaped, and determining the future development pattern for Tower Hamlets.

1.4 The Local Plan, together with the London Plan and Neighbourhood Plans, will form the statutory Development Plan framework for Tower Hamlets and be used to assess all planning applications.

1.5 The process of development a Local Plan starts with engaging the community which the council commenced in January 2023. Reflecting on the submissions received through early engagement a Regulation 18 draft Local Plan was consulted upon in late 2023. The updated version of the Local Plan which considers submissions received at Regulation 18 is the Regulation 19 Local Plan. This updated version of the document is submitted to the Secretary of State under Regulation 19, alongside any final comments or 'representations'. If the Secretary of State deems the document to meet the basic legal requirements, an Independent Inspector will be appointed to undertake and examination in public of the draft Local Plan.

Figure 2: Key stages of the plan making process, highlighting the current stage of production



## 2. Why is a new Local Plan being produced?

2.1 All Local Planning Authorities are required by the National Planning Policy Framework to have an up-to-date Local Plan. Without an up-to-date Local Plan, Tower Hamlets would see a reduced ability to apply local discretion on deciding planning applications. A new Local Plan will ensure a better understanding of current needs, address known and emerging challenges and make the most of the borough's unique assets and opportunities.

2.2 The council's current Local Plan "Managing growth and sharing the benefits", was adopted in 2020. It provides the planning policy framework for the borough up to 2031. However, specific objectives, policies and guidance contained in, and informing the Plan, may be considered outdated, particularly due to changes in national and regional guidance, in particular the London Plan (2021), new Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill and the draft consultation National Planning Policy Framework.

2.3 Of particular importance is ensuring that a new Local Plan for the borough best responds to the needs and aspirations of the local community, responding to the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living pressures, and providing the best opportunity for local residents to thrive in Tower Hamlets.

2.4 A new Local Plan will also need to consider and plan for parts of the borough where the planning powers are currently held by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) planning authority. This includes the areas of Fish Island, Hackney Wick and Bromley by Bow. The planning powers of this area will be handed back to the



relevant boroughs, including Tower Hamlets, by December 2024 as agreed by the Mayor of London.

2.5 Cumulatively, these trends, challenges, and opportunities will have a significant impact on the borough's housing, employment, town centres, infrastructure, and environment for the next 15 years. As a result, the council has committed to the preparation of a new Local Plan as a priority to respond to these changes. The council will continue to take a leadership role in planning positively for the borough and ensuring equality of opportunity.

### 3. What are the statutory requirements in developing a Local Plan?

3.1 The draft Tower Hamlets Local Plan has been prepared within the wider planning framework which provides the context for the document and sets requirements for the plan making process, the structure and contents of local plans and how a vision, policies and site allocations should be implemented.

#### **Legislative framework:**

3.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is the primary legislative act that provides the basis for the plan-led system in England. It is supported by other legislative instruments, including the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), which provide further details on the process for the council to prepare and adopt the Local Plan and other supporting documents.

#### **National guidance:**

3.3 The Local Plan is required to be consistent with national policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It includes requirements for the preparation of local plans and is also a material consideration in the decision-making process for planning applications.

3.4 Local plans are independently examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are 'sound'. Plans are 'sound' if they are:

- Positively prepared;
- Justified;
- Effective; and
- Consistent with national policy.

3.5 The NPPF is supported by National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which contains further detail on the plan-led system, decision-making, consultation, appraisals, and process-related requirements.

#### **Regional framework:**

3.6 The Local Plan must also be in general conformity with regional planning policies. For Tower Hamlets and all Greater London Boroughs, this is provided within the London Plan, which is produced by the Mayor of London and is referred to as the 'Spatial Development Strategy'. This hierarchy ensures a considered, balanced, and consistent approach to planning across all boroughs. The London Plan forms part of the Tower Hamlets development plan, meaning it must be taken into account in planning decisions. The London Mayor also prepares London Plan Guidance (LPG) documents that support implementation of the London Plan.



## 4. What informs the development of the Local Plan?

### Evidence base

4.1 To support policies and site requirements, robust and justifiable evidence must be produced. This will ensure that the Local Plan is considered sound and best represents the community's interest. Evidence base documents will consider market trends, population projections, on-site realities, expert input, and a range of quantitative and qualitative data to provide the best available information. The evidence has been prepared by either the council or other organisations including government bodies and comprises research studies, technical data, strategies, site masterplans and other technical information to cover the wide range of local plan policy areas. The evidence has also incorporated findings from the 2021 Census data that has been released to date. Growth and population projections have been informed by the Greater London Authority's updates and releases.

4.2 A series of evidence base documents have been completed and these will be listed throughout the document for each relevant section and policy area. Completed documents are available on the council's 'Let's Talk' consultation platform.





## **Integrated Impact Assessment**

4.3 The preparation of a new local plan must be continuously assessed in relation to potential social, economic, and environmental impacts. A series of impact assessments have been conducted throughout the Local Plan process to ensure impacts are mitigated, avoided and provide alternative options. These assessments have considered sustainability objectives, health, equalities, habitats regulation, and community safety. All of these assessments will be continued through the whole Local Plan process and will be updated in later consultation stages. An Integrated Impact Assessment that has appraised this Regulation 19 draft new Local Plan is available on the council's 'Let's Talk' consultation platform.

## **Viability**

4.4 Local plans must be assessed in relation to their economic/ financial viability as to whether they are deliverable. This includes assessing the policies and site requirements provided within a local plan and considering how feasible it is for development opportunities to deliver what is being asked.

## **Duty to cooperate**

4.5 The Localism Act (2011), subsequent regulations and the NPPF place a duty on local planning authorities to cooperate with neighbouring boroughs and other statutory bodies when preparing, or supporting the preparation of policies which address strategic matters. Tower Hamlets has and will continue to work positively with neighbouring boroughs and other relevant public bodies to identify and address issues of strategic importance during the preparation and implementation of the new Local Plan.

## **Consultation and engagement**

4.6 There will be three main engagement/consultation stages as part of the Local Plan process. These stages provide an opportunity for all community members and stakeholders to provide feedback on what a new local plan should include, whether initial ideas and concepts are right, whether the themes are consistent with community aspirations or if anything has been missed. All feedback will be reviewed in detail and used to inform the next stages of the Local Plan process.

## 5. Consultation and engagement

5.1 The draft Local Plan has been developed together with all key stakeholders including with the Mayor of Tower Hamlets, elected councillors, local residents, neighbourhood forums, community groups, landowners, developers, and statutory bodies.

5.2 Early engagement on the new Local Plan was a non-statutory consultation event, running from Wednesday 25 January 2023 until Wednesday 8 March 2023. It consisted of:

- Digital engagement materials:
  - Details on the Tower Hamlets website;
  - Let's Talk Tower Hamlets consultation page;
  - ArcGIS StoryMap platform;
  - PDF engagement documents;
  - Google Forms survey;
  - Word document version of survey; and
  - Social media.
- Emails to mailing list and stakeholders, including residents, consultees, and councillors.
- Public events:
  - 3 webinars;
  - 2 online drop-in sessions;
  - 2 in-person drop-in sessions; and
  - In-person public engagement sessions.

- Flyers and posters at Idea Stores and libraries; flyers handed out on streets.

5.3 Following the early engagement, consultation in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, was undertaken for a six week period from 6th November to 18th December 2023. The purpose of the Regulation 18 consultation was to gain feedback on the new draft policies, including their suitability and potential impacts. This engagement process included:

- Digital engagement methods:
  - A dedicated webpage in the council's consultation portal;
  - A mapping and survey system called StoryMaps;
  - Online drop-in and webinar events.
- Emails to mailing list and stakeholders, including residents, statutory consultees, and councillors.
- Public events:
  - Six in person presentations covering different themes and geographic areas;
  - Drop-in sessions at the Town Hall; and,
  - Attendance at meetings of community organisations.

5.4 The feedback and input received from the above processes significantly contributed to the preparation of this draft Local Plan. Early engagement and Regulation 18 submissions both came from a wide range of respondents. These included key stakeholders in the borough, both those listed under the specific and general consultation bodies in the council's statement of community involvement and the wider public.

There was significant involvement from residents and individuals who live and/or work in the borough, producing a diverse sample of views and experiences of Tower Hamlets.

5.5 A summary of the early engagement for the new Local Plan can be found at <https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/local-plan>.

5.6 A summary of the Regulation 18 consultation for the new Local Plan can be found [here](#).

## 6. How to get involved in the Regulation 19 stage of the Local Plan process

6.1 The Draft Local Plan has been published by Tower Hamlets Council Local Planning Authority (LPA) in order for responses to be made on it before it is submitted for examination by a Planning Inspector.

6.2 In complying with the stages and requirements for producing a Local Plan, as prescribed by national policy, legislation, and through the council's own Statement of Community Involvement, the council will ensure a comprehensive and robust Regulation 19 consultation which looks to test the soundness of the proposed submission document against the four criteria set out in national guidance.

6.3 At this stage of the plan making process, in accordance with national guidance, it is requested that consultation responses focus on legal and procedural compliance, mainly the soundness of the Draft

Local Plan and the duty to cooperate. There are four tests of soundness which require the Draft Local Plan to be:

- Positively prepared
- Justified
- Effective
- Consistent with national policy

6.4 All relevant information relating to this stage of consultation, including the Draft Local Plan, supporting documents and a model representation form can be found on the council's website. Hard copies of the Local Plan and the model representation form will also be available at the Town Hall and Idea Stores and libraries across the borough for inspection.

6.5 You can review the Draft Local Plan to understand its contents and supporting evidence base by:

- Visiting the dedicated Let's Talk page ([insert link](#));
- Using our interactive StoryMap ([insert link](#));
- Speaking to officers of the council, visiting the Town Hall, libraries, or Idea Stores; and,
- Attending an in-person or online event;

6.6 If you wish to make a response seeking a modification the Local Plan you should set out clearly in what way you consider the plan or part of the plan is legally non-compliant or unsound, having regard as appropriate to the soundness criteria above. You can make a formal response on the soundness of the Draft Local Plan by:

- Completing and submitting response form on our Let's Talk page;
- Submitting a response to [localplan@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@towerhamlets.gov.uk); and,
- Submitting a written response to the Plan Making Team, Housing and Regeneration, Tower Hamlets Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1BJ

6.7 Your representation should be supported by evidence wherever relevant. It will be helpful if you also say precisely how you think the plan should be modified. To ensure an effective examination, it is important that the inspector and all other participants in the examination process are able to know who has made representations on the plan. Therefore, when completing the response form it is vital you provide your name and contact details.

6.8 You can help by:

- Forwarding information of this project to people, groups, or organisations you think may be interested;
- Making a post on social media to help spread the word; and
- Sharing feedback on how we're consulting on this project.

## 7. Next steps

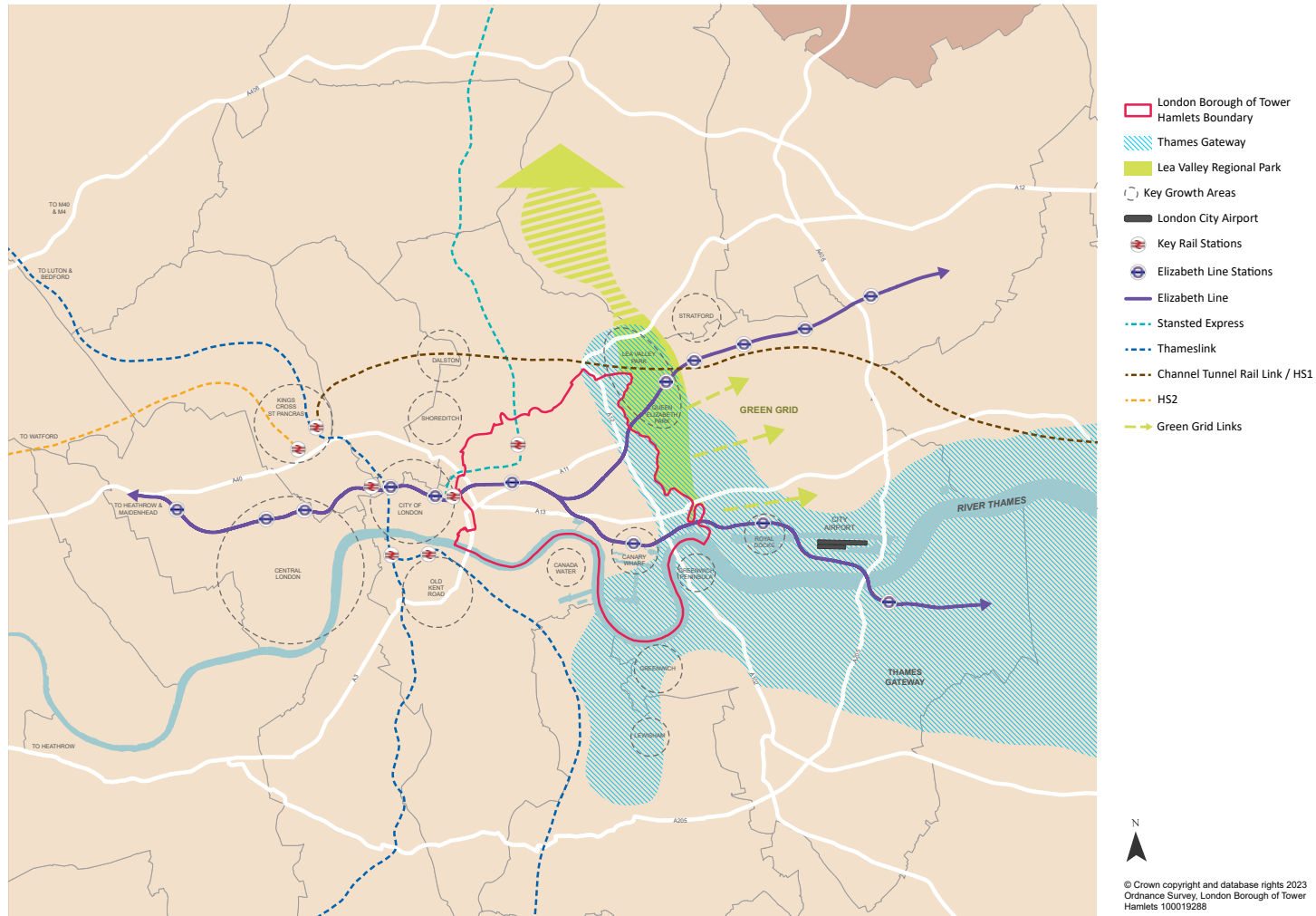
7.1 Following the Regulation 19 stage and reflection on the contents of representations received the Draft Local Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for an Independent Examination in Public, along with all representations received. The Secretary of State will appoint a Planning Inspector who will consider all responses received at the Regulation 19 stage, examine the Draft Local Plan and decide whether it is sound and legally compliant. The Inspector may require modifications to the Local Plan and will decide whether or not to recommend adoption of the Local Plan.





# Setting the Scene

Figure 3: Strategic location map, showing Tower Hamlets in the wider context.





## 8. Setting the scene

8.1 This chapter provides an overview of Tower Hamlets, its people, economy, housing profile, indicators of deprivation, built form, environment, and town centres. It highlights how the borough is a microcosm of London, having the fastest population growth in the country and having always been a gateway for people of all backgrounds to live, work, and visit the borough.

8.2 Tower Hamlets is a dynamic and exciting borough with a wealth of opportunities for businesses, residents, and visitors alike. With its diverse population, rich history, and thriving economy, Tower Hamlets truly is a unique and exciting location to live, work, and visit.

### History

8.3 Tower Hamlets is a borough with a rich and dynamic history, with evidence of Roman settlements and Viking invasions. The 19th century marked a pivotal moment for the borough as it became a prominent hub for shipping and manufacturing industries. However, the area suffered extensive damage during World War II, leading to significant regeneration and the establishment of many migrant communities. Encompassing much of the traditional East End of London, Tower Hamlets has emerged as a focal point for London and the UK, strategically located within the wider south-east region of England.

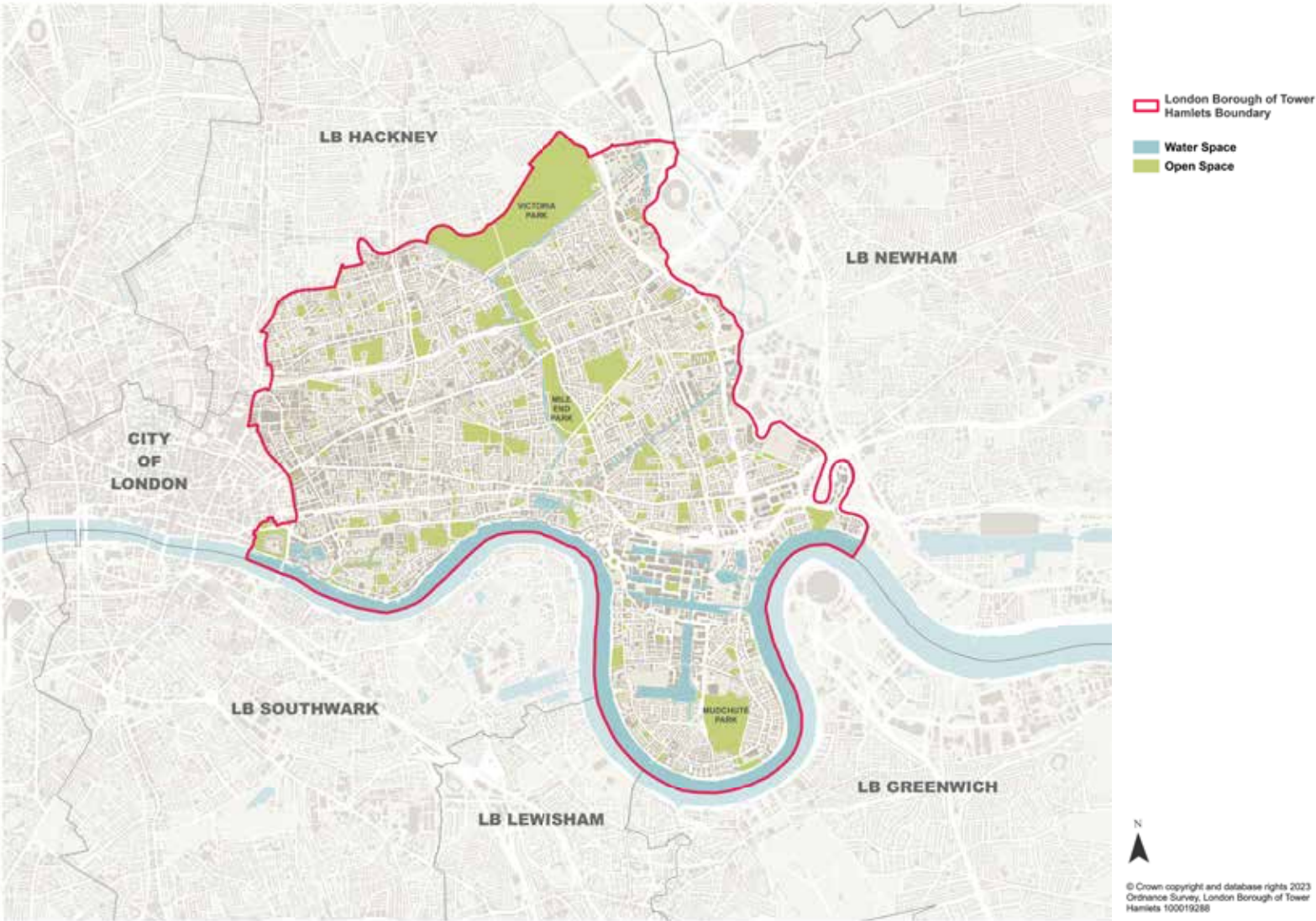
### Context

8.4 Covering approximately 7.63 square miles, Tower Hamlets shares borders with several London boroughs, including the City of London to the west, Hackney to the north, and Newham to the east, as well as being bounded by the river Thames to the south. Neighbouring areas across the river include Lewisham, Southwark, and the Royal Borough of Greenwich. Tower Hamlets is renowned for its diversity and multiculturalism, with a vibrant cultural scene and numerous historical landmarks, including the iconic Tower of London and Tower Bridge.

8.5 Part of the borough (Fish Island, Hackney Wick, and Bromley-by-Bow) currently falls within the boundary of the LLDC, the local planning authority responsible for coordinating the growth and regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and surrounding areas as part of the 2012 London Olympic Games legacy. The planning powers for this area will be passed back to LBTH by the end of 2024.

8.6 Tower Hamlets connectivity has been enhanced and the borough has been made even more attractive for businesses and residents alike, with the borough's transportation network receiving a significant boost with the long-awaited arrival of the Elizabeth line, with stations at Whitechapel and Canary Wharf.

Figure 4: Context map of the borough





## People

8.7 From 2011 to 2021, the population of Tower Hamlets increased by 22.1% from 254,100 to 310,300. This marks a significant proportional increase and represents the fastest population growth of any local authority in England. This population increase together with the overall size of the borough has Tower Hamlets being recorded as the most densely populated local authority area in England with 15,695 residents per km<sup>2</sup>, compared to the national average of 424 per km<sup>2</sup>.

8.8 The borough has the youngest population profile of any local authority area across England where the average age sits at 30 years. Across the country, the overall average sits at 40 years. The number of people in Tower Hamlets aged 35 to 49 years rose by around 21,000 (an increase of 42.8%), while the number of residents between 75 and 84 years fell by just under 600 (10.5% decrease).

8.9 The rich, ethnic diversity of the Tower Hamlets population has continued with the 2021 Census data showing:

- The Bangladeshi population remains by far the largest in England by way of proportion (34.6%) and overall size (107,333).
- At 22.9% the White British population in Tower Hamlets is the fourth smallest in England and Wales behind Newham, Brent and Harrow.
- In 2021 there were 45,187 White Other residents in Tower Hamlets; 14.6% of the overall local population, a significant increase compared to 2011.
- In 2021, 6,180 residents identified as Somali or Somalilander, this is 2% of the overall population.

- The Black African population has increased; 5% of residents of Tower Hamlets identified as Black African which, at 5% of the local population is double the proportion of England and Wales as a whole (2.5%) but lower than the rate in London (7.9%).
- The local Chinese population in Tower Hamlets (3.3%) is the third highest proportion in England and Wales, behind City of London and Cambridge.
- Tower Hamlets has the fourth largest Roma population in England and Wales after Brent, Sheffield, and Newham (2,225 people identified as Roma in Tower Hamlets).

8.10 In 2021, 39.9% of people in Tower Hamlets described themselves as Muslim (up from 38.0%), while 22.3% described themselves as Christian (down from 29.8% the decade before). In 2021, 26.6% of Tower Hamlets residents reported having "No religion", up from 21.0% in 2011. The rise of 5.6 percentage points was the largest increase of all broad religious groups in Tower Hamlets.

8.11 73% of residents in Tower Hamlets reported that English is their main spoken language and an additional 20.7% of residents stated that, whilst it is not their main language, they can speak English well or very well. 6.2% of residents don't speak English well or at all. After English, Bengali is the most commonly spoken language in Tower Hamlets (11%) then Italian (2.2%) and Spanish (1.7%).



## Deprivation and inequality

8.12 Tower Hamlets remains a borough of extremes and contrasts. Deprivation and poverty across the population is widespread. While there are pockets of affluence in locations proximate to the City Fringe, River Thames and Canary Wharf, there remains a significant disparity across a range of indicators related to education, overcrowding, income, and employment.

8.13 The council conducted a poverty review between March to June 2021. This review found that in 2019/20, 28 per cent of children in Tower Hamlets were living in a low-income family. Once housing costs are considered, 56% of children in Tower Hamlets were living in a low-income family - the highest level of child poverty in the England. 44% of older people in Tower Hamlets live in low-income households - the highest proportion in England. In 2018/19, 1.21% of Tower Hamlets households were estimated to be destitute. Tower Hamlets is in the 20 local areas in the country with the highest rates of destitution.

8.14 The 2022 local area statistics revealed that 15,385 (26.7%) children in Tower Hamlets were living in relative low-income families and 12,522

8.15 (21.8%) children in Tower Hamlets were living in absolute low-income families before housing costs - this is the second highest proportion among London Boroughs after the City of London (The City of London has a significantly smaller population size than any other local authority area given its location, commercial focus, and geographical area). These indicators of deprivation and inequality are contributed to by a number of factors, including:

- more families in Tower Hamlets have nobody in work than average, despite a decline in unemployment in recent years;
- a growing number of working families are on a low income - more than 3 in 4 children in poverty are in a family where at least one person works;
- the cost of living is high in the borough, particularly the cost of housing; and
- changes to the social security system mean that many people cannot afford essentials - larger families and lone parents with dependent children have been particularly affected.



## Housing

8.16 Tower Hamlets plays an integral role in the strategic regeneration and development of Greater London, providing homes for the wider city, continually being measured against the highest housing targets across all London boroughs.

8.17 According to the March 2021 Census, Tower Hamlets had a total of 120,539 households. The majority (81%) of households in the borough live in purpose-built flats, the second highest proportion in England and Wales after the City of London and twice the proportion in the London region. In terms of ownership, there was a slight decrease in the number

of owner-occupiers from 24.2% in 2011 to 23.1% in 2021. This is the lowest proportion of owner-occupiers of any area in England and Wales.

8.18 Of the households in Tower Hamlets, 31.5% had one bedroom, 39.9% had two bedrooms, 20.0% had three bedrooms, and 8.6% had four or more bedrooms. Since 2011, the largest increase in households came from four or more-bedroom households (28% increase) and one-bedroom households (26% increase), with slightly smaller increases in two-bedroom households (15%) and three-bedroom households (17%).

8.19 There has been a decrease in social renting households from 39.6% in 2011 to 35.9% in 2021, with 13.9% of households (16,697) renting from the local authority. On the other hand, there has been a rise in private renting from 32.6% in 2011 to 38.2% in 2021, making Tower Hamlets the 5th highest area for households renting privately in England and Wales in 2021.

8.20 Regarding overcrowding, 15.8% of households (19,130 households) were considered overcrowded based on the measure of having too few bedrooms. This was slightly lower than in 2011 when it was 16.4%. However, Tower Hamlets still had the fourth-highest rate of any area in England and Wales after Newham, Barking & Dagenham, and Brent.

8.21 Tower Hamlets has consistently delivered more homes than any borough within London, with the period between 2012-2021 showing a total of 21,097 dwellings being delivered. However, the need and demand for new homes remains significant - as of April 2022, there were 21,840 households on the council's Common Housing Register, providing a measure of the affordable housing need within the borough.

8.22 The overall median price for a property within Tower Hamlets across all types was £525,000 in September 2022 whilst the overall median rent across all bedroom types was £1,650 a month.





## Built form

8.23 Tower Hamlets is made up of 24 places, each containing unique characteristics that shape and define the borough and that have coalesced over time. Much of the borough has been developed at a modest scale with many neighbourhoods composed of streets of terraced properties dating from the 19th century. Located alongside the River Thames, the economy of much of the borough depended on this watercourse and thriving docks characterised the area until the middle of the last century. The decline of the docks has brought significant change and regeneration to the borough. The former docklands have changed from largely working environments to provide new residential neighbourhoods for the borough's growing community. Many have been developed at high densities and including clusters of tall buildings that have transformed the borough's skyline.

8.24 Tower Hamlets contains substantial areas of historic and architectural interest, including 58 conservation areas (which cover around 30% of its total area) and over 2,000 listed buildings, with great variation in character and size. Some of these buildings are landmarks of national and international importance, including the Tower of London (a UNESCO world heritage site) and Christ Church, Spitalfields. Other notable historic buildings include the medieval parish church of St Dunstan (which predates the Tower of London) and the high-tech, former Financial Times Print Works (constructed in the late 1980s). One Canada Square is a landmark skyscraper located within the Canary Wharf Estate, standing at 235m above ground level and was the tallest building in the United Kingdom when constructed in 1990 and is the current third tallest building. The building played a significant role in the shifting of London's financial centre from the traditional Square Mile to

the historic docklands, east of the City of London. One Canada Square is a symbol of modern, progressive London and forms the backdrop to the dramatic skyline of Canary Wharf, which is visible over a wide area and globally recognised as an iconic London landmark.

8.25 Large parts of the borough, predominantly towards the Isle of Dogs, Lower Lea Valley, Olympic Legacy and City Fringe areas have undergone significant change and regeneration within our inner-city communities. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of tall buildings, causing notable changes to the borough's skyline. For a number of years, Tower Hamlets has had the largest pipeline of tall buildings of any local authority area in the United Kingdom (including consented and proposed developments).

8.26 Tall building clusters have also established in neighbouring boroughs and are visible from vantage points within Tower Hamlets. These include Dalston in the London Borough of Hackney, Stratford and Canning Town in the London Borough of Newham, the Greenwich Peninsula in the Royal Borough of Greenwich, Canada Water in the London Borough of Southwark and Lewisham town centre in the London Borough of Lewisham. Further investment and growth is taking place in the Lower Lea Valley, around the Royal London Hospital and Queen Mary University and at the former London Dock in Wapping.



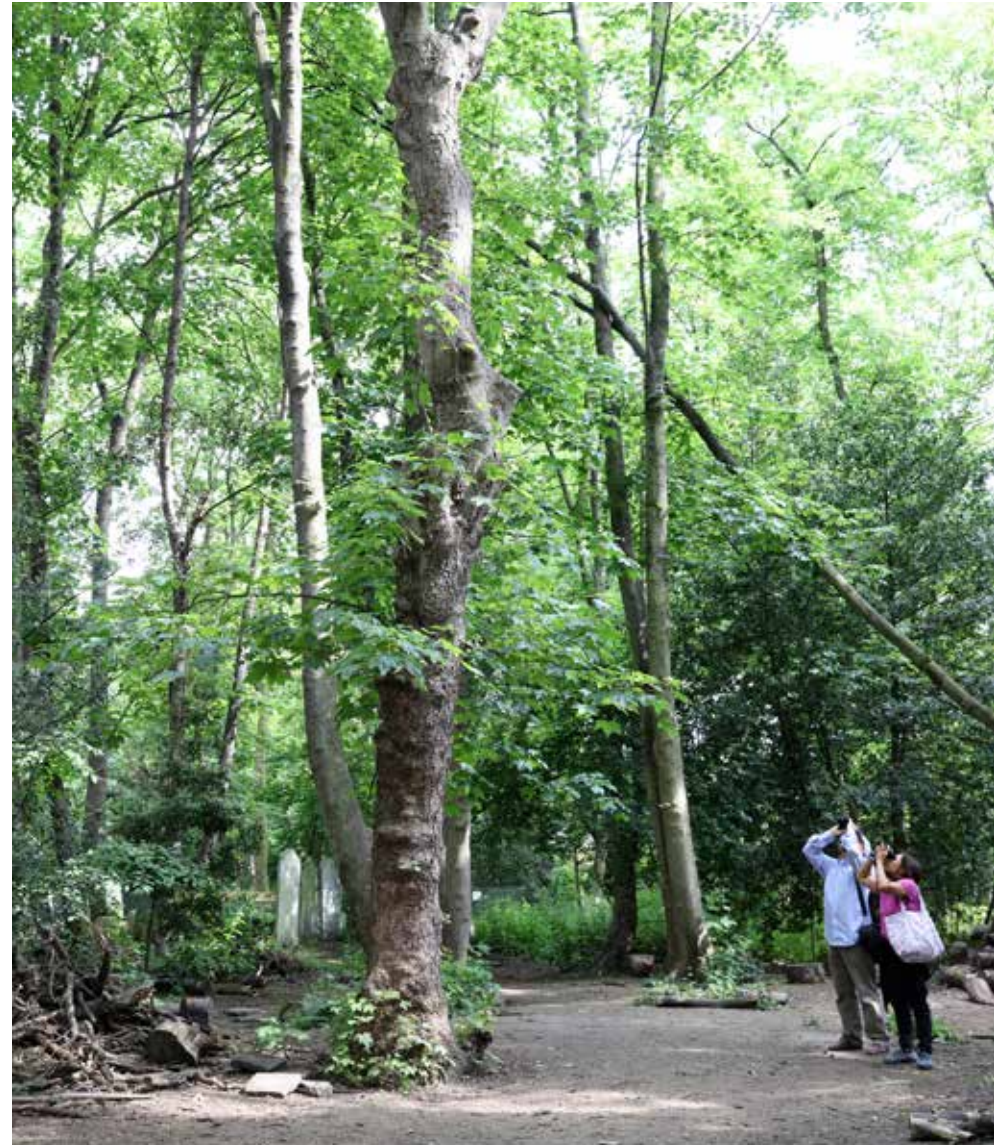


## Environment and open spaces

8.27 Tower Hamlets is home to over 200 parks and open spaces, with more than 170 of these accessible to the public, covering an area of approximately 260.58 hectares. Of these spaces, 5 are Registered Historic Parks and Gardens with listed status ranging between Grade II\* to Grade II, 16 are protected London Squares, and 52 are sites of historic interest. While larger urban parks, including Victoria Park, Mudchute Park, and Mile End Park, play a significant role in attracting visitors from across London, the overall provision of publicly accessible open space in the borough is lower than that of other inner London boroughs with similar characteristics and falls below national standards. Furthermore, the borough's topography and urban form make it susceptible to the effects of climate change, including flooding and the urban heat island effect.

8.28 One of Tower Hamlets' greatest natural assets is its access to the river Thames and the network of inland waterways that cut through the borough, which includes canals, reservoirs, and former working docks. The borough is also home to a rich biodiversity of rare and protected species, such as the black poplar (Britain's rarest native timber tree), the nationally scarce brown-banded carder bee, the streaked bombardier beetle (recently recorded from only four UK sites), bats, great crested newts, and the black redstart.

8.29 In March 2019, Tower Hamlets Council committed to becoming a net zero carbon council by 2025 and a net zero carbon borough by 2045 or sooner, as part of its efforts to play a role in addressing the climate emergency and moving towards a cleaner and greener future.





## Business and the economy

8.30 Tower Hamlets has a vibrant economy which has played a significant role in supporting the vitality of the borough and its people, as well as making a healthy contribution to the overall economic growth of Greater London and the wider national economy.

8.31 Tower Hamlets' vibrant local economy can be attributed to the strong and unique presence of our markets which are mostly situated in our thriving local town centres. The local economy is also made up by many local retail businesses and micro and local independent businesses. This provides a unique character to the borough, creating a strong sense of community and diversity.

8.32 Tower Hamlets is also home to London's second financial district at Canary Wharf, which plays host to several major businesses, including financial services companies, law firms, and multinational corporations. It has also become a hub for the emerging tech industry and life sciences, with several technology and biotech start-ups choosing to set up base in the area.

8.33 The borough's creative industries, particularly in film, television, and music production, continue to thrive, with Tower Hamlets providing an ideal location for studios and production companies. Additionally, the area is home to a range of universities, colleges, and schools, making it a popular destination for students.

8.34 Tower Hamlets' close network of commercial areas, excellent transport links, and location on the edge of the City make it a popular choice for businesses and individuals to locate in the borough as well as have access to the wider London market if needed.



## Employment

8.35 There were an estimated 323,000 jobs in Tower Hamlets in 2021, a number which is expected to increase to 439,000 by 2026. Average weekly earnings in Tower Hamlets are significantly higher than the London and UK averages, with the average full-time worker in the borough earning £797.30/week in 2020. Despite this strong economic growth, there is no correlation between the economic growth of the borough and better living standards for some people. A significant portion of residents are living next to a thriving economy unable to reap its benefits. Fewer than 15% of jobs in the borough are taken by borough residents, and Tower Hamlets has the highest worklessness rate in London and 14% of residents have no qualifications - twice the London average. Persistent inequality requires further intervention in order for residents to access the benefits from the economic development. The skills of many residents are ill suited to the new jobs that are being created.

8.36 While the economic profile of Tower Hamlets is dominated by some of the world's largest financial and professional service organisations with 40% of all jobs within Tower Hamlets within this industry (Financial and Professional Services), primarily influenced by Canary Wharf and the City Fringe - the borough has a wide range of local businesses including small family companies, creatives, start-ups, light manufacturers, and small-to-medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The vast majority of businesses based in Tower Hamlets are small businesses with 98% of enterprises employing fewer than 50 people and nine in ten are 'micro' businesses which employ fewer than 10 people. 7% of enterprises are sole traders. Only 0.5% of the borough's enterprises employ 250 employees or more.

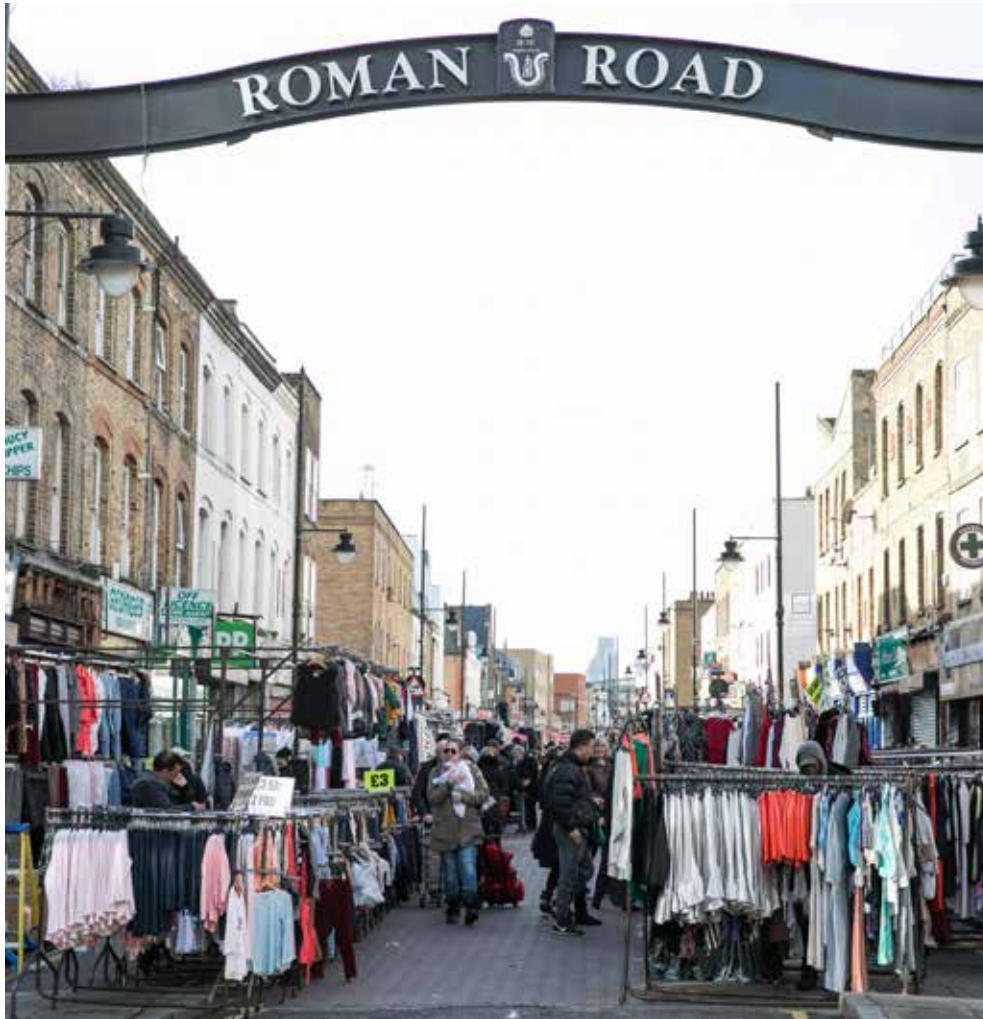
8.37 Emerging creative, digital, and ICT hubs can be found in areas such as Bethnal Green, Brick Lane, Cambridge Heath, and Whitechapel. The northern and eastern parts of the borough are more industrial in nature, with recent growth in the creative sectors in places like Bow and Fish Island.

8.38 Tower Hamlets has bucked the trend seen across England, with the 2021 census showing an increase in overall employment for people aged 16 years and over (excluding full-time students). The percentage of employed individuals in the borough rose from 55.7% in 2011 to 58.7% in 2021, while across England it decreased from 56.5% to 55.7%. Meanwhile, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were unemployed (excluding full-time students) in Tower Hamlets fell from 6.5% to 4.7%, with the percentage of economically inactive individuals aged 16 years and over who were retired decreasing from 7.6% to 5.8%.

8.39 Over the period 2023-2038, Tower Hamlets is expected to see demand for an additional 283,000sqm of office floorspace and 77,000 sqm of industrial floorspace.

8.40 It is important to note that the Census 2021 data was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time of rapid and unprecedented change. The national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures may have had an impact on the labour market and our ability to measure it.





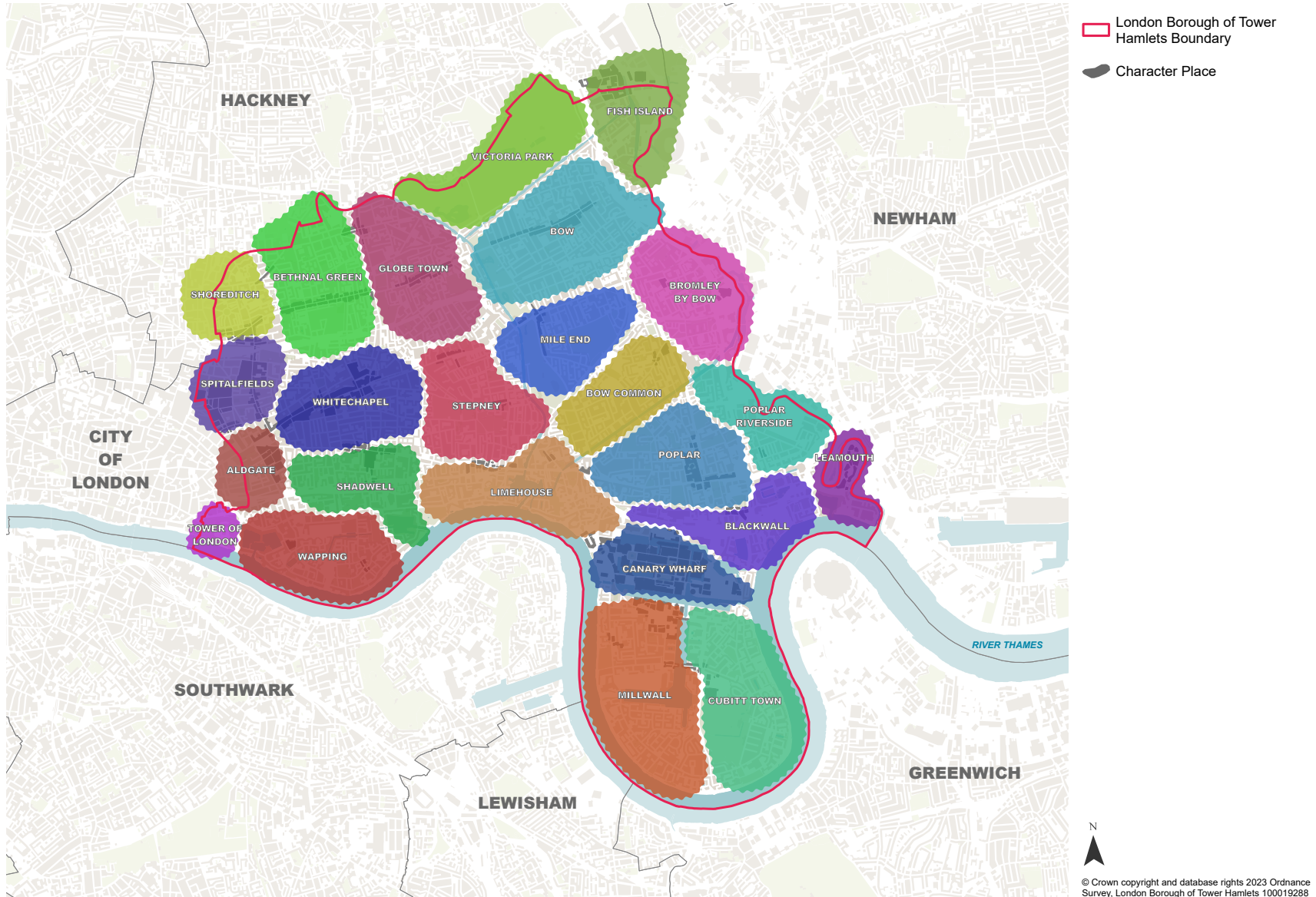
## Town centres

8.41 Tower Hamlets is a diverse borough that contains a variety of town centres, each contributing to the vitality and vibrancy of the area. The borough contains parts of the London Plan's Central Activities Zone (CAZ), as well as one metropolitan centre in Canary Wharf, eight district centres, three specialist centres, three CAZ centres, 16 neighbourhood centres, and 14 neighbourhood parades.

8.42 The town centres serve a vital function in the wider community, with each offering a diverse and varied selection of amenities. The bustling markets in Whitechapel, Crisp Street, Roman Road, Columbia Road, and Petticoat Lane provide a unique shopping experience. Meanwhile, Spitalfields, Redchurch Street, Brick Lane, Canary Wharf, Hackney Wick, Whitechapel, Cambridge Heath, Columbia Road, and Bethnal Green offer a thriving night-time economy. Canary Wharf is home to a range of retail, leisure, and community offers, and the borough also has a growing arts and cultural scene, which includes galleries, museums, cinemas, theatres, studios, and drinking establishments.

8.43 These town centres play an important role in the wider strategic function of London and contribute significantly to the area's international appeal. In addition, the borough's community facilities, including libraries, leisure centres, community hubs, idea stores, places of worship, and the new Town Hall in Whitechapel, are highly valued by Tower Hamlets residents.

Figure 5: 24 Character places







# Vision and objectives





**Empowering the next generation:  
building a brighter future for Tower  
Hamlets, together.**

## 9. Our vision for Tower Hamlets

9.1 Our vision for Tower Hamlets is to build a brighter future, to empower the next generation, and to promote a multicultural and diverse community that thrives within mixed, cohesive, and inclusive neighbourhoods. The council will prioritise inclusivity for people of all ethnicities, faiths, genders and sexual orientation, walks of life, designing our places to ensure that people are put first within the highest quality environments that meet the needs and ambitions of all our communities.

9.2 The council will strive to address overcrowding in the borough and meet the range of housing needs of our communities by delivering a significant amount of high-quality new homes. The issues caused by overcrowding including poorer health and educational outcomes, increased impacts on mental health and greater incidences of depression and anxiety will be mitigated with the focus on an increased capacity for housing. We will consider a mix of housing products, types, tenures, layout, and size to best match the borough's population, with a focus on affordable and social housing, particularly family homes that can meet the needs of our overcrowded residents. We will seek to focus on the delivery of affordable and social housing through a 50% overall target and a 40% on-site development requirement to tackle the overcrowding and housing crisis. The borough's Tall Building Zones (TBZ) will be expanded to optimise housing capacity and provide an uplift in affordable housing. Tower Hamlets will work towards a clean and green future where carbon emissions and overall energy usage are reduced. We will prioritise the reuse and adaptation of buildings and where not feasible, the recycling of building materials. We will support walking and cycling links alongside the use of, and improvements to,

the public transport network. The transport needs of all residents will be considered as part of future development opportunities, particularly where this supports mobility needs or for the purposes of employment. The borough's network of green and blue spaces, including Victoria Park, Mile End Park, Mudchute Park, the Thames, River Lea, Dock Basins, and canals, will provide opportunities for leisure, relaxation, and entertainment with a variety of uses encouraged to support health and well-being while still ensuring their enjoyment and function as open spaces is retained.

9.3 The borough, having regained the planning powers for parts of Bromley-by-Bow, Fish Island, and Hackney Wick from the LLDC, will continue to integrate and grow the distinctive opportunities these areas offer.

9.4 The borough's small businesses, start-ups, and markets including Whitechapel Market, Petticoat Lane Market, Bethnal Green Markets, Roman Road Market, Columbia Road Market, Watney Market, Crisp Street Market, Brick Lane Market, and other local traders will be prioritised and at the heart of decision-making. The key employment areas of Canary Wharf, Whitechapel, and the City Fringe will continue to evolve into dynamic centres of innovation and global hubs for the financial, technology, professional, life-sciences, biotech, and digital sectors. The continued benefits of the Elizabeth line arrival will further unlock the unique opportunities available within the borough. A community wealth building approach will be adopted, alongside the provision of genuinely affordable workspace will be prioritised for local small businesses, local start-ups, makers, the creative industries, and emerging and thriving small and medium-sized enterprises.



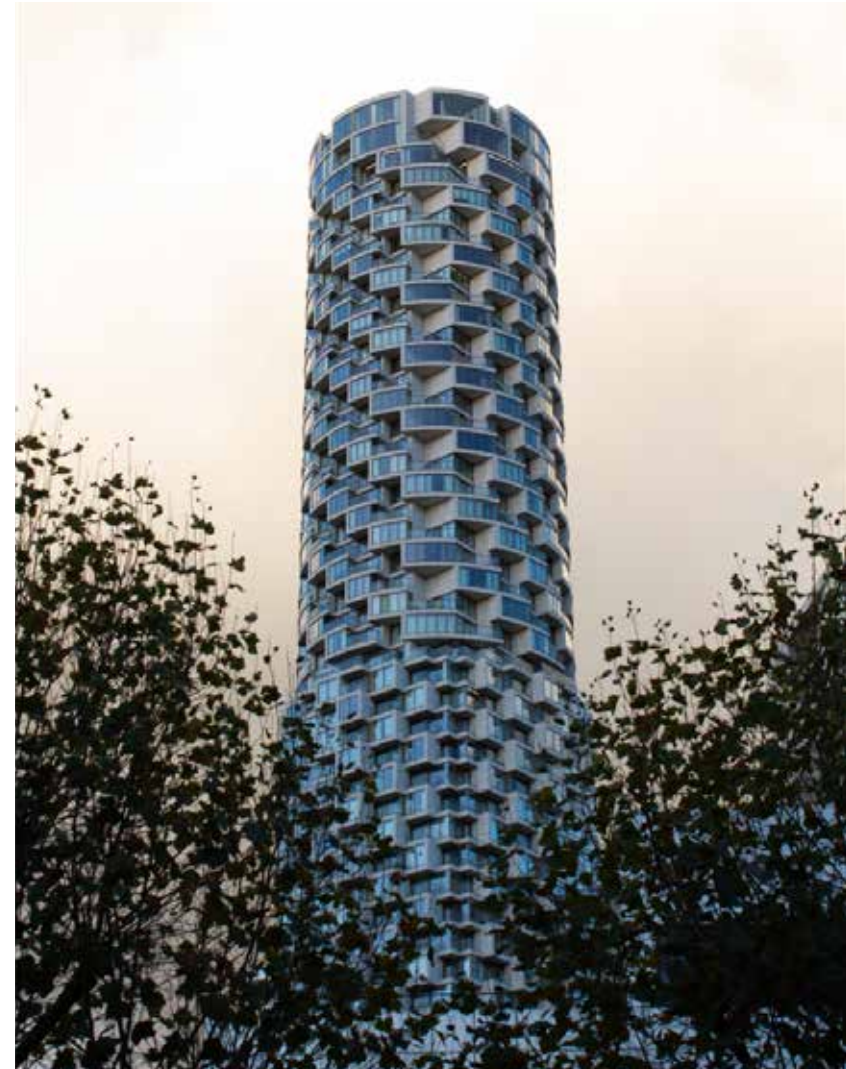
9.5 We will identify and coordinate the provision of infrastructure necessary to support our growing population, including promoting the delivery of new parks, public transport improvements, educational, health, community, cultural, and recreational facilities across the borough.

9.6 Our unique town centres, markets, historical, and cultural attractions will be revitalised to support local communities and become some of London's top attractions. With the borough's growing

population, young people will be at the forefront of anticipated regeneration with jobs, homes, spaces, and environments geared towards their success.

9.7 Exceptional design and architectural innovation will be ensured across the borough to ensure our distinct buildings, skylines, and streetscapes provide a high-quality environment for our residents and remain a recognisable feature of London. We will celebrate the vibrant history and urban landscape of Tower Hamlets through thoughtful design and placemaking, highlighting our rich, historic, and significant character areas. Tower Hamlets will emerge from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit to maintain its status as an international hub for business, culture, and tourism. Our unique location, with strong links to the City of London, Stratford, London City Airport, and beyond, will allow for a rich mix of strategic functions that benefit the community.

9.8 By 2038, Tower Hamlets will have made significant strides in addressing overcrowding, delivered thousands of new homes to support the community, provided opportunity for markets and small local businesses to thrive, and improved the overall health and safety of residents. The borough will have continued to play a role in supporting London's growth and economy through sustainable development. The borough's strong and inclusive communities will be thriving within healthy environments, ensuring a brighter future for all.





## 10. Key objectives and principles

The Local Plan's strategic objectives provide a link to the delivery of the vision for Tower Hamlets. These objectives address the key challenges of the borough over the 15-year plan period.

The objectives have been informed by and reflect many of the key documents prepared by the council, including the Strategic Plan (2022-2026).

### 10.1 **Empowering our communities culturally, economically, and politically:**

- a. Growth will be delivered through high-quality, best practice design outcomes that optimise land and the opportunity made available by the borough's unique assets. Such growth will be delivered to retain, reinforce, and protect the historic character of Tower Hamlets to ensure the identity of our neighbourhoods, communities, and townscapes remain special and distinctive.
- b. Important views and landmarks across the borough that make architectural, cultural, or aesthetic contributions will be protected and where possible enhanced.
- c. Arts and cultural event spaces and businesses will be encouraged to flourish and supported to thrive as part of the distinct identity of communities.
- d. Communities will be empowered to be involved within the planning system at the earliest opportunity; through consultation, making the process more transparent and accessible, and providing support for the process of neighbourhood planning.



### 10.2 **Tackling overcrowding and housing in our borough:**

- a. Tower Hamlets will respond to the growth of the borough through positively managing the delivery of new homes to meet the diverse needs of the wider population.
- b. Tackling overcrowding across the borough will be prioritised to combat levels of increased poverty, physical and mental illness, and poor living standards through increasing overall housing supply, setting a target of 50% genuinely affordable homes across the borough and ensuring the delivery of larger sized homes within affordable and social rented units.

- c. The delivery of genuinely affordable, family-sized, low-cost social rent homes will be prioritised in lieu of intermediate products to respond to the borough's most critical need.
  - d. High-quality housing stock will be delivered along with the provision of a range of housing products that cater to specific needs, including for older people.
  - e. The borough's emphasis on mixed and inclusive communities will be reinforced to encourage community cohesion that both enables communities to welcome new residents and ensure existing residents remain rooted within their local neighbourhood.
  - f. New homes will be located and designed to ensure equitable access to high-quality local services, amenities and public spaces.
  - g. The capacity of development sites across the borough will be optimised, making efficient use of land, ensuring appropriate densities and exploring the potential for tall buildings. h. The use of innovative building types and technologies will be encouraged in suitable locations to provide sustainable high-quality internal and external living environments.
  - h. The provision and enhancement of infrastructure including community and youth services will be identified and coordinated.
- b. Public space, play areas, and community infrastructure will be of high quality, and be safe, fun, and welcoming for all young people to support recreational use, active and healthy lifestyles.
  - c. Access to education, learning interventions, opportunities for financial support, and childcare provision will be prioritised to support young people and the community.
  - d. Community functions across the borough will be supported, including an investment in youth services to support young people with study spaces, career advice, the development of life skills, and leisure activities.
  - e. Investment in young people across the borough and effective support for educational aspirations will be secured to ensure increased opportunities at the country's top universities. Initiatives including the council's priority to deliver an Institute of Academic Excellence will be supported.

### 10.3 **Supporting young people and accelerating education:**

- a. Tower Hamlets will continue to support the development of skills, training, and career opportunities for young people, ensuring long term prospects within the borough's key industries and sectors.





## 10.4 A thriving local and global economy that boosts jobs, skills, businesses and tackles inequalities:

- a. Local traders, entrepreneurs, start-ups, and small local businesses will be supported and provided with opportunity to thrive. Access to genuinely affordable workspace options will be delivered across the borough.
- b. The borough's markets including Whitechapel Market, Petticoat Lane Market, Bethnal Green Markets, Roman Road Market, Columbia Road Market, Watney Market, Chrisp Street Market, and Brick Lane Market will be strongly supported and invested in with their maintenance, promotion, and general upkeep at the heart of decision-making.
- c. Local businesses will take advantage of the borough's proximity to world-class visitor attractions (including the Tower of London world heritage site, the Tower Bridge, and Brick Lane), encouraging visitors to explore more of the borough.
- d. The current skills gap and inequalities amongst the working population will be closed, through improving access to education, training, careers, social mobility, and increasing the mix of employment sectors.
- e. Local job opportunities, education, and skills opportunities (including apprenticeships, internships, work placements, and graduate placements) will be prioritised through development schemes, with a particular emphasis on promoting inclusion to support under-represented groups (e.g., SEND residents, women, and BAME residents).

- f. The borough's role as a key location for employment opportunities will continue to flourish, optimising the economic benefits of Canary Wharf, Whitechapel, the City Fringe, and growing business and economic hubs across Tower Hamlets.
- g. The benefits of the new Elizabeth line, including the stations at Whitechapel and Canary Wharf, and other transport schemes will act as a further catalyst for investment and economic growth in the borough.

## 10.5 **Securing infrastructure delivery to protect and strengthen public services:**

- a. Tower Hamlets will meet the duties to deliver essential physical, digital, community, and green infrastructure, linked to effective infrastructure planning and delivery including through the securing of obligations through Section 106 Agreements.
- b. The timely provision of sufficient infrastructure, optimised capacity and densities to meet current and future needs will be secured, taking account of the cumulative impact of future development, especially in deficient areas.
- c. Additional transport investment (including improvements to bus, rail, and river services, new river crossing opportunities, and pedestrian and cycle connections) will be championed to support growth.
- d. Improvements in services, programmes, and facilities that support adults social care, children's services, children with SEND, and children in trouble with the law will be promoted across development opportunities.

- e. The borough's network of libraries and idea stores will be supported and invested in with their contributions to the borough's residents invaluable.
- f. Partnerships and collaborations across the borough will be promoted including opportunities for integrated health and care services to meet residents' needs.

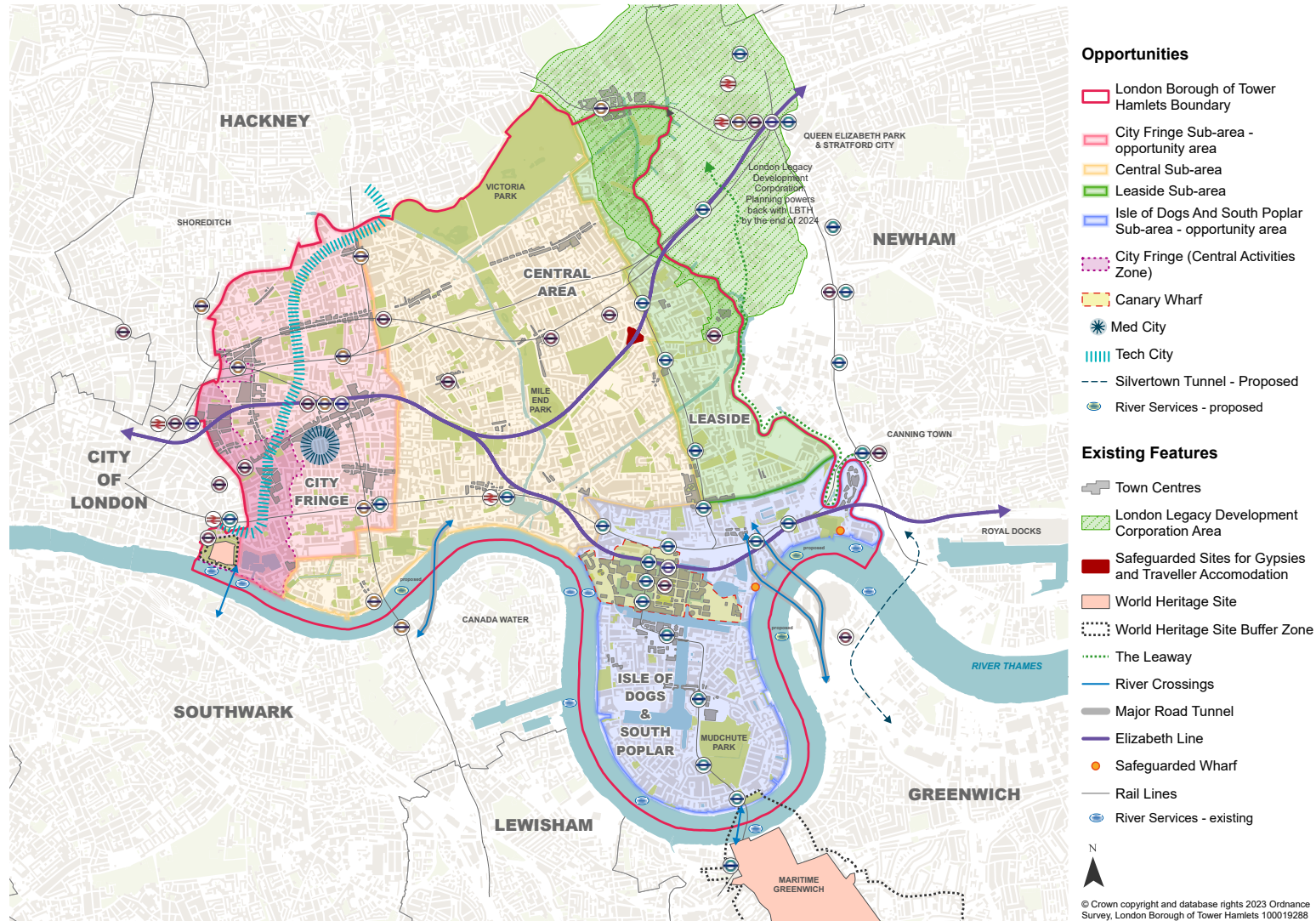
## 10.6 **A clean and green future:**

- a. Tower Hamlets will become a net zero carbon borough by 2045 or sooner.
- b. Tower Hamlets will play its part in tackling the climate emergency through ensuring zero carbon developments are delivered across the borough alongside the exploitation of low carbon energy sources and through the support of retrofit opportunities on existing buildings to be climate resilient.
- c. The use of sustainable transport modes including walking, cycling and electric vehicles will be promoted to realise long-term energy use reductions and carbon emissions. Energy efficiency and other green measures will be maximised through development.
- d. The number of electric vehicle charging points in the borough will be increased and support provided to those in the community who depend on their car for work or mobility in accordance with the Mayor's commitments outlined in the 'Cleaner and greener future for Tower Hamlets' document (2023).

- e. The ecological, biodiversity, and recreational value of the borough's natural assets will be protected and promoted to take advantage of our green spaces and waterways. An overall net gain in biodiversity will be delivered across the borough to increase the resilience and significance of our ecosystem.
  - f. The borough's poor air quality will be addressed to provide a safer living environment, through a range of innovative methods and solutions with strict requirements on developments to be applied.
  - g. Leisure, retail, jobs, services, and associated necessary infrastructure will be located to best support local neighbourhoods and to reduce the need for long-distance travel. This will assist local residents in supporting physical activity, active travel, greener streets, and public spaces.
  - h. Flood risk will be mitigated through the use of multi-functional green spaces including sustainable drainage systems, improved flood defences, and innovative water management methods.
- 10.7 **Healthy, safe and inclusive neighbourhoods:**
- a. People of all ages, background, and abilities will be provided with an environment that encourages and enables active and healthy lifestyles. Social interaction and accessibility will be promoted in buildings, streets, and spaces to create high-quality places that are valued, enjoyed, and feel safe for all.
  - b. The borough's neighbourhoods will become safer and perceptions of safety will improve by delivering high-quality, legible, visible, and permeable spaces that are inclusive and accessible to everyone. The built environment will comprise welcoming spaces that design out crime and improve resilience to emergencies.
  - c. Socially cohesive, mixed, balanced, and healthy communities will be promoted together with walkable neighbourhoods to enhance the population's wider health and well-being and to address the wider determinants of mental health and deprivation. The effects from the high level of growth and construction will be managed to ensure minimised impacts to local communities.
  - d. Initiatives to develop programmes and spaces for women from ethnic minority backgrounds and faith communities will be supported to empower women and to ensure an inclusive and cohesive community.
  - e. Opportunities to deliver health facilities will be promoted across the borough with an investment in drug treatment, rehabilitation, and recovery programmes, including culturally sensitive projects targeting those under-represented in drug and treatment services.



Figure 6: The key diagram





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## 11. Delivering the Local Plan



DV1 – Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets

DV2 – Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets

DV3 – Healthy communities

DV4 – Planning and construction of new development

DV5 – Developer contributions

DV6 – Social value

DV7 – Utilities and digital connectivity

DV8 – Site allocations

### Introduction

11.1 The following policies set out a holistic approach to helping realise and implement the vision of the Local Plan and how sustainable development and growth will be delivered in Tower Hamlets. Together, they support our aspiration to build a brighter future, tackle overcrowding and the housing crisis, create a clean and green borough, empower the next generation, and to ensure a multicultural and diverse community that thrives within mixed, cohesive, and inclusive neighbourhoods. This is about shaping the future of life in Tower Hamlets.

11.2 This section contains the following policies:

- Policy DV1: Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets
- Policy DV2: Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- Policy DV3: Healthy environments
- Policy DV4: Planning and construction of new development
- Policy DV5: Developer contributions
- Policy DV6: Social value
- Policy DV7: Utilities and digital connectivity
- Policy DV8: Site allocations

## **Policy DV1 Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets**

1. To meet the borough's pressing needs the council will promote development proposals in locations across the borough, particularly where they support housing delivery, and work with the community and stakeholders to support the principles of sustainable development and good growth. This will be achieved through:
  - a. promoting the majority of the borough's growth towards:
    - i. the borough's site allocations where significant development opportunities are identified;
    - ii. highly accessible locations which have good links to public transport, walking and cycling networks, and local services;
    - iii. the opportunity areas, as illustrated in figure 6, of the City Fringe, Poplar Riverside, and the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar; and
    - iv. the Central sub-area of the borough, through gradual intensification and optimised site capacity while respecting and enhancing the area's well-established character.
  - b. promoting comprehensive design and development to ensure co-designed site masterplanning.
2. The council will require development proposals that are within or part of a site allocation to deliver design-led site optimisation that accords and is compatible with the identified land uses, infrastructure requirements and site allocation specific design and delivery principles.
3. The council will prioritise development proposals for residential use which comply with the affordable housing policies of the Local Plan.
4. The council will promote, protect, and support the 'everyday economy,' that creates new jobs, businesses, services, and local employment opportunities for residents across the borough. This will be achieved through:
  - a. promoting affordable workspace opportunities to support local businesses, start-ups, entrepreneurs, and small-to-medium sized enterprises (SMEs);
  - b. protecting and enhancing the borough's Preferred Office Locations (POL), Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and Canary Wharf Fringe for commercial and employment-led development, strategic CAZ functions or other uses considered appropriate in accordance with the role and function of their designation;
  - c. protecting and supporting intensified industrial development within the borough's Strategic Industrial Locations (SIL) and Local Industrial Locations (LIL);
  - d. supporting a mix of employment accommodation types for secondary, local or specialist need within the borough's Local Mixed-use Employment Locations (LMEL), and
  - e. promoting the protection and retention of railway arch space for a wide range of industrial uses and community spaces across the borough.
5. The council will promote the borough's town centres, including high streets and street markets, and ensure these continue to be the focus



of shopping, leisure, cultural, and community activities, and will include a broad range of uses that are accessible to a significant number of people via foot, cycle, or public transport.

6. Where appropriate the council will require developments to deliver significant new infrastructure to support growth within the four sub-areas, including:

- a. improvements to the transport network and wider strategic and local connections;
- b. green grid projects;
- c. community infrastructure;
- d. outdoor sports pitches, new parks, and public open spaces; and
- e. the delivery and coordination of essential new and upgraded utilities and services across the borough.

7. The council will support opportunities to maximise the delivery of social value to positively contribute to additional social, economic, environmental, and community benefits, including economic well-being, social inclusion, equal opportunity, and community cohesion.

## Supporting text

11.3 This policy recognises that the whole borough has a role to play in addressing development needs, while seeking to ensure new development is in keeping with the principle of good growth and can deliver sustainable communities. Part 1 of this policy sets out the broad locations and opportunity areas within the borough where growth (primarily housing delivery) and investment will be targeted over the lifetime of the plan. The growth will also be complemented by development on small sites. Significant housing delivery is needed across the borough help alleviate overcrowding and to ensure genuinely affordable housing is provided to those most in need.

11.4 Part 1(a)(i) looks to direct the majority of the borough's growth towards the borough's site allocations. These are sites that have been identified across a range of locations within each of the sub-areas to address the housing and employment needs of the borough as well as facilitate the delivery of key supporting infrastructure, such as publicly accessible open space, schools, and other social infrastructure. These sites are shown on the Policies Map. Further information on the detailed site-specific requirements that will inform the design, scale, and layout of new development within these allocations is set out in Section 4.

11.5 Part 1(a)(ii) aims to direct growth to highly accessible locations with good links to existing or commitment to the delivery of public transport, cycling and walking networks, and town centres in line with policies TC1 and MC1.

11.6 Part 1(a)(iii) seeks to direct growth towards the three opportunity areas (City Fringe, Poplar Riverside, and Isle of Dogs and South Poplar) which have been identified in the borough by The London Plan (GLA, 2021) and have significant potential to accommodate new development and support urban renewal given their capacity for growth and existing

and planned infrastructure. These areas are shown on the key diagram (see Figure 6).

11.7 Part 1(b) expects all development proposals to demonstrate comprehensive design and development. Piecemeal delivery on sites will be resisted. Piecemeal delivery is where individual developments on shared sites or adjacent sites are delivered in different ways and at different times without coordination between the developments, leading to a poor quality of placemaking and lack of vision for the wider area. Instead, development proposals on shared sites or on sites in proximity to other development sites must demonstrate co-designed site masterplanning has taken place which realises the site vision and design principles, creating high-quality places and neighbourhoods, and ensuring that the timing of delivery is supported by the necessary infrastructure.

11.8 Part 2 aims to ensure that development proposals within or part of the borough's site allocations realise the site vision and design principles, and ensure the timing of delivery is supported by the identified infrastructure requirements. This can be achieved through design-led site optimisation which seeks to ensure that development makes the best use of land through the consideration of design options, determining the most appropriate density and form of development for the site's context, capacity for growth and connections to jobs, services, infrastructure, and amenities.

11.9 Part 3 of the policy highlights the council's prioritisation of affordable housing delivery in the borough and the need for development to comply with the affordable housing policies of the Local Plan to alleviate the large-scale levels of overcrowding and lack of affordable housing in the borough.



11.10 Part 4 of the policy seeks to ensure new development promotes, protects, and supports the "everyday economy" which focuses on jobs, opportunities, and the experiences of local people and residents across the borough.

11.11 Part 4(a) looks to promote the provision of affordable workspace across the borough to support the "everyday economy," particularly local businesses, start-ups, entrepreneurs, and SMEs.

11.12 Part 4(b) seeks to protect and enhance employment-led development, or other strategic CAZ functions and appropriate uses, in the following strategic locations: the Preferred Office Locations

(POL); CAZ and Canary Wharf Fringe (as identified on Figure 16). In particular to support Tech City - a strategically important business cluster within the heart of the City Fringe sub-area, centred on digital and creative companies, particularly around Shoreditch, Spitalfields, and Whitechapel, and a new state-of-the-art life science research hub around the existing Queen Mary University campus and Royal London Hospital site in Whitechapel alongside residential and commercial uses.

11.13 Part 4 (c) seeks to protect the borough's Strategic and Local Industrial Locals. Given the borough's limited area and increasing demand for industrial land it is necessary to protect such locations to ensure there is land to meet such employment and business needs.

11.14 Part 4(d) and (e) support the need for mixed and innovative uses in employment areas and also maximising opportunities in railway arch spaces.

11.15 Part 5 emphasises that the council will promote the borough's town centres as the economic, transport, social and civic hearts of our communities, offering the greatest accessibility to jobs, services, shops and public transport. They have faced great challenges as a result of global circumstances over the past few years, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic and its follow-on consequences. In order to stimulate recovery and to nurture vibrancy back into our town centres, high streets, and street markets, there is a need to diversify and increase accessibility to attract more people and businesses throughout the day and evening as well as meet changing customer demands. The network and hierarchy of centres is set out in policy TC1, with each centre performing a different but complementary role.

11.16

11.17 Part 6 outlines the requirements on developments to deliver new infrastructure and utilities to meet the demand from significant levels of development in the borough and the resulting population growth across the Local Plan sub-areas of City Fringe, Isle of Dogs, Central Area and Lower Leaside. A range of facilities, services, and infrastructure will need to be delivered. This includes:

- a. improvements to the transport network and wider strategic and local connections;
- b. green grid projects (including East India Dock, the Lea River Park and Whitechapel Green Spine);
- c. community infrastructure, such as schools, youth clubs, early education and childcare facilities, purpose built special educational needs schools/teaching units, new parks, open space, health centres, sports centres and leisure facilities;
- d. outdoor sports pitches, new parks and public open spaces; and
- e. coordinating the delivery of essential new and upgraded utilities and services infrastructure across the borough to ensure utilities networks and connections can serve new developments, supporting the creation of new neighbourhoods and enhancing facilities on sites of intensification.

11.18 As well as requirements for additional infrastructure, much of the borough's existing infrastructure is at or close to full capacity and in many cases requires investment. Developers are therefore expected to contribute towards meeting the additional infrastructure needs arising from new development. Further details (including the mechanisms through which developers will be expected to contribute towards



infrastructure provision) are outlined in Policy DV5, Section 4 (relating to site allocations) and Section 5 (relating to the monitoring and delivery framework).

11.19 As well as requirements for additional infrastructure, much of the borough's existing infrastructure is at or close to full capacity and in many cases requires investment. Developers are therefore expected to contribute towards meeting the additional infrastructure needs arising from new development. Further details (including the mechanisms through which developers will be expected to contribute towards infrastructure provision) are outlined in Policy DV5, Section 4 (relating to site allocations) and Section 5 (relating to the monitoring and delivery framework).

11.20 Part 7 sets out that Social value refers to a broader concept of value beyond just monetary contribution. It focuses on people and contribution to the community, assessing the positive value created for the local economy, improvements in social well-being, and enhancements to protect the local environment. There is a precedent for considering social value as a key factor in procuring contracts after the passing of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. When applied to development, social value looks at the wider social contribution a development creates for society across its whole lifecycle, from how it is constructed to how it is managed, considering its direct and indirect impacts. This is in-line with Part 2 of the NPPF 'Achieving Sustainable Development', which outlines the three objectives of the planning system: to promote economic well-being, improve social progress, and protect and enhance our natural and built environment.

11.21 This policy will be implemented through a number of mechanisms such as supplementary planning guidance, masterplans, and opportunity area frameworks, which provide more detailed guidance to coordinate and manage development alongside the London Plan.

**London Plan policies:**

- H2 Small sites
- GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities
- SD1 Opportunity Areas
- SD4 The Central Activities Zone (CAZ)
- SD5 Offices, other strategic functions and residential development in the CAZ
- SD8 Town centre network

**Local Plan policies:**

- All policies

**Evidence base:**

- The London Plan, 2021
- City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework, 2015
- Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Opportunity Area Planning Framework, 2019
- South Poplar Masterplan SPD, 2021
- Central Area Good Growth SPD, 2021
- Queen Mary University London SPD, 2021
- Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan

## Policy DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets

1. The council will support development proposals that contribute towards delivering the Local Plan vision and objectives where they:
  - a. ensure a design-led approach is taken to development, which requires:
    - i. high-quality design and delivery;
    - ii. optimising capacity, the efficient use of land, ensuring appropriate density, and exploring the potential for tall buildings;
    - iii. the promotion and enhancement of the historic environment, character, and setting of the area; and
    - iv. the protection of the natural environment, transport capacity, and infrastructure.
  - b. contribute towards an inclusive, cohesive, and mixed environment that is designed and useable for all. This will be achieved through:
    - i. creating healthy, equitable environments by encouraging physical activity, promoting good mental and physical well-being, and reducing environmental factors which can contribute to poor health, including overcrowding, poor air quality, and mitigation against damp and mould;
    - ii. creating mixed and inclusive communities;
    - iii. understanding the local population and their needs, and conducting appropriate community engagement to achieve this;

- iv. delivering tenure-blind developments;
    - v. increasing opportunities for social interaction;
    - vi. providing local training, employment, and enterprise opportunities in the construction and end use of a development;
    - vii. supporting the use of local goods and services as part of developments;
    - viii. providing local careers, social mobility and tackling poverty; and
    - ix. delivering social infrastructure, transport infrastructure, and public realm improvements which are inclusive and accessible to all.
  - c. contribute towards a clean and green future that ensures:
    - i. zero carbon developments, sustainable design, construction, and operation, and prioritise the whole lifecycle of buildings;
    - ii. the use of circular economy principles and prioritisation of the reuse and recycling of buildings and materials;
    - iii. low carbon energy and heat production;
    - iv. ambitious mode share targets for sustainable travel, and promoting sustainable freight;
    - v. mitigated impacts of poor air quality; and
    - vi. mitigated flood and drought risk.

## Supporting text

11.22 This policy seeks to deliver sustainable development and growth in Tower Hamlets, addressing the specific environmental, social, and economic challenges facing the borough. It seeks to ensure each individual development positively contributes to implementing and delivering the vision and objectives of the plan.

11.23 For the purposes of part 1(a) of this policy, we will consider the application and design in its entirety including its relationship to its surroundings. Impacts will be considered unacceptable when they do not meet the standards and requirements provided in the policies in the plan or where they result in negative impacts that cannot be adequately mitigated. Development proposals will also be expected to conform with guidance from the council on securing design quality.

11.24 Part 1(b) requires the design of the built environment and the provision of accessible services to directly contribute to reducing inequalities (including health and wealth inequalities) and promoting community cohesion through mixed and inclusive communities. This policy addresses these objectives and helps to empower our communities and deliver healthier, more inclusive, safer, and cleaner spaces throughout the borough. Planning has a particular role to play in ensuring the built environment is accessible to all and benefits the local community. In order to demonstrate compliance, developments will be expected to provide details within the planning application statement identifying how they have met the principles outlined above. Development proposals should consider these principles from the outset and are encouraged to engage with the council through pre-applications where appropriate to ensure they are meaningfully met.

11.25 Part 1(c) seeks to address the need to achieve a clean and green future for the borough, a key priority in the council's Strategic Plan (2022-

2026), reflecting the significant need to reduce carbon emissions to tackle climate change and meet the goal of becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2045, as well as addressing the pressing need to improve cleanliness and air quality so that residents, workers, and visitors can enjoy a healthier and cleaner borough. Improvements in the standard of development through zero carbon development, sustainable operation and circular economy principles will reduce carbon emissions and help the borough achieve this goal. Mode share targets should seek to meet those set out in the Mayor's Transport Strategy.

### London Plan policies:

- GG2 Making the best use of land
- GG3 Creating a healthy city
- GG6 Increasing efficiency and resilience
- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- D4 Delivering good design
- D5 Inclusive design
- D9 Tall buildings

### Local Plan policies:

- All policies

### Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan, 2022
- Tower Hamlets Health and Well-being Strategy, 2021
- Tower Hamlets Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2017
- Healthy Streets for London, 2017
- Mayor of London's Transport Strategy, 2018



## Policy DV3 Healthy communities

1. Development proposals are required to maximise health benefits, minimise harm to health, and promote health equity for new and existing communities. This will be achieved by:
  - a. designing for an inclusive built and natural environment, which considers and responds to the needs of the whole community regardless of age, gender or ability, and promotes physical activity where possible, including layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
  - b. providing accessible and inclusive high-quality open spaces, culturally sensitive community facilities, and an equitable urban realm that supports walking, wheeling, other forms of active travel and social interaction; and
  - c. ensuring internal spaces are well-ventilated to prevent damp and mould occurring and are appropriately sized to avoid overcrowding.
2. Major development proposals are required to complete and submit a rapid Health Impact Assessment (HIA) as part of their planning application.
3. Development proposals of a scale referable to the Greater London Authority (GLA) (as set out in legislation) are required to complete and submit a detailed HIA as part of their planning application and must ensure the following is undertaken:
  - a. the scope of the detailed HIA is agreed with the council's development management and public health services prior to commencement of the assessment, and at the earliest opportunity;
  - b. the assessment is undertaken at an early stage of the development process and there is clear demonstration that the assessment has informed the overall design and end use(s) and occupation of the proposal;
  - c. the assessment is undertaken in accordance with the council's latest HIA guidance, and responds to the latest local public health data and community insight gathered by the applicant's team; and
  - d. Recommendations within the HIA are secured and monitored as part of a planning obligation.

## Supporting text

11.26 Part 1 of this policy seeks to ensure development contributes towards a healthy built environment in accordance with the NPPF, the London Plan (GLA, 2021) and the objectives of the Tower Hamlets Health and Well-being Strategy (2021-2025). The policy seeks to ensure that the health impacts of all development proposals are considered at the earliest opportunity, so that the positive health benefits are maximised, and the negative health impacts are minimized. This includes mitigation against overcrowding, damp, mould and seeking to encourage more active lifestyles. It should be ensured that the needs of vulnerable groups are met by the development.

11.27 Part 2 of this policy requires major development proposals to complete and submit a rapid HIA, which should be undertaken using the council's most current HIA guidance. Definition of what constitutes a major development proposal can be found in the glossary in Appendix 1.

11.28 Part 3 of this policy requires development proposals of a scale referable to the GLA to complete and submit a detailed HIA, which should be undertaken using the council's latest HIA guidance, and the scope of this assessment agreed with the council's development management and public health services prior to commencement and at the earliest opportunity (part 3(a)). Definition of what constitutes a development proposal of a scale referable to the GLA can be found in the glossary in appendix 1. A HIA can also be submitted as part of an Integrated Impact Assessment.

11.29 As required in part 3(b), the HIA process should begin as early as possible, and it is expected to be initiated at pre-application stage so that the consideration of health can meaningfully influence proposals and how they will be used post completion. Actions should be identified



that aim to enhance the positive impacts and mitigate the negative impacts on the wider determinants of health. The outcome of these actions should be clearly identifiable within the planning application, demonstrating how the proposal has developed its design and strategy in accordance with the findings from the HIA and an engagement process with the local community.

11.30 Part 3(c) of the policy requires the HIA to be undertaken in accordance with the council's latest guidance, and respond to the latest local public health data and community insight gathered by the applicant's team. The HIA submission should visually demonstrate how the design has developed to adapt to serve these identified needs and

improve on the previous strategy.

11.31 Wherever community engagement is required as part of a HIA, steps should be made to ensure all voices, in particular vulnerable groups, are consulted upon. This is to ensure that their needs are understood and that they can inform the recommendations of the assessment.

11.32 As required by part 3(d) of the policy, recommendations within the HIA are to be secured and monitored as part of a planning obligation. This will be achieved through undertaking an independent post occupancy evaluation of residents and users of the development to assess whether the development is equitably meeting the needs of all its occupants and the wider neighbourhood, identify areas for improvement and a plan of action to help elicit improvements and provide learning that informs better decisions in the future.

### **London Plan policies:**

- GG3 Creating a healthy city

### **Local Plan policies:**

- All policies

### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Spatial Planning and Health Needs Assessment, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Health and Well-being Strategy, 2021
- Tower Hamlets Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2017
- Healthy Streets for London, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Air Quality Action Plan, 2022
- Tower Hamlets Air Quality Annual Monitoring Report





## **Policy DV4 Planning and construction of new development**

1. Major development proposals should sign up to the Tower Hamlets Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) and where appropriate, a constructors' forum. All construction sites in the borough should meet or exceed requirements set out in the Tower Hamlets CoCP.
2. Development proposals should undertake consultation with the council and neighbouring residents and businesses likely to be affected by their works, prior to commencement, for coordination and mitigation of disruption.
3. Development proposals should ensure consultation with the development and utility coordination team of Tower Hamlets as early as possible in the development process.
4. Major development must consider the cumulative impact of their development on the amenity of local residents and businesses in the vicinity of the site. This should be addressed through:
  - a. outlining measure to address these cumulative impacts in the Construction Management Plan (CMPs) and Site Environmental Management Plans (SEMPs).
  - b. Working collaboratively with other nearby developers and the council.
5. The Council will secure financial contributions towards coordination and integration of development activity to help address the cumulative impact of construction from sites across the borough.
6. Development is required to employ the highest standards of sustainable construction, including:
  - a. sustainable construction methods, such as the use of sustainably sourced, low embodied carbon and recycled materials; and
  - b. the use of demolished material from the development site, where practicable, in order to minimise the transportation of waste, reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and to facilitate the transition to a circular economy.

## Supporting text

11.33 This policy recognises that the high levels of growth within the borough are mainly taking place alongside, or within, areas which are already densely inhabited or have been allocated for large scale development. It therefore seeks to ensure development minimises its impact on the local environment, existing and emerging communities.

11.34 Part 1 sets out how the council expects developers to sign up to the Tower Hamlets Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) and a constructors' forum (where appropriate) to better manage and mitigate the cumulative impacts arising from construction on the borough's key development sites. The Tower Hamlets CoCP seeks to set out simply and clearly what constitutes acceptable site practice within the borough. It is intended to help developers, architects, engineers and construction professionals to plan, cost and manage the environmental mitigation required to protect the health, safety and well-being of our residents and businesses.

11.35 Part 2 ensures that there is ongoing communication and regular updates, at each phase of delivery, by those responsible for the development's delivery to the Council. This aids the facilitation of development coordination.

11.36 Developers will also be expected to sign up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS), which is a national initiative which seeks to promote safe and considerate building practice and engineering works and improve standards of neighbourliness. Sites that are registered under the scheme are independently assessed and monitored against a code of considerate practice, designed to encourage higher

standards of conduct. We may also consider membership of alternative constructor schemes as also meeting the requirements of this policy. Developers are also encouraged to sign up to the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standard which ensures constructors achieve the safest, leanest, and greenest construction vehicle journeys.

11.37 Part 3 requires development proposals to consult the development and utility coordinator teams of Tower Hamlets as early as possible in the development process. This is to allow the scheme to meet the requirements of the CoCP and to liaise with local utility and service providers in advance of commencement of development and to minimise disruption.

11.38 Part 4 of the policy seeks to ensure that construction impacts from the site and from other major developments within the vicinity of the proposal site are assessed and mitigation actions identified. Developers should take account of noise, vibration, artificial light, odour, air quality, fumes, dust or pollution, hours of operation, delivery timings and routes and location of equipment accordingly to reduce this impact. This should be evidenced through the Construction Logistics Plan (CLP), Construction Management Plan (CMP) and Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP). Further guidance on producing a CLP can be found in the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA 2014) and our latest CoCP.

11.39 Given the very high levels of construction activity occurring in already high-density locations across the borough, the council consider that strategic solutions are required to address to cumulative impacts of construction activity. This can only be achieved through collaboration between the council and other developers.

11.40 As set out in part 5, the council will secure a financial contribution towards co-ordination and integration of development activity, including leading and/or delivering projects and interventions by the council to address the cumulative impacts.

11.41 Part 6 requires development to employ the highest standards of sustainable construction. It seeks to reduce development waste and encourage the process of limiting waste to begin early in site development. The design and materials used in the construction of new buildings (including the need to choose sustainable materials, sustainable construction methods and incorporate circular economy principles) can make a significant difference to the energy requirements and associated level of carbon emissions. Sustainable construction methods include volumetric building, panelised systems and offsite manufacture (Modern Methods of Construction) which all have benefits in terms of limiting waste and increasing build quality and providing the opportunity for design for disassembly. Evidence of a commitment to low carbon and low emission energy sources for construction and related transport should also be demonstrated. Applicants should evidence how the development will meet the requirements set out in Part 5 of the policy in the design and access statement and/or the sustainability statement, as part of the planning application. More detailed guidance can be found in the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA 2014) and the Circular Economy Statement LPG (GLA 2022).

**London Plan policies:**

- SL1 Improving air quality
- SL2 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
- SL7 Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy

**Local Plan policies:**

- PS1 Design and infrastructure-led approach to development
- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm
- CG4 Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy
- CG10 Air quality
- CG11 Noise and vibration
- MC1 Sustainable travel
- MC3 Impacts on the transport network
- MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing and construction

**Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Code of Construction Practice, 2023
- Circular Economy Statement LPG, 2022
- Control of Dust and Emissions SPG, 2014
- Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA 2014)



## Policy DV5 Developer contributions

1. Development proposals will be required to:
  - a. pay Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charges required by any charging schedules which are in operation for the area within which the development is located, including the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy (MCIL);
  - b. enter into Section 106 agreements to provide affordable housing and make provision to mitigate the impacts of the development where necessary or appropriate, having regard to any relevant policies, supplementary planning documents or guidance; and
  - c. submit a financial viability assessment as part of the planning application, where required, which may be subject to scrutiny by the council/appointed consultants, at the applicant's expense, where they do not meet planning policy requirements or do not propose to deliver required Section 106 planning obligations.
2. Proposal which seek to provide CIL-in-kind in exchange for the delivery of strategic infrastructure are required to:
  - a. provide robust justification for CIL-in-kind in comparison to contributions towards strategic infrastructure;
  - b. set out in detail the proposed type of infrastructure which would qualify as CIL-in-kind; and
  - c. engage early in the development process with the council's infrastructure planning team.
3. Where development proposals are seeking CIL-in-kind in exchange for the delivery of strategic infrastructure, discussions should be opened with the council at the earliest possible opportunity to determine what kinds of infrastructure will be granted CIL-in-kind on the site.
4. Vacant building credit has the potential to adversely impact our ability to meet the affordable housing target and will not apply in the borough. This policy acts as an exemption from its application in Tower Hamlets.

## Supporting text

11.42 In order to ensure that the policies and infrastructure requirements of the Local Plan are delivered in a way that achieves sustainable development, we will seek contributions from developers to fund improvements to infrastructure and the environment. Contributions will be made through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (which applies a standard charge to developers to fund supporting infrastructure such as transport, schools, health and community facilities) and/or Section 106 agreements (which address the provision of affordable housing and site-specific infrastructure or development mitigation requirements).

11.43 The spatial vision and objectives emphasise the importance of managing growth and shaping change. This puts planning for infrastructure at the heart of the Local Plan, ensuring that new development in the borough contributes towards the provision of infrastructure that is needed to support growth and enable everyone in the borough to benefit from the opportunities this infrastructure will bring.

11.44 Developer contributions can help to contribute to the success of a development and the needs of the wide community in line with the key priorities set out in the Local Plan vision. For instance, they can enhance the benefits that arise from a development to the local community and equally ensure it does not give rise to unacceptable development impacts.

11.45 The council will work collaboratively with our partners to deliver the infrastructure necessary to support the growth and development identified within the Local Plan, understanding the contribution that this

growth can make to achieve the wider objectives of the plan and other relevant strategies. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifies the types of infrastructure required to support the anticipated growth in the borough, and additional infrastructure requirements will be identified during the course of the plan period as appropriate. The IDP sets out the projects across a range of infrastructure requirements which will help deliver the infrastructure needed to serve existing and emerging communities and businesses. The IDP is periodically updated to ensure it is responsive to the infrastructure requirements of the borough. These updates will be undertaken in consultation with both internal and external stakeholders such as service areas and infrastructure providers.

11.46 In order to implement Part 1(a), development must follow both the borough-wide Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule, or any subsequent adopted version; and the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy (MCIL) charging schedule, or any subsequent adopted version, and supplementary planning guidance.

11.47 The borough-wide CIL (revised and adopted in January 2020) will be used to deliver infrastructure to address the cumulative impact of development in the borough. Necessary items required to mitigate the impact of development such as affordable housing, may be secured through Section 106 obligations.

11.48 The MCIL will help fund strategic transport projects. We collect these receipts from developments in Tower Hamlets and pass them onto Transport for London (TfL). Developments in the borough may be liable for both the Mayoral and borough-wide CIL and, in certain circumstances, pursuant to supplementary planning guidance,

11.49 Part 1(b) seeks to address the use of Section 106 planning obligations to secure the provision of affordable housing and mitigate the impact of development where these cannot be addressed through planning conditions or the CIL. Section 106 planning obligations will be sought where they are:

- a. necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- b. directly related to the development; and
- c. fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

11.50 The measures sought through a planning obligation will vary depending on the nature and scale of a development, its location and impacts. Further information about the requirements for obligations are included throughout this plan. The Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides detailed guidance on our approach to planning obligations. Development which is subject to a Section 106 agreement should apply the SPD, and will be assessed on an individual basis. The obligations identified in the Local Plan and Planning Obligations SPD are not an exhaustive list and the council may wish to negotiate other forms of planning obligations which meet the CIL Regulation 122 tests depending on the individual circumstances of a site and scheme. The methodologies for calculating certain financial obligations are set out in Appendix 2.

11.51 A monetary contribution to cover the monitoring of planning obligations will be secured. This will be calculated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the nature of the proposed development, obligations secured, and the estimated cost of monitoring.

11.52 Financial contributions may be sought financially or 'in kind' –

where the developer builds or directly provides the matters necessary to fulfil the obligation negotiated as part of the planning application. Where provision is made within developments, this will be credited to the scheme and may offset financial contributions that may otherwise be sought. In-kind delivery of planning obligations will be at the discretion of the council and only in appropriate circumstances.

11.53 Part 1(c) aims to ensure developers maximise contributions towards the delivery of affordable housing and infrastructure in line with the vision and objectives of the plan, whilst still ensuring development can be delivered. Development should follow the guidance set out in the financial viability appraisals and must comply with the Mayor of London's Affordable Housing and Viability London Plan Guidance and the Tower Hamlets' Development Viability SPD. This sets out how the Local Plan policies should be applied in a development viability context when determining planning applications. It aims to provide greater clarity to both applicants and the public and ensure that the principles of sustainable development are at the forefront of decision-making in Tower Hamlets.

11.54 Financial viability is a key consideration in terms of the application of Section 106 planning obligations, and where development does not meet planning policy or propose to provide required planning obligations, financial viability assessments are required to be submitted in accordance with the prevailing local validation requirements checklist or any relevant supplementary planning document. The issue of financial viability should be considered at the earliest opportunity. If an applicant is engaged with us in this regard prior to the submission of a planning application, then the chances of a positive outcome for all sides are greatly increased.



11.55 In the exceptional circumstances where viability constraints prevent the delivery of all policy requirements, there may be some site-specific exceptions where an alternative prioritisation is considered more appropriate. Where necessary to deliver the provision of infrastructure required as part of a site allocation or considered necessary by internal or regional consultees, and proven via viability evidence, additional sources of funding to enable the delivery of the required infrastructure may be identified by the council.

11.56 Part 2 sets out that developments which seek CIL-in-kind will need to be supported by information which justifies and sets out what the CIL-in-kind comprises and how this equates to the strategic infrastructure development contribution. Part 2 emphasises the importance of early discussions with the council in instances where developers are seeking CIL-in-kind. In some instances, the delivery of strategic infrastructure as part of a development proposal may make the development eligible for CIL-in-kind, but this will be at the discretion of the council, following discussions with the Infrastructure Planning team.

11.57 Part 3 sets out our approach to the application of the vacant building credit, which provides an incentive for brownfield development on sites containing vacant buildings. Viability evidence finds there is no need to apply the vacant building credit mechanism in the borough to 'kick start' development (Tower Hamlets Local Plan Viability Assessment 2017). In addition, the effect of the vacant building credit will be to reduce affordable housing contributions and this is contrary to our need to deliver affordable housing through the planning system. The Affordable Housing and Viability Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2017) sets out the extent to which vacant building credit should be applied in London and concludes that its application is unlikely to be suitable in London.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- D2 Infrastructure requirements for sustainable densities
- H4 Delivering affordable housing
- H5 Threshold approach to applications
- H7 Monitoring of affordable housing
- T9 Funding transport infrastructure through planning

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- HC1 Meeting housing needs
- HC2 Affordable housing and housing mix
- HC7 Purpose-built student accommodation
- HC8 Large-scale purpose-built shared living
- CG1 Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate
- CG2 Low energy buildings
- CG3 Low carbon energy and heating
- CG4 Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy
- CG8 Water efficient design
- EG3 Affordable workspace
- Cl1 Supporting community facilities
- RW2 New and enhanced waste facilities
- MC3 Impacts on the transport network
- MC4 Parking and permit free
- MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing and construction

#### **Evidence base:**

- Planning Obligations SPD, 2021
- Development Viability SPD, 2017
- Affordable Housing and Viability SPG, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan

## Policy DV6 Social value

1. The council will support opportunities to maximise the delivery of social value to positively contribute to additional social, economic, environmental and community benefits, including economic well-being, social inclusion, equal opportunity, and community cohesion.
2. Major development proposals are required to submit a social value strategy which clearly sets out how social value will be achieved through the construction and operation of the proposed development. The social value strategy must identify how:
  - a. the social value contribution is proportional to the scale of the development; and
  - b. the development will support social inclusion, economic well-being, equal opportunity and community cohesion throughout its lifecycle. This shall include demonstrating how the development will maximise wider social value contributions across the following themes:
    - i. reducing poverty and promoting equality and cohesion in Tower Hamlets;
    - ii. boosting local jobs, skills, opportunities, and economic inclusion (including careers and social mobility);
    - iii. inclusive growth and strengthening the local economy;
    - iv. empowering communities to become more resilient and increase participation; and
    - v. working towards a clean and green future.
3. Where appropriate, the delivery of social value interventions will be secured by planning obligation. Social value interventions will be treated separately to planning obligations required by other policy such as affordable housing or employment and training requirements.
4. The implementation of social value interventions is secured and compliance is monitored as part of a planning obligation.

## Supporting text

11.58 Part 1 of the policy sets out the council's intention to maximise the delivery of social value through development, ensuring positive contribution to community benefits including economic well-being, social inclusion, equal opportunity, and community cohesion.

11.59 Part 2 of the policy sets out the requirement for major development proposals to submit a social value strategy. The social value strategy shall identify how the development will deliver social value benefits throughout its lifecycle including during its construction and operational phases, demonstrating that social value delivery has been integrated into the design of the scheme. The strategy will ensure that the development will maximise its positive contribution to economic well-being, social inclusion, equal opportunity, and community cohesion based on site-specific analysis and consultation. Such strategies can be informed by the councils' most up to date guidance on social value in development.

11.60 Part 2(a) requires the social value contribution of a development proposal to be proportional to the scale of development. The social value strategy should demonstrate this and should be introduced as early as possible, so that the consideration of social value can meaningfully influence proposals. Therefore, it is strongly encouraged that the strategy is considered at pre-application stage, should the applicant seek that service. At the design/ pre-application stage it is expected that the social value strategy will be of a higher level, setting out social value goals and identifying when these will be delivered throughout the lifecycle of the scheme. Subsequently, prior to commencement, it is expected that the social value strategy will have been refined and developed in more detail, setting out the social value outcomes that will be delivered by the development.

11.61 Social value should be considered early in the development process and applicants should engage with the council's development management and infrastructure planning teams.

11.62 Part 2(b) requires the social value strategy to demonstrate how the development proposal will support social inclusion, economic well-being, equal opportunity, and community cohesion throughout its lifecycle. To demonstrate this, the strategy should provide a structure as to how social value will be implemented through each stage of the proposal, setting-out clear goals and implementation strategies and outlining measurable targets to ensure effective monitoring, reporting, and assessment.

11.63 The social value strategy will outline how site-specific local needs analysis and community engagement was conducted to understand and co-design what social value could be added through the lifecycle of the development, in response to a real, evidence-based need to benefit the surrounding local community. The Council's development management and infrastructure planning team will offer guidance on groups which could be suitable to be part of the co-design process. Guidance on co-design and community consultation is set out in the Optimising Site Capacity: A Design-led Approach LPG (GLA, 2023).

11.64 The social value strategy will focus on the themes set out in part 2(b), which have been developed in accordance with both national approaches and best practice for measuring social value (including the National TOM's framework) and the priorities set out in the Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan 2022-26:

- i. reducing poverty and promoting equality and cohesion in Tower Hamlets: upholding the council's commitments to reducing poverty and inequality across the borough (including the impacts of the cost-



of-living crisis), as well as promoting diversity and cohesion;

- ii. boosting local jobs, skills, opportunities, and economic inclusion: creating high-quality jobs, training opportunities, and skills and careers support for local people, with a particular focus on those facing barriers to employment;
- iii. inclusive growth and strengthening the local economy: positively contributing to the local economy through inclusive placemaking, supporting local and independent businesses, progressive procurement activities and promoting responsible business practices amongst supply chains;
- iv. empowering communities to become more resilient and increase participation: proactively engaging with local people and businesses (with a particular focus on underserved communities and groups) to shape proposals, and investing in communities to become more resilient through initiatives that will improve safety, health, and well-being; and
- v. working towards a clean and green future: implementing policies and initiatives that support the council's vision to become a carbon neutral borough, improving air quality and reducing waste (including promoting the circular economy).

11.65 It is acknowledged that existing planning obligations would sit in some of the themes above and therefore already provide some social value benefits to the local community. However, the content of the social value strategy should be independent of these, and target areas that the planning obligations do not address, to provide additionality and to complement any existing obligations. The strategy should be project specific, allowing flexibility for each development to develop a social

value strategy that is informed by its site-specific local needs analysis and consultation.

11.66 Examples of potential social value contributions, that should be project specific:

- spatial and environmental improvement works that improve health and well-being, adopt gender inclusive design, and create safer spaces;
- encouraging more local representation in Design Review Panels (including upskilling local residents to participate) – with a particular focus on underrepresented communities and groups;
- contributions (including donations, resources and staff volunteering) to local community projects that tackle poverty and the cost-of-living crisis;
- providing training and skills opportunities (including internships, work experience and graduate placements) for individuals facing barriers to employment i.e. long-term unemployed, Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs), care leavers, ex-offenders, and residents with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND residents);
- careers and social mobility initiatives – including engaging with local schools and colleges to deliver work experience placements, career talks, and site visits for young people;
- delivering support and advice for small and independent businesses and voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs) – for example, workshops on fit-out and design;
- making procurement opportunities more accessible for local small and independent businesses throughout the development lifecycle – including VCSEs and diverse business owners;

- ensuring suppliers pay London Living Wage and commit to responsible business practices;
- protecting the environment and mitigating the impacts of climate change through all aspects of the development, not just the built form – for example, by committing to encouraging active travel and using sustainable delivery methods;
- promoting positive health and well-being in the community and for employees;
- contributions (including donations, resources, and staff volunteering) to local tackling poverty initiatives, local community groups, VCSEs and charitable organisations; and
- community engagement activities to measure happiness and well-being of occupiers and people that use the development upon completion.

11.67 Part 3 of the policy sets out how social value commitments outlined in the strategy will be considered independently and as additions to complement any other planning obligations or contributions, and will be secured via a planning obligation to ensure the implementation of any approved social value strategy, requiring where appropriate that compliance with the relevant parts of the strategy is confirmed prior to the commencement and the occupation of the development.

11.68 As required in part 4 of the policy, the social value observations will be secured and monitored as part of a planning obligation. This will include monitoring and review of expected outcomes prior to, during and post construction.

**London Plan policies:**

- GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities
- GG3 Creating a healthy city
- GG5 Growing a good economy
- D5 Inclusive design
- D8 Public realm
- E3 Affordable workspace

**Local Plan policies:**

- All policies

**Evidence base:**

- Good Growth Principles in the London Plan

## Policy DV7 Utilities and digital connectivity

1. All strategic development proposals must ensure there is sufficient utilities infrastructure capacity, (including electricity, heat, water supply, digital connectivity, and drainage) to meet demand during construction and operation. To do this, major development proposals will be expected to:

- a. engage with the Council on the content of a utilities statement which sets out the requirements for utilities and services infrastructure which are necessary to service the development;
- b. undertake engagement with utilities and service providers at the before submitting of a planning application to ensure the construction approach and end design of the development address utilities providers' requirements, and to ensure utilities networks and connections can serve the development;
- c. provide evidence of the engagement to the council, along with relevant load and consumption data and proposed routing, in a utilities statement for review and coordination; and
- d. demonstrate that the spatial, visual, amenity, and environmental impacts of new, expanded, or reconfigured utilities and services infrastructure will be avoided, remedied, or mitigated.

2. Major development proposals must prioritise connections to decarbonised heat networks to support the delivery of net zero carbon emissions solutions for clean, green, and integrated energy systems. Development with significant heat rejection, such as data centres, must be built ready to supply waste heat to a heat network, including all necessary on-site infrastructure required to facilitate a future connection.

3. Major development proposals are required to deliver Fibre To The Premises (FTTP) broadband and where possible mobile telecoms, small cell 5G and 6G digital infrastructure. A digital infrastructure statement must be submitted as part of the utilities statement to demonstrate how this will be achieved, which should:

- a. establish how FTTP will be provided to serve the development and that it will be engaged at first occupation and be of a sufficient standard to meet the requirements of future occupiers of the development; and
- b. Where required demonstrate the impact on the digital connectivity of existing residents, businesses and local communities.

4. For all other residential and employment development proposals, FTTP will be encouraged by the council as a means of expanding the local fibre network.

## Supporting text

11.69 This policy seeks to ensure that new homes and developments in Tower Hamlets are supported with sufficient utilities and service infrastructure, and new developments have access to clean energy, heat, water and sewerage, mobile connectivity and fast broadband connections. Recent studies undertaken by the Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Coordination Pilots Programme (IDCPP) have found that the traditional methods of utility and services procurement are not an efficient solution with which to support new growth and development, including the decarbonisation of our energy and transport systems. Although progress has been made on improving the energy and water efficiency of new developments to better manage utilities demand, additional connections to utilities and services are still required.

11.70 Council engagement with developers has demonstrated there is a need to coordinate approaches with local utilities providers for the planning of utilities and connections. This will deliver improved efficiency for the delivery of utilities and minimise delays to developments and their utilities connections. Site utility information should therefore be shared with the council to achieve this objective.

11.71 Part 1 (a) requires that strategic development proposals submit a utility statement, which considers the relevant utilities needed to service the proposed development. The framework and contents for utility statements will be informed by the most current guidance at the time of the development proposals assessment. It is recommended that advice on the contents of the utilities statement is sought in advance of the submission of a development proposal ideally in advance of submission of a planning application or at pre-planning stage and engagement with

the council's infrastructure planning team is recommended. The scope or necessity of the components a utility statement can be determined as a result of such engagement with the Council.

11.72 Part 1(b) requires strategic development proposals to engage with utilities providers at the earliest opportunity in the design and construction process. This includes water supply, wastewater drainage and the SuDS Approval Body, electricity and energy including heat network operators, digital connectivity, and mobile communications. Development proposals should be supported by evidence of this engagement. This is to ensure there will be sufficient utilities and service capacity to meet the increased demand, and that the predicted demand increase will not impede the utilities availability for current or predicted future growth.

11.73 Part 1(c) requires strategic development proposals to submit a utility statement in line with the scope set out in Part 1(B) for assessment as part of their application, to support the coordinated delivery of utilities capacity, maximise efficient routing, and reduce the impacts of connection installations. Aggregated information from utility statements will allow early conversations with utility and service providers that inform their capacity and route planning, supporting on-time delivery and coordination and reduce disruption, which could not be achieved through applications by individual developers.

11.74 Utility statements should set out the expected demand and present evidence received from utility and service providers in the consultation that there is sufficient capacity to meet their development's as well as further projected growth needs.



11.75 As a minimum, utilities statements should include:

- location and size of existing utilities and services;
- proposed connection points routes to/from the site and site entry points;
- equipment required on and off-site to allow the connection;
- cover water, electricity and energy supplies, drainage and digital connections;
- make reference to other relevant reports and provide overview of key information, such as the drainage strategy;
- provide connection sizes, peak loads, annual demands, volumes, capacities as required for applications with each provider;
- describe function, operation and key maintenance of each item;
- provide a programme for works; and
- cover construction and occupation including phasing where applicable.

11.76 Developments which result in offsite upgrades will be subject to conditions to ensure occupation is aligned with the delivery of the required utilities infrastructure. Developments with exceptionally high utilities demands, such as data centres, must demonstrate that these requirements will not undermine the deliverability of planned homes and developments in the borough. Where this cannot be demonstrated, development proposals may be refused, or be subject to providing sufficient capacity ahead of delivery.

11.77 Part 1(d) requires applicants to demonstrate that new or expanded utilities infrastructure will not have any negative impacts to amenity or environment, such as noise, odour or vibration, or that any identified

impacts will be mitigated. Design of new utilities infrastructure should be considered, particularly where infrastructure is delivered in close proximity to existing or proposed developments, to integrate utilities into the urban landscape.

11.78 Part 2 of this policy identifies the need for new developments to connect to heat networks. All heat sources, including ambient and waste heat and significant heat rejection, present opportunities to decarbonise the borough's heating systems and achieve its net zero carbon emissions target. All new developments that emit waste heat must ensure on-site provision is made to future-proof an easy connection to future heat networks. This includes the provision of heat exchangers, thermal stores, pipework connections at the site boundary, and heat supply agreements to heat network operators. Heat network operators supplying to residential properties shall be registered participants in the Heat Trust scheme and each heat network shall be a Heat Trust registered scheme. Where existing heat networks have not decarbonized, sleeving shall be applied for the connection of new development.

11.79 In addition, a new primary electrical substation will be required on the Isle of Dogs by 2030 as identified in the Opportunity Area Framework and the Isle of Dogs Feasibility Study (Electrical Connectivity) to support ongoing development as well as the electrification of heat and transport and to reduce the pressure on the congested electrical routes currently supplying the island. This will be established on the site of a customer requiring electrical connection.

11.80 Parts 3 and 4 of this policy pertain to the delivery of digital infrastructure. Digital infrastructure plays a vital role in our daily lives which enables people to access the connectivity and services they

need where they live, work or travel. The council considers that digital infrastructure, including the delivery of Fibre To The Premises (FTTP) (also called full fibre gigabit broadband), existing 4G and 5G mobile telecoms and future wireless technologies including 6G, to be essential infrastructure to support the delivery of sustainable development. Part R1 of the Building Regulations 2010 requires buildings to be equipped with at least 30 MB/s ready in-building physical infrastructure, however new developments using full fibre to the property or other higher-grade infrastructure can achieve connectivity speeds of 1GB/s. Developers should engage early with a range of network operators, to ensure that development proposals are designed to be capable of providing this level of connectivity to all end users. Mechanisms should also be put in place to enable further future infrastructure upgrades. Innovation is driving reductions in the size of infrastructure, with marginal additional unit costs, but greater digital connectivity is needed in more locations.

11.81 This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals provide the necessary standards and do not have a negative impact on digital connectivity within the borough for existing residents and local people, as well as future occupiers. As well as achieve national ambitions to deliver gigabit broadband to at least 99% of premises nationwide and coverage of standalone 5G to all populated areas of the UK by 2030.

11.82 Further guidance on delivering digital infrastructure is set out in the Tower Hamlets Digital Infrastructure Strategy (2022) and the GLA Sub-regional Digital Strategy (emerging). Development proposals should consider the most up-to-date digital and utility guidance published by the council at the time of their assessment.

**London Plan policies:**

- S13 Energy infrastructure
- S15 Water infrastructure
- S16 Digital infrastructure

**Local Plan policies:**

- All policies

**Evidence base**

- Proposals for heat network zoning, 2022
- London Heat Network Manual II, 2021
- Sub-regional Integrated Water Management Strategy (SWIMS) for East London, 2023
- Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP), 2020
- Isle of Dogs, South Poplar and Leaside Local Area Energy Plan, 2022
- Tower Hamlets Surface Water Integrated Management Strategy
- Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Opportunity Area Framework, 2019
- Isle of Dogs Feasibility Study (Electricity Connectivity), UKPN, 2023
- UK Digital Strategy, 2022
- Sub-regional Digital Strategy
- Digital Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan: Isle of Dogs, South Poplar, and Lower Leaside Areas, 2022
- Utilities and Heat Network Topic Paper, 2024
- Foul Sewerage and Utilities Statement

## Policy DV8 Site allocations

1. Development proposals on site allocations should meet the following requirements:
  - a. apply all Local Plan policy requirements unless specified through the site allocation text;
  - b. deliver required infrastructure on earlier phases of development as far as possible;
  - c. open discussions with the council at the earliest possible opportunity, where CIL-in-kind is sought in exchange for the delivery of strategic infrastructure, to determine what kinds of infrastructure will be granted CIL-in-kind on the site;
  - d. provide new publicly accessible open space of at least 0.4ha, and where family housing on allocations is delivered, it should be delivered in close proximity to the open space;
  - e. where strategic publicly accessible open spaces are required in the site allocation text, they must consist of at least 1 hectare of contiguous open space, and must be additional to other local plan open space requirements;
  - f. provide a buffer zone of 8m to fluvial watercourses and 16m to tidal watercourses; and
  - g. on sites with decommissioned gasholders, the space taken up by the gasholders is not considered to be employment space, and so employment floorspace does not need to be re-provided as part of redevelopment for this floorspace.

## Supporting text

11.83 This policy sets out some requirements that apply to all of the site allocations included in the plan.

11.84 Part 1(a) specifies that the local plan must be read as a whole, and allocations should not be treated as isolated sets of requirements that sit outside of the other planning policies in this document. For reasons of efficiency, the site allocations do not set out standard requirements relating to issues like the delivery of affordable housing, biodiversity improvements, the improvement of air quality, or many other topics covered in the local plan policies – these requirements should be assumed to apply unless the site allocation text specifies that they do not.

11.85 The site allocations set out required infrastructure that must be delivered to make a development acceptable, and part 1(b) emphasises that the delivery of this infrastructure, including sustainable transport improvements, should be focused on the earlier phases of delivery where possible. It is accepted that not all infrastructure will be able to come forward at the very start of development, but there should be a general principle that the delivery of infrastructure is front-loaded to ensure that the needs of the community will be met as new residents move into a development.

11.86 Part 1(c) sets out the council's approach to the delivery of social infrastructure such as health, educational, and community facilities on site allocations. The site allocations in this plan will be delivered over a long period of time, and it is possible that needs which are forecast at the time of preparing the plan may not materialise over the fifteen years of the plan period. This can particularly be the case for schools, where future pupil numbers and demographic trends can be difficult



to accurately predict. The council has therefore taken a precautionary approach to allocating social infrastructure in this plan, and when applications for development on site allocations come forward discussions should be held with the council at the earliest possible opportunity to determine whether the social infrastructure needs have changed since the time when the plan was prepared. In some cases, it may prove that a particular piece of social infrastructure is no longer needed, but the need for another kind of infrastructure has increased and this can be delivered instead. In other cases, it may be that there is no further need for social infrastructure on a particular site, and

alternative uses can be considered. This will need to be assessed on a site-by-site basis, which is why developers are encouraged to begin early discussions around this.

11.87 Part 1(d) sets out that all site allocations in the plan are expected to deliver some new publicly accessible open space. Some site allocations specify that a strategic open space should be delivered, and this is elaborated in part 1(e). For allocations that do not specify the need for a strategic open space, publicly accessible open spaces that meet local needs should be delivered instead, with a target of delivering at least 0.4 hectares across the site (it is acknowledged that on smaller allocations this level may not be achievable, however some amount of new publicly accessible open space is expected to be provided and discussions should be opened with the council at the earliest opportunity to discuss this). In all cases, family housing within site allocations should be delivered in close proximity to publicly accessible open space.

11.88 Part 1(e) explains that for publicly accessible open space to count as strategic infrastructure (and therefore to meet the requirements of site allocations that include open space as required infrastructure, and to potentially be liable for CIL-in-kind), it must consist of at least 1 hectare of contiguous open space. Smaller, non-contiguous open spaces, even where they add up to a total of 1 hectare across a site, will only be considered to meet local needs for open space, not strategic needs. This applies even where such spaces are claimed to be connected via green routes or pedestrianised pathways. All publicly accessible open space should be additional to other open space requirements in the Local Plan, such as communal amenity space and play space requirements – spaces that are counted towards the required total of communal amenity space or children’s play space



cannot also be counted towards the provision of new publicly accessible open space.

11.8g Development which is in proximity to watercourses must incorporate buffer zones to support the incorporation of flood risk management into development proposals.

11.90 There are some site allocations that contain decommissioned gasholders, and part 1(g) specifies that the floorspace taken up by the gasholders is not considered to count as employment space for the purposes of policy EG4, and therefore there is no expectation that this floorspace needs to be re-provided as an employment use in any redevelopment. Any other existing employment use on such sites will still need to be re-provided.

11.91 In addition to these requirements, it should be noted that some of the site allocations in the Leaside sub-area originated in the London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan. As part of the process of developing this local plan, the requirements for these sites and any adopted guidance related to them will be reviewed and may be updated.

## **London Plan policies:**

- D1 London's form, character and capacity for growth
- D2 Infrastructure requirements for sustainable densities
- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- G4 Open space
- SI 12 Flood risk management

## **Local Plan policies:**

- All policies

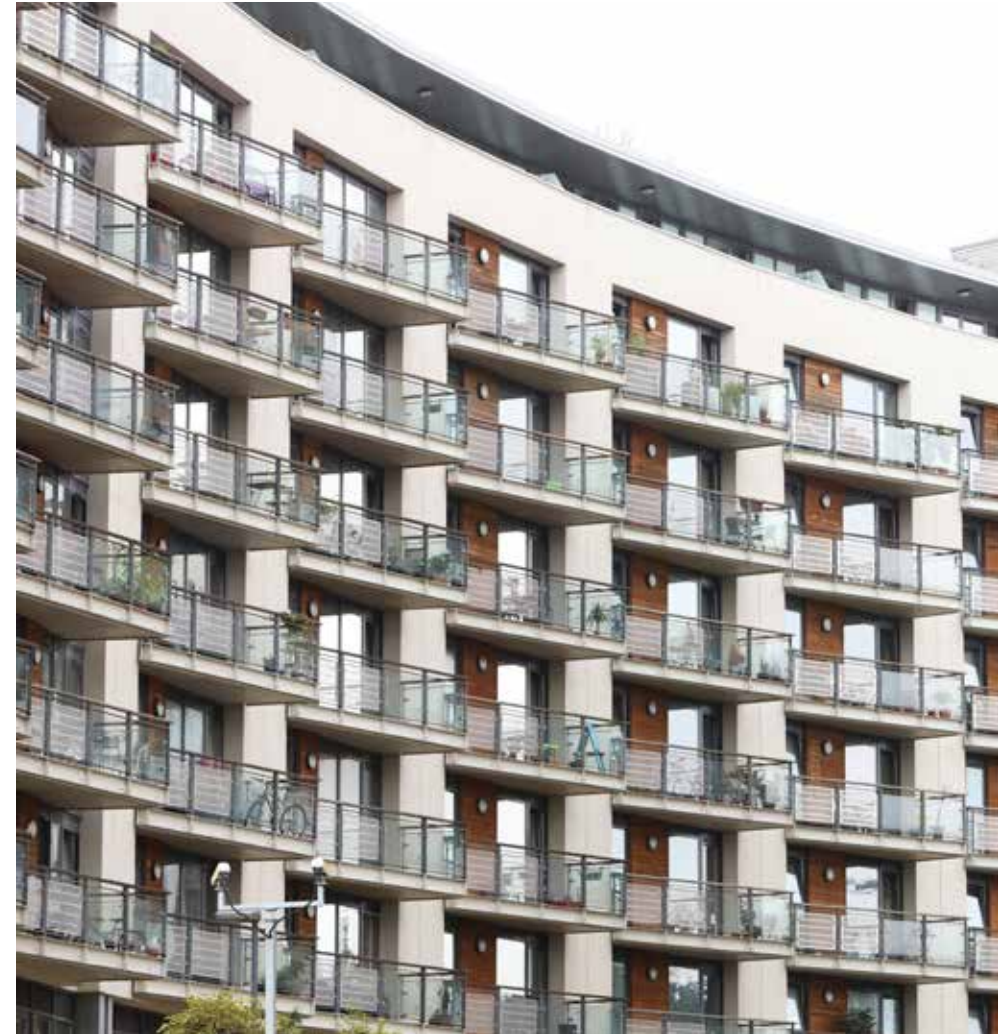
## **Evidence base:**

- Optimising Site Capacity: A Design-led Approach LPG, 2023

## 12. Homes for the community



- HF1 – Meeting housing needs
- HF2 – Affordable housing and housing mix
- HF3 – Protection of existing housing
- HF4 – Supported and specialist housing and housing for older people
- HF5 – Gypsy and traveller accommodation
- HF6 – Purpose-built student accommodation
- HF7 – Large-scale purpose-built shared living
- HF8 – Housing with shared facilities (houses in multiple occupation)
- HF9 – Housing standards and quality



## Introduction

12.1 Tower Hamlets is facing an acute housing shortage, with a particular lack of social rented homes to meet the needs of local residents. This leads to overcrowding, as residents are unable to move into their own accommodation and need to live with family, friends, or shared homes even when these circumstances lead to health and well-being issues.

12.2 The borough's strategic ambition is to ensure that everyone in Tower Hamlets lives in a good quality home that they can afford. To meet this need, this plan seeks to enable the delivery of an ambitious number of new homes, with a focus on larger, family-sized social rented homes, as this has been identified as the area of most acute need. This chapter sets out the policies that will support the borough in meeting these needs.

12.3 In addition to increasing the overall supply of new homes in the borough, there is also an acute need to ensure that all homes are of a good quality and meet the needs of their residents. This chapter includes policies that support the development of good quality homes that meet the needs of a wide variety of residents. It also supports the development of specialist housing that supports the needs of particular groups, such as older residents, those with special needs, and those experiencing homelessness. To meet this need, Policy HF2 imposes a requirement for development proposals to provide affordable housing, with rates varying depending on the nature of the development.

12.4 All parts of the borough are expected to experience redevelopment or intensification to increase densities in recognition of the substantial need for new housing. The areas with the greatest identified opportunities for growth are the areas designated as Opportunity Areas in the London Plan:

- a. Isle of Dogs and South Poplar sub-area: the places of Canary Wharf, Blackwall, Leamouth, and northern parts of Millwall and Cubitt Town;
- b. City Fringe sub-area: the places of Whitechapel, Wapping, and Aldgate; and
- c. Leaside sub-area: the places of Poplar Riverside and Poplar, and the area of the LLDC which sits within Tower Hamlets.

12.5 Additionally, significant opportunities exist outside of these areas, which this plan seeks to harness.

## Policy HF1 Meeting housing needs

1. The council will secure the delivery of at least 52,095 new homes across the borough between 2023-2038. This will be achieved through:
  - a. promoting the delivery of new housing in locations across the borough, particularly within the borough's opportunity areas, highly accessible locations, and site allocations (as shown on the policies map);
  - b. supporting new housing delivery on sites below 0.25 hectares (small sites) in size;
  - c. supporting new housing delivery on windfall sites (land not allocated within the Local Plan);
  - d. supporting estate regeneration schemes;
  - e. supporting proposals that would bring back into use long-term empty homes and derelict empty homes; and
  - f. supporting development proposals for housing as a
2. The council will prioritise the delivery of affordable homes across the borough and require developments to contribute towards the creation of sustainable, mixed, and inclusive communities that respond to local and strategic need. This will be achieved through:
  - a. securing affordable homes from all residential development proposals; and
  - b. requiring a mix of unit sizes and tenures to meet local need on all sites providing new homes.
3. The council will prioritise the delivery of self-contained (Class C3) homes in new residential developments when assessing development proposals for non C3 forms of housing.
4. Where they can deliver on the requirements of part 2 of this policy, the council will support development proposals which seek to meet the needs of specific groups:
  - a. families with children;
  - b. for those who rent their homes;
  - c. older people;
  - d. key workers and service families;
  - e. communities seeking to commission or build their own homes; and
  - f. students in appropriate locations.
5. The council will support development proposals that meet the needs of:
  - a. Disabled and vulnerable residents and those who need specialist housing;
  - b. Gypsy and Traveller communities; and
  - c. Emergency accommodation.
6. The council will expect residential development proposals to be of a high quality, sustainable, and take appropriate account of cumulative development.



## Supporting text

12.6 Part 1 of this policy sets out the strategic housing targets<sup>1</sup> for Tower Hamlets as well as our objectives of ensuring the creation of mixed and inclusive communities, sustainable places, and quality living environments within the borough.

12.7 The borough's housing target relates to total net housing supply. The strategic target is composed of the housing supply target of at least 34,730 new homes between 2019/2020 and 2028/2029 – established in policy H1 Increasing housing supply of the London Plan (GLA, 2021) – with the period beyond this being informed by the later phases of London Plan Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2017. The target includes self-contained residential units and non-self-contained residential accommodation, including specialist housing for older people, people with specialist care needs and students in use Classes C2, C3 and C4 or sui generis.

12.8 A proportion of the London Legacy Development Corporation's housing target as set by the London Plan 2021 is located within the boundary of Tower Hamlets. The delivery of this proportion will be supported through the adoption of the LLDC's site allocations in the Tower Hamlets Local Plan, extant masterplans and planning permissions.

12.9 Significant housing growth opportunities are identified in the locations specified in Part 1(a),<sup>2</sup> supported by capacity assessments of allocated sites. The borough's limited area requires optimising deliverable capacity in other locations across the borough. This will be achieved through a number of different mechanisms: the regeneration of previously developed land, the intensification of the built form in



opportunity areas, windfall developments, the delivery of small sites and appropriate development in highly accessible locations along transport corridors.

12.10 Part 1(b-e) supports the delivery of housing through town centre intensification, estate regeneration, and infill development on sites less than 0.25 hectares, bringing back long-term vacant properties into residential use and the development of windfall sites.

<sup>1</sup> Housing Land Supply Topic Paper

<sup>2</sup> Allocated sites and opportunity areas

12.11 Part 1 (d) acknowledges that the regeneration of existing housing estates will play a role in delivering the homes the borough needs. Such regeneration should not only seek to deliver an increased number of new affordable homes but to result in improved and expanded social facilities, enhancement of environmental amenity, open space and public realm that responds to the resulting increase in demand generated by the increased number of residents in the regenerated estate. Such schemes should be guided by the Council's Estate Regeneration Pathway and engage early in the design process with the Council's regeneration team.

12.12 Part 1(e) recognises that the borough contains a stock of vacant and derelict homes. In order to meet housing needs, it will be essential to bring these homes back into use. Grants are available from the council to allow owners to carry out works to homes to bring them back into use, and council tax penalties are imposed on homes that have been left empty for more than two years.

12.13 Part 1(f) regarding housing as a temporary meanwhile use, will be supported in locations which are appropriate for residential development and meet the requirements of all applicable policies. The temporary use of land for residential purposes is supported by London Plan Policy H3 Meanwhile use as housing. It is expected that such developments will be time limited to ensure that the long-term intended use of a site is ultimately delivered.

12.14 Part 2 sets out how development proposals should create mixed and inclusive communities through providing affordable housing and a range of different sized homes, with a focus on addressing overcrowding in the borough through delivering family/larger sized affordable (social) units as part of all developments.

12.15 Part 3 recognises that the acute need for more standard C3 housing in the borough means that the supply of this type of housing will normally be prioritised over other types of housing such as purpose-built student accommodation and large-scale purpose-built shared living. These types of housing are addressed in more detail in policies HF6 and HF7 respectively.

12.16 Part 4 recognises our duty to create a policy framework to enable the quality delivery of homes for families with children, those who rent their homes, older people, key workers and service families, and students. This will be achieved through working with partners to facilitate the appropriate quantity and quality of housing and ensuring that it provides affordable housing in accordance with Part 2.

12.17 Part 4(e), in line with the requirements of paragraph 62 of the NPPF, establishes support for those who wish to build their own home. The current self-build register indicates there is interest in self-build in the borough, however high local land values and housing targets are resulting in the predominance of flatted developments which limits opportunities for viable self-build. Group self-build has the best potential to deliver significant additional housing output in higher cost areas. We would therefore encourage group self-build as a more viable model of self-build in the borough.

12.18 Part 5 recognises that the borough has a duty to support the development of housing that meets the needs of disabled and vulnerable residents and the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Part 5 (a) considers specialist housing which meets the needs of disabled and vulnerable residents and how such developments should be integrated into the wider area through careful design and the sharing/joint use of facilities thus encouraging a sense of community belonging and social

interaction, where applicable. The Council's Housing with Care Strategy and the London Plan establish the need for those elderly residents with additional support needs.

12.19 Part 5 (b) Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need will be secured through safeguarding the existing Gypsy and Traveller site at Old Willow Close and seeking to deliver additional safeguarded pitches adjacent to the site. Additional support is offered through policy HF5 Gypsy and Traveller accommodation which sets out a framework for further sites to come forward.

12.20 Part 5 (c) acknowledges the need for emergency accommodation which will provide accommodation for the most vulnerable members of our communities such as those who find themselves homeless.

12.21 Part 6 requires development proposals to appropriately respond to the character of the surrounding area and site-specific constraints, as well as provide a high-quality living environment taking account of the relevant London Plan Guidance and London Borough of Tower Hamlets SPDs. Further design guidance is provided in the People Places and Spaces policies.

## London Plan policies:

- Policy H1 Increasing housing supply
- Policy H2 Small sites
- Policy H3 Meanwhile use as housing

## Local Plan policies:

- HF2 Affordable housing and housing mix
- HF3 Protection of existing housing
- HF4 Supported and specialist housing
- HF5 Gypsy and traveller accommodation
- HF6 Purpose-built student accommodation
- HF7 Large-scale purpose-built shared living
- HF8 Housing with shared facilities (houses in multiple occupation)
- HF9 Housing standards and quality

## Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Local Housing Need Assessment, 2023
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2017
- London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan, 2020
- Tower Hamlets Tackling Overcrowding
- Housing Design Standards LPG, 2023
- Housing SPG, 2023
- High Density Living SPD, 2023
- Housing with Care Strategy (LBTH, 2024)

## Policy HF2 Affordable housing and housing mix

1. Development proposals will be required to optimise the delivery of affordable homes on-site and contribute to the London Plan and Tower Hamlets strategic target for 50% of all new homes to be affordable.

Residential development proposals must:

- a. provide a financial contribution for affordable homes on sites delivering 2 to 9 new residential;
- b. deliver a minimum of 40% affordable housing (by habitable room) on-site when seeking to provide 10 or more new residential units;
- c. deliver a minimum of 50% affordable housing (by habitable room) on-site through the redevelopment of affordable housing, estate regeneration schemes and industrial land for residential use; and
- d. deliver the required amount of affordable homes in accordance with a 85% social homes and 15% intermediate homes tenure split.

2. Development proposals that do not deliver the required amount of affordable housing, tenure, or unit mix, or proposals that do not accord with other relevant policies of the Local Plan, will be subject to viability testing to derive the maximum viable level of affordable housing.

3. Development proposals for phased residential development must prioritise the early delivery of affordable housing. They must demonstrate how family-sized homes and affordable housing will be provided across all phases and must be considered cumulatively as each phase progresses.

4. Development proposals seeking to deliver off-site affordable homes will not be supported, unless it can be robustly demonstrated that:

- a. there would be a minimum of 50% (by habitable room) affordable housing overall;
- b. a higher proportion of (low-cost) social rented family-sized homes would be delivered;
- c. a higher quality of built environment can be provided both off-site and on-site, through the delivery of public realm, green spaces, play spaces, and community facilities;
- d. there would be no over-concentration of one type of housing, allowing mixed and inclusive communities to be delivered both off-site and on-site with a mix of tenures and unit sizes;
- e. the location of the off-site affordable housing allows the same level of accessibility to local infrastructure and services that would be provided for housing delivered on-site.
- f. the off-site location would not otherwise deliver housing and affordable housing.

5. Development proposals seeking to provide a payment in lieu affordable housing contribution will not be supported unless it can be robustly demonstrated that:

- a. exceptional circumstances apply;
- b. a suitable off-site location cannot be found for the delivery of affordable homes; and
- c. the contribution would secure a higher level of affordable housing provision than the council's 50% strategic target.



6. Affordable housing contributions for amendments to extant permissions will be calculated on the basis of the total number of dwellings of the overall amended development proposal.

7. Affordable housing contributions relating to development proposals for additional housing supported by existing development will be calculated on the basis of the additional component of development.

8. Development proposals are required to deliver a mix of unit sizes in accordance with local housing need, outlined in the table 1:

**Table 1: Housing mix**

Housing mix	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4-bedroom
Affordable housing (rented)	15%	20%	40%	25%

Development proposals for market units should provide a healthy mix of units (at least 15% 3 bed+). Development proposals with an over-reliance on studios and/or one-bedroom units will be resisted. The housing mix in intermediate units should take account of the requirements set out in the London Plan, associated guidance, as well as the LBTH Local Housing Needs Assessment to ensure products will meet an identified need.

9. Schemes that include the demolition of existing affordable housing must:

- a. replace the existing affordable housing with equivalent floorspace and the same housing tenure(s).
- b. seek to achieve an overall uplift in affordable housing by delivering a minimum of 50% affordable homes (by habitable room) in the final development or a minimum of 35% affordable homes (by habitable room) will be delivered within the uplift, whichever is the greater. In either case development proposals will need to meet the council's preferred tenure split within the affordable units.

## Supporting text

12.22 Tower Hamlets faces an acute housing need – in particular for low cost rented family housing – a need which is replicated across London. In addition, LBTH faces considerable challenges in delivering homes which are affordable to local people on average incomes, who are unable to access social housing or afford market housing, particularly if they have children<sup>3</sup>.

12.23 Part 1 sets a strategic target of achieving 50% affordable homes through private development, developments by Registered Providers, the third sector, community led projects, as well as council-led initiatives. This target is considered to best reflect local housing need as evidenced in the Local Housing Need Assessment and the Housing with Care Strategy.

12.24 Part 1(a) sets out that development proposals for between 2 and 9 additional residential units will be required to provide a financial contribution to the development of affordable housing.

12.25 Part 1(b) sets out that on development proposals for 10 or more residential units, at least 40% affordable housing is expected.

12.26 Further details are set out in Appendix 2 Financial Contribution Calculation Methodologies and the borough's Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.

12.27 Part 1(c) expects development proposals on public land or designated industrial land, or delivered as part of the redevelopment of existing affordable housing or an estate regeneration scheme to provide at least 50% affordable housing.

12.28 The affordable housing provision, as per Part 1(d) should be comprised of:

12.29 a. 85% low cost rented element, of which 50% should be affordable rental products and the remaining to be other social rent products as agreed with the council (social rent will also be accepted particularly where this enables schemes to access grant); and

12.30 b. 15% intermediate element, which can include London living rent, shared ownership, and other intermediate products (where supported by the council).

12.31 Affordable rental products are to be inclusive of service charges in order to ensure new homes are genuinely affordable for those on low incomes. In suitable locations a component of affordable housing can be provided as Specialist Housing to meet need identified for those with additional care need in line with the Council's Housing with Care Strategy.

12.32 In addition to the requirements in Part 1, developments are expected to maximise the provision of affordable housing, having regard to availability of public subsidy, implications of long term or 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.

12.33 The requirements of Part 1 apply to all types of housing falling into use Class C3, including Build-to-Rent accommodation. Other types of housing, including student housing, large-scale purpose-built

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<sup>3</sup> These needs have been identified through the Tower Hamlets Local Housing Need Assessment, which sets out the housing requirements arising from expected population growth

shared-living and specialist and supported housing are addressed in the relevant policies in this chapter and will include different affordable housing requirements.

12.34 Levels of affordable housing lower than those set out in Part 1 will only be accepted where robustly justified through viability evidence and where it is demonstrated that there are clear barriers to delivery. Applications that do not meet policy requirements will be subject to viability reviews. Further guidance is provided in the Borough's Development Viability SPD and the Viability and Affordable Housing SPG (GLA, 2017).

12.35 Where the development provides more than the minimum level of affordable housing required in Part 1, the tenure of the additional affordable homes will be subject to negotiation. GLA developed products (including the London Affordable Rent and London Living Rent) may be subject to change over the plan period. Our affordable housing service will provide further guidance on suitable products when assessing applications. Rent levels are determined as part of the viability assessment of each planning application and undertakings are made to retain similar rent levels at the point of completion. The ownership of affordable homes must be transferred to one of our approved local registered providers or other approved affordable housing providers.

12.36 The provision of affordable housing will be calculated using habitable rooms as it ensures the provision of a range of housing sizes more likely to meet the needs identified in the latest housing needs assessment. Any variation on aggregate floorspace across both bedroom mix and tenure should be presented in the accommodation schedule.

12.37 Part 4 expects affordable housing to be delivered on-site. This is important in promoting mixed and inclusive communities. In exceptional circumstances, specific site constraints may require that affordable housing is provided off-site or through payments in lieu. These cases give rise to particular policy requirements to maximise the provision of affordable housing. Payments in lieu towards affordable housing will be secured by planning obligation.

12.38 Part 4(e) requires off-site affordable housing contributions to allow the same level of accessibility to local infrastructure and services as if they were delivered on-site. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate this through submitting a detailed comparison of available infrastructure on-site and with the off-site location and should include as a minimum an assessment of: Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) scores, availability, proximity, and capacity of services such as medical centres, retail, and community facilities.

12.39 Part 5 expects development proposals that include cash in lieu contributions for affordable housing to provide evidence demonstrating that exceptional circumstances in relation to the site or nature of the development would not allow the delivery of the full amount of affordable housing on-site and that all opportunities for off-site development have been investigated and found unfeasible. In order to off-set the harm caused by not delivering affordable housing on-site, development proposals that include a robustly justified cash-in-lieu contribution to affordable housing are expected to provide a payment that amounts to more than 50% affordable housing across the development.

12.40 Part 6 seeks to ensure that affordable housing contributions sought through Minor Material Amendments (MMA) (S73 applications)

reflect the full scale of the overall development, rather than the uplift proposed in the MMA application. In development proposals for the construction of additions or extensions that result in new dwellings being added to existing buildings, an affordable housing contribution will be sought based on the number of new dwellings being proposed.

12.41 Part 7 of the policy reflects the particularly high need for larger, family-sized units in the affordable rental tenure. This is to address an urgent need for larger units to combat the impacts of overcrowding, and may be reviewed later in the plan period. While a unit mix is not prescribed for market and intermediate dwellings, there should be a healthy mix (at least 15% 3 bed+ units), and developments weighted towards studios and one-bedroom units in these tenures will be resisted

12.42 Part 8(a) recognises that, given the high level of need for affordable housing in Tower Hamlets, proposals that include the demolition of affordable housing must ensure that there is no net loss of affordable housing. This should be measured by floorspace rather than by unit numbers or habitable rooms to take account of the fact that older housing estates may contain units that are larger than those required under current planning policies, and to ensure that there is no reduction in real terms.

12.43 Part 8(b) expects proposals for the redevelopment of existing affordable housing to provide either 40% affordable housing on the uplift in habitable rooms, or 50% overall, whichever results in the higher amount of affordable housing by habitable rooms. In both cases, proposals will be expected to meet the council's preferred tenure split as set out in Policy HF2. It should be noted that estate regeneration proposals are not eligible for the London Plan's Fast Track approach to affordable housing and will have to provide viability testing.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- H2 Small sites
- H4 Delivering affordable housing
- H5 Threshold approach to applications
- H6 Affordable housing tenure
- H7 Monitoring of affordable housing
- H8 Loss of existing housing and estate regeneration
- H12 Supported and specialist housing

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- DV1 Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets
- DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- DV5 Developer contributions
- DV6 Social value
- HF1 Meeting Housing Needs

#### **Evidence base:**

- Development Viability SPD, 2017
- Viability and Affordable Housing SPG, 2017
- Local Housing Need Assessment (LBTH, 2023)
- Housing with Care Strategy (LBTH, 2024)



## Policy HF3 Protection of existing housing

1. Development proposals resulting in the net loss of residential floorspace, self-contained homes, or family-sized homes will not be supported.
2. Development proposals which compromise the supply of self-contained housing will not be supported – in particular family homes.
3. Development proposals which involve the conversion, subdivision, or amalgamation of individual or multiple family homes will only be supported where there is no net loss of family-sized dwellings (3-plus bedroom units). The retained family unit should have access to private external amenity space.

## Supporting text

12.44 Policy HF3 seeks to protect existing and safeguard the future supply of self-contained homes across the borough. To meet the housing need of Tower Hamlets over the plan period we must ensure that the supply of self-contained homes and in particular family-sized homes is maintained.

12.45 Part 1 seeks to ensure that there is no net loss of existing residential floorspace through development in the borough. This is to ensure we meet identified local need as well as strategic targets for housing. Family housing requires particular protection, due to high levels of identified need.<sup>4</sup>

12.46 Part 2 seeks to protect existing and safeguard the future supply of self-contained housing. This is to ensure we meet identified local need as well as strategic targets for housing. Development for non-self-

<sup>4</sup> Local Housing Need Assessment

contained units will not be supported where it utilises land identified for self-contained housing through a current planning permission, or through the borough's development plan. It is recognised that other policies in this plan identify suitable locations for other land uses. Developments of other land uses, where supported by policy and/or site allocations, are not considered to undermine the supply of self-contained units. Family housing requires particular protection, due to high levels of identified need.

12.47 In order to manage the current shortage of family homes (three or more bedrooms), part 3 ensures that proposals to convert family homes into smaller self-contained flats will be resisted, unless the conversion enables the retention of a family unit (3-plus bedrooms). Where possible, the family-sized unit should have access to external amenity space.

### London Plan policies:

- H8 Loss of existing housing and estate redevelopment
- Hg Ensuring best use of stock

### Local Plan policies

- HF1 Meeting housing needs
- HF4 Supported and specialist housing
- HFg Housing standards and quality

### Evidence base:

- Good practice guide to estate regeneration, 2016
- Housing SPG, 2016

## Policy HF4 Supported and specialist housing and housing for older people

1. Development proposals for new specialist and supported housing and housing for older people will be supported in principle where it can be demonstrated that it:
  - a. is of high quality, considers the needs of intended occupiers, and meets relevant best practice guidance for this form of accommodation;
  - b. integrates residents into the surrounding community;
  - c. is located in close proximity to public transport, community facilities, local shops and services;
  - d. includes amenity and accommodation facilities for staff where necessary;
  - e. includes provision of affordable units, where appropriate; and
  - f. provides an appropriately detailed and resourced management plan.
2. Where practical, development proposals for new housing for elderly people should deliver small-scale community facilities or town centre uses that allow for interaction between residents and the local community in suitable locations and where supported by council commissioning teams.
3. Existing specialist and supported housing and housing for elderly people will be protected where it is considered suitable for its use and meets relevant standards for this form of accommodation.
4. The redevelopment of any site which includes specialist and supported housing and housing for older people is only considered acceptable where the existing provision is considered to be of low quality, a decanting strategy is provided, and:
  - a. it has been demonstrated that there is no longer an identified need for its retention in the current format;
  - b. the needs met by this form of housing will be re-provided elsewhere within the borough, resulting in no net loss of provision and is both available and affordable; or
  - c. re-provision as part of the development proposal would result in improved standards and quality of accommodation and the accommodation would be re-provided at comparable rent levels.

## Supporting text

12.48 This policy aims to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of appropriate housing available for people with specialist care needs, older people, homeless people, disabled people, and vulnerable people to live as independently as possible in accordance with our statutory duties. It also seeks to protect appropriate staff accommodation ancillary to a relevant use.

12.49 The Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy (2016-2021) and the draft Housing and Care Strategy 2024 seek to support the delivery of more choice so that development meets a wide range of housing needs. The London Plan provides an indicative benchmark for specialist housing for older people. The benchmark for Tower Hamlets is 45 units a year. Further need for both supported and specialist housing and housing for older people is set out in the Local Housing Need Assessment 2023.

12.50 Examples of specialist housing include:

- sheltered housing – commonly self-contained homes with limited on-site support (usually within use Class C3);
- residential care homes – commonly bedsit rooms with shared lounges and eating arrangements (within use Class C2);
- nursing homes – similar to residential care, but accommodating ill or frail elderly people, and staffed by qualified nursing staff (also within use Class C2);
- dual-registered care homes – residential care homes where nursing care is provided for those residents who need it (also within use Class C2);
- extra-care homes – combinations of the above providing independent living alongside care and support, and sometimes also offering support for older people in the wider community;

- homeless shelters and transitional housing for those experiencing homelessness (sui generis use, C2 use or C3 use depending on the nature of the facility); and
- staff accommodation ancillary to a relevant use.

12.51 In order for development proposals to be considered high-quality in accordance with Part 1(a) they must provide a high-quality living environment both internally and externally. Internal proposals should include components such as, but not limited to, suitably sized kitchens, bathrooms, laundry facilities, lounges, and external amenity spaces. Developments must also consider the needs of the intended occupiers. Advice on how to suitably consider occupiers with additional support needs can be sought from the council's housing and adult health service teams.

12.52 In accordance with Part 1(b), opportunities to integrate the development into the wider area should also be explored to encourage a sense of belonging (especially among people from different generations) as well as to protect against the health impacts of loneliness and isolation. This expectation should inform the layout of the development and the design of associated public realm.

12.53 In accordance with Part 1(c), development proposals must demonstrate that they are accessible in terms of location and individual mobility needs. Close proximity to local services is considered to be a walkable distance of no more than 10 to 15 minutes. Where appropriate, the proposed scheme should provide necessary storage for mobility scooters and wheelchairs, where relevant, and provide pick up and drop off facilities close to the principal entrance suitable for taxis (with appropriate kerbs), minibuses and ambulances. The particular locational needs of facilities will vary according to the intended residents and their levels of mobility. Where mobility is limited, development proposals



should be located within 5 minutes walking distance of local shops, services, community facilities, and public transport to ensure that residents can continue to participate in their local community.

12.54 Part 1 (d) sets out the need for staff facilities at specialist housing developments. Such developments may require 24-hour care and therefore staff being present on site for extended periods of time. Facilities such as break spaces, changing rooms, showers, toilets and even rest spaces for overnight should be considered.

12.55 Part 1(e) requires that development proposals include provision of affordable housing. This requirement will vary based on the nature of the proposal. All development proposals for C3 housing will be required to provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy HF2. While non-C3 housing should also provide affordable accommodation, it is recognised that, due to the particular costs or nature of a facility, it may not be possible to provide the amount of affordable housing required by Policy HF2. In these cases, development proposals should demonstrate that they are providing the maximum viable amount of affordable housing. It should be noted that specialist older persons housing is eligible for the London Plan's Fast Track Route for the provision of affordable housing; other types of specialist housing are excluded from the fast-track approach and typically take bespoke approaches to the provision of affordable housing.

12.56 Part 1(f) requires that development proposals for specialist or supported accommodation provide a management plan. If the proposed facility is new and not yet operational, the applicant should set out which local authorities or charities the provider will be working with and seek agreement with the council as to the percentage of occupiers that will be existing Tower Hamlets residents. Management plans should demonstrate the residential population mix and other management practices that minimise safeguarding risks, maximise opportunities to create and sustain social networks and access appropriate support, and ensure that the development minimises amenity impacts. Management plans should also include details of numbers of staff on site and staff routines, how residents will be placed within the accommodation, the level of care provided, how resident independence would be sustained, expected comings and goings, safeguarding practices, health and



safety procedures and the maintenance of the accommodation and any communal spaces provided.

12.57 Part 2 seeks to incorporate, where practical, small-scale community and town centre uses within the development proposal. Such components can improve the health and well-being of residents as they offer opportunity to play and active role in their community through continued interaction and stimulation with the surrounding existing and wider community.

12.58 Part 3 sets out that existing accommodation will be protected where it is considered suitable and meeting the needs and standards required.

12.59 Part 4 provides criteria for the assessment of development proposals that include the redevelopment of specialist housing. In order to comply with these criteria, development proposals will need to demonstrate that they have consulted with council commissioning teams and external providers to demonstrate that (a) there is no longer an identified need for the existing facility in its current format, taking account of impacts that consented developments may have on the supply of this type of facility; (b) the needs met by this form of housing will be re-provided elsewhere in the borough, resulting in no net loss of provision and that the proposed space is both available and affordable – in this case, an existing facility should be identified that is able to accommodate the existing need without placing any additional pressure on the facility or compromising the ability of the borough to meet future needs for this type of facility; or (c) the facility will be re-provided as part of the development proposal with improved standard of accommodation and at comparable rent levels to the existing facility – in this case, development proposals will need to submit a decanting

plan to show how disruption to existing residents will be minimised and prioritising a single permanent move over a move to a temporary facility and a move to the re-provided facility.

12.60 All proposals for specialist and supported housing and housing for older people will be referred to our adult health service to consider the approach to safeguarding, and ensure that a good quality service can be provided to vulnerable people.

### London Plan policies:

- H12 Supported and specialised accommodation
- H13 Specialist and older persons housing

### Local Plan policies:

- DV5 Developer contributions
- H2 Affordable housing and housing mix
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 Gender inclusive design

### Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Local Housing Need Assessment, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Local Housing Strategy
- Tower Hamlets Housing and Care Strategy

## Policy HF5 Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

1. Accommodation for the Gypsy and Traveller community will be secured through safeguarding the existing Gypsy and Traveller site at Old Willow Close, seeking to deliver additional safeguarded pitches adjacent to the site and development proposals at suitable locations.
2. Development proposals for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation will be supported in principle, where it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. the proposed site is suitable for housing and in an accessible, safe location;
  - b. the proposal employs high-quality design and is sympathetic to local character and heritage;
  - c. the proposal maintains and enhances the quality of the environment and residential amenity; and
  - d. the site is not located in an area of high flood risk (flood zone 3).

## Supporting text

12.61 This policy safeguards the existing Gypsy and Traveller site at Old Willow Close and securing any new pitches that arise as a result of the completion of the Elizabeth line at Old Willow Close. Should there be need for additional accommodation identified through the Greater London Authority Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Need Assessment, development proposals which meet this need will be considered against the criteria set out above and in line with government guidance.

12.62 This policy aims to ensure that new Gypsy and Traveller sites are well integrated into their surroundings and respect the interests of existing settled communities. Any new provision should be prioritised for permanent facilities, rather than transit sites, due to the local Gypsy and Traveller need.

### London Plan policies:

- D13 Agent of change
- H14 Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

### Local Plan policies:

- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm
- CG6 Managing flood risk

### Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016

## Policy HF6 Purpose-built student accommodation

1. Development proposals for purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) will be supported only where it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. the proposal would not compromise the supply of Class C3 self-contained homes;
  - b. the site is located within a site allocation for PBSA (refer to policies map), is within the CAZ or the Borough's Metropolitan and District Town Centres and in a location with a PTAL of 4 to 6, or within short walking distance of a further or higher education institution;
  - c. the proposal would not result in an overconcentration of similar uses within the area, liable to give rise to residential amenity issues to neighbours, and not be detrimental to the mix and cohesiveness of communities and uses in the area;
  - d. there is an agreement with one or more of London's Higher Education Institutions; and
  - e. the proposal would not place significant pressure on local infrastructure.
2. Development proposals for PBSA are required to:
  - a. deliver a minimum of 50% affordable C3 homes on-site, or
  - b. where the location is not suitable for C3 affordable housing, deliver a minimum of 50% of units as affordable student accommodation on-site;
3. Development proposals for PBSA are required to:
  - a. provide 10% of student rooms which are wheelchair accessible and adaptable, including access to a wheelchair-accessible shower room for independent use (as per London Plan 2021);
  - b. provide an appropriate layout of living space, communal amenity space including well located and useable outdoor communal amenity space and internal communal facilities for each student in line with emerging guidance;
  - c. secure the majority of the bedrooms in the development, including any affordable student accommodation bedrooms, through a nomination agreement for occupation by students at one or more higher education providers and make best endeavours to secure the remainder of the bedrooms through a nomination agreement for occupation by students at one or more higher education providers; and
  - d. give priority of accommodation to local students leaving care, experiencing homelessness, or otherwise in need of alternative accommodation within the borough.
4. Temporary use of PBSA during holidays during the academic year for students attending non-term time courses will normally be supported, provided students without alternative holiday time accommodation are not displaced.
5. Development that proposes the net loss of existing PBSA will only be supported where:
  - a. it can be demonstrated that the accommodation is no longer needed because the needs of students can be better met elsewhere, or
  - b. adequate replacement housing will be provided which meets the criteria in Part 1 to 4 above.

## Supporting text

12.63 In the context of this policy, student housing relates to student accommodation with an undertaking with an institution and accommodation provided by an institution.

12.64 This policy recognises that the delivery of a significant amount of student housing compromises the ability to deliver other priorities, in particular affordable housing, but also employment and infrastructure provision. As such, the delivery of student accommodation needs to be managed in accordance with strategic needs and local priorities, ensuring that the positive impacts it can bring to the local economy and the borough's higher education sector is combined with the delivery of the affordable homes and infrastructure the residents of LBTH need.

12.65 In accordance with part 1(a) of the policy, development proposals for student accommodation will not be supported where they compromise the supply of self-contained homes. In this case, the supply of self-contained homes is defined as: existing housing (use Class C3 and other types of housing, including specialist accommodation), sites with planning permission for housing (use Class C3) and sites allocated in this plan or other development plan documents for the development of housing.

12.66 Part 1(b) of the policy directs student accommodation to the most appropriate locations where the introduction of student housing could potentially complement the existing mix of uses and the provision of local services, including public transport. Close proximity is defined as adjacent to the institution or within walkable distance of 10 to 15 minutes.

12.67 Part 1(c) of the policy acknowledges that student accommodation and large scale purpose-built shared-living developments can have an



impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, particularly in relation to noise and anti-social behaviour. Parts of the borough already have concentrations of PBSA and applications will be required to demonstrate the number of existing and the pipeline of future PBSA developments within a 400m radius, from the site boundary, of the site. Development proposals for student accommodation will need to demonstrate how these matters have been addressed through the layout and design of the development and how they will be addressed through the management of the facility.



12.68 Part 1 (d) requires a development proposal to demonstrate that there is a link between one or more of London's Higher Educational Institutions. This is to ensure that the accommodation provided will serve the need of students seeking education at providers within London. Proposals should also demonstrate that the bedrooms in the Purpose-built student accommodation development are needed by London's HEIs in that particular location, and that its design, layout, and rental levels meet the needs of London's higher education students. Higher Education Institutes should be involved in the early design process of the Purpose-built student accommodation.

12.69 To comply with part 1(e), development proposals for student accommodation will need to carry out an assessment of the provision of relevant infrastructure serving the development, including public transport, electricity, and water to ensure that the proposed development would not place significant additional pressure.

12.70 Part 2(a-b) supports the delivery of affordable student housing in accordance with the London Plan. Part 2(a) recognises the high level of need for traditional affordable housing in the borough and that student housing developments may occupy land that could otherwise be used for the delivery of traditional housing. If the development proposal includes the provision of affordable C3 housing, we will apply the requirements of Policy HF2 in terms of tenure mix and unit size mix. In accordance with the London Plan, development proposals for student housing are assessed on the basis that 2.5 student bedrooms are equivalent to 1 standard C3 dwelling. On that basis, development proposals that include 25 or more student bedrooms are considered major development and will be expected to provide affordable housing on-site. Development proposals that include fewer than 25 student

bedrooms will need to provide a cash-in-lieu contribution in accordance with the small sites affordable housing requirements set out in Policy HF2.

12.71 Part 2(b) acknowledges that there may be some sites that are proposed for purpose built student accommodation where traditional housing would not be appropriate. In those cases, the council will expect the provision of at least 50% of the rooms as affordable student accommodation. Development proposals should demonstrate that the delivery of on-site affordable C3 housing would not be appropriate and feasible. The cost should be no more than 55% of average student income for a UK full-time student living in London away from home. Planning obligations will be used to secure the affordability and availability of the affordable accommodation for as long as the student housing use continues.

12.72 Part 3(a) to (b) sets out the requirements for new student accommodation to ensure that it is of the highest quality and meets the needs of all students who would use the accommodation while locating such accommodation in areas which have the facilities and sustainable transport connections to support residents. In order to meet the needs of students with physical disabilities, 10% of student rooms must be wheelchair accessible (capable of being independently accessed and used). To meet this requirement, rooms and bathrooms must meet the requirements outlined in Figure 30 and Figure 52 in the British Standard BS8300: Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. Wheelchair-accessible rooms should be located in level 5 or below. The GLA intend to publish London Plan Guidance (LPG) on PBSA proposals will be expected to comply with this LPG.

12.73 In order to demonstrate that there is a need for the proposed student accommodation, Part 3(c) requires student accommodation to either be operated directly by a higher education institution or have an agreement in place from initial occupation with one or more higher education providers to provide housing for its students. This agreement is known as a nomination agreement and must cover the development as long as it is used for student accommodation. A nomination agreement with one or more higher education providers must cover at least 50% of the bedrooms within the development, and all of the affordable student bedrooms. For the remainder of the student bedrooms, development proposals must demonstrate that best endeavours have been taken to secure nomination agreements with higher education institutions, including demonstrating that, in the first instance, all local higher education institutions have been approached and, in the second instance, that all higher education institutions based in London and the immediate vicinity have been approached. The nomination agreement will be secured through a S106 agreement.

12.74 The London Borough of Tower's Hamlets classes those who have left the care system as a protected characteristic. In order to comply with part 2(d), development proposals should demonstrate that they have engaged with the council's youth services to identify local students in need of alternative accommodation within the borough in order to attend college or university.

12.75 Part 4 seeks to support PBSA utilization as accommodation during non-term time holidays when it would normally be largely left under occupied. The PBSA could be used to provide accommodation for other students attending non-term time courses, seminars, or entry examinations. The accommodation should not be used for non-educational purposes. Some students may not have alternative holiday

time accommodation, including recent care-leavers and others. These students should not be displaced.

12.76 Part 5 relates to proposals involving the net loss of student accommodation. The loss of student accommodation should not create additional pressure on the existing housing stock and the supply of new housing, and thus it will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that it no longer serves a purpose or can be provided elsewhere.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- H4 Delivering affordable housing
- H15 Purpose-built student accommodation

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- HF2 Affordable housing and housing mix
- HF3 Protection of existing housing
- DV5 Developer contributions
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm

#### **Evidence base:**

- Housing SPG (2016)
- Housing Design Standards LPG (2023)
- Local Housing Need Assessment (2023)
- British Standard BS8300: Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment
- High Density Living SPD, 2020

## Policy HF7 Large-scale purpose-built shared-living

1. Development proposals for large-scale purpose-built shared-living (LSPBSL) will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. the proposal meets the definition of LSPBSL as set out in the London Plan policy H16;
  - b. it would not compromise the supply of Class C3 self-contained homes;
  - c. it forms part of a mixed-use development that provides ground floor spaces that serve the community, either with community uses or town centre uses where relevant at the ground floor and well-activated public realm spaces;
  - d. it is located within the CAZ or the Borough's Metropolitan and District Town Centres; and
  - e. it would not result in an overconcentration of similar uses, would not be detrimental to neighbouring residential amenity and would not be detrimental to the mix and cohesiveness of communities and uses in the area.
2. Development proposals for LSPBSL are required to:
  - a. deliver a minimum of 50% affordable C3 homes on-site; or
  - b. provide a financial contribution secured by planning obligation equivalent to 50% C3 affordable housing at the borough's required tenure and size mix.
3. Development proposals for LSPBSL are required to:
  - a. provide 10% of homes which are wheelchair accessible and adaptable, including access to a wheelchair-accessible shower room for independent use;
  - b. comply with relevant design guidance and standards and satisfy the most up to date housing space standards as the time of assessment;
  - c. provide communal space that meets the minimum requirements for houses in multiple occupation;
  - d. provide an appropriately detailed and resourced management plan to mitigate potential harm to residential amenity; and
  - e. be under single management

## Supporting text

12.77 Large-scale purpose-built shared living (LSPBSL) is defined as non-self-contained market housing developments that include at least 50 units. This type of housing can provide accommodation to single person households who cannot or choose not to live in traditional self-contained housing or HMOs. London Plan Policy H16 provides additional policy requirements and guidance for the development of LSPBSL.

12.78 LSPBSL can play a role in meeting a component of the need for new homes in the borough. Development proposals should be situated in locations which are close to existing services, facilities and public transport.

12.79 In accordance with part 1(b) of the policy, development proposals for LSPBSL will not be supported where they compromise the supply of self-contained homes. In this case, the supply of self-contained homes is defined as: existing housing (use Class C3 and other types of housing, including specialist accommodation), sites with planning permission for housing (use Class C3) and sites allocated in this plan or other development plan documents for the development of housing.

12.80 Part 1(c) sets out that LSPBSL should be genuinely mixed-use developments which offer more uses than merely residential and therefore optimises land use given the preferred locations as set out in Part 1 (d).

12.81 In line with London Plan Policy H16 Part 1 (d) spatially directs LSPBSL developments to the CAZ and the borough's metropolitan and district town centres which would offer the readily available services to serve LSPBSL. These are areas which also offer access to public transport with high PTAL scores.

12.82 Part 1 (e) given the high density nature of LSPBSL, they can have particular impacts on their surrounding communities in terms of noise, privacy, and stress on existing infrastructure. To ensure that LSPBSL does not have a negative impact on the amenity of an existing community, development proposals will be required to provide an assessment of the potential impacts of the proposal, and the cumulative impacts of the proposal alongside other consented development in the surrounding area, on neighbouring amenity, and any measures necessary to mitigate these impacts.

12.83 The Council will monitor the pipeline of existing and consented LSPBSL schemes to determine their concentration across the borough and identify areas which could be subject to an overconcentration impacting upon balanced and mixed communities.

12.84 Additionally, information setting out existing and planned infrastructure within the vicinity of the development proposal will help inform understanding of how part 1 (e) has been addressed.

12.85 Parts 2 (a) and (b) In accordance with the London Plan, development proposals for LSPBSL are assessed on the basis that 1.8 bedrooms are equivalent to 1 standard C3 dwelling. On that basis, as required by Part 2(a)-(b), development proposals that include 18 or more bedrooms are considered major development and will be expected to provide affordable housing on-site or a cash-in-lieu contribution equivalent to the delivery of 50% affordable housing. Development proposals that include fewer than 18 bedrooms will need to provide a cash-in-lieu contribution in accordance with the small sites affordable housing requirements set out in Policy HF2.

12.86 In order to meet the significant need in the borough for affordable housing, part 2 of this policy requires development proposals for



LSPBSL to either provide a cash-in-lieu contribution to the provision of affordable housing elsewhere in the borough equivalent to the delivery of 50% affordable housing at the unit size and tenure mix set out in Policy HF2, or deliver 50% affordable housing on-site at the unit size and tenure mix set out in Policy HF2. Where the affordable housing is delivered on-site, this must be in the form of self-contained C3 housing and the development proposal should ensure that the service charges are affordable for the residents, meaning that they may need to restrict access to some shared amenities within the LSPBSL element. The affordable housing will need to meet the housing standards set out in Policy HF9.

12.87 In accordance with part 3(a), development proposals must provide a minimum of 10% of dwellings as wheelchair accessible units. Given the nature of LSPBSL developments, the communal amenities must also be designed to be wheelchair accessible, including kitchens, laundry rooms, lounges, and external amenity space.

12.88 To meet the requirements of parts 3 (c) and (b), development proposals should have regard to Policy HF9.

12.89 Communal amenity space should be generously sized and high quality and should be located within the site in such a way that it minimises exposure to noise and air pollution. A portion of the amenity space should be provided at ground level to ensure there is space useable by those who may not be comfortable using a rooftop space.

12.90 Part 3(d) requires development proposals for LSPBSL to provide a management plan, that plan should address the following:

- be under single management, with a minimum tenancy length of three months;
- management practices that minimise safeguarding risks;
- opportunities for residents to create and sustain social networks;
- measures that will minimise the accommodation's amenity impacts;
- security and fire safety procedures;
- maintenance of the internal and external areas of the building, including communal spaces and private rooms;
- how services for the residents will operate, for example the concierge service, gyms, room cleaning, or linen changing services, and their timings and access arrangements;
- the management of deliveries for servicing the development and residents; and
- arrangements for moving in and out of the accommodation.

12.91 Management plans will be secured via planning condition or a Section 106 agreement.

12.92 The GLA has produced London Plan Guidance regarding LSPBSL. Development proposals must have regard to this guidance.

12.93 Part 3 (e) requires that LSPBSL schemes be under single management and that such management companies will be responsible for ensuring compliance with any agreed management plan.

**London Plan policies:**

- H4 Delivering affordable housing
- H16 Large-scale purpose built shared living

**Local Plan policies:**

- DV5 Developer contributions
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm

**Evidence base:**

- Large-scale purpose built shared living LPG, 2024
- Housing Design Standards LPG, 2023
- British Standard BS8300: Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment
- High Density Living SPD, 2020

**Policy HF8 Housing with shared facilities  
(houses in multiple occupation)**

1. Development proposals for housing with shared facilities (Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)) will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. it will not result in the loss of existing larger housing suitable for family occupation;
  - b. it will provide a cash-in-lieu contribution to the delivery of affordable housing in accordance with policy HF2;
  - c. they are located in an area of high transport accessibility; and
  - d. they comply with relevant standards and satisfy the housing space standards outlined in Policies HF9.
2. Developments for HMOs should include an appropriately detailed and resourced management plan.
3. The loss or self-containment of good quality homes for multiple occupation will be resisted unless:
  - a. it can be demonstrated that the accommodation is incapable of meeting the relevant standards for houses in multiple occupation; or
  - b. adequate replacement housing with shared facilities will be provided that satisfies criteria 1(a) to (d) above.

## Supporting text

12.94 Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) refer to residential properties that take the form of shared houses, flats, and non-self-contained dwellings. Planning permission is required for an HMO where there are more than six unrelated individuals forming a household who share a kitchen, bathroom, or toilet. This definition is different to that used by the mandatory licencing scheme. HMOs have traditionally provided lower cost housing, including for those under 35 years of age in receipt of the shared room rate housing benefit.

12.95 Applications should seek to address housing need, as outlined in Policies HF1 and HF2. It is considered this is best delivered through a mixed tenure scheme which could meet a range of housing needs. In addition, reflecting the changing role of HMO-style accommodation in the borough and the acute shortage of affordable housing, it is appropriate that all forms of market housing (including HMOs) contribute towards meeting the high affordable housing need.

12.96 Part 1(a) to (d) ensures development proposals contribute towards maintaining mixed and inclusive communities. Affordable housing contributions will be sought from all residential developments (as per the GLA's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance and Tower Hamlet's SDP on development obligations).

12.97 Part 1 (b) sets out the requirements to provide affordable housing for this type of development. In accordance with the London Plan, development proposals for HMOs are assessed on the basis that 1.8 non-self-contained communal accommodation bedrooms is equivalent to 1 standard C3 dwelling. On that basis, development proposals that include 18 or more bedrooms are considered LSPBSL and covered by Policy HF8. Development proposals that include fewer than 18 non-self-

contained communal accommodation bedrooms will need to provide a cash-in-lieu contribution in accordance with the small sites affordable housing requirements set out in Policy HF2.

12.98 HMO developments must provide high-quality living space, in line with relevant standards as outlined in HF9 and PS3. Applicants should also ensure that HMOs satisfy the appropriate environmental health and fire safety standards. Part 2 sets the requirement for the inclusion of a management plan which should contain:

- management practices that minimise safeguarding risks;
- opportunities for residents to create and sustain social networks;
- measures that will minimise the accommodation's amenity impacts; and
- security and fire safety procedures.

12.99 Part 3 of the policy seeks to protect existing HMOs where they are of a suitable standard.

### London Plan policies:

- H9 Ensuring the best use of stock

### Local Plan policies:

- HF2 Affordable housing and housing mix
- HF3 Protection of existing housing
- PS3 Securing design quality

### Evidence base:

- LBTH LHNA 2023

## Policy HFg Housing standards and quality

1. All residential development is required to demonstrate that, as a minimum, it meets with the most up-to-date London Plan space and accessibility standards, in particular:
  - a. it provides a minimum of 2.5 metres floor-to-ceiling heights, and
  - b. at least 10% of dwellings are built to the 'wheelchair user dwellings' accessible housing standard M4 (3) and the remainder of dwellings are built to the 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' accessible housing standard M4 (2) both contained within part M (volume 1) of the building regulations:
    - i. Where units which meet the wheelchair user dwellings standards M4 (3) (2) (b) are to be delivered above the ground floor, access to a second lift must be provided.
    - ii. In exceptional circumstances, where units which meet the wheelchair user dwellings standards M4 (3) (2) (b) cannot be accommodated on site, contributions in-lieu will be considered.
  - c. To ensure wider accessibility development proposals must include powered and fully automated:
    - i. Communal gates
    - ii. Communal doors and first fire doors
    - iii. Doors to waste storage rooms
2. Development proposals for affordable housing should demonstrate that:
  - a. they are not externally distinguishable in quality from private housing; and
  - b. low cost rented family units should include a mix of units which offer homes with open plan living spaces and separate kitchen and living rooms.
  - c. should have well-appointed and adequately sized entrance lobby areas
3. Residential development proposals are expected to maximise the proportion of dual aspect units. Where single aspect units are proposed, justification should be provided demonstrating that no alternative design was feasible that would have reduced or eliminated single aspect units. Developments should also incorporate external shading to adapt to a warming climate.
4. Developments must use hard wearing, durable materials for the affordable housing elements of the development.
5. Development is required to protect or re-provide existing amenity space (private, communal, and child play space). Net loss of existing amenity space will be resisted.
6. Development will need to demonstrate how it will meet the following minimum amenity space (private, communal, and child play space) standards on site:
  - a. a minimum of 5 square metres of private outdoor space should be provided for each 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1 square metre should be provided for each planned additional occupant in each larger dwelling;
  - b. balconies and other private external spaces should have a minimum width and depth of 1500 mm;



- c. for developments with 10 or more residential units, the minimum communal amenity space (excluding circulation areas, access routes and waste or bike storage) should be 50 square metres for the first 10 units plus a further one square metre for every additional unit thereafter;
- d. major developments should provide a minimum of 10 square metres of high-quality play space for each child and young person;
- e. Communal amenity space should:
  - i. receive sunlight;
  - ii. be adequately screened from parking areas;
  - iii. be located so as to minimise exposure to air and noise pollution;
  - iv. be inclusive for all users;
  - v. be overlooked by habitable rooms to ensure safety and surveillance;
  - vi. incorporate sustainable landscaping principles and practices;
  - vii. be accessible to all residents of the development, irrespective of tenure; and
  - viii. support an appropriate balance between informal social activity and play.
- f. Development proposals should locate play spaces at ground floor level or demonstrate why this is not practical. Development proposals that include child play space on rooftop spaces or internal floorspace should have direct access to outdoor amenity space and allow oversight of children outside from family sized homes.

## Supporting text

12.100 Delivering the homes the borough needs will result in further optimisation of land use and therefore require an appropriately quality-driven response to maintain and improve standards of living in the borough. High density developments necessitate that development delivers higher than the minimum design, space, and amenity standards. The High Density Living SPD provides additional guidance regarding standards of accommodation for development proposals.

12.101 Part 1(a) and (b) seeks to ensure all housing development provides adequate internal space to meet relevant space, accessibility and amenity standards and provide an appropriate living environment. It requires development to comply, as a minimum, with the space and accessibility standards set out in the London Plan (GLA, 2021), the Housing Design Standards London Plan Guidance (GLA, 2023) and the Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance 2016), whilst having regard to the particular needs of residents in the borough as well as the increasingly dense character of the built form. If the GLA's space and accessibility standards are updated, the council may seek to implement these changes, so long as they are locally suitable. The council strongly urges developers/applicants to provide evidence of how the scheme will achieve high-quality design.

12.102 In order to implement Part 1(b) and meet standards in the Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (2016), 10% of all new units across all tenures should be wheelchair user dwellings, but this may be varied to at least 10% of habitable rooms where a better outcome is provided in terms of delivery of larger units. All 'wheelchair user dwellings' (the M4 (3) standard) in the affordable rented tenure should meet the M4 (3) (2) (b) standard which meets the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs.



12.103 It is expected that units which meet the wheelchair user dwellings standards M4 (3) (2) (b) above the ground floor will be provided with access to a second lift for use when the primary lift is not functioning. The council has a preference that units which meet the accessible units standards M4 (3) will be provided below the fifth floor due to difficulties allocating wheelchair accessible units on higher floors. In some circumstances, site constraints (such as the inability to secure sufficient accessible parking, lack of lift circulation space, and restrictions on ground floor residential uses) could lead to applicants arguing that units which meet the wheelchair user dwellings standards M4 (3) (2) (b) may not be able to be delivered on site. In these

circumstances, we may accept payments in lieu of the provision of units which meet the wheelchair user dwellings standards M4 (3) (2) (b) through the 'Project-120' scheme. The payment in lieu will cover the typical installation costs of retrofitting an existing dwelling and will be secured by planning obligation.

12.104 Part 1 (c) ensures wider accessibility of development proposals, greater ease of use and safety for all residents.

12.105 Part 2 provides guidance that private and affordable housing should not be distinguishable. Different tenures should be mixed throughout a development, although it is recognised that separate cores may be required to enable effective management and minimise service charges for affordable units. Where separate cores result in separate entrances for market and affordable units, these entrances must also not be externally distinguishable and must be located so that they are of equivalent access and amenity value. The internal layout, floor levels and quality of affordable housing entrances must be of a high quality and sufficient area and thoughtfully designed to accommodate access and ease of movement of residents using, wheelchairs, mobility scooters or push chairs. Entrances and lobbies must also be well-appointed and adequately sized to ensure inclusive accessibility for those with mobility impairments or entering with small children in pushchairs, having regards to the guidance in the High Density Living SPD.

12.106 Part 2 (c) sets out that low cost rented family homes should generally be designed to include a mix of homes which offer open plan living spaces and also separate kitchen and living room which offers choice to meet the preferences of those living in the borough and in housing need.

12.107 Part 3 recognises the benefits of dual aspect dwellings to the

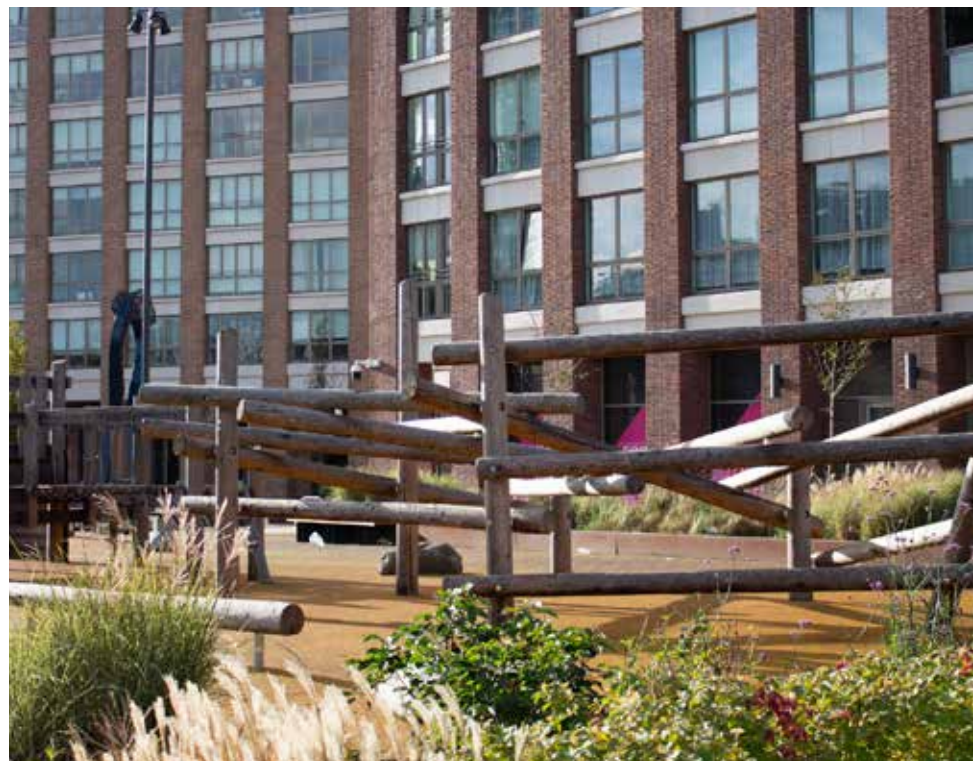
well-being of residents and the ability of housing to adapt to the impacts of climate change without the need for mechanical cooling. In order to justify the inclusion of single-aspect dwellings, development proposals will need to demonstrate that no alternative design or layout that includes a greater proportion of dual-aspect dwellings is feasible. In line with the policies in the Clean and Green Future chapter development must mitigate and adapt to climate change. Developments should incorporate overhangs, eaves, recesses, louvres or shutters to aid temperate control of internal spaces.

12.108 Part 4 recognises that due to higher occupancy rates and child yields, affordable housing is likely to be subject to more wear and tear than other housing tenures. In order for these homes to be fully fit for purpose, developers must use hard-wearing, durable materials to ensure the development remains of high quality throughout its lifetime and requires minimal service charges to clean and maintain. This should be evidenced in the design and access statement. In addition, all family-sized affordable homes should have separate kitchens and living rooms, due to local needs. For further guidance, please contact our affordable housing service and/or refer to the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum's Section 106 Design Guide.

12.109 Part 5 aims to ensure that all existing amenity space is protected. Where it would result in an improvement in quantity and/or quality of open space, re-provision will be allowed.

12.110 Part 6 seeks the provision of new outdoor amenity space on-site which is well located, well designed and functional (including private amenity space, communal amenity space and child play space) to provide opportunities for residents to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

12.111



12.112 In considering the design and layout of private amenity space, it is important that the space meets the minimum standards set out in the policy (see part 5) to ensure that residents have sufficient space to carry out activities such as drying clothes or eating a meal outside.

12.113 Due to the positive impacts of access to nature in terms of well-being, a significant amount of amenity space should include soft landscaping. This also provides greater opportunity to incorporate biodiversity elements and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). In considering the design and layout of communal space, it is important that this space is integrated into the overall design of the development and the wider public realm. The design should ensure that communal



space is overlooked and supports a range of activities including space for relaxation, gardening, urban agriculture, and opportunities to promote biodiversity, ecology, and intergenerational community cohesion.

12.114 In considering the design and layout of child play space, it is important to ensure that this responds to the needs of children within the development. This space should be well-integrated into the development and fully considered in the design of the communal space. However, play provision requirements must be provided in addition to other quantitative standards, such as open space provision and communal space provision. In order to demonstrate that the proposed play space is of high quality, applicants will be required to demonstrate how they have used Play England's 10 key design principles for creating successful play spaces. Development proposals that do not include on-site play space will not generally be supported. In exceptional circumstances, where a development proposal can demonstrate that all opportunities to provide the required play space on-site have been exhausted, the council may seek a cash-in-lieu contribution to support expansions or enhancements to existing play spaces. This will be secured by as a planning obligation.

12.115 Part 6(e) sets out standards for the development of communal amenity space, including child play space. More guidance regarding the design of communal amenity space can be found in the High Density Living SPD. In regeneration schemes it is recommended that input is sought from existing residents on the design of communal amenity spaces.

12.116 Part 6(f) recognises that ground floor space is preferable for the provision of child play space and that some residents and parents may be anxious using a rooftop space. In the first instance development

proposals should seek to deliver child play space at ground floor level and where this is not possible robustly demonstrate why it is not achievable. Where ground floor child play space cannot be delivered it must adjoin direct accessed amenity space which is overlooked by family homes to foster a sense of security.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- D6 Housing quality and standards
- D7 Accessible housing
- S4 Play and informal recreation

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- DV3 Health impact assessments
- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- CG7 Sustainable drainage
- CG9 Air quality
- CG10 Noise and vibration
- BO6 Plan and recreation spaces

#### **Evidence base:**

- High Density Living SPD, 2020
- Nationally Described Space Standards, 2015
- Tower Hamlets Child Yield Calculator, 2017



## 13. Clean and green future



- CG1 – Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate
- CG2 – Low energy buildings
- CG3 – Low carbon energy and heating
- CG4 – Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy
- CG5 – Overheating
- CG6 – Managing flood risk
- CG7 – Sustainable drainage
- CG8 – Water efficient design
- CG9 – Air quality
- CG10 – Noise and vibration
- CG11 – Contaminated land

### Introduction

13.1 Addressing the climate emergency is both a global and local issue, where the challenge to mitigate against the impacts of a changing climate begins in our homes, streets, and buildings. The Tower Hamlets Council Strategic Plan 2022-2025 sets out the council's ambition to address the climate crisis by ensuring that the borough ranks among the cleanest, greenest, and most energy efficient local authorities, not just in London, but the whole of the UK.<sup>5</sup>

13.2 In March 2019, Tower Hamlets became one of the first councils in the country to declare a climate emergency and adopt a Net Zero Carbon Plan for the Borough. This plan sets out commitments to reduce carbon emissions under the council's direct control (such as from council-owned and operated buildings and vehicles) to net zero by 2025. In 2021, the council joined the UK 100 Net Zero Pledge to become a Net Zero Borough by 2045 or sooner,<sup>6</sup> five years ahead of national targets.<sup>7</sup>

13.3 There is a growing body of evidence that the built environment is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. The Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Partnership Action Plan (2021) estimates that buildings made up approximately 31% of the borough's emissions in 2016, and that the overall level of emissions from this sector would barely decrease at all by 2050 under a 'business as usual' scenario. In addition, Tower Hamlets currently produces the fourth highest levels of total carbon emissions out of all London boroughs.<sup>8</sup> It is evident that significant changes must be made to achieve the council's net zero carbon commitments.

<sup>5</sup> A Cleaner and Greener Future for Tower Hamlets (2023)

<sup>6</sup> Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Partnership Action Plan (2021)

<sup>7</sup> The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019

<sup>8</sup> London Energy and Greenhouse Gas Inventory (LEGGI) (2020)



13.4 However, it is no longer adequate to focus on carbon emission reduction as the sole means of addressing the climate emergency. London is already experiencing the effects of a changing climate, from warmer winters to hotter summers, with increased risk of extreme weather events such as heatwaves and flooding. Many local residents and businesses have already experienced dramatic increases in energy costs, with families struggling to afford to heat their homes over the winter. Indeed, all measures taken to address the impacts of climate change are tantamount to protecting and improving people's

health, well-being, and quality of life. Climate change also impacts the resilience of natural habitats, and can harm the natural biodiversity of the borough's green and blue spaces. Adaptation and mitigation must be a crucial consideration in planning and development, to ensure that development in Tower Hamlets will not adversely affect, but rather improve, climate resilience within the borough and London as a whole.

13.5 Tower Hamlets is a low-lying borough that will severely suffer from increased flooding if the effects of climate change are not mitigated in the coming years. Whilst the Thames Barrier and other flood defences currently provide effective protection, their continued maintenance, along with further investment in flood defences, is required. Climate change will increase the risk of flooding, and it will be necessary to consider the ways of mitigating the risk of flooding for the lifetime of a development. The borough also has a number of critical drainage areas which are at higher risk of surface water flooding. London-wide vulnerability mapping indicates that Tower Hamlets is at increased risk of overheating resulting from a changing climate, and greater mitigation and adaptation measures must be introduced to cope with the scale of these changes.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Climate Risk Mapping, GLA (2022)

13.6 Despite this, London has lower rainfall than the national average, whilst having a very high population density. This combination has resulted in London being declared an area of serious water stress and could face future water shortages; a trend that is likely to be exacerbated by climate change.

13.7 The whole of the borough falls within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), parts of which exceed the World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline limits and national air quality objectives on harmful pollutants. Air pollution is associated with adverse health impacts which particularly affect the most vulnerable in society.<sup>10</sup>

13.8 The policies set out in this chapter support the council's strategic priorities to reduce future emissions arising from new development within the borough, by delivering low-energy developments that require minimum energy for space heating, providing ultra-efficient systems for heating and hot water, combined with high levels of insulation, that will minimise the costs to future occupants.

13.9 This section contains the following policies:

- CG1: Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate
- CG2: Low energy buildings
- CG3: Low carbon energy and heating
- CG4: Embodied carbon, circular economy and retrofit
- CG5: Overheating
- CG6: Managing flood risk
- CG7: Sustainable drainage
- CG8: Water efficient design
- CG9: Air quality
- CG10: Noise and vibration
- CG11: Contaminated land and storage of hazardous substances

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<sup>10</sup> Tower Hamlets Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2022-2027

## Policy CG1 Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate

1. The council will support development proposals that increase local resilience to the impacts of a changing climate by:
  - a. reducing operational carbon emissions through energy efficient and sustainable design, low carbon heat, and local renewable energy generation;
  - b. adapting to the impacts of a changing climate by ensuring developments mitigate the risk of overheating and flooding;
  - c. promoting efficient use of materials in the construction process in line with the principles of the circular economy, minimising waste and consumption throughout the lifecycle of a building;
  - d. prioritising the reuse and retrofit of existing buildings before design and construction of new buildings to minimise upfront embodied carbon emissions;
  - e. incorporating water efficiency measures to reduce water use and discharges; and
  - f. mitigating and improving poor air quality in the borough, and contributing towards delivering the objectives of the latest Tower Hamlets Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

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11 Climate Risk Mapping, GLA (2022)

### Supporting text

13.10 This strategic policy seeks to support the council's commitment to becoming a net zero carbon borough by 2045, and ensure that future development will protect and enhance the key aspects of the borough's environment while improving the health of local residents by mitigating against the impacts of a changing climate.

13.11 New developments will be expected to be net zero carbon in operation where possible, with low energy use and high thermal efficiency. Developments will be expected to maximise renewable energy generation on site through the use of photovoltaic (PV) panels, reducing dependence on the National Grid and supporting access to low-cost clean energy. Delivering energy efficient buildings will also help to manage the increasing costs of energy bills faced by many borough residents and businesses.

13.12 To achieve net zero carbon, new developments must also minimise embodied carbon, and seek to drive down carbon emissions in the demolition, construction, and maintenance phases of a building. New developments should be designed with consideration of disassembly, reuse, or recycling to encourage sustainable material uses and minimise waste in line with circular economy principles.

13.13 Recent London-wide vulnerability mapping<sup>11</sup> indicates that Tower Hamlets is at increased risk of flooding and overheating as a direct result of a changing climate. New development must be planned, designed, and constructed to respond to future anticipated changes in climate, such as warmer winters and hotter summers, and the risks associated with such changes, including increased likelihood of extreme weather events such as droughts, heatwaves, intense rainfall, and flooding.



13.14 In recognition of the borough's areas of flood risk, more vulnerable development should be located away from these areas, as shown on the Policies Map. As part of the council's commitment to reducing the risk of flooding, Tower Hamlets will work closely with national and regional bodies, neighbouring authorities, and relevant landowners to:

- maintain and improve the existing flood defences;
- raise flood defences in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan;
- ensure effective emergency-planning practices are in place;
- keep up-to-date information about flood risk in the borough and likelihood of flood events; and
- enhance multi-functional green space with nature-based drainage systems to alleviate local surface water flood risk, in line with the drainage hierarchy.

13.15 New development must also address London's water stress by reducing water use. London is in an area of severe water stress, but planned growth and development will rapidly increase the demand for water. New developments will need to reduce demand on fresh and wastewater systems and champion sustainable futures through innovations in water efficiency, as well as rainwater harvesting and greywater collection and reuse.

13.16 Development plays a key role in improving air quality and reducing exposure to air pollution. Air quality modelling indicates that the most polluting areas in the borough are along arterial roads. In these areas of sub-standard air quality, nitrogen dioxide levels exceed national air quality objectives, and particulate matter exceed annual mean limits –

(PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels greater than 10 µg/ m<sup>3</sup> (WHO 2005 air quality guideline (AQG) limits) and PM<sub>10</sub> levels greater than 40 µg/ m<sup>3</sup> (national objective limits). There are no safe levels of air pollution exposure, and health risks associated with particulate matters are a significant cause for concern. The Tower Hamlets AQAP outlines the mitigation measures to reduce people's exposure to air pollution and identifies the ways in which development can improve air quality in the borough.

### London Plan policies:

- GG6 Increasing efficiency and resilience
- SI1 Improving air quality
- SI2 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
- SI5 Water infrastructure

### Local Plan policies:

- DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets

### Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Plan, 2020
- Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Policy Evidence Base, 2023
- Delivering Net Zero, 2023
- LETI Embodied Carbon Primer, 2020
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)
- Air Quality Action Plan, 2022-2027
- Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan

## Policy CG2 Low energy buildings

1. Development proposals will be supported where they are designed and constructed to be net zero carbon in operation.
2. Development proposals must demonstrate through submission of an energy assessment that energy demand has been minimised, and are required to meet the following Energy Usage Intensity (EUI) standards:
  - a. All residential use proposals must achieve an EUI of no more than 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr.
  - b. Non-domestic buildings should achieve an EUI of no more than the following (where technically feasible) by building type or nearest equivalent:
    - i. Warehouses and light industrial units – 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr;
    - ii. Schools – 65 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr;
    - iii. Offices, Retail, HE teaching facilities, GP surgeries – 70 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr; and
    - iv. Hotels – 160 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr.
3. Development proposals must achieve a space heating demand of less than 15 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr.
4. Development proposals must demonstrate that the operational energy performance of the development will meet the targets within this policy through the use of a quality assurance standard.
5. Major developments must monitor their total energy use and renewable energy generation and submit the annual figures to the council for the first 5 years of operation.

## Supporting text

13.17 Tower Hamlets needs to exceed the zero carbon policies set out in the London Plan for the borough to meet its net zero carbon commitments, and new policies must be bold to reflect the urgency with which the risks associated with climate change must be addressed.<sup>12</sup>

13.18 New buildings must be designed and constructed to net zero carbon standards to enable the council to meet its ambitious zero carbon targets. All new buildings should be designed and built to be net zero carbon in operation, with ultra-low levels of total energy use and space heating demand. These recommendations are in line with recommendations of the Climate Change Committee (CCC), the London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)<sup>13</sup>. Development proposals which do not demonstrate how net zero carbon will be achieved will not be supported.

13.19 Delivering new homes that are as energy efficient as possible is an essential step to address the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis in Tower Hamlets. Buildings that require minimal energy for heating, providing ultra-efficient systems for heating and hot water, combined with high levels of insulation will minimise the costs for future occupants. Achieving the council's zero carbon aspirations will have direct benefits to local residents and communities.

13.20 Part 2 of this policy requires proposals to demonstrate that energy usage has been minimised, by meeting specific Energy Usage Intensity (EUI) target for domestic and non-domestic buildings. The EUI represents the total amount of energy used by a building divided by its floor area (based on gross internal area, or GIA). It is reported in kWh/m<sup>2</sup> year, and includes both regulated and unregulated energy use. Energy generated by on or off-site renewables does not affect the EUI value.

13.21 The EUI targets set out in this policy are supported by detailed energy modelling as part of the Delivering Net Zero study (2023), which modelled the predictive energy usage of eight building typologies, four domestic and four non-domestic, to identify best-practice targets for low energy-use.

13.22 Part 2(a) identifies an EUI target of no more than 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr for domestic buildings. The definition of domestic refers to a dwelling that houses a single or multiple households. This applies to C3 (Dwellinghouse) and C4 (House in multiple occupation) planning use classes. This target also applies to student or keyworker accommodation, care homes, and extra-care homes.

13.23 Part 2(b) Sets out different targets for non-domestic buildings based on their use, based on extensive predictive energy modelling within the Delivering Net Zero study (2023). Non-domestic buildings include warehouse and industrial, schools, office, retail, and HE facilities, GP surgeries, and hotels. Where a non-domestic development does not have an applicable category of use outlined in the policy, the applicant should discuss with the council to identify an appropriate EUI target.

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<sup>12</sup> Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Plan (2020) Pg 31

<sup>13</sup> Delivering Net Zero (2023)

13.24 Part 2(b) Sets out different targets for non-domestic buildings based on their use, based on extensive predictive energy modelling within the Delivering Net Zero study (2023). Non-domestic buildings include warehouse and industrial, schools, office, retail, and HE facilities, GP surgeries, and hotels. Where a non-domestic development does not have an applicable category of use outlined in the policy, the applicant should discuss with the council to identify an appropriate EUI target.

13.25 Part 2(b) (vi) sets the EUI target for hotels at 160 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr. This is higher than the EUI set out in the GLA Energy Assessment Guidance. This can be attributed to the high energy consumption per m<sup>2</sup> in hotels due to high catering loads and domestic hot water usage. An updated target has been recommended in the Delivering Net Zero study (2023), which will drive energy and fabric efficiency in hotel design.

13.26 Part 3 requires development proposals to meet a space heating demand of 15 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr or less.<sup>14</sup> This figure applies to all domestic and non-domestic building types. Space heating demand is the amount of heat energy needed to heat a building over a year, and is a measure of the thermal efficiency of a building. Space heating demand is influenced by a number of design and specification decisions, including building form and orientation, insulation, airtightness, windows and doors, and the type of ventilation system used. Buildings with a low space heating demand are more thermally efficient and lose heat slowly. This makes it easier to maximise the contribution from renewable energy sources and will result in lower heating and energy costs for residents and businesses.

13.27 For the council to achieve net zero carbon aspirations, it is essential that new buildings deliver the intended energy performance. It is common for the actual energy performance of a building to fail to meet the design standard, which is known as 'the performance gap'. Part 4 requires development proposals to use an assured performance method to demonstrate that the performance gap has been minimised. The assured performance method must be recognised by an accredited industry body. This includes (but is not limited to) the Passivhaus standard, the Building Energy Performance Improvement Toolkit (BEPIT), and the Association for Environment Conscious Building (AECB) standard. Other standards may be used with agreement of the council.

13.28 Furthermore, Part 5 requires major developments to report on energy performance for at least five years following completion, as per the London Plan "Be Seen" requirement, and following the GLA Energy Assessment Guidance (2022). The council intends to publish further guidance on submitting an energy assessment.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- GG6 Increasing efficiency and resilience
- SI 2 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets

#### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Plan, 2020
- Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Policy Evidence Base, 2023
- Delivering Net Zero, 2023

<sup>14</sup> 'UK housing – fit for the future?' Climate Change Committee (2019)



## Policy CG3 Low carbon energy and heating

1. All development proposals must use clean and efficient sources of energy, maximising on-site renewable energy generation, storage, and use, through appropriate technologies. The amount of energy generated in a year should aim to supply 100% of the predicted annual energy demand of the building.
2. New developments must not be connected to the gas grid and heat must be provided through zero or low carbon fuels. Gas boilers in domestic or non-domestic developments will not be supported.
3. Major development proposals must prioritise connections to heat networks to support the delivery of net zero carbon emissions solutions for clean, green, and integrated energy systems.
4. Developments with significant heat rejection, such as data centres, must be built ready to supply waste heat to a heat network, including all necessary on-site infrastructure required to facilitate a future connection.
5. Development proposals must submit an energy assessment which demonstrates:
  - a. how on-site renewable energy and/or heat generation has been maximised; and
  - b. how heat network providers have been engaged with.
6. through the energy assessment that the development proposal: Energy offsetting will only be considered as a last resort, and if it can be demonstrated
  - a. does not use fossil fuels on-site for heat or energy;
  - b. has a level of EUI and space heating demand compliant with levels set in Policy CG2; and
  - c. onsite renewable energy generation (e.g. through PVs) has been maximised.
  - d. If all conditions are met, the applicant should establish the shortfall between predicted renewable energy generation to enable the annual renewable energy generation to match the EUI in kWh. The applicant should pay a cash-in-lieu contribution equivalent to generating this energy shortfall.

## Supporting text

13.29 This policy seeks to support the council's commitment to low carbon heating and supply of clean energy. New buildings cannot continue to burn fossil fuels for heating if Tower Hamlets is to stay within carbon budgets. Low carbon heat is therefore an essential component of a net zero carbon building. New buildings should contribute to the significant increase in renewable energy generation required between now and 2045.

13.30 Part 1 of this policy seeks to maximise the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources in all new buildings. Development proposals will be required to maximise renewable energy generation on site, matching or exceeding the predicted annual energy use, i.e. renewable energy generation (kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr) = or > EUI (kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr). The most robust method to deliver a balance between total energy use and renewable energy generation for new buildings at a system level is to seek to achieve this balance at the site level. This would also have the advantage of low-cost electricity close to its point of use, helping to deliver energy cost savings for building users.

13.31 Part 2 seeks to ensure that new development will utilise low carbon heating. This is in line with national legislation which will ban the installation of gas boilers in new homes from 2025<sup>15</sup>. It also reflects the high carbon costs of combined heat and power (CHP) systems, which often generate power through burning fossil fuels or biomass fuels.

13.32 The carbon content of electricity has been steadily reducing in recent years. In the 2000's, when electricity had a carbon content of approximately 500 gCO<sub>2</sub> e/kWh, heating systems that used gas such as boilers and CHP were considered more environmentally friendly options. This has now changed completely: the de-commissioning of coal-fired power stations and the rise of renewable energy have meant the annual average carbon content of electricity is now around 150-200 gCO<sub>2</sub> e/kWh, and is predicted to reduce further over the next decade.

13.33 Low carbon alternatives that are currently available include heat pumps and direct electric heating. Heat pumps use refrigerant to efficiently move heat from one place to another. Heat pumps can provide both space heating and domestic hot water, can serve individual homes or communal heating systems, and are highly energy efficient (typically around 250-300% for an air source heat pump).<sup>16</sup>

13.34 Tower Hamlets is classified as a Heat Network Priority Area (HNPA)<sup>17</sup>, meaning that the heat density in Tower Hamlets is sufficient for heat networks to provide a feasible solution for heating buildings. Heat networks can provide a cost-effective and low carbon solution for heating in dense urban contexts, and support Tower Hamlets' transition to a zero carbon borough.

13.35 Part 3 of this policy identifies the need for new developments to connect to heat networks. All heat sources, including ambient and waste heat and significant heat rejection, present opportunities to decarbonise the borough's heating systems and achieve its net zero carbon emissions target. All new developments that emit waste heat must ensure on-site provision is made to future-proof an easy connection to

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<sup>15</sup> Heat and Buildings Strategy, Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2021)

<sup>16</sup> Delivering Net Zero (2023)

<sup>17</sup> [www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/energy/london-heat-map](http://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/energy/london-heat-map)

future heat networks. This includes the provision of heat exchangers, thermal stores, pipework connections at the site boundary, and heat supply agreements to heat network operators.

13.36 Heat network operators supplying to residential properties should be registered participants in the Heat Trust scheme and each district heating network shall be a Heat Trust registered scheme. Where existing heat networks have not decarbonized, sleeving shall be applied for the connection of new development.

13.37 In addition, a new primary electrical substation will be required on the Isle of Dogs by 2030 as identified in the Opportunity Area Framework and the Isle of Dogs Feasibility Study (Electrical Connectivity) to support ongoing development as well as the electrification of heat and transport and to reduce the pressure on the congested electrical routes currently supplying the island. This will be established on the site of a customer requiring electrical connection.

13.38 To ensure new developments are compatible with future low carbon heating systems, large scale developments should be designed to accommodate heat network connections or communal systems, with adequate space provided for energy centres, plant rooms and distribution pipework within the building.

13.39 For smaller-scale developments where communal and heat network solutions are less likely to be feasible, individual heating systems such as air source heat pumps and ground source heat pumps should be prioritised as low carbon heat options.

13.40 New developments should also explore the uses of smart controls such as building energy management systems to ensure thermal comfort to building occupants which optimises the performance of networked heating solutions such as heat networks and communal systems.

13.41 Part 5 requires all development proposals to submit an energy assessment which demonstrates how on-site renewable energy and/or heat generation has been maximised, and how heat network providers have been engaged with. Applicants should refer to the GLA Energy Assessment Guidance (2022) for further guidance on submitting an energy assessment.

13.42 Part 6 outlines the conditions that must be met to permit energy offsetting through a cash-in-lieu contribution. The CCC has a clear position on carbon offsetting - offsetting must have a very limited role if we are to achieve national targets of zero carbon by 2050. Cash-in-lieu contributions for carbon offsetting calculated at £/tonne CO<sub>2</sub> will not be accepted. Energy offsetting will only be considered where the development has sought to minimise the building's predicted energy usage and maximised PV generation on site. If council officers are satisfied that the development complies with these policy requirements, a cash-in-lieu payment will be accepted to offset the residual difference between energy use and renewable energy generation. In these circumstances, the applicant should establish the shortfall between predicted annual energy usage and annual renewable energy generation. The applicant should pay into the council's offset fund a sum of money equivalent to this shortfall.

13.43 The offset price will be set on the basis of cost to install PVs elsewhere in the borough. Using a reasonable cost rate for a high output PV system with micro-inverters (i.e. £1.016/kWp) and applying a 10% additional rate for administering and managing the PV funding process, would give an energy offset price of £1.32/kWh/yr.

13.44 The energy offset contribution = Energy Gap (kWh) x £1.32/kWh and will be secured via planning obligation. The energy offset contribution is based on calculations from the Delivering Net Zero report (2023). The offset cost calculation may be updated as required, reflecting the varying costs of energy and project delivery.

### London Plan policies:

- GG6 Increasing efficiency and resilience
- Sl2 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions

### Local Plan policies:

- DV7 Utilities and digital connectivity
- EG6 Data centres

### Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Plan, 2020
- Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Policy Evidence Base, 2023
- Delivering Net Zero, 2023
- GLA Energy Assessment Guidance (2022)
- Local Plan Topic Paper – Utilities and Heat Networks (2024)





## Policy CG4 Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy

1. Major developments must assess the whole lifecycle carbon emissions of a development by undertaking a Whole Life Carbon (WLC) assessment.
2. Major development proposals should achieve the following LETI 2020 best practice upfront embodied carbon emissions targets for building elements:
  - a. Domestic buildings should achieve upfront embodied carbon limits of 500kg CO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> or less; and
  - b. Non-domestic buildings should achieve upfront embodied carbon limits of 600kg CO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> or less.
3. Development proposals should adopt a circular economy approach to design and construction to reduce waste and minimise embodied carbon emissions. Major development proposals are required to submit a circular economy statement in accordance with the London Plan and Circular Economy Statements LPG (2022).
4. Development proposals should adopt a retrofit-first approach, prioritising retrofit and refurbishment of existing buildings over demolition and construction. Where demolition is proposed, it should be justified by demonstrating that options for retaining the existing buildings and the carbon cost of demolition have been fully explored, by:
  - a. Undertaking a pre-demolition audit which demonstrates how materials will be reused;
  - b. demonstrating how energy and waste will be minimised in the design and construction of the new building, through reuse of materials on-site or ensuring new materials are sustainably sourced and low impact;
  - c. designing for durability and flexibility, disassembly, and reuse at the end of their useful life; and
  - d. demonstrating how the design could support modification, adaption, or retrofitting to suit new uses in the future.
5. Existing buildings are encouraged to undertake retrofit work to improve energy efficiency and reduce environmental impacts. Where planning permission is required for retrofit work, development proposals must submit a retrofit plan, demonstrating how operational carbon will be reduced.

## Supporting text

13.45 Whole life carbon (WLC) emissions are the total carbon emissions resulting from the construction, operation, maintenance, and end-of-life/ reuse of a building. WLC encompasses both the operational carbon emissions associated with a building's use, and the embodied carbon emissions associated with production, sourcing and transport of building materials, construction, repair and replacement, and finally end-of-life / reuse of a building.

13.46 To achieve WLC reductions, all emissions from energy used in the material manufacture, construction, operation, maintenance, and end-of-life phases of a building must be measured and reduced. Current best practice for reducing embodied carbon emissions requires designing for disassembly and using low carbon materials; the lowest carbon materials available are those which can be repurposed from existing buildings, in accordance with circular economy principles.

13.47 Part 1 requires all major development proposals to undertake a Whole Life Carbon assessment (WLCA). This requires applicants to calculate operational and embodied carbon emissions and demonstrate how they can be reduced as part of the WLCA. Requiring all major development proposals, not just referable schemes, to undertake a WLCA will help to support the Tower Hamlets' 2045 net zero carbon borough targets, as the construction and development comprises a significant portion of the borough's carbon emissions. It will also drive resource efficiency and adoption of circular economy principles, by encouraging refurbishment, retention, and reuse of existing materials and buildings before demolition and new construction. Applicants may undertake the required Whole Life Carbon reporting using the templates provided by either the London Plan Guidance or the updated RICS Professional Statement.

13.48 Part 2 encourages new development to utilise best practice methods in sustainable design and construction to minimise embodied carbon emissions, and sets best practice upfront embodied carbon emissions targets for new domestic and non-domestic buildings that major development proposals should achieve.

13.49 At present, there are no standardised national targets for embodied carbon emissions due to limited evidence and research on the topic, and the lack of consistent measurements and benchmarks is a key issue faced by the construction industry. Delivering an alignment in embodied carbon measurement is an important interim step towards developing net zero carbon targets that reflect the UK's carbon budget. To address the issue of misaligned targets, LETI have identified best practice targets for upfront embodied carbon, which refers to the initial amount of embodied carbon associated with the building (Building Life Cycle Stages A1-A5 excluding sequestration).

13.50 The LETI Embodied Carbon Target Alignment document sets out an embodied carbon rating system, which outlines total embodied carbon targets and upfront carbon targets. These targets have been developed in collaboration with industry groups, including CIBSE, RIBA, and the GLA, and are being adopted by a number of local authorities in lieu of national and regional embodied carbon targets.

13.51 The LETI Embodied Carbon Primer (2020) identifies that current 'business as usual' building design (without implementing embodied carbon reductions) result in upfront carbon emissions of around 800kg CO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> for domestic and 1,000kg CO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> for non-domestic buildings, equivalent to a LETI band 'E' rating. Current best-practice performance projects in the design phase are able to achieve a LETI band 'C' rating, equivalent to 500kg CO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> for domestic and 600kg CO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> for non-domestic buildings. These targets are equivalent to 40% reduction over

baseline for upfront embodied carbon. Studies from LETI and RIBA both indicate that these limits are achievable and deliverable using industry current best practice. These targets are also consistent with the Whole Lifecycle Carbon Assessment LPG 'Aspirational WLC benchmark' targets for upfront emissions.

13.52 Parts 3 and 4 seek to embed the principles of a circular economy into the design and construction process by retaining materials in use at their highest value for as long as possible, which are then reused or recycled, minimising building waste being sent to landfill. Materials with the lowest embodied carbon costs are those reused and repurposed from existing buildings. Development proposals should consider the whole lifecycle of the building at the earliest stage in the planning process in line with the circular economy principles, including maximising opportunities for material reuse, and designing for disassembly.

13.53 London Plan Policy SI7 defines the circular economy as a 'new economic model that moves away from this current linear economy, where materials are mined, manufactured, used and thrown away, to a more circular economy where resources are kept in use and their value is retained.' The built environment is the largest user of materials and generator of waste in the economy, and accounts for 54% of total waste in London. Moving to a circular economy approach will have a number of benefits for individuals, developers, as well as the natural environment, namely:

- reduce the impact of demolition and waste on air and noise quality;
- reduce the demand for virgin materials;

- drive material optimisation and waste minimisation, reducing material and disposal costs for developers; and
- encourage innovation in material use in design, to ensure buildings can adapt to a variety of uses throughout their lifetime, and
- structures and materials can be dismantled or deconstructed and reused at the end of their life.

13.54 Development proposals should adopt the circular economy hierarchy to inform key decisions in the design and development process. This prioritises a 'retrofit-first' approach, which encourages refurbishment and repurposing of buildings. Where this is not possible, demolition must be fully justified by demonstrating that options for retaining the existing buildings have been explored, and the carbon reductions/ environmental benefits/ public benefits of the new development will outweigh the carbon costs of development. Applicants must also undertake a pre-demolition audit to identify a bill of materials and assets that can be recovered for reuse. Developers are encouraged to sign up to a materials hub platform, to maximise the recovery and reuse of existing materials in other developments.

13.55 Part 5 of this policy seeks to encourage retrofit of existing buildings. New buildings make up only a small percentage of the borough, and to achieve Tower Hamlets' zero carbon aspirations existing buildings will need to undergo retrofit to improve energy efficiency, thermal efficiency, and end reliance on fossil fuels.

13.56 Best practice retrofit can bring multiple social, environmental, and economic benefits, such as reducing energy bills, improving comfort, and supporting national decarbonization efforts. However, a poor or

piecemeal retrofit can miss the opportunity to maximise environmental benefits, and result in need for further retrofit works in the future. Poorly considered retrofitting interventions can even have a negative impact; for example, it is crucial that improvements attempting to enhance energy and carbon performance of homes do not worsen the risk of overheating.

13.57 Where retrofitting works require planning permission, development proposals should submit a retrofit plan, which includes an energy improvement strategy. A retrofit plan demonstrates how retrofitting has been considered comprehensively across the building, using a 'whole building approach', which provides a holistic overview of how a building has been constructed, its context, and the factors affecting energy use. The retrofit plan should demonstrate a consideration for the most suitable retrofit works for the context of the building. Additional guidance on retrofit best practice and developing a retrofit plan is available in the Climate Emergency Retrofit Guide (LETI) and Key Considerations for Commercial Retrofit (UKGBC).

13.58 Where retrofit works for listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets are proposed, developers are advised to engage with the council's design and heritage team at the earliest opportunity, as well as review relevant guidance from Historic England.

**London Plan policies:**

- SI2 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
- SI7 Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy

**Local Plan policies:**

- DV4 Planning and construction of new development
- RW1 Managing our waste

**Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Policy Evidence Base, 2023
- Delivering Net Zero, 2023
- LETI Climate Emergency Retrofit Guide, 2021
- LETI Embodied Carbon Primer, 2020
- LETI Embodied Carbon Alignment document
- Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessments LPG, 2022



## Policy CG5 Overheating

1. Development proposals must ensure that buildings (both internally and externally) and the spaces around them are designed to avoid overheating and excessive heat generation, while minimising the need for internal mechanical cooling systems and providing sufficient daylight and sunlight levels.
2. Development proposals must submit proof of ability to meet the Building Regulations Part O, using passive design cooling principles only, provided as part of the planning application.
3. All domestic development proposals must submit the Good Homes Alliance 'Early Stage Overheating Risk Tool'. If a medium or high-risk score (>8) is indicated, applicants should undertake dynamic thermal modelling.
4. Major non-domestic development proposals should undertake full dynamic thermal modelling and achieve summer thermal comfort according to CIBSE TM52 requirements.



### Supporting text

13.59 London-wide climate risk mapping<sup>18</sup> indicates that Tower Hamlets is at increased risk of overheating as a direct result of a changing climate. Overheating can cause not only significant discomfort to residents and building users, but adverse impacts to health and well-being, and even loss of life. However, relying on mechanical air-conditioning systems to cool buildings can be energy intensive, ineffective, and can cause discomfort to building users. Large developments in particular have the potential to alter the local climate.

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<sup>18</sup> Climate Risk Mapping, GLA (2022)

For example, a light-coloured building that reflects heat will stay cool on the inside and the outside, whereas a dark building will absorb heat during the day to raise internal temperatures and slowly release this heat as the temperature cools, warming the local air temperature. Internal air-conditioning systems also produce heat which increases the outside temperature and contributes to the urban heat island effect.

13.60 Part 1 seeks to incentivise good design to minimise the risk of overheating and maximise the effectiveness of passive strategies to avoid the need for active cooling, which brings additional embodied and operation carbon emissions and increased energy costs for residents.

13.61 Part 2 requires development proposals to demonstrate compliance with Building Regulations Part O (2021) using passive measures only without the use of mechanical cooling. These regulations require new developments to demonstrate that the amount of heat entering a building during the summer is minimised, and that excess heat can be adequately removed from the indoor environment.

13.62 The following passive strategies could be used to mitigate the risk of overheating:

- dual aspect ventilation;
- minimum window openable area should be 60% of the total window area, while providing safe and secure openings in accordance with building regulations;
- reduced glazed area on the north, east, and west facades, in respect of minimum daylight requirements;

- external, moveable shading devices (e.g. external shutters or brise-soleil) on east and west facing windows;
- fixed or moveable horizontal shading devices (e.g. awnings) on south facing windows;
- adequate roof insulation;
- reflective walls and roof coating (high albedo materials);
- exposed thermal mass can be used in living areas where night-time ventilation through windows is possible; and
- all ground floor and first level windows should be equipped with safety devices to allow for safe opening of windows at night, with minimum 20% openable free area.

13.63 Design to avoid overheating should be balanced in consideration with impacts of noise and air quality to building users. For example, an over-reliance on opening windows as a passive cooling method would not be appropriate as the only source to mitigate heating in areas of high air pollution and noise pollution, or near existing industrial uses. It may also pose safety risks to ground floor uses. Likewise, design interventions to mitigate overheating which limit natural daylight and sunlight, such as reducing size or quantity of windows, should be avoided, and balanced with cumulative impact to a building's users.

13.64 Where buildings are unable to rely solely on passive cooling measures such as natural ventilation to achieve comfortable conditions due to surrounding pollution or noise levels, mechanical cooling systems will be considered. However, the building should be designed so that, if noise and pollution conditions are resolved in the future, Part O compliance can still be achieved based on passive strategies for domestic buildings and CIBSE TM52 compliance can still be achieved using passive strategies for non-domestic buildings. A full overheating report should be submitted to demonstrate compliance with Part O/ CIBSE TM52 in case of no noise and pollution constraints.

13.65 As per the cooling hierarchy in the London Plan, active cooling systems will only be considered as a last resort. Development proposals that do not robustly justify that compliance with Building Regulations Part O is achievable using passive cooling methods only may not be supported.

13.66 Part 3 requires domestic development proposals to submit the Good Homes Alliance 'Early Stage Overheating Risk Tool'. If a medium or high-risk score (>8) is indicated, applicants should undertake dynamic thermal modelling based on the CIBSE TM59 methodology.

13.67 Part 4 requires major non-domestic development proposals to undertake full dynamic thermal modelling and achieve summer thermal comfort through passive strategies only in the majority of the building, according to CIBSE TM52 requirements. Exceptions can be made for small, enclosed rooms that do not have access to natural light (such as meeting rooms in offices). The CIBSE DSY1 for the 2020s, High Emissions, 50th percentile scenario for Central London should be used for the modelling.

13.68 For both Parts 3 and 4, where the dynamic modelling approach is followed to prove compliance with Part O, the building should also be tested under future weather conditions using the following weather files:

- CIBSE 2080 Low Emissions, 50th percentile weather file for Central London to represent the 2°C GW scenario.
- CIBSE 2080 High Emissions, 50th percentile weather file for Central London to represent the 4°C GW scenario.

13.69 If the assessment fails under future weather files, this should be highlighted in the overheating report as a potential risk.

### London Plan policies:

- D6 Housing quality and standards
- SL4 Managing heat risk

### Local Plan policies:

- HF9 Housing standards and quality
- CG9 Air quality
- CG10 Noise and vibration

### Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Net Zero Carbon Policy Evidence Base, 2023

## Policy CG6 Managing flood risk

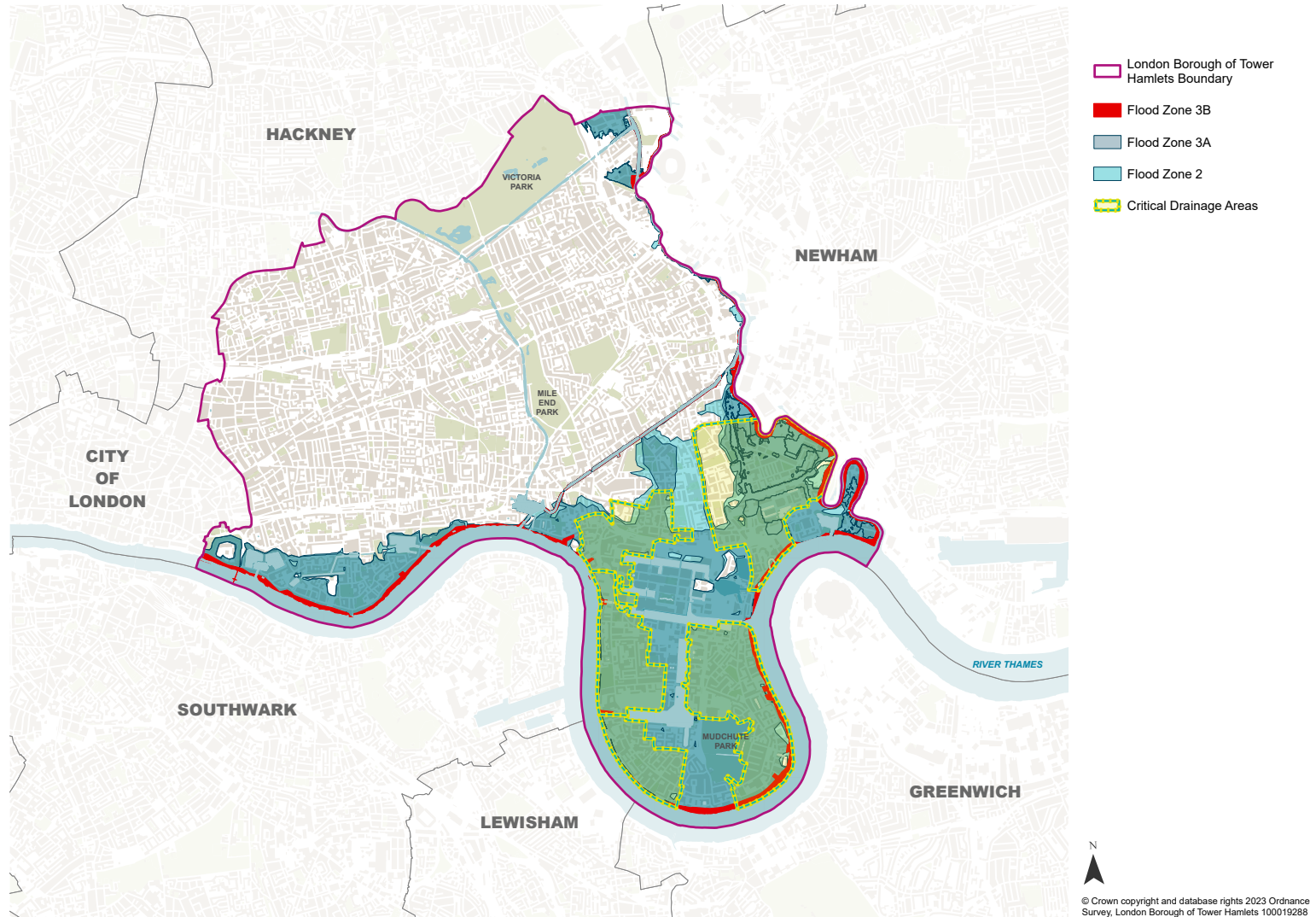
1. Development proposals must implement measures to avoid, control, manage, and mitigate the risk of flooding by incorporating resilience and adaptation measures, and should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere. To meet this requirement, development proposals must:
  - a. assess the risk of flooding from all sources as informed by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) or subsequent updates of the evidence and best available data;
  - b. be located in areas with the lowest risk of flooding as suitable for the vulnerability level of the proposed uses, as informed by passing the Sequential Test, and if required, the Exception Test; and,
  - c. provide a site-specific Flood-Risk Assessment (FRA) in accordance with national requirements, the SFRA, and Environment Agency guidance.
2. A site-specific FRA is required for all development proposals within Flood Zone 2, 3a, 3b, and all major development within Flood Zone 1. The FRA should include:
  - a. a sequential test if the development is in Flood Zone 2 or 3;
  - b. the risks of both on and off-site flooding to and from the development for all sources of flooding including fluvial, tidal, surface run-off, groundwater, ordinary watercourse, sewer, and reservoir, as well as cumulative risk from multiple sources;
    - c. an assessment of breach and overtopping of main river defences;
    - d. the impact of climate change using the latest government guidance;
    - e. demonstration of safe access and egress;
    - f. mitigation measures, taking account of the advice and recommendations set out in the Tower Hamlets SFRA; and,
    - g. development design needs to be resilient to and adapt to flooding and allow quick recovery after a flood.
3. Site design of development which meets criteria outlined in Part 2 above is required to:
  - a. undertake a sequential approach to development layout to direct highest vulnerability uses to areas of the site with lowest flood risk from all sources; and
  - b. incorporate flood resilience and/or resistance measures.
4. Development proposals are required to protect and where possible increase the capacity of existing water spaces and flood storage areas to retain water.
5. Development proposals are required to enable effective flood risk management through:
  - a. ensuring buildings are setback from the River Thames and the River Lea and its tributaries by the following distances unless significant constraints are evidenced:



- i. A minimum of a 16-metre buffer strip along a tidal river; and
  - ii. A minimum of a 10-metre buffer strip along a fluvial river.
- b. optimising opportunities to realign or set back defences and improve the riverside frontage to provide amenity space and environmental enhancement.
6. Development proposals must contribute to the delivery of the measures set out in the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan and prepare for raising of defences without negatively impacting amenity in coordination with adjacent plots. Plots including or adjacent to protected wharfs should ensure early consultation and coordination.
7. The construction of new basements, and extension of or change-of-use of existing basements, should give due regard to flood risk and ensure that flood risk on and off site as well as risk to life and property are not increased, and that flood flows, including groundwater flows, are not disrupted.



Figure 7: Flood zones map



## Supporting text

13.70 Large parts of Tower Hamlets, including the Isle of Dogs and Lower Lea Valley, are in medium to high-risk flood areas (zones 2 and 3). The flood risk zones are shown on the Policies Map and Figure 7. New development must not increase the risk of flooding and must provide mitigation measures to reduce their impact on flood risk, including enabling the repair, raising, and further delivery of flood defences.

13.71 Part 1 of the policy seeks to ensure that new development does not increase the risk of flooding, and that development proposals work proactively to minimise and mitigate flood risk from all sources. Applicants are advised to seek early engagement with relevant stakeholders, including the council as the Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency, Thames Water, and Port of London Authority. For Part 1 (b), the vulnerability of uses is defined within the NPPF and is contained in the latest SFRA.

13.72 As per the Flood Risk and Coastal Change PPG:

- highly vulnerable uses will not be permitted within flood zone 3a and 3b;
- essential infrastructure and more vulnerable uses within flood zone 3a must pass the exception test; and
- highly vulnerable uses within flood zone 2 must pass the exception test.

13.73 Highly vulnerable uses include a self-contained basement without internal access to the upper floors above breach level. More vulnerable uses include a basement with access to upper floors above the breach level. All basement developments are required to conduct a basement



impact assessment to demonstrate that proposals safeguard structural stability, are safe from a flood risk perspective, and will not have any adverse impacts on local hydrogeology. It should take account of the guidance provided in the SFRA.

13.74 Basements being used for sleeping accommodation is classified as a highly vulnerable use, as per Annex 3 of the NPPF, and as such will not be permitted within Flood Zone 3 or within the tidal breach flood extent. This is in line with Table 2 of the PPG for Flood Risk and Coastal Change. Furthermore, sleeping accommodation will not be permitted below the



tidal breach flood level, in line with national planning policy. This is not limited to basements, and can apply to ground and higher floors, where sleeping accommodation is proposed below the breach flood level.

13.75 To address Parts 2 and 3, the flood risk assessment should also:

- be proportionate with the degree of flood risk that the proposed development is exposed to and may exacerbate;
- consider the cumulative impact of existing and future development; and
- demonstrate where adjacent to flood defences that development will safeguard and maintain the existing flood defences over its lifetime.

13.76 Developments within site allocations which seek to deliver their allocated use do not have to undertake a sequential test, even if the site is in flood zone 2 or 3, as required under Part 3(a).

13.77 Flood resistance refers to constructing a building in such a way as to prevent floodwater entering the building and damaging its fabric. Flood resilience means that a building is constructed in such a way that, although flood water may enter the building, its impact is minimised (i.e. no permanent damage is caused, structural integrity is maintained and drying and cleaning are facilitated). It must be noted that, as per paragraph 68 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change PPG, flood resistance and resilience measures cannot be used to justify development in inappropriate locations. Water entry strategies are not acceptable for More/ Highly Vulnerable developments. Furthermore, temporary/ demountable barriers are not appropriate for new build developments.

13.78 Part 5 should also be considered alongside Policy BO1 Green and blue infrastructure and BO3 Water spaces. The requirement to include

an adequate buffer zone between waterways and developments applies to main rivers only (as identified in the Tower Hamlets SFRA). It is to enable sustainable and cost-effective flood risk management, including upgrading of river walls and embankments.

13.79 All tidal rivers should have a minimum of 16m buffer strip, and all fluvial rivers should have a minimum 10m buffer strip. This should be measured from the bank to the top to provide an effective and valuable river corridor which improves habitat connectivity. New or additional hard standing waterways within the buffer zones will be discouraged.

13.80 Where the preferred level of setback is unachievable, current and future flood risk must be alleviated to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency and through consideration of the specific recommendations of the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. This can include:

- raising existing flood defences to the required levels in preparation for future climate change impacts or otherwise demonstrating how tidal flood defences can be raised in the future, through submission of plans and cross-sections of the proposed raising (in particular to demonstrate that the development does not preclude future raising of the defence in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan);
- demonstrating improved access to existing flood defences and safeguarding land for future flood defence raising and landscape, amenity and habitat improvements;
- maintaining, enhancing or replacing flood defences to provide adequate protection for the lifetime of the development;
- where opportunities exist, re-aligning or setting back flood defence walls and improving the river frontage to provide amenity space, habitat, access, and environmental enhancements in line with the TE2100 Plan's riverside strategy approach; and



- requiring the delivery of flood risk management infrastructure and/or improvement measures that mitigate directly related impacts from the development, where these have been identified in the Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

13.81 These setback requirements align with the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNF) Rivers Metric assessment, and can also contribute towards opportunities for public access and recreation, as outlined in Policy BO2 Open spaces and the Green Grid network.

13.82 Riparian landowners are responsible for maintaining and raising tidal flood defences, and should follow the latest good practice guidance such as the Estuary Edges guidance.

13.83 Part 7 requires new basements, and extensions, or change of use of existing basements, to ensure that flood risk on and off site as well as risk to life and property are not increased, and that flood flows, including groundwater flows, are not disrupted. Furthermore, new must basements to be protected from sewer flooding through the installation of a suitable (positively) pumped device. This is only applicable where there is a waste outlet from the basement, ie, where the basement includes toilets, bathrooms, utility rooms, etc. Applicants should show the location of the device on the drawings submitted with the planning application.

## London Plan policies:

- SI12 Flood risk management

## Local Plan policies:

- BO1 Green and blue infrastructure
- BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network
- BO3 Water spaces

## Evidence base:

- Thames River Basin Management Plan, 2022
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), 2017
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment: Update (SFRA) (emerging)
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, 2016-2022
- Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Integrated Water Management Plan, 2020
- Sub-regional Integrated Water Management Strategy for the Lower Lea Valley (2023)
- Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan
- Estuary Edges

## Policy CG7 Sustainable drainage

1. Development proposals are required to reduce the risk of surface water flooding through demonstrating how they reduce the amount of water run-off and discharge from the site through the use of appropriate water reuse and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) techniques.
2. Any development, refurbishment, or change of use that is likely to increase foul drainage should increase the sustainable drainage capacity on site. If this is not possible and the amount of impermeable surfaces would increase, the developer must provide evidence that combined discharges to sewers will not increase.
3. All major development proposals and any development within Critical Drainage Areas must submit a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that surface water will be controlled as near to its source as possible in line with the sustainable drainage systems hierarchy.
4. Rainwater reuse and nature-based drainage systems must be prioritised over grey SuDS and discharge off-site. Where below ground attenuation tanks are included, monitoring and adaptive control technology should be installed and at least 50% of annual stored water volume reused on site.
5. Development proposals are required to ensure the following run-off standards:
  - a. new development proposals in areas defined in the Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP), those areas shown in the SFRA as suffering from the risk of surface water flooding, in critical drainage areas, and adjacent sites that flow into the critical drainage area, are required to achieve a greenfield run-off rate and volume leaving the site;
  - b. all other major development proposals must achieve greenfield runoff rate and volume leaving the site;
  - c. where the above flow and volume reductions cannot be achieved on site, a financial contribution will be secured to offset the shortfall; and
  - d. proposals for zero discharge developments will be supported.
6. The design for SuDS are required to:
  - a. follow the requirements set out in Section G of the Environment Agency's Approach to Groundwater Protection;
  - b. be submitted to the SuDS Approving Body (SAB) for review;
  - c. be constructed in line with the most up to date CIRIA manuals, LBTH SuDS guidance, Sewers for Adoption, and any additional requirements an Adopting Body may have; and
  - d. Guarantee the life-time management and maintenance for every aspect of the drainage system.
7. New development proposals, major development proposals and change of use are required to minimise the pressure on the combined sewer network by removing surface water runoff from the sewers.
  - a.

## Supporting text

13.84 A further source of flood risk is from surface water flooding. This arises following periods of intense rainfall when the volume and intensity of a rainfall event exceeds the capacity of the drainage system, resulting in localised flooding. Current critical drainage areas in the borough are in the Isle of Dogs, with other smaller areas of high surface water flood risk found throughout the borough. These are shown on the Policies Map and Figure 7.

13.85 The July 2021 floods highlighted London's vulnerability to flooding caused by extreme rainfall. Subsequent research has shown that these events could have happened anywhere in London if the intense rains had fallen in different locations. The impact of flooding goes beyond the material loss and the time spent to get residences and businesses back into use, the risk of loss of life, long term trauma and value impact on properties are very real. With climate change affecting rainfall patterns and sea levels, such events as the July 2021 storms and floods are set to increase in frequency, intensity, and over larger affected areas.

13.86 Recent holistic studies of the local water environment, namely, the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) and the Sub-regional (Lower Lea Valley) Integrated Water Management Strategy (SIWMS), have shown that traditional sewerage-based solutions can no longer meet the demand for increased drainage capacity, posed by the combination of development and climate change. Both studies, and indeed integrated water management strategies and plans developed for other parts of London, have shown that SuDS, with emphasis nature-based source control elements, can

significantly reduce the risk and impact of flooding while providing the multiple additional social, economic, and environmental benefits of green infrastructure. Furthermore, implementing a catchment-based approach can deliver positive outcomes for the borough's water environment by promoting a better understanding of the environment at a local level, and interventions upstream benefit sites downstream from a water quality perspective.

13.87 To reduce the amount of water being discharged from sites, this policy requires development proposals to reduce the run-off from all impermeable finishes. When assessing the requirements of this policy, consideration will be given to the size, scale, and nature of the development and whether relative provision has been made. Even minor developments (e.g. rear extensions) have the ability to provide sustainable drainage measures. This policy also anticipates that Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act is expected to come into force in 2024, and will introduce a mandatory requirement for development proposals to implement SuDS.

13.88 Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider the requirements for SuDS at the earliest opportunity, as this will enable their more effective integration and provision. SuDS should also be considered alongside the 'living building' requirements outlined in Policy BO5, and green grid requirements outlined in Policy BO2, as SuDS can also have biodiversity and urban greening benefits. Applicants should demonstrate that they have considered different types of SuDS, prioritising SuDS which deliver multiple benefits, their ability to remove pollutants, their capacity, and future maintenance.

13.89 SuDS also play an important role in improving the quality of surface water run-off in the borough. Applicants are encouraged to refer to the Thames River Basin Management Plan and Water Framework Directive (WFD) to ensure that SuDS intercept and reduce urban run-off rates, such as through soakaways or permeable paving, in order to protect the borough's water bodies and their associated elements.

13.90 To satisfy the requirements of Parts 1, 2 and 3, all major development proposals and any development within a Critical Drainage Area is required to submit a Surface Water Drainage Strategy including the London Sustainable Drainage Proforma with the planning application. All other relevant development proposals are strongly encouraged to do so.

13.91 Part 2 also seeks address where a development, refurbishment or change of use will increase foul drainage, this will be balanced with reduction of surface water run-off to ensure that discharge to the combined sewerage network will not increase.

13.92 To satisfy the requirements of Part 5, surface water reduction and the required run-off rates should be achieved by following the sustainable drainage systems hierarchy, which is outlined in the London Plan. Infiltration SuDS techniques should only dispose of clean surface water into suitable ground and include stages of the SuDS treatment train as required. They should not be used for foul discharges or trade effluent, and may not be suitable within source protection zone 161 (as defined by the Environment Agency).

13.93 As per Part 5(c), where new development cannot meet the discharge requirements on site after providing evidence that all reasonable effort has been made, it is permissible to pay into a Drainage Offset fund. This will be secured as a financial contribution and will

be invested by LBTH to reduce surface water discharges in existing building stock by the same amount, to achieve the overall drainage target. The methodology for calculating the financial contribution is set out in Appendix 2. Alternative strategies to financial contributions may be sought through agreement with the Environment Agency (EA) and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

13.94 Part 6 requires all SuDS designs to be submitted to the SuDS Approving Body (SAB) for their review and comment. Submissions should include:

- the prioritisation of nature based "on the surface" SuDS in line with the SuDS hierarchy;
- design criteria, discharge quantity and quality information;
- evidence of amenity and biodiversity benefit with clear links to Biodiversity Net Gain and Urban Greening Factor submissions, in line with policies BO4 & BO5;
- a construction method statement; and
- establishment and long-term management and maintenance information.

13.95 Given the industrial history of Tower Hamlets, discharges of surface water run-off to ground at sites affected by land contamination or from sites used for the storage of potential pollutants may require an environmental permit. This applies especially to sites where storage, handling or use of hazardous substances occurs (for example, garage forecourts, coach and lorry parks/turning areas and metal recycling/vehicle dismantling facilities). These sites will need to be subject to risk assessment with acceptable effluent treatment provided.

13.96 Part 7 seeks to reduce the pressure on the existing combined sewer network by significantly lowering the rate of discharge and



removal of large volumes of surface water from the system, which currently limit the capacity of the sewer system in certain parts of the borough, particularly the Isle of Dogs Opportunity Area. This will help to manage the significant increase of foul water discharge which planned developments in the borough will generate, without increasing the risk of sewer flooding in Critical Drainage Areas and reducing the need for combined sewer system upgrades.

13.97 Tower Hamlets is predominantly served by combined sewers, draining foul and surface water discharges towards Thames Water's Beckton Sewage Treatment Works. Combined sewer overflows discharge excess water to the Thames during heavy storm events, even after the Tideway tunnel is completed. To accommodate additional foul drainage from new development in the existing sewers, surface water discharges from sites need to be reduced. The construction of new sewers is not viable due to significant below ground congestion in many areas, delivery timescales, disruption, and cost.

## London Plan policies:

- Sl13 Sustainable drainage

## Local Plan policies:

- DV7 Utilities and digital connectivity
- BO1 Green and blue infrastructure
- BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network
- BO3 Water spaces
- BO5 Urban Greening

## Evidence base:

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), 2017
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment: Update (SFRA) (emerging)
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, 2016-2022
- Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Integrated Water Management Plan, 2020
- Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan
- Storm overflows discharge reduction plan, 2023
- London Sustainable Drainage Action Plan (LSDAP)
- Sub-regional Integrated Water Management Strategy for the Lower Lea Valley (2023)
- Water and drainage offset study (2023)
- Local Plan Topic Paper – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) (2024)

## Policy CG8 Water efficient design

1. Development proposals are required to reduce mains water consumption through efficiency and substitution measures. This should be achieved by:
  - a. new major residential development proposals must achieve a maximum mains water use of 80 litres per person per day for internal use, plus an additional 5 litres per person per day where external green space is provided;
  - b. making use of fittings with water consumption below those listed in Building Regulations Part G table 2.2;
  - c. domestic refurbishment must meet all BREEAM water efficiency credits;
  - d. non-domestic development and refurbishment should earn at least 75% of available BREEAM water efficiency credits; and
  - e. major development proposals that can demonstrate they are unable to meet the above targets on site must make a financial contribution to the council to offset the shortfall elsewhere.
2. Alternatively, new development proposals should demonstrate how they achieve and maintain performance that qualifies for Thames Water's Tier 2 Infrastructure Charge Environmental Discount.
3. Development proposals which achieve Water Neutrality or Thames Water's Tier 3 Infrastructure Charge Environmental Discount will be supported.
4. All new major residential and non-residential development proposals must install water supply and drainage pipework suitable for the separate collection of rain, grey, and foul water as well as the distribution of non-potable water throughout the development from and to all relevant fitments. All major residential and non-residential refurbishment and change of use should aim to retrofit rain and greywater recycling systems.

## Supporting text

13.98 London is an area of serious water stress,<sup>19</sup> but the overall demand for water is growing rapidly. Current building standards are insufficient to manage water scarcity. By 2044, the total difference between demand for water and available water will be over 360 million litres of water per day, unless innovative solutions to address water supply and efficiency are delivered.<sup>20</sup>

13.99 Part 1 of this policy seeks to reduce the pressure on fresh and wastewater systems through reducing demand and requiring high levels of water efficiency in all new developments. The London Plan requires new residential development to reduce water consumption to 105 litres p/person p/day or less, which acknowledges the water scarcity prevalent in London. As Tower Hamlets indirectly draws its mains water resource from the river Lee, where groundwater abstractions need to be reduced significantly to avoid the destruction of precious and globally unique chalk stream habitats, it is necessary to reduce local mains water demand below building regulations.

13.100 Data analysis of water demand undertaken as part of the IWMP for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar found that a London Plan compliant base-demand usage of 105 litres was easily achievable in new residential units through efficient fixtures and fittings alone; innovative solutions such as reuse systems would result in a total potable demand of 75 litres per person per day. To reflect this, part 1(a) requires all new residential developments to achieve maximum mains water use of 80 litres per person per day. This target seeks to support the growth of sustainable communities which are resilient to the impacts of water scarcity.

<sup>19</sup> Water Stressed Area – Final Classification, Environment Agency (2021)

<sup>20</sup> Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Integrated Water Management Plan, (GLA, 2020)

13.101 Part 1(b) requires new development proposals to maximise water efficiency measures by using fittings with water consumption below those listed in Building Regulations Part G (2021) or relevant updates.

**Table 2: Maximum fittings consumption optional requirement level in Building Regulations Part G (2021).**

Water fitting	Maximum consumption
WC	4/2.6 litres dual flush
Shower	8 l/min
Bath	170 litres
Basin taps	5 l/min
Sink taps	6 l/min
Dishwasher	1.25 l/place setting
Washing machine	8.17 l/kilogram

13.102 The use of genuinely water efficient fittings can lead to significant water, energy, and financial savings. Fittings need to be selected to be rated within the central or a better performance band of the voluntary Unified Water Label or the emerging UK mandatory water efficiency label.

13.103 All other residential development proposals must not exceed a maximum water use of 105 litres per head per day (excluding the allowance of up to 5 litres for external water consumption) using the 'Fittings Approach' in Table 2.2 of Part G of Building Regulations. Planning conditions will be applied to new residential development to ensure that

the water efficiency standards are met.

13.104 Part 1(c) and 1(d) relate to requirements to achieve BREEAM water efficiency credits. Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) applies to non-residential developments and residential developments arising from conversions and changes of use. This method provides a holistic assessment of the environmental sustainability of a development.

13.105 Part 1(e) outlines an offset approach for major development proposals that demonstrate they are unable to implement reuse measures which meet the proposed targets on site. In these circumstances a financial contribution will be secured to offset the shortfall and achieve the overall water efficiency target. Applicants will be expected to pay a price £/litre per person of demand reduction they are unable to achieve. Contributions will be used for water consumption offset to be achieved elsewhere in the borough. The methodology for calculating the financial contribution will be set out in Appendix 2.

13.106 Part 2 is an alternative methodology to encourage innovation and use of technologies that collect and/ or reuse water. To be eligible for a Thames Water Tier Two Environmental Discount, development proposals are required to demonstrate that they have incorporated water reuse technology, such as rainwater harvesting, greywater recycling, and/ or other water reuse technologies, that captures at least 50 litres of water use /property /day for reuse. Evidence, that Thames Water will grant the Environmental Discount is to be provided.

13.107 Measures to achieve Parts 1 and 2 will require the installation of water efficient fittings and appliances (which can help reduce energy consumption as well as water consumption) and by capturing and re-using rainwater and grey water on site. Major developments and high or



intense water use developments, such as hotels, hostels, and student housing, should include a grey water re-use and rainwater harvesting system. Where such a system is not feasible or practical, development must demonstrate to our satisfaction that this is the case. Development proposals are expected to submit a water efficiency calculator to demonstrate how they have met this requirement.

13.108 Part 4 requires all new major development proposals to install "dual plumbing" (potable and non-potable pipework systems as well as separate rain, grey and foul water collection) and to design for the installation of rainwater harvesting and grey water re-use systems, to provide improved future resilience. Dual plumbing will allow buildings to



be connected to sources of reused water as they are developed in the future, supporting the development of a market for reused water.

13.109 As the cost of providing clean mains water is set to increase over the lifetime of developments and retrofit is often prohibitively expensive and disruptive to residents, it is required that all major new development has the facility to generate and use non-potable water for uses such as WC flushing. To this end the building's plumbing system is to be able to collect storm runoff and grey water separately for reuse while foul water can be discharged to sewer. The water distribution system also is to be able to supply fittings as sinks and showers with potable quality water, while WCs are to be fed from a separate system that can distribute non-potable water. A suitable plantroom area for the required equipment is to be identified.

13.110 In addition, Part 4 requires major and non-major residential refurbishment and change of use applications to seek to retrofit rain and greywater recycling systems in order to achieve lower water consumption rates in existing buildings, address existing inefficiencies and maximise future proofing for increasing water demand in the borough. London Plan Policy SI 5 states that retrofitting should occur wherever possible, and the retrofitting of existing spaces and buildings is also a priority of the London Sustainable Drainage Action Plan.

## London Plan policies:

- SI5 Water infrastructure

## Local Plan policies:

- DV7 Utilities and digital infrastructure
- CG7 Sustainable drainage

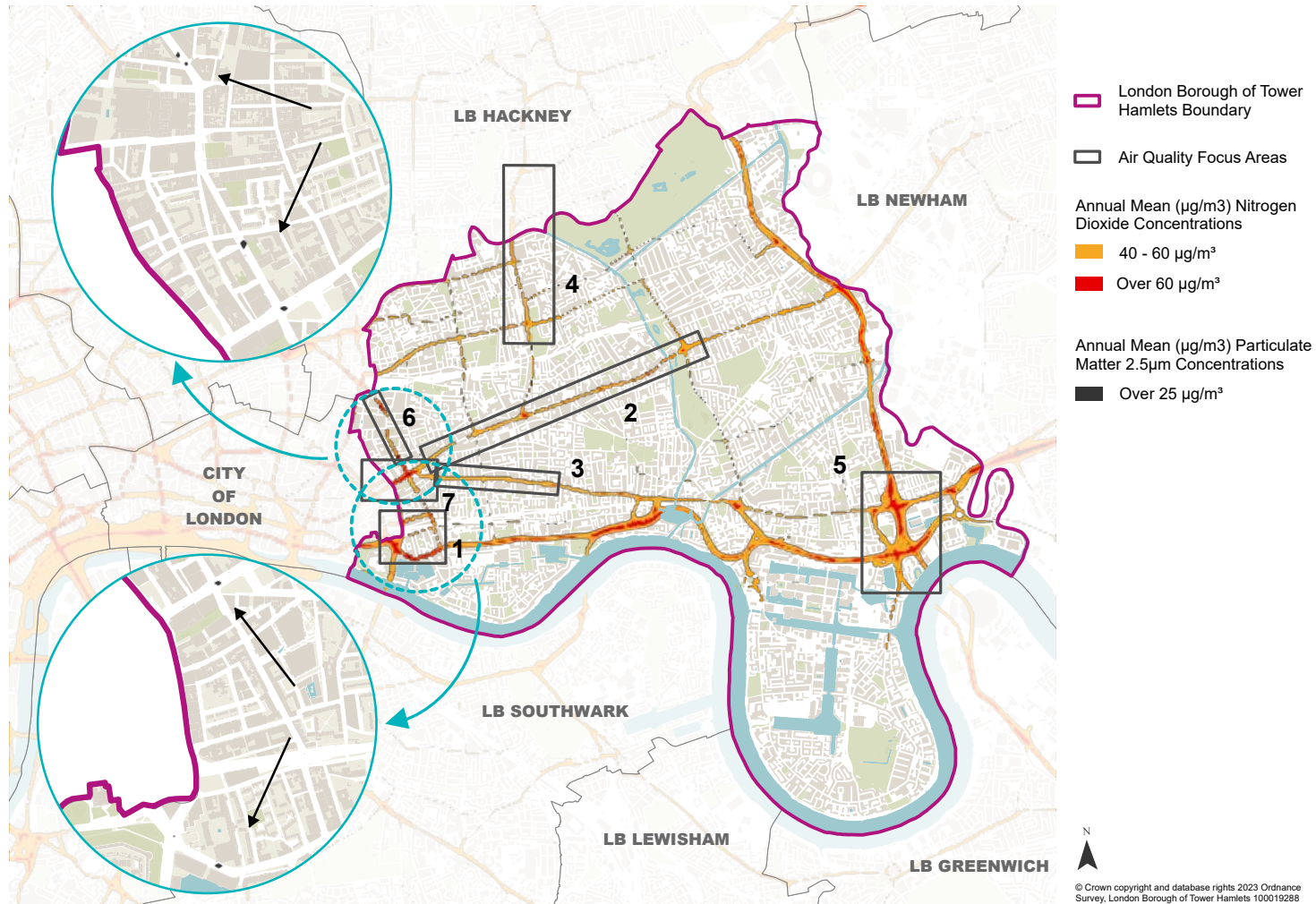
## Evidence base:

- Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Integrated Water Management Plan, 2020
- Sub-regional Integrated Water Management Strategy for the Lower Lea Valley (2023)
- Tower Hamlets Water and Drainage Offset Study (2023)
- Local Plan Topic Paper – Water Efficiency (2024)

## Policy CG9 Air quality

1. All development proposals should mitigate and improve poor air quality. Large-scale development proposals, and major development within Air Quality Focus Areas should achieve 'air quality positive' standards, in line with the Air Quality Positive LPG (2023). All other development proposals are required to meet or exceed the 'air quality neutral' standard.
2. An air quality impact assessment, based on current best practice, is required as part of the planning application for:
  - a. major developments proposals;
  - b. developments which will require substantial earthworks, or partial or complete demolition;
  - c. developments which include education and health facilities or open space (including child play space);
  - d. new build developments in areas of sub-standard air quality (as designated and shown on the Policies Map).
3. Where an air quality assessment indicates that a development will cause harm to air quality or where end users could be exposed to poor air quality, development will be resisted unless mitigation measures are adopted to reduce the impact to acceptable levels.
4. Measures to improve air quality should be implemented onsite. Where it is robustly demonstrated that this is not possible, off-site measures may be accepted, such as financial contributions to deliver air quality improvement measures in the Tower Hamlets AQAP.
5. New build developments proposals which provide any private, communal, publicly accessible open space or child play space in areas of sub-standard air quality are required to demonstrate that they have considered positioning and design of the open space to minimise exposure of future users to air pollution.
6. Development proposals for new residential and commercial moorings on waterways should include an electrical hook-up at each mooring point; where demonstrated that this is not possible, other clean energy alternatives such as solar panels must be considered.

Figure 8: Air quality map



## Supporting text

13.111 LBTH is committed to reducing the exposure to poor air quality within Tower Hamlets. Levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulates (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are of particular concern, due to their impacts on human health<sup>21</sup>. Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts, which more acutely affect the most vulnerable in society, particularly children, older people, and individuals with heart and lung conditions..

13.112 Between 2017 and 2022, Tower Hamlets saw a significant improvement to air quality within the borough. In 2016, 77% of the borough's population was living in an area that exceeded the UK legal limit for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) annual mean concentration of 40ug/m<sup>3</sup> (micrograms per cubic metre). According to modelling projections undertaken in 2019, this had reduced to 7.5% of the Borough's population.<sup>22</sup> This could be attributed to a number of factors, including improvements in vehicle emissions standards, update of electric vehicles, introduction of Ultra Low Emissions Zones (ULEZ) and local measures to improve air quality.<sup>23</sup>

13.113 However, there are no safe limits for air pollution, and the health risks associated with particulate matters, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, continue to be a significant cause for concern. In 2021, 7% of deaths among people in Tower Hamlets were attributed to particulate air pollution (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), compared to 5.5% in England.<sup>24</sup>

13.114 Air quality modelling from the London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) 2019 shows that the most polluting roads in the borough are along the arterial roads, including the A13, the Blackwall Tunnel Approach and the Highway. In these areas, the levels of levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulates (PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>) exceed WHO 2005 air quality guideline limits and, in the case of nitrogen dioxide, European Union safe legal limits /national air quality objectives.<sup>25</sup> The London Environment Strategy (2018) sets commitments to meet the WHO health-based interim guideline limits across London by 2030. In 2021 the WHO issued more stringent guidelines for particulate air pollution, and the council aspires to meet the updated guideline values for PM<sub>2.5</sub> in the shortest possible timeframe.

13.115 In addition, seven Air Quality Focus Areas (AQFAs) have been identified in the borough. These are areas that have been identified as having high levels of pollution and human exposure, as shown on Figure 8. The AQFAs are reviewed periodically based on LAEI data, and may be subject to change in the future.

13.116 Part 1 requires large-scale development proposals and major development within Air Quality Focus Areas to adopt an 'air quality positive' approach. Air Quality Positive is a process of identifying and implementing methods to push development proposals beyond air quality neutral standards, as set out in the Air Quality Positive LPG (2023). Developments will be required to submit an Air Quality Positive statement as part of the Air Quality Assessment, in line with GLA

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21 Tower Hamlets Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Strategic Planning and Health (2016)

22 London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) (GLA, 2019)

23 LBTH Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2022-27

24 Public Health Outcomes Framework Data, OHID (2021)

25 LBTH Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2022-27



guidance, to demonstrate how benefits to local air quality have been maximised, and how measures to minimise pollution exposure will be implemented. Certain development proposals outside of AQFAs may also be required to submit an Air Quality Positive statement, this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the council's Air Quality team.

13.117 All other development proposals will be required to achieve the air quality neutral benchmarks as set out in the London Plan. These benchmarks set out the maximum allowable emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter based on the size and use class of the proposed development. There are two sets of benchmarks covering the main two sources of air pollution from new developments:

- Building Emissions Benchmark (BEB) – emissions from equipment used to supply heat and energy to the buildings; and
- Transport Emissions Benchmark (TEB) – emissions from private vehicles travelling to and from the development.

13.118 Both benchmarks must be achieved for a development proposal to be considered air quality neutral. Applicants should refer to the Air Quality Positive LPG and Air Quality Neutral LPG for further guidance.

13.119 Part 2 requires that an air quality assessment be undertaken for all major development proposals, proposals which will require substantial earthworks or demolition, proposals pertaining to education and health facilities or open space (including child play space), and all new development proposals within areas of sub-standard air quality (as shown on the Policies Map).

13.120 Areas of sub-standard air quality refer to areas where nitrogen dioxide levels exceeding 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (the European Union legal limit / national air quality objectives). This includes areas in which the particulates (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) levels exceed 25µg/ m<sup>3</sup> annual mean levels (UK



annual limit) as identified on the Policies Map and Figure 8. Please note: air quality fluctuates and applications should be guided by the latest available monitoring data.

13.121 The air quality assessment must consider the potential impacts of pollution from the development on occupants of the site and neighbouring areas during construction and operational phases. It should also consider the cumulative impact of surrounding developments located within a 1-kilometre radius. The air quality assessment and the construction management plan should contain details of compliance with European emissions standards.

13.122 Major development proposals are also required to include a dust assessment. Proposals that would give rise to diffuse air pollution must consider the potential for effects on European sites of nature conservation importance, in particular Epping Forest.

13.123 The air quality assessment must also outline the measures to mitigate any adverse effects during construction or operation. This could include:

- reducing vehicular traffic levels;
- encouraging sustainable movement patterns;
- methods of carrying out construction;
- actions to reduce emissions throughout the lifetime of the building;
- reducing emissions from associated plant equipment;
- improving or greening the public realm; and
- ensuring decentralised energy facilities do not contribute to poor air quality.

13.124 As per Part 3, measures to reduce exposure to poor air quality could include the following (in order of priority):

- minimize g distance from pollutant source (the recommended distance would be over 50 metres from the pollution source);
- considering proven ventilation systems;
- parking considerations (in accordance with our transport policies);
- the use of winter gardens, instead of balconies;
- internal layout and minimize g internal pollutant emissions; and
- the materiality of the building envelope and any other structures.

13.125 Maximising distance from pollutant source allows for air pollution to disperse and can reduce exposure. In some cases, this could also take the form of improvements to the public realm, such as introduction of nature-based solutions that can act as a green buffer to reduce exposure to air pollution. However, green infrastructure itself is not a solution to air pollution.

13.126 As per Part 4, where it is demonstrated that measures to improve air quality cannot be delivered on site, an offsetting contribution may be agreed with the council in the form of a cash-in-lieu payment, to deliver the air quality improvement measures offsite. The method for calculating the offset payment is set out in Section 5 of the Air Quality Neutral LPG.

13.127 Part 5 requires new private, communal, publicly accessible open space, and child play spaces that are proposed in areas of sub-standard air quality to demonstrate that the positioning and design has been considered to minimise the exposure of future users, particularly vulnerable users, to air pollution. The recommended distance within the AQAP is 50 meters from the pollution source.

13.128 Moorings for residential boats are present in many locations across Tower Hamlets, and the number of such boats on waterways across London is increasing (water space study, 2017). Furthermore, a number of basins connected to the river Thames, such as Limehouse Basin and St Katharine Docks, are primarily used for residential moorings. Heating systems on houseboats are typically fuelled by burning oil, natural gas, wood, or coal. This contributes to poor air quality around the borough's waterways, with solid fuel sources (wood and coal) being the most inefficient/ polluting, leading to high levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter. Part 6 of this policy therefore requires development

proposals including new moorings to provide suitable infrastructure to enable houseboats to use electricity for heating when moored. This will support the decarbonisation of houseboats in the borough and promote better air quality around the borough's waterways. Applicants are recommended to discuss their proposal for new moorings with the Canal & River Trust and Port of London Authority (PLA) where appropriate.

### **London Plan policies:**

- GG3 Creating a healthy city
- SI1 Improving air quality

### **Local Plan policies:**

- DV3 Healthy communities
- DV4 Planning and construction of new development
- CG5 Overheating
- HF9 Housing standards and quality

### **Evidence base:**

- Air Quality Action Plan, 2022-2027
- Using green infrastructure to protect people from air pollution (GLA) 2019

## Policy CG10 Noise and vibration

1. Development proposals are required to:
  - a. adopt good acoustic design in accordance with the Institute of Acoustics' Professional Practice Guidance (ProPG): Planning & Noise – New Residential Development, using the most appropriate layout, orientation, design, and use of buildings to minimize noise and vibration impacts;
  - b. identify and outline mitigating measures to manage noise and vibration from new development, including during the construction phase;
  - c. separate noise-sensitive development from existing operational noise; and
  - d. provide a noise assessment where noise-generating development or noise-sensitive development is proposed.
2. Where new noise-sensitive land uses are proposed in proximity to existing noise-generating uses, the 'Agent of Change' principle requires the proposal for new development to robustly demonstrate how conflict with existing uses will be avoided, through mitigation measures.

3. Development proposals are required to demonstrate that the level of noise emitted from any new heating or ventilation plant will be below the background level by at least 10dBA, or comply with guidance set out in the latest version of British Standard 4142.
4. For new residential development proposals that are located within ambient noise level areas determined to be at the significant observed adverse effect level (SOAEL) or above, the developer will be required to provide information to prospective occupants about the mitigation measures that have been put in place, to reduce the risk of post-purchase/ occupancy complaints.<sup>26</sup> This will be secured by planning obligation.

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<sup>26</sup> Noise Guidance, DLUHC (2019)



## Supporting text

13.129 This policy seeks to manage noise and vibration from new development and manage existing sources of noise on sensitive development. Noise and vibration can have a significant impact on local amenity and well-being. According to the WHO, excessive noise can cause a number of short- and long-term health problems, including sleep disturbance, cardiovascular effects, and cause poor performance at work and school.

13.130 The Increasingly high-density and mixed-use nature of development in Tower Hamlets means it is essential that building design and use minimises noise pollution and disturbance. Part 1 of this policy sets out measures to minimise noise from new development and separate noise-sensitive uses such as housing, hospitals, and schools from existing noise sources where practicable to protect the amenity and well-being of the surrounding area.

13.131 Where required, the noise assessment should consider the following:

- source and absolute level of the noise together with the time of day it occurs, considering day-time and night-time noise where appropriate
- for non-continuous sources of noise, the number of noise events, and the frequency and pattern of occurrence of the noise;
- pitch and tone of the noise;
- the cumulative impacts of more than one source should be taken into account along with the extent to which the source of noise is intermittent and of limited duration; and
- in cases where existing noise sensitive locations already experience

high noise levels, a development that is expected to cause even a small increase in the overall noise level may result in a significant adverse effect.

13.132 Where the avoidance of noise conflicts is impractical, mitigation measures such as effective soundproofing for noise attenuation (e.g. appropriate glazing and building materials) and restrictions on operating hours will be implemented through appropriate planning conditions. The cumulative impact of mitigation measures to reduce noise must be considered alongside measures taken to reduce overheating and exposure to poor air quality.

13.133 There have been several examples across London of long-standing entertainment venues closing or becoming at risk of closure due to a combination of factors, including noise complaints from new residents and venues being purchased for redevelopment (particularly for housing). This has implications for the long-term future of London's creative and cultural sector which has an impact not just on residents but also its tourism potential.<sup>27</sup> Part 2 uses the Agent of Change principle to seek to reduce this phenomenon. This principle may also apply to other noise-generating uses, such as schools, sporting and entertainment venues, industrial sites, waste sites, safeguarded wharves, rail, and other transport infrastructure. The Agent of Change principle places responsibility for noise management on the incoming individual or business. Applicants must submit detailed noise assessments and demonstrate that noise levels within the proposed development emitted from nearby uses would be at an acceptable level. Where it has not been robustly demonstrated that the operations of nearby uses would not be compromised, development proposals will be refused.

13.134 Part 3 sets requires heating and ventilation plants to be designed

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<sup>27</sup> Rescue Plan for London's Grassroots Music Venues Update, (GLA, 2017)

so that they do not adversely affect nearby amenities, including open spaces, which are valued for their quiet environment. At present, the level of noise emitted from any new heating or ventilation plant must be below the background level by at least 10dBA. However, it is understood that British Standard 4142 will be updated in the near future, and this policy should be read to reflect these updated requirements.

13.135 Significant observed adverse effect level (SOAEL) is the level of noise exposure above which can have a significant adverse effect on health and well-being. Part 4 requires developers of residential units in SOAEL areas to provide information to prospective occupants about the noise mitigation measures that have been put in place. This is to ensure that prospective buyers and occupants are made fully aware of the effects of noise in the area and the mitigation measures that have been implemented to reduce the risk of post-occupancy noise complaints. This will be secured by planning obligation.

13.136 Appendix 5 provides further guidance on how this policy will be implemented.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- D13 Agent of Change
- D14 Noise

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- DV4 Planning and construction of new development
- HF9 Housing standards and quality
- CG5 Overheating



## Policy CG11 Contaminated land and storage of hazardous substances

1. Where development is proposed on contaminated land or potentially contaminated land, a desk study, site investigation, and risk assessment in line with current guidance and the Tower Hamlets Contaminated Land Strategy (2022) is required and remediation proposals agreed to deal with the contamination before planning permission is granted.
2. Development proposals will not be supported which involve the storage or use of hazardous substances or which are located in close proximity to hazardous installations where it would cause a significant threat to health and the environment.
3. Certain contaminating developments, processes or land uses proposed within or in close proximity to sensitive locations, including source protection zones, may not be acceptable.

### Supporting text

13.137 Part 1 of this policy provides additional guidance on protecting health of the borough's residents and workers and the environment from contaminants and hazardous substances. This should be read in conjunction with the guidance set out in the London Plan.

13.138 Contaminated land is land that has been polluted with harmful substances to the point where it now poses an unacceptable risk to health and the environment. Tower Hamlets has a history of industrial land uses and this policy seeks to ensure that the impacts of these past and current land uses do not affect the health of people and the environment. An updated public register of contaminated land is available on the Tower Hamlets website, and any site included in the register or any site which is potentially contaminated will be required to carry out a site investigation and agree a scheme of mitigation with the council to ensure that contaminated land issues are considered at the planning application stage.

13.139 Contamination applies not only to land and soil contamination, but to groundwater contamination. Development proposals should protect and enhance groundwater quality, and should not have any adverse impact on groundwater flow, quantity or quality. A verification report will be required through condition to provide confirmation that the remediation work has been undertaken properly in line with best practice.

13.140 Part 2 of the policy relates to the management of hazardous substances which are outlined in the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations (2015). There are a small number of listed hazardous installations in or near to the borough. Hazardous substances are also controlled by the need for a separate hazardous substances consent. As

such, it will be necessary to demonstrate that any developments which involve hazardous substances would not cause a significant hazard to the health and well-being of local residents or to the local environment.

13.141 The council will apply the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) land use planning methodology in the event of a proposal being located near to a hazardous installation. In combination with advice provided by the HSE, consideration will also be given to site-specific circumstances and any proposed mitigation measures. If the HSE advise against development, planning permission will only be granted in circumstances where it can be demonstrated that the benefits arising from the proposed development would significantly outweigh the potential risks to health and the local environment.

13.142 Source protection zones are spatial areas around public drinking water abstraction points. Locations of source protection zones are available on the Environment Agency's website. Applicants are advised to speak to the council's environmental health service and the Environment Agency, where relevant.

**London Plan policies:**

- SD1 Opportunity Areas

**Local Plan policies**

- DV3 Healthy communities
- DV4 Planning and construction of new development

**Evidence base:**

- Strategy For the Identification of Contaminated Land, 2022



## 14. People, places and spaces



- PS1 – Design-and infrastructure-led approach to development
- PS2 – Tall buildings
- PS3 – Securing design quality
- PS4 – Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 – Creating inclusive places
- PS6 – Heritage and historic environment
- PS7 – World heritage sites
- PS8 – Shaping and managing views
- PS9 – Shopfronts
- PS10 – Advertisements, hoardings and signage
- PS11 – Siting and design of telecommunications infrastructure



### Introduction

14.1 This chapter focuses on delivering places and spaces in the borough that are designed around the needs of local communities for good-quality housing and a reduction in overcrowding, ensuring that Tower Hamlets is a borough that everyone can feel proud to live in and excited to spend time in. The policies in this chapter seek to ensure that new development takes place in a way that complements the existing character of our places, while taking advantage of the potential capacity for growth that some parts of the borough demonstrate. They require new development to be well-designed, safe, accessible, and inclusive, and to pay careful attention to the layout, scale and form of buildings

and spaces, the connections between them, and the mitigation of their impacts, such as noise and air pollution. The policies in this section also provide a framework for ensuring that new development respects and enhances the natural and built heritage of the borough. Through good design, development should contribute to the health, well-being, and social inclusion of the borough's communities.

14.2 At the same time, the policies in this section also take a new approach to tall buildings, allowing the consideration of greater height across more of the borough. Taller buildings will still be restricted in sensitive areas, such as conservation areas and nature sites, but beyond these places tall buildings will be considered and assessed in line with the requirements of policy PS2. This will help to optimise housing capacity, and provide an uplift in affordable housing.

14.3 Tower Hamlets consists of a number of distinctive, diverse, and vibrant places, including historic hamlets, ancient markets, urban parks, inland docks, urban farms, a world heritage site, and many other types of place. These places have evolved gradually over many years and their characteristics, both modern and historic, make up the distinct identity of the borough. The diverse places and communities of the borough also contribute to the character of the wider East End of London.

14.4 Tower Hamlets is experiencing high levels of growth and development and has done so for many years; it is important to ensure that the borough can successfully accommodate continued change and growth while also preserving those distinctive elements that are so valued by local communities and by those who come to Tower Hamlets from further afield for employment or leisure.

14.5 This section contains the following policies:

- PS1 – Design-and infrastructure-led approach to development
- PS2 – Tall buildings
- PS3 – Securing design quality
- PS4 – Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 – Creating inclusive places
- PS6 – Heritage and historic environment
- PS7 – World heritage sites
- PS8 – Shaping and managing views
- PS9 – Shopfronts
- PS10 – Advertisements, hoardings and signage
- PS11 – Siting and design of telecommunications infrastructure

## Policy PS1 Design-and infrastructure-led approach to development

1. The council will support development proposals that are design-led and respond to a site's context and capacity for growth to determine the appropriate form and land use for the site and where they deliver on the borough's needs for housing, employment, retail, and community space, and to create sustainable communities. All development proposals should demonstrate how the proposed capacity of the development has been informed by:

- a. the form and layout of the site, within its context, including appropriate scale, height and massing;
- b. the experience of future and existing residents and users of the site;
- c. the quality and character of the proposed development;
- d. the character of the 24 places of Tower Hamlets, as set out in the council's Urban Structure and Characterisation Study;
- e. the capacity for growth of the site, as set out in figure 9; and
- f. robust community engagement and co-design from an early stage in the design process.

2. The council has determined design principles, indicative capacities, and appropriate heights for site allocations through a design-led approach. The council will support development proposals that conform to the requirements of site allocations.

3. Where a development proposal exceeds the capacity or height set out in a site allocation, the council will only support it where a further design-led approach can demonstrate that the proposal will be appropriate to the site and its context, is sustainably designed, and that there is sufficient infrastructure (either existing, planned, or to be delivered through the development) to support the proposed capacity.

4. The council will require certain development proposals to be accompanied by a site-specific infrastructure impact assessment to establish the additional requirements for infrastructure that will be created by the proposal, beyond what is planned for in the Local Plan, and how these requirements will be delivered. These assessments will be required for:

- a. proposals on site allocations which exceed the capacity or height set out in the allocation;
- b. proposals for 500 or more homes on unallocated sites; and
- c. proposals for tall buildings on unallocated sites that exceed the height limits set out in policy PS2.

5. The council will support development proposals to be accompanied by design codes, setting out clear design expectations for the site that respond to its surrounding context and reflecting effective community engagement in their preparation. On site allocations in multiple ownership, the council will support development proposals to be accompanied by a joint design code for the site, developed in collaboration between the different landowners.

## Supporting text

14.6 Tower Hamlets is a small borough in geographical terms, so opportunities for development are limited. Thus, to meet our ambitious targets for good-quality housing, to address overcrowding, and to enable sustainable placemaking, an increase in density is generally supported across the borough. But this increase in density needs to have high-quality design as a key focus with the borough's housing needs in mind, and needs to be proportionate to the capacity of the borough to absorb the increase in terms of infrastructure (both social and physical) and the creation of positive places through elements such as townscape and multi-functional public realm in order to deliver successful and sustainable places.

14.7 This policy aims to ensure that new development is well-designed and proposes sustainable capacities and densities to create high-quality places for our residents to live. It incorporates the requirements of the new London Plan for all sites to optimise their capacity through a design-led process. This will help to ensure that new development creates attractive, liveable places that existing and future residents are proud to live in. The London Plan Guidance on Optimising Site Capacity makes clear that optimising site capacity does not mean maximising the density of a site. Instead, it means "responding to the existing character and distinctiveness of the surrounding context and balancing the capacity for growth, need for increased housing supply, and key factors such as access by walking, cycling and public transport, alongside an improved quality of life for Londoners. Capacity-testing should be the product of the design-led approach, and not the driver" (paragraph 1.1.1.).

14.8 In design terms, an increase in density will not always mean taller buildings are needed or appropriate. Increased density can be achieved in multiple ways, and in many cases a lower-rise form of density may be



the more appropriate option, while still providing a significant increase in housing or other uses. However, in other cases, the use of tall buildings may allow for greater density than could otherwise be achieved on smaller or otherwise constrained sites, thus allowing for a greater contribution towards meeting the borough's housing needs. A design-led approach to sites will allow us to determine this. See Policy PS2 for more details on the approach to tall buildings.

14.9 Part 1 sets out that proposals should follow a design-led approach in line with the London Plan and the National Design Guide. The National Design Guide says that "well-designed places and buildings come about when there is a clearly expressed 'story' for the design concept and how



it has evolved into a design proposal. This explains how the concept influences the layout, form, appearance, and details of the proposed development. It may draw its inspiration from the site, its surroundings, or a wider context" (paragraph 16). This is consistent with the approach to design-led development set out in London Plan policies D1, D2 and D3 and the council's expectation that proposals will demonstrate a clear rationale for their design.

14.10 Proposals should demonstrate that they have considered:

- The form and layout of the proposal – how does the layout, scale, and appearance of the building relate to the character of the area and existing and proposed street layouts? Are they aligned with people's patterns of movement in the area, and encourage further permeability and connectivity? Are the designs street-based, with clearly defined private and public spaces, and do they encourage active travel and enable people to feel safe moving around the space?
- Experience – does the proposal provide an attractive, welcoming space for residents, nearby communities, and others who may use the development or the surrounding public realm, including marginalised groups? Are there spaces for play, relaxation, social interaction and physical activity? Does the proposal promote community health and well-being? Does the proposal provide adequate privacy for residents, while also allowing for active frontages and a positive relationship between the inside and outside of the buildings to allow people to feel safe and comfortable using the space? Does the proposal reflect the needs of all members of the community, including families, larger households, and those who may inhabit the low cost rented units - both in terms of the quality of the homes



themselves, but also in relation to the general layout of the building, and the public and private amenity spaces.

- Quality and character – is the development of high architectural quality, with attention paid to architectural details and materials, and consideration given to the potential uses of different spaces? Will the proposal be built to meet high sustainability standards, and to maximise green spaces and sustainably manage flood risks? Does the proposal identify valued features and characteristics of the surrounding area, and make a genuine attempt to contribute towards the positive aspects of the local character?

14.11 As part of this design-led approach, proposals should also take into account the specific character and capacity for growth of different areas of the borough, as set out in two evidence base documents.

14.12 The Urban Structure and Characterisation Study (2009, and a 2016 addendum) defined 24 specific 'places' or neighbourhoods within Tower Hamlets, and set out what makes those places unique. This study can provide a starting point for understanding how a development site fits within the wider context of its surrounding neighbourhood and can help to determine positive elements of local character that can be accentuated through new development.

14.13 The Characterisation and Growth Study (2023) takes a more granular approach and characterises the specific building typologies of small areas of the borough. It then assesses them for coherence, design quality, and sensitivity to change, and determines their capacity for growth – set out for each area as 'conserve', 'enhance', or 'transform', as shown on figure 9. The capacity for growth as set out in this document does not determine what development should be proposed on a site, and does not imply that there are areas where no development would be possible. Instead, it is a starting point for a design-led process, allowing for consideration of what would be the most appropriate form within each area.

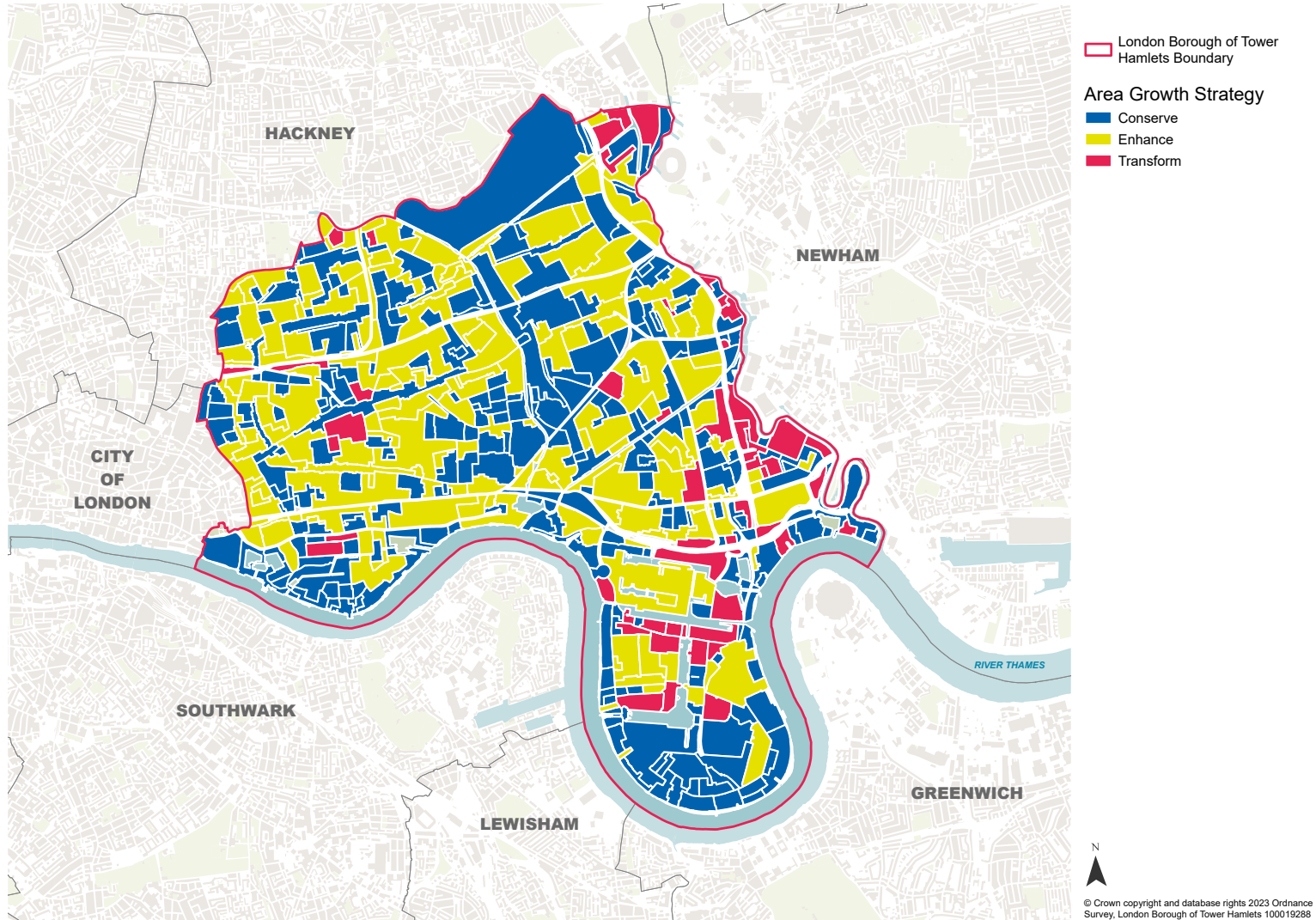
The three types of growth area can be understood as follows:

- 'Conserve' areas have consistently high quality and coherent character. This can include conservation areas, which are designated for their heritage significance, but can also include areas of more modern development which have a positive character. In these areas, change and growth can take place, but must be

undertaken sensitively to maintain the existing character and quality. Development coming forward in 'conserve' areas should draw on the predominant typology and architecture in the area and reflect this in its proposal. Materiality and detailing should reflect or positively respond to the local vernacular while development heights should normally closely resemble the prevailing height.

- 'Enhance' areas have mixed design quality and may be less coherent than 'conserve' areas. These areas offer potential for incremental change to enhance the overall character of the area. While there is an opportunity for new forms of design and architecture in these areas, any proposal should respect and draw on the special and valued features of the existing area. The height of a new development should be sensitive to the prevailing heights in the area, while also recognising the potential for increased heights on adjacent sites within 'transform' areas. There may be opportunities for a transition in height on appropriate sites and there is the opportunity for the materiality and detailing to reflect the local vernacular.
- 'Transform' areas are places where an opportunity exists to establish a new character, due to the poor quality of the existing character – many of these areas are vacant brownfield sites suitable for significant development. This may also offer the potential to intensify development both in respect of development floorspace and height. Many of these areas have been identified for change through regeneration area designations or site allocations. New development should both enhance positive elements where they exist and improve the physical character through placemaking to create attractive new places.

Figure 9: Growth areas in Tower Hamlets





14.14 Consultation, early engagement, and negotiation are all necessary key elements of a design-led approach and can help to ensure that the final proposals as submitted will be well-designed and supported by the community. Consultation with affected communities should take place at the earliest possible stage in the design process and should inform the design rather than only responding to proposals. Consultation with diverse and representative groups, including those with protected characteristics, is particularly important, to ensure these groups have their voices heard and their needs taken into account in the design process.

14.15 All strategic developments will be expected to be submitted to the Tower Hamlets Quality Review Panel as part of the design process, and this may be agreed as part of a Planning Performance Agreement. Some smaller proposals may also be referred to the panel, particularly in instances where there are concerns around elements of the design, or where they may have significant effects on heritage assets. Proposals are usually expected to be presented to the panel twice, once at pre-application stage and once at application stage, and applicants should be prepared to explain how the comments of the panel have been addressed.

14.16 Part 2 sets out how this process is to be followed on site allocations. The council has undertaken a high-level design-led site capacity assessment for allocated sites, which has led to an understanding of the design principles, indicative capacities and appropriate heights that will be considered suitable on allocated sites. Proposals that conform to these capacities and heights, and meet the other principles set out in the site allocations, will be supported.



14.17 It is recognised that multiple design options may be acceptable on a single site, so there may be alternative options that could potentially increase capacities. Part 3 sets out that this must be robustly justified through the design-led approach. Allocated site capacities are based on an understanding of available infrastructure capacity, so increases will need to be acceptable in design terms but also demonstrate that there will not be a negative effect on infrastructure capacity, or that such effects are mitigated through delivery of additional infrastructure through the development process.



14.18 Part 4 sets out the requirement for an assessment of the impacts on infrastructure as a result of the proposed development. The Local Plan and supporting evidence base, sets out the infrastructure to support the amount of development identified in the Plan over the period to 2038. Part 4 of this policy identifies circumstances that will increase the amount of development beyond what is planned for, and hence it is necessary for such proposals to identify how they will mitigate the additional impacts created. Infrastructure impact assessments are therefore required for allocated sites that exceed allocated capacities or heights, but also on unallocated sites that are delivering above the 500-home threshold used to assess site allocations. In addition, proposals for tall buildings outside of site allocations that are expected to exceed the height limits set out in policy PS2 will also be expected to submit infrastructure impact assessments.

14.19 Infrastructure impact assessments should demonstrate the expected impact of the development on the provision of local and strategic infrastructure, including but not limited to:

- education – early years, primary, secondary, and specialist;
- healthcare – primary care provision, adult social care provision;
- sports and leisure facilities – sports halls, swimming pools, pitches;
- publicly accessible open space;
- community presence facilities (i.e. Idea Stores);
- community facilities;
- youth facilities;
- energy infrastructure and utilities; and
- emergency services.



14.20 The infrastructure impact assessment should, in line with London Plan policy D2, "have regard to the local infrastructure delivery plan or programme, and the CIL contribution that the development will make". The infrastructure delivery plan is based on an assessment of expected densities of development within the borough during the lifetime of the plan, and developments that exceed these densities should therefore clearly highlight the additional impacts that increased density is likely to have on infrastructure requirements, and how the additional infrastructure needs that are created will be provided for. This should be determined in discussion with the council, and developers are encouraged to open such discussions at the earliest possible point in the

process. The council recognise that more development will likely equate to more CIL, however an infrastructure impact assessment should still consider costs as well as the wider context within which infrastructure is delivered, including land availability and affordability, location and accessibility, and deliverability. This may involve the consideration of delivery beyond the proposed scheme. In line with the London Plan Policy D2, "Where additional required infrastructure cannot be delivered, the scale of the development should be reconsidered to reflect the capacity of current or future planned supporting infrastructure".

14.21 Where infrastructure impacts have been considered in other submitted documents, such as environmental, transport, or utility assessments, this information should not be repeated, but instead referenced clearly in an infrastructure impact assessment. The infrastructure impact assessment document should focus on the resulting impacts and actions to be taken by the applicant to mitigate those impacts.

14.22 The NPPF encourages the creation of design codes by both local authorities and developers, and part 5 of this policy encourages the creation of such codes. In the case of strategic developments, which can have a significant impact on the local area, the development of design codes can support delivery of new development and encourage public support. They can also ensure that important design elements of a scheme are fully considered at an early stage of development. Some of the site allocations in this plan cover land that is owned by multiple parties, and in these cases a design code produced jointly between these different landowners can ensure that development comes forward in a coordinated manner and help to ensure that proposals on different parts of the allocations can be considered appropriate in design terms

and given permission. The development of design codes should be discussed with the council and should be subject to early engagement with local communities, to ensure that proposals are appropriate to the local context and can effectively support the delivery of new development.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- D1 London's form, character and capacity for growth
- D2 Infrastructure requirements for sustainable densities
- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- D5 Inclusive design
- E11 Skills and opportunities for all

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- HF1 Meeting housing needs
- HF2 Affordable housing and housing mix
- HF4 Supported and specialist housing
- HF5 Gypsy and Traveller accommodation
- HF6 Purpose-built student accommodation
- HF7 Large-scale purpose built shared-living
- HF8 Housing with shared facilities (houses in multiple occupation)
- HF9 Housing standards and quality
- EG1 Creating investment and jobs
- TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- Cl1 Supporting community facilities
- BO1 Green and blue infrastructure
- MC1 Sustainable travel
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets

## **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Capacity Study, 2024
- Brick Lane and Pedley Street Site Capacity Study, 2024
- Characterisation and Growth Study, 2023
- Whitechapel North and South – Vision and Site Capacity Assessment, 2023
- Gender Inclusive Design: Creating a safe, inclusive and restorative borough, 2023
- Securing Design Quality – A Practice Note, 2023
- Optimising Site Capacity: A Design-Led Approach LPG, 2023
- Characterisation and Growth Strategy LPG, 2023
- National Design Guide, 2021
- National Model Design Code, 2021
- Statement of Community Involvement, 2019
- Urban Structure and Characterisation Study and Addendum, 2009, 2016

## Policy PS2 Tall buildings

1. Within Tower Hamlets, a tall building is defined as one which is 30m or more in height measured as the height above ground level to the uppermost part of the structure.

2. Areas considered suitable for tall buildings are shown on the policies map and in figure 10, divided into zones A-F. Development of tall buildings will be supported within zones A-E, and in zone F where appropriate; and within site allocations, as set out in table 4 and within the site allocations chapter of this plan.

3. All proposals that include tall buildings must demonstrate how they provide significant public benefits; and residential proposals that include tall buildings must meet the affordable housing requirements set out in Policy HF2, including provision of 40% affordable housing, with 85% of that affordable housing delivered as social rented homes.

4. Proposed heights must take account of:

- a. the need for variation in heights within a particular development proposal and across different development proposals within an area;
- b. the need to avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets, areas of ecological importance, or the enjoyment of the borough's open spaces;
- c. impacts on daylight, sunlight, and overshadowing for neighbouring land and developments;
- d. the need to maintain sky views from street level from within clusters of tall buildings; and



- e. appropriate heights within specific allocations or appropriate heights within tall building zones, as set out in table 4 and figure 10.

5. All proposals for tall buildings must demonstrate how they meet the following design criteria in order to deliver high-quality development:

- a. promote the health and well-being of all residents and other users;
- b. be of a height, scale, mass, volume, and orientation that is proportionate to their role, function and the importance of the



- location in the local, borough-wide and London context; and take account of the character of the immediate context and of their surroundings;
- c. achieve exceptional architectural quality and innovative and sustainable building design, using robust, durable, attractive, and contextually appropriate materials throughout the building, and responding to the local character in the architectural language of the development;
  - d. enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area without adversely affecting designated townscapes and landscapes (including building/roof lines);
  - e. take account of, and avoid causing harm to the significance of, national or borough-designated landmarks, heritage assets, Conservation Areas, key views and other historic skylines, and their settings;
  - f. provide a positive contribution to the skyline during both the day and night time;
  - g. maintain adequate distance between buildings to ensure a high-quality ground floor experience and enhanced environment;
  - h. present a human scale of development at street level and comprise an attractive and legible streetscape that takes into account the use of the public realm for a variety of users and includes active uses at ground floor level;
  - i. provide an adequate quantum of high-quality communal open space, play areas and public realm (where residential uses are proposed), and where appropriate provide shared facilities at the ground floor level to encourage social cohesion;
  - j. demonstrate that the development does not adversely impact on the microclimate and amenity of the application site and the surrounding area;
  - k. demonstrate consideration of public safety requirements as part of the overall design, including the provision of safe evacuation routes and two staircases;
  - l. comply with civil aviation requirements and not interfere to an unacceptable degree with telecommunications, television and radio transmission networks and river radar equipment;
  - m. not prejudice future development potential of adjacent/ neighbouring buildings or plots; and
  - n. within Source Protection Zones, consider the importance of managing risks to groundwater resources that could be caused by deep-piled foundations.
6. Proposals for tall buildings should consider incorporating public viewing galleries within the development where appropriate.
7. Proposals within designated tall building zones should apply the following principles, as part of ensuring appropriate development of the townscape of the borough:

**Table 3: Tall building zone principles**

Tall building zone	Principles
<b>Zone A (Aldgate)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. This zone has a primarily office/commercial character.</li> <li>b. Building heights in this zone should step down towards the southern edge of this zone.</li> <li>c. An appropriate height for taller points in this zone is between 60-80m AOD. Appropriate heights on individual sites will be dependent upon the impact on heritage assets and their settings, including the protected view of the Tower of London from the Queen's Walk. Development must protect this view, and this may lead to a limitation of building heights on particular sites where this is necessary to preserve the view and the outstanding universal value of the Tower of London.</li> </ul>
<b>Zone B (Canary Wharf)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. This zone has a primarily office/commercial character in the centre, with increasingly residential character at the western, eastern, and northern edges.</li> <li>b. Development within this zone will be expected to positively contribute to the skyline of strategic importance and maintain the iconic image and character of Canary Wharf as a world financial and business centre.</li> </ul>
<b>Zone C (Marsh Wall and Millwall Inner Dock)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. This zone has a primarily residential character.</li> <li>b. Building heights along Marsh Wall should step down from the Canary Wharf TBZ to support its central emphasis</li> <li>c. Building heights should step down further from Marsh Wall and ensure that the integrity of the Canary Wharf TBZ is retained on the skyline when seen from places and bridges along the River Thames across Greater London, particularly in views identified in Policy PS8.</li> <li>d. Building heights should be consistent with the protection of London View Management Framework views, particularly those from Greenwich and the setting of Tower Bridge.</li> <li>e. An appropriate height for the tallest new developments in this zone is 180m AOD.</li> </ul>
<b>Zone D (Blackwall)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. This zone is of mixed residential/commercial character.</li> <li>b. This zone should remain lower in height and separated from the nearby Canary Wharf zone.</li> <li>c. Development heights should step down towards the western, northern, and eastern edges of this zone, and buildings should be of varying heights allowing sky views between them when viewed from the river or the Greenwich peninsula.</li> <li>d. An appropriate height for the tallest point in this zone is 130m AOD.</li> </ul>

Tall building zone	Principles
<b>Zone E (Leamouth)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. This zone has a primarily residential character.</li> <li>b. Tall buildings in this zone should respect the primacy of the Canary Wharf zone, and step down towards the River Thames and the East India Dock Basin and ensure glimpses and views across the zone.</li> <li>c. An appropriate height for the tallest point in this zone is 90m AOD.</li> </ul>
<b>Zone F</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. This zone consists of all areas suitable for tall buildings that do not fall within zones A to E. This zone has a mixed character, with variations across different neighbourhoods.</li> <li>b. Tall buildings in this area should show a variation in height to create a varied and interesting townscape, and should respond sensitively to the surrounding context.</li> <li>c. In locations where this zone is adjacent to zones A to E, heights within this zone should respond to the principles set out for zones A to E above, including through an appropriate step-down in height from adjacent developments.</li> <li>d. The tallest points should cluster around rail transport stations and within town centres.</li> <li>e. Buildings and clusters of buildings within this zone should not undermine the prominence of tall building zones A to E as the principal points of height in the borough.</li> <li>f. An appropriate height for the tallest points in this zone is 70m AOD.</li> </ul>
<b>Site Allocations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Proposals within site allocations should apply the design principles set out in the respective allocations in Section 4 of this plan.</li> <li>b. Height for new development should not exceed the heights set out in the allocations and in table 4.</li> </ul>

8. Proposals that are within a Tall Building Zone but adjacent to an area that is not suitable for tall buildings should demonstrate careful consideration of heritage concerns and how to appropriately transition between greater and lesser heights without undermining the significance of the borough's heritage assets or publicly accessible open spaces.

## Supporting text

14.23 This policy seeks to guide and manage the location, scale, and development of tall buildings in the borough in line with the requirements of the London Plan. In recent years, Tower Hamlets has consistently been one of the London boroughs with the largest pipeline of tall buildings under development, and with some of the tallest buildings in London. The significant amount of tall buildings being planned and constructed in the borough are important contributors to meeting high housing targets, and can also make an important contribution to affordable housing. However, tall buildings can also bring negative impacts for residents if poorly designed, such as creating poor microclimates with excessive wind, shadowing, or overheating, which can create unhealthy and dangerous places to live. For example, research undertaken for the High Density Living SPD found that 35% of residents living in the areas around high-density schemes including tall buildings felt that the buildings blocked sunlight to their homes; 40% of residents in high-density schemes said their homes overheated in the summer, and those living above the 20th floor were less comfortable opening their windows to help cool rooms down; and 34% of residents surveyed felt that high-density developments were damaging their privacy. The negative impacts of poorly designed tall buildings can also affect the wider area and detract from the iconic skylines of the borough or damage the significance of heritage assets. Therefore, it is important that the council ensures that tall buildings which come forward are of the highest possible quality and make a positive contribution to the borough, in order to ensure that we deliver the high-quality housing that is needed to meet our ambitions for providing homes and addressing overcrowding.

14.24 This policy takes a new approach to tall buildings from that previously implemented in Tower Hamlets. Under this plan, greater



height will be considered in a wider range of locations across the borough, with the additional density provided by these developments balanced out by a correspondingly greater level of affordable housing delivery. Important locations, such as conservation areas and nature sites, will still be protected from the potential negative impacts of taller buildings, but a greater level of height and densification will be considered in less sensitive areas of the borough, and should be focused around locations with high levels of accessibility to transport, shops, and other facilities.

14.25 Part 1 sets out a definition of tall buildings in Tower Hamlets, which is 30m height above ground level to the uppermost part of the structure,



including any plant or antennae. Sites that are below this height will not need to show consideration of the rest of the tall buildings policy, though they will have to comply with all remaining design policies in the Local Plan. Sites that are above this height will need to meet the remaining requirements of this policy, even when they are in locations identified as suitable for tall buildings under part 2 of the policy. When stating the height of a tall building as part of an application, in addition to the storey height, this should be described in metres and the height above ordnance datum (AOD).

14.26 Part 2 sets out the council's approach to the locations of tall buildings. Due to the exceptional need for affordable housing in the borough, and the ability of tall buildings to increase density and therefore increase the amount of affordable housing delivered, the council considers that there should be a relatively permissive approach to tall buildings in Tower Hamlets. Conservation areas, listed buildings, protected view corridors, and open spaces (where development would generally not be allowed anyway) are considered to be the only locations that are not acceptable on principle for tall buildings of some form. Proposals for tall buildings in these areas will not be supported. However, the rest of the borough is considered to be suitable for tall buildings of various heights. These tall building areas can be understood as falling into three categories:

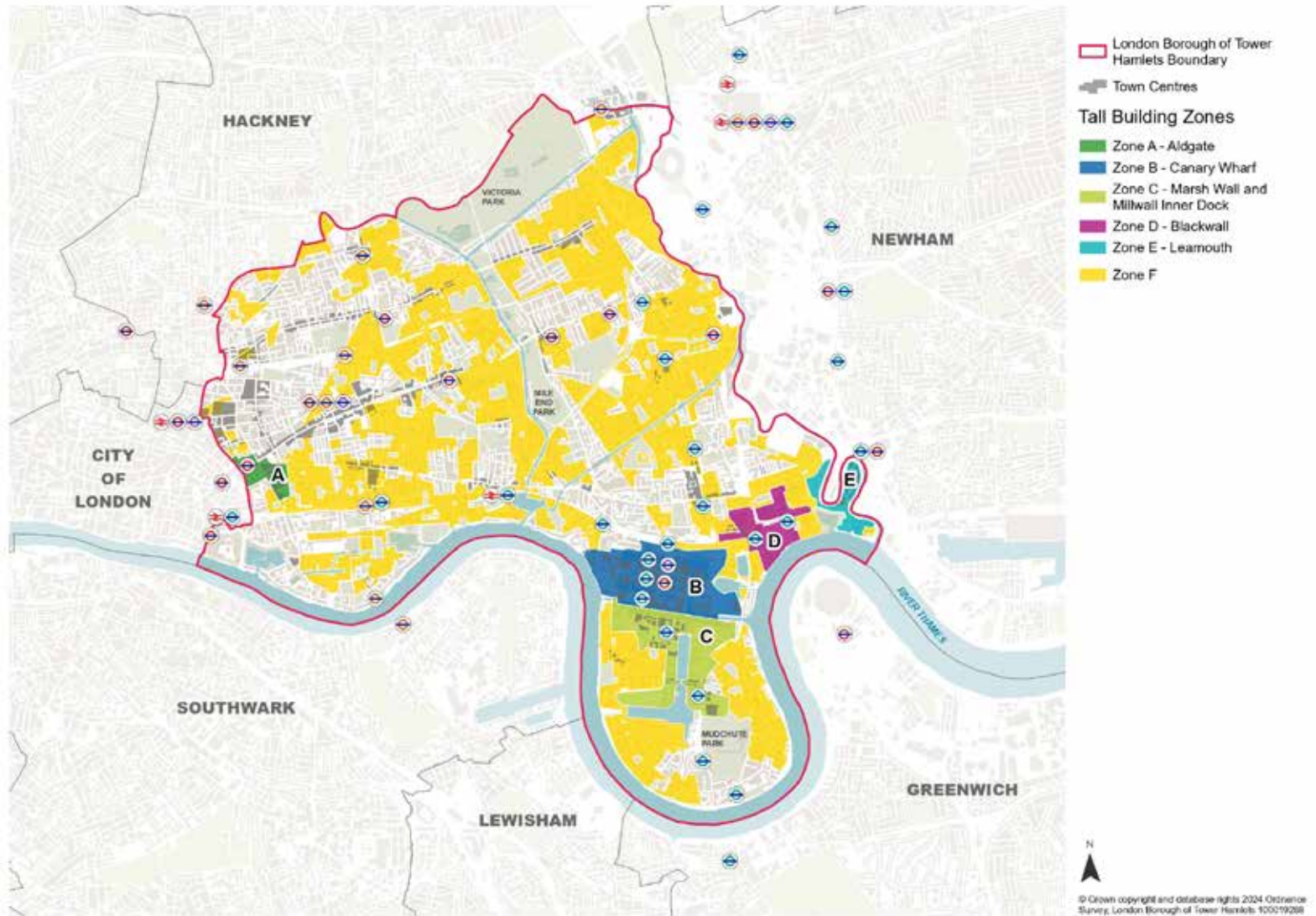
- Site allocations – these are specific locations where the potential for significant development has been identified. The details of site allocations are set out in section 4 of this plan and include design principles and appropriate acceptable heights. These appropriate acceptable heights will vary from site to site, depending on location

and context. All site allocations are expected to be able to deliver at least 500 new homes, and in some cases much more than this.

- Tall building zones A-E – these are the locations in the borough that are most appropriate for the tallest buildings. These areas already contain clusters of tall buildings, and in many cases contain other tall buildings under construction or with planning permission.
- Tall building zone F – this consists of the remaining areas of the borough that are considered suitable for tall buildings. By its nature, this area is geographically diffuse, including areas with a variety of different characters from town centres through to purely residential areas. Given the existing character of these areas, while they are considered suitable for some additional height, they should not be the locations for the tallest buildings in the borough, which should be concentrated in zones A-E.

14.27 The tall buildings zones are set out in figure 10 below. Appropriate heights for the tallest points- within each zone, and appropriate heights within the site allocations, are set out in table 4 below. Further principles for the development of these different zones are set out in part 6 of the policy.

Figure 10: Tall building zones



**Table 4: Appropriate heights in tall building zones and for site allocations**

Site allocation	Appropriate height for new development
1.1 Bishopsgate Goods Yard	105m AOD (Tower Hamlets side)
1.2 London Dock	89m AOD
1.3 Marian Place Gasworks	57m AOD
1.4 Whitechapel South	88m AOD
1.5 London Metropolitan University	63m AOD
1.6 Whitechapel North	52m AOD
1.7 Brick Lane and Pedley Street	70m AOD
2.1 Bow Common Lane	89m AOD
2.2 Chrisp Street	88m AOD
3.1 Ailsa Street	80m AOD
3.2 Leven Road	76m AOD
3.3 Aberfeldy Estate	80m AOD
3.4 Bromley-by-Bow	50m AOD
3.5 Blackwall Trading Estate and Leamouth Road Depot	N/A
3.6 Hackney Wick Station	43m AOD
3.7 Hepscott Road	32m AOD
3.9 Sweetwater	36m AOD
3.10 Teviot Estate	50m AOD
4.1 Aspen Way	91m AOD

Site allocation	Appropriate height for new development
4.2 Billingsgate Market	N/A
4.3 Crossharbour	115m AOD
4.4 Limeharbour	N/A
4.5 Marsh Wall East	N/A
4.6 Marsh Wall West	230m AOD
4.8 Millharbour	146m AOD
4.9 North Quay	N/A
4.10 Reuters	139m AOD
4.11 Riverside South	N/A
4.12 Westferry Printworks	110m AOD
4.13 Wood Wharf	N/A
4.14 10 Bank Street	N/A
4.17 Westferry and Park Place	N/A
Tall Building Zones	Appropriate height for tallest point in the zone
Tall building zone A – Aldgate	80m AOD
Tall building zone B – Canary Wharf	N/A
Tall building zone C – Marsh Wall and Millwall Inner Dock	180m AOD
Tall building zone D – Blackwall	130m AOD
Tall building zone E – Leamouth	90m AOD
Tall building zone F	70m AOD

14.28 Part 3 requires all tall building proposals, even when they are located within areas that have been identified as potentially suitable for tall buildings, to demonstrate how they provide significant public benefits to justify their development. Tall buildings and increased densities can be positive things, but they are not inherently so – they have to be accompanied by the public benefits that denser, taller buildings can unlock. The design criteria in this policy set out the circumstances in which tall buildings will be considered acceptable from a design perspective, but to be considered acceptable in the overall planning balance, where the potential negative impacts of taller buildings are considered against the benefits they bring, they must provide a significant proportion of the affordable housing that the borough so urgently needs. To that end, to be considered acceptable, tall building proposals must meet or exceed the 40% affordable housing target for the borough, and provide a suitable mix of unit sizes, including family homes, to meet the identified needs of the borough. In relation to affordable housing, proposals should also meet the tenure mix requiring 85% social rented housing and 15% intermediate housing. Proposals for tall buildings that do not meet this threshold will not be supported. For more details on affordable housing requirements, refer to policy HF2 – affordable housing and housing mix.

14.29 This policy sets out appropriate heights for tall buildings across the borough. However, precise heights will still need to be considered on a site-by-site basis, and each proposal will be assessed on its own merits – in some places within a Tall Building Zone it may be possible to build up to the highest appropriate height, but in other places a lower height may be required for a number of reasons (including, but not limited to,

elements such as microclimate, daylight/sunlight impacts, heritage impacts, and townscape impacts).

14.30 In all cases, the height that is proposed on a particular site should be the one that is demonstrated by a design-led process to be the most appropriate for the context. Part 4 of this policy sets out the criteria that should be considered when determining height on particular sites. Proposals should also consider the specific tall building zone principles in part 6 of the policy.

14.31 Tall buildings should vary in height, so as to not present a 'wall' of development, and to avoid negative impacts on daylight, sunlight, overlooking, and microclimates. Tall buildings within a group should be carefully positioned so that sky views can be experienced from street level and so that tall buildings do not have an overbearing impact on streets and spaces within the area.

14.32 Part 5 sets out a number of design criteria against which tall building proposals will be assessed. This is to ensure that when tall buildings are built, they are well-designed and make a positive contribution to both the directly surrounding context and public realm in which they are located, but also the wider townscape and skyline of the borough. Tall buildings should be designed in a way that promotes the health and well-being of all their residents, as well as those who live in the surrounding area, including through careful consideration of accessibility for people with disabilities and gender-inclusive design. The High Density Living SPD identifies a number of health and well-being concerns with high-density developments (which often, though not always, will include tall buildings) relating to space for children to play



and socialise, sense of community, adequate space for domestic tasks, home working, and keeping pets, a lack of flexibility and storage space in layouts, and problems relating to daylight, overheating, privacy, noise, and wind. However, while poorly-designed tall buildings can exacerbate these problems, well-designed tall buildings can provide high-quality housing that encourages health and well-being. The High Density Living SPD suggests a range of interventions that can ensure tall buildings achieve this.

14.33 The criteria will guide the visual and contextual development of tall buildings in the borough. In order to enable assessment against the criteria, proposals should be accompanied by accurate visual representations within the design and access statement showing the impacts of the proposal in near, middle and distant views, including the public realm and its appearance at street level. The views to be included should be discussed as part of the pre-application process. Major and strategic development proposals should be accompanied by a 3D model of the proposed development in a format compatible with the council's IT systems, ideally provided at pre-application process as well as application stage, to allow officers to assess potential viewpoints.

14.34 Due to their visual prominence, it is important that tall buildings are of exceptional architectural quality, as expressed in part 5(c). New tall buildings should significantly enhance their immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. Visually prominent plant, building maintenance units (BMU) and/or antennae at the top of a building will not be acceptable and should be appropriately concealed as part of the architectural design.

14.35 Tall buildings should be designed to express elegance, proportionality, and verticality in a form that is consistent from every angle. To that end, generally slab blocks and bulky forms should be avoided.

14.36 The choice of facing materials is important to assist in visually weaving a new building into its established surroundings or, where appropriate, provide a contrast. Design should draw on local character and distinctiveness when selecting materials and help reinforce the identity and sense of place within an area. The choice of materials needs to be carefully tested through 3D modelling and visualisations to fully understand their impact. Consideration should be given as to how design detailing is perceived from close up, and middle and long distance views. Materials should be durable and offer longevity, and should be fully justified in relation to the typical palette of materials and colours used in its location. Bright colours and tones that are visually prominent should generally be avoided on tall buildings, particularly within the setting of sensitive heritage assets or when visible in sensitive views.

14.37 Tall buildings house large numbers of people and can support a range of activities, including the provision of amenity areas (e.g. private, communal and public spaces) and active uses. In the majority of cases, tall buildings are communities in their own right given the number of inhabitants they have. In relation to part 5(i), where they are residential, tall buildings should deliver appropriate quantities of high-quality amenity and play space for tenants and occupants. Communal open spaces and children's play space should typically be at the centre of

the development and be well-overlooked. Spaces should be accessible for those who require level access, and should be oriented to maximise sunlight and daylight. Communal spaces should establish platforms for interactions between users to support a sense of belonging. Ground floors of tall buildings, where possible, should introduce uses which would benefit the wider neighbourhood. Tall buildings should also foster social cohesion and support integration between local communities.

14.38 Further guidance on how to achieve good design for social interaction in high density environments can be found in the Tower Hamlets High Density Living SPD.

14.39 In relation to part 5(j), proposals involving tall buildings will need to demonstrate how any adverse impacts on the microclimate will be mitigated in relation to wind, overshadowing, daylight and sunlight, solar glare, and light pollution. Buildings over 25 metres in height and/ or substantially taller than surrounding buildings must be tested against the following amended Lawson criteria in relation to wind.

**Table 5: Amended Lawson criteria for wind testing**

Category	Mean and gust equivalent mean (GEM) wind speed (5% exceedance)	Description
Frequent sitting	2.5m/s	Acceptable for frequent outdoor sitting use, e.g. restaurant, café.
Occasional sitting	4m/s	Acceptable for occasional outdoor seating, e.g. general public outdoor spaces, balconies/terraces intended for occasional use, etc.
Standing	6m/s	Acceptable for entrances, bus stops, covered walkways or passageways beneath buildings.
Walking	8m/s	Acceptable for external pavements, walkways.
Uncomfortable	>8m/s	Not comfortable for regular pedestrian access.

14.40 Strong winds are to be assessed as exceedances of 15m/s, and are to be mitigated to safe levels.

14.41 The testing of the following scenarios will be required as part of the planning application:

- baseline (i.e. the situation at the time of submission);
- the proposed development without mitigation/landscaping;
- the proposed development with surrounding cumulative developments without mitigation/landscaping;
- the proposed development with the inclusion of mitigation/landscaping; and
- the proposed development with surrounding cumulative developments with the inclusion of mitigation/landscaping.

14.42 Specific details on the required mitigation measures must be provided, including where and how these measures will be implemented. It must be ensured that all mitigation measures and landscaping proposed and tested in the wind microclimate assessment are proposed within the relevant planning documents, including the landscaping strategy.

14.43 It is essential that any required mitigation measures are tested as part of the application. This is to ensure that the mitigation is adequate and can therefore be relied upon. The mitigation must be implemented prior to occupation of any part of the development and retained for the duration of the development.

14.44 In relation to part 5(k), all buildings of 18m or more in height will

be expected to provide at least two staircases as part of improved fire safety measures. This is in line with expected changes to the building regulations.

14.45 In relation to part 5(l), proposals involving buildings 90 metres in height or greater must be referred to the Civil Aviation Authority and London City Airport to ensure they will not be a potential hazard to aviation safety and navigation, in view of the proximity to London City Airport.

14.46 Part 5(m) relates to situations in which the delivery of tall buildings on one site could potentially harm the delivery of a similar level of density on an adjacent site if development on the first site is delivered badly. This can particularly be the case where buildings are proposed right against the boundary line of a plot, which could make it difficult for adjacent plots to achieve Local Plan requirements relating to privacy, overlooking, and daylight and sunlight.

14.47 The criteria set out in part 5 also apply to the redevelopment of existing tall buildings (including those outside the tall building zones). The presence of an existing tall building on the site will not in itself be regarded as justification for replacing it with another tall building – all proposals for tall buildings will need to be justified with reference to this policy and other policies that make up the development plan.

14.48 Part 6 of the policy sets out the requirement to consider the incorporation of public viewing galleries within tall building developments. Such arrangements should be made free to enter and publicly accessible. Such galleries should typically be located at the top

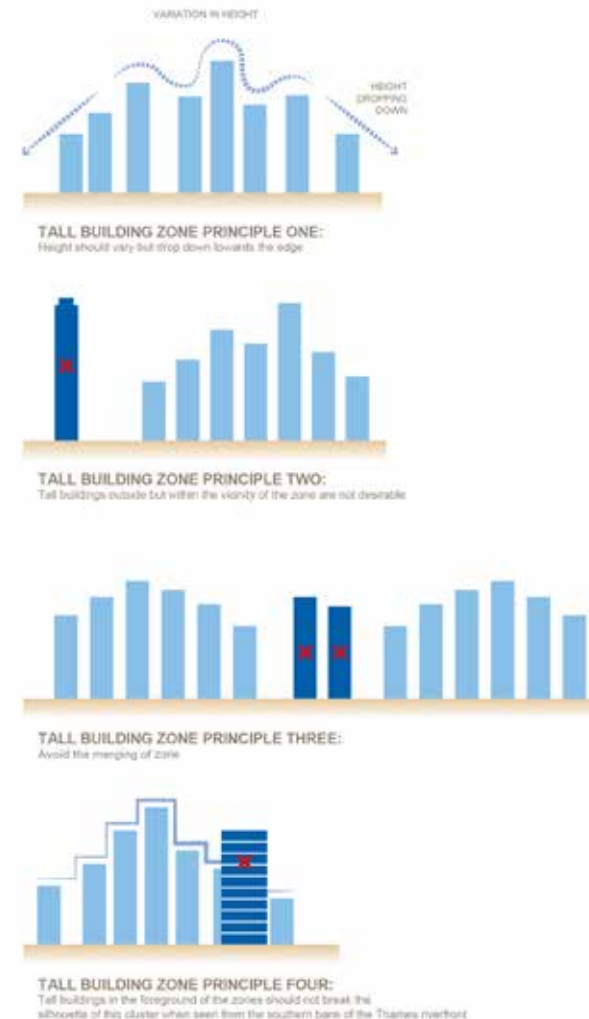
of the building to afford wider views across London. This would support Part D of London Plan Policy D9 and provide greater opportunities to appreciate London's skyline from different parts of the borough.

14.49 Part 7 sets out specific principles for the tall building zones in the borough. Within these zones, tall buildings will be considered acceptable in principle, but it is still necessary to have some principles for how they are delivered, to ensure that clusters of tall buildings work harmoniously together, present a positive image of the borough, and do not have negative impacts in terms of microclimate, daylight/sunlight, heritage, or townscape. These principles will allow the council to assess proposals within the tall building zones and determine whether they are of appropriate height within the context.

14.50 The height of tall buildings within a zone should reflect the role and function of the zone. Zones A to E are considered to be the principal points of height within the borough, and these zones are where the tallest buildings in the borough will be delivered. Within these zones, normally the tallest elements should be located towards the centre of the zone, which should mark a particular feature or location.

14.51 Development will be required to step down towards the edges of the tall building zones. Variations in height will be encouraged to create a more dynamic skyline. Figure 11 demonstrates principles for the tall building zones that should be considered as part of the design-led process for proposals within tall building zones.

**Figure 11: General tall building zone principles**





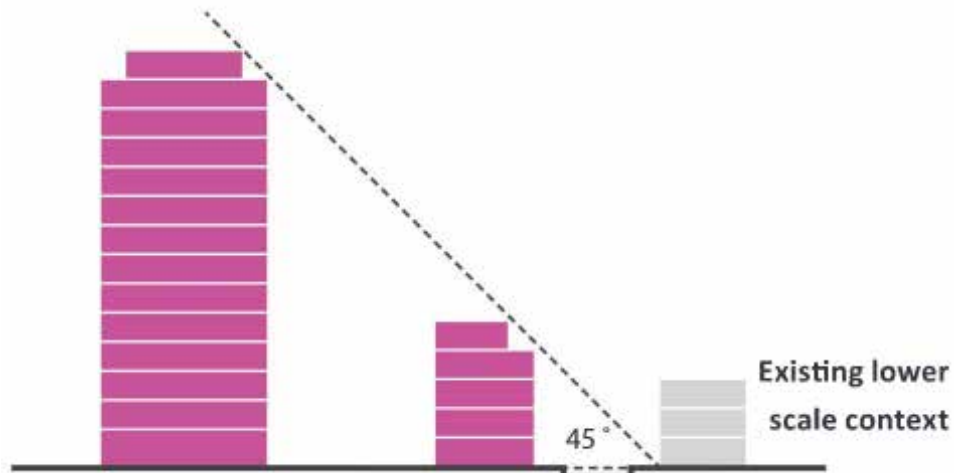
14.52 Zone F represents a much more geographically diffuse and varied area than zones A to E. This zone illustrates the principle that much of the borough is suitable for relatively tall buildings, especially where these deliver public benefits including affordable housing. To this end, the zone contains all the character areas identified in the Characterisation and Growth Study which are not already within Tall Building Zones A to E or within site allocations, and which are not disqualified by means of being located within Conservation Areas, protected viewpoints, or nature or open space designations. However, to ensure the primacy of zones A to E and to ensure that very tall individual buildings are not brought forward on inappropriate sites far away from existing clusters, heights within this zone should be limited to 70m, and the tallest buildings within the zones should form clusters around rail transport stations or be located within town centres, where the higher level of accessibility to public transports, shops, and services can better accommodate higher densities. The threshold of 70m has been selected as this is the definition of a tall building in the City of London, which is adjacent to Tower Hamlets. By limiting heights to this level, we can gradually and sustainably increase the density of Tower Hamlets while respecting the context of heights in the City. Locating taller buildings in these areas can aid legibility, helping people find their way to town centres and transport hubs.

14.53 Site allocations are also considered to be areas suitable for tall buildings, and specific heights and design principles for tall buildings within site allocations are set out in more detail in section 4 of this plan.

14.54 Part 8 highlights the extra consideration that is required where areas that are suitable for tall buildings meet areas that are not suitable. In these areas there are likely to be particular heritage concerns that

may necessitate lower building heights in order to avoid harm to heritage assets. The council has a statutory duty to pay special attention to protecting listed buildings and preserving or enhancing the character of conservation areas, and tall buildings may be harmful to the character or appearance of conservation areas in situations where modest building heights, consistent rooflines, or an open street scene form part of that special character. In some instances, taller buildings may cause harm by disrupting important views, overpowering areas of lower rise character with historic significance, or causing unacceptable harm to the setting of a conservation area or listed building. The cumulative impact of development on open spaces will also need to be considered in some instances, to ensure that open spaces remain attractive and enjoyable for residents and are not permanently in shadow. Heights in these locations may be expected to 'step up' more gradually from the non-tall building areas to reduce harm. As a frame of reference for appropriate heights in locations where tall buildings may be placed in close proximity to areas of lower height, an angular plane of 45 degrees should be measured from surrounding properties in the lower height area to determine appropriate heights above which new development should not extend (though there may be further issues relating to heritage impacts that necessitate lower heights even than this).

Figure 12: Example of 45 degree angular plane taken from existing lower scale context



14.55 The heights of buildings within the area suitable for tall buildings will not be taken as a precedent to justify tall buildings within the area not considered suitable for tall buildings.

**London Plan policies:**

- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- D9 Tall buildings
- D12 Fire safety

**Local Plan policies:**

- HF2 Affordable housing and housing mix
- HF9 Housing standards and quality
- BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network
- BO3 Water spaces
- BO6 Play and recreation spaces

**Evidence base:**

- Views and Landmarks Study, 2024
- Characterisation and Growth Study, 2023
- Historic England Advice Note 4: Tall Buildings, 2022
- Fire Safety LPG – Consultation Draft, 2022
- Tall Buildings SPD Evidence Base Report, 2021
- High Density Living SPD, 2020
- Character and Context SPG, 2014
- Urban Structure and Characterisation Study and Addendum, 2009, 2016
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines

## Policy PS3 Securing design quality

1. Development is required to meet the highest standards of design, layout and construction which promotes health and well-being and respects and positively responds to the context, townscape, landscape, public realm, and the needs of the community at different spatial scales. To achieve this, development must:

- a. be of an appropriate scale, height, mass, orientation, bulk, layout, and form in its site and context;
- b. integrate positively with existing development in the surrounding area, including having regard to the existing urban grain and established plot division;
- c. provide coherent building lines, roof lines and setbacks, complement streetscape rhythm and associated landscapes (including boundary treatments) and ensure optimal plot coverages to avoid over-development;
- d. ensure that the architectural language – scale, composition and articulation of building form, design of detailing, elements and materials applied on elevations – complements and enhances the immediate and wider surroundings;
- e. use high-quality design, materials and finishes to ensure buildings are robust, efficient and fit for the life of the development;
- f. consider the use of colour to respond contextually to the character of surrounding areas and improve legibility;



- g. ensure that buildings are designed and laid out in such a way as to be adaptable and accessible for potential future uses and users;
- h. ensure that the health and wellbeing of all users, particularly vulnerable people, is considered throughout the design process;
- i. use design and construction techniques to ensure that the development does not result in unacceptably harmful impacts

- arising from overheating, wind, air pollution, light pollution noise pollution, or unacceptable odours whilst optimising energy and waste efficiency;
- j. provide a mix and range of communal and publicly accessible open spaces and water spaces, and enhanced connectivity to existing open and water space;
  - k. maintain privacy for residents within habitable rooms (including residents of existing nearby buildings) and avoid overlooking where possible, or an unacceptable increase in the sense of enclosure;
  - l. ensure new and existing habitable rooms have an acceptable outlook, and maximise dual aspect units;
  - m. ensure new and existing habitable rooms provide an acceptable level of ventilation;
  - n. seek to maximise levels of daylight and sunlight in new residential developments and ensure adequate levels of daylight and sunlight for new residential occupiers in habitable rooms and in amenity spaces within the development;
  - o. not result in an unacceptable material deterioration of the sunlight and daylight conditions in habitable rooms of surrounding development and not resulting in an unacceptable level of overshadowing to surrounding open space and private outdoor space;
  - p. not create unacceptable levels of artificial light, odour, noise, fumes, vibrations, or dust pollution during the life of the development; and
- q. consider implementing suicide prevention safety measures where necessary and where they can be feasibly and appropriately incorporated into the design of the building.
2. Development with a density of 1,100 habitable rooms per hectare or more must demonstrate how it has considered the requirements of the Tower Hamlets High Density Living SPD in the design of the proposal.
  3. The council will require the use of planning conditions or planning obligations to ensure that the design quality of applications is carried through to the final delivery of a development.



## Supporting text

14.56 This policy sets out the general design criteria against which all new development will be assessed. The purpose of this policy is to outline the key elements of high-quality design so that new development creates buildings, spaces and places that are sustainable, accessible, attractive, durable, and well-integrated into their surroundings and that are responsive to the character of the area, thus contributing to a better quality of life for residents.

14.57 The experience of the urban environment is collective and cumulative, and even small elements of poor design can significantly detract from how we experience, understand, and value a place. Good design, on the other hand, can contribute positively to the health and well-being of residents and the wider community. Therefore, all development will be expected to meet the highest possible standard of design.

14.58 Policy PS1 requires a design-led approach to new development and Policy PS3 complements this strategic approach to design by detailing some of the specific elements of good design that should be considered. This policy does not exhaust everything that should be considered as part of that design-led process, and in particular a design-led process will also be heavily influenced by engagement and consultation with the community – but the requirements of this policy will help to ensure that the design-led process is successful.

14.59 Parts 1(a) to (j) sets out requirements to ensure that new development is of an appropriate design, layout, and construction to create sustainable and adaptable new communities. The design, siting and layout of new development should be considered in the wider context and be sensitive to the existing character and identity of the

area. This does not require proposals for new development to copy surrounding buildings – imaginative and innovative interpretations of the local context can be the starting point for high-quality architecture and can contribute positively to the character of a neighbourhood, but only where they have been carefully considered, refined, and consulted on to ensure that they respond to the needs of the community.

14.60 New development should be well-integrated with existing development in the surrounding area (part 1(b)). This can be related to the physical characteristics of buildings, such as materials and form, but can just as importantly be related to the social elements of design. It is important that new development does not 'turn its back on' existing communities and create a feeling of exclusivity or separateness. New development should be seen and felt to benefit and contribute to existing communities, rather than to stand apart from them or to feel like an imposition on existing communities.

14.61 With regard to roof lines (part 1(c)), plant should ideally be located below ground rather than on the roof. However, where provided on the roof, it should be fully integrated into the form and design of the roof to avoid compromising the appearance of the building, including the profile and appearance from neighbouring buildings and in long views.

14.62 Ground floors should be designed with a finer level of architectural detailing to ensure their legibility from street level; and on larger scale buildings, architectural detail should be sufficiently pronounced to remain readable features from a distance (part 1(d)).

14.63 In line with the policies in the Clean and Green Future chapter of this Plan, it is important that the design of new development takes account of the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This should include the use of materials that are robust and long-lasting and

which also have the potential to be reused in line with circular economy principles (part 1(e)); and consideration of how to use the orientation of buildings and external shading features such as overhangs, recesses, Louvres or brise soleil to control the temperature of indoor spaces and avoid overheating without the use of energy-intensive air conditioning systems.

14.64 Planning applications (including temporary permissions) will need to include technical information regarding materials, detailing, and finishes to demonstrate their longevity, quality and relationship to the local context.

14.65 Buildings and spaces should be designed to be adaptable and flexible from the outset, enabling them to respond to the changing needs and lifestyles of the occupier and allow for a variety of uses over time (part 1(g)).

14.66 The health and wellbeing of all users (part 1(h)), particularly vulnerable people, should be considered throughout the design process, and opportunities to promote health equity through design should be explored. Policy DV3 on healthy communities looks at this requirement in more detail.

14.67 Communal amenity space (part 1(j)) should be shared by all housing tenures – if it is not possible to make all amenity space shared, the majority of it should be. Amenity space should be spread throughout the development to avoid the burden of it falling on one tenure.

14.68 Amenity space should be easily accessible from residential entrances and should be well overlooked. The primary communal amenity space in a development should be located outdoors. Part of

the communal amenity space should promote physical activity such as outdoor gyms or gardening, and part should encourage rest and relaxation.

14.69 Parts 1(k) to (p) set out requirements relating to residential amenity. For the purposes of these parts, a habitable room is defined as a room within a dwelling, the primary use of which is for living, sleeping, or dining. This definition includes living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, studies, home offices, and conservatories but excludes halls, corridors, bathrooms, and lavatories. Kitchens which provide space for dining and have windows will be considered habitable rooms and should be included in the assessment of amenity impacts.

14.70 Part 1(k) of the policy seeks to ensure there is sufficient privacy and no unreasonable loss of amenity from overlooking between habitable rooms of adjacent residential properties, or onto schools and other community facilities (e.g. health centres) or private open spaces. The degree of overlooking depends on the distance and the horizontal and vertical angles of view. However, a distance of approximately 18 metres between windows of habitable rooms reduces inter-visibility to a degree acceptable to most people. This figure will be applied as a guideline depending upon the design and layout of the development.

14.71 For the purposes of part 1(l), outlook is defined as the visual amenity enjoyed by occupants when looking out of their windows or from their garden. To achieve acceptable outlooks, single aspect dwellings should be avoided – in line with the London Plan Guidance on Housing Design Standards, homes are expected to be at least dual aspect unless there are exceptional circumstances which make this impractical or undesirable. The definition of a dual aspect unit will be that

used in Appendix 3 of the Housing Design Standards LPG – this means that “the provision of bay windows, stepped frontage, shallow recesses, or projecting facades does not constitute dual aspect”. If dwellings overlook bin stores, then screening and landscaping should be used to limit the impact.

14.72 Part 1(n) seeks to ensure that the design of new development optimises the levels of daylight and sunlight. Part 1(o) seeks to ensure that new developments minimise the impact of the loss of daylight and sunlight and unacceptable overshadowing (including on amenity space and public open space). A sunlight and daylight assessment must accompany all major planning applications and smaller schemes where adverse effects on daylight and sunlight levels are anticipated. It should follow the methodology set out in the most recent version of Building Research Establishment’s Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight guidance and the British Standard Code of Practice for daylighting, the results of which must be submitted with the planning application. Daylight and sunlight assessments should also include consideration of the potential redevelopment of adjacent sites, so as not to prejudice their redevelopment.

14.73 Part 1(p) seeks to ensure that artificial lighting is well-designed and uses appropriate light levels. For the purpose of this policy, light pollution is defined as the adverse effect of artificial lighting and includes glare, light spillage and sky glow. Odour and fumes from commercial developments can also have an adverse impact on the amenity of surrounding residents. Development proposals should refer to the most up-to-date guidance and best practice on the control of odours and noise from commercial kitchen exhaust systems.

14.74 Part 1(q) encourages consideration of suicide prevention safety measures where this is necessary – for instance, to reduce the risk

of suicide from falling. This could involve the installation of physical barriers, but also the use of creative design to achieve outcomes such as the reduction of fall height. Areas with an identifiable suicide risk could also benefit from the installation of signage promoting support services. Applicants are encouraged to discuss this with the council at the earliest opportunity, to better understand how such measures can be sensitively incorporated into the design of the development.

14.75 Further guidance on a successful design approach can be found in supplementary guidance, in particular the Tower Hamlets High Density Living SPD. Part 2 of the policy specifies that this document must be considered as part of any proposal with a density of 1,100 habitable rooms per hectare or above. However, developments that are high density but below this threshold are also encouraged to consider the provisions of this document as part of the design-led process, as it includes ‘best practice’ guidance that can help to ensure that the proposal is acceptable in design terms.

14.76 It is important to ensure that the quality of design that is granted permission is carried through to the final delivery of a development, both to ensure that high-quality design comes forward in the borough and also to provide trust in the process among local communities, who can feel confident that what is permitted is what will be developed. Part 3 of the policy sets out that the council may, where it is considered appropriate and necessary, require the use of planning conditions or planning obligations to ensure that design quality is carried through into the detailed design and construction of the development in accordance with London Plan Policy D4. This may include architect retention clauses or requirements for design certification. Providing the maximum possible level of design detail at application stage can reduce the need for later design amendments that could negatively affect development quality.

14.77 Further considerations relating to design quality can be found in the council's document Securing Design Quality – A Practice Note.

**London Plan policies:**

- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- D5 Inclusive design
- D6 Housing quality and standards

**Local Plan policies:**

- DV3 Healthy communities
- CG2 Low energy buildings
- CG4 Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy
- CG5 Overheating
- CG8 Water efficient design
- CG9 Air quality
- CG10 Noise and vibration
- HF9 Housing standards and quality
- BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network
- BO3 Water spaces
- BO6 Play and recreation spaces

**Evidence base:**

- Characterisation and Growth Study, 2023
- Gender Inclusive Design: Creating a safe, inclusive and restorative borough, 2023
- Securing Design Quality – A Practice Note, 2023
- London Plan Guidance – Housing Design Standards, 2023
- Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, 2022
- National Design Guide, 2021
- High Density Living SPD, 2020
- Planning and Social Cohesion Evidence Base, 2020
- Preventing Suicides in Public Places, 2015
- Character and Context SPG, 2014
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines



## Policy PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm

1. Development is required to contribute to improving and enhancing connectivity, permeability, and legibility across the borough, ensuring a well-connected, joined-up, safe and easily accessible street network and wider network of public spaces through:
  - a. improving connectivity to public transport hubs, town centres, open spaces, water spaces, social and community facilities and surrounding areas;
  - b. maintaining existing public routes or appropriately re-providing access routes during the construction phases of new development;
  - c. incorporating the principles of 'secured by design', where these can improve safety and perception of safety for pedestrians and other users without significantly conflicting with other elements of good design including those set out in this policy; and
  - d. incorporating an inclusive 'healthy streets' approach to the design of new developments and improvements to adjacent streets where appropriate, particularly streets that are part of the green grid.
2. Development is expected to optimise the coverage and effectiveness of active frontages in order to create routes throughout the borough that feel safe for all users through:
  - a. prioritising active frontages along main roads and primary routes through sites;
  - b. designing commercial and community uses so that the most

- c. not including frosted or otherwise obscured glazing along routes that are providing active frontages;
      - d. designing ground floor amenity uses in residential buildings so that more active uses are visible from the street or from primary routes through the site;
      - e. locating entrances in visible, safe and accessible locations;
      - f. ensuring that ground floor units can be accessed directly from the street;
      - g. creating opportunities for natural and passive surveillance, particularly at ground level;
      - h. locating inactive uses away from main roads and primary routes through sites; and
      - i. designing inactive frontages to be more attractive and, where appropriate, visually permeable.
3. Development is required to positively contribute to the public realm through:
  - a. providing clear definitions and enclosure through building frontage and massing, and connection and continuity of pedestrian desire lines and street activities, at a human scale;
  - b. providing a range of public spaces that can function as places for social gatherings and other recreational uses;
  - c. reducing visual clutter and obstacles in the public realm of the scheme and the adjacent area;
  - d. ensuring balconies do not over-hang on the public highway or onto neighbouring properties, civic spaces and public buildings,

such as schools;

- e. avoiding the creation of gated communities which do not promote socially inclusive and cohesive neighbourhoods or connectivity between places;
  - f. using high-quality, robust, low-maintenance, and trip-proof materials for footways, parking spaces and local streets to create attractive, accessible, comfortable and useable public spaces;
  - g. integrating high-quality public art into the public realm, especially at gateway locations or other appropriate landmarks, and retaining existing good quality art in the locality of new development, where possible;
  - h. ensuring that all new streets contain native or drought-resistant trees or otherwise maximise planting and soft landscaping to provide visual and environmental relief from hard landscaping, buildings and traffic supported by a planting management and maintenance plan;
  - i. designing out concealment points and leftover spaces;
  - j. creating clear sightlines and visual permeability, and improving legibility of the surrounding area at all times of the day and night; and
  - k. providing clearly lit, well-signed, and direct routes for night-time use.
4. The council will support proposals for suicide prevention safety measures to be added to bridges over water, roads, or rail, where these measures do not impede access to the transport or active travel network and are compatible with the conservation of heritage assets. The council



will also support proposals for suicide prevention measures along waterfronts where these do not impede access or reduce the ability to use water spaces and adjacent waterfronts for leisure and recreational purposes.

5. Spaces underneath and within 5.5m from the edge of raised DLR viaducts should remain free from permanent structures and should be publicly accessible. Proposals to activate these spaces and promote healthy lifestyles, active travel, community activities, emissions reduction, and economic activity within the surrounding area will be supported.

## Supporting text

14.78 As Tower Hamlets has some of the highest population densities in London, the quality of streets and spaces is important to maintain and create a high quality of life. This policy aims to deliver an attractive, legible, accessible, and well-designed network of streets and spaces which promote social interaction and inclusion which people of all ages and abilities can value and enjoy, and where they feel safe and comfortable. The public realm in the borough varies considerably, from the high-quality treatments around Canary Wharf (e.g. natural stone paving and tree planting) and conservation areas, through to the isolated, post-war streetscapes beyond Canary Wharf and Aldgate, as well as the severance arising from major arterial routes, such as Aspen Way and The Highway, around Bow, Poplar, Limehouse and the Tower of London. New development should always aim to provide a public realm which is an improvement on what was there before.

14.79 Part 1 encourages better connectivity and permeability around sites, encouraging people to easily and safely get around the borough – where possible, using active travel methods such as walking or cycling.

14.80 Connectivity refers to the number of connections and their integration, layout and relationship to one another and the impact this has when moving from one point to another. Permeability refers to the variety of pleasant, convenient, accessible, and safe routes through an area and the capacity of those routes to carry the movement of people, whilst avoiding visual clutter in the streetscape and barriers to pedestrian/cycle movement as much as possible. Legibility is the degree to which a place can be easily understood and moved around in.

14.81 In order to improve accessibility and increase movement, new development will also be required to follow a street hierarchy that

puts pedestrians and cyclists first and promotes streets as links for movement and as public places in their own right to ensure a strategic, accessible and safe street network across the borough. Development proposals should provide a clear understanding of the street hierarchy in the surrounding area, and also how new streets created by the development will be incorporated into the hierarchy. The hierarchy consists of:

- Main streets – focusing on movement, and prioritising the safe and convenient flow of buses, cyclists and pedestrians;
- Secondary streets – balancing movement of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians with attractive and convenient places where people gather and dwell; and
- Local streets – focusing on place, and protecting and enhancing the character and social gathering function that streets provide, alongside their function of providing safe and convenient access to individual properties.

14.82 Part 1(c) seeks to embed the principles of 'secured by design' into the design and layout of new development. Secured by design is a police-led initiative which focuses on how the design of the public realm can create places that are safe or unsafe, or perceived as such by those who use them. Developers should refer to the relevant guidance in relation to counter-terrorist and crime prevention security and engage fully in the pre-application process in order to ensure that measures to mitigate risks are incorporated into developments, where appropriate.

14.83 Where there is a need to ensure the safety of streets and public spaces, particularly crowded places, the correct level of protection should be provided without compromising the ability to create aesthetic and functional public spaces. Proposals should not impose undue restrictions on other occupiers in the area. Proposals should focus on

creating places that feel safe while accommodating a range of uses, rather than through reducing activity by removing features such as seating.

14.84 Part 1(d) encourages development to apply the GLA's 'healthy streets' approach to the design of new public realm spaces. This approach aims to improve the character of London streets and the experience of those who use them, including those with additional accessibility needs. The approach is based on monitoring and improving ten indicators of what life on a healthy street should look like:

- Clean air
- Pedestrians from all walks of life
- Easy to cross
- Shade and shelter
- Places to stop and rest
- Not too noisy
- People choose walking, cycling and public transport
- People feel safe
- Things to see and do
- People feel relaxed

14.85 Further guidance on the implementation of the healthy streets approach can be found in the GLA guidance Healthy Streets for London (2017) and Guide to the Healthy Streets Indicators (2017).

14.86 Part 2 requires the creation of active frontages as part of new developments. Active frontages refers to areas at the ground level of a building where there is a feeling of activity, and the potential for activity. This can help to encourage a feeling of safety and sociability in the public realm by ensuring that users of the space – whether just

passing by or dwelling in the space for some time – feel that they are not isolated and vulnerable.

14.87 Development proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of where active frontages need to be prioritised, gained from a design-led approach to the proposal which includes consultation and engagement with a wide range of potential users of the space. Development should strike a careful balance between the need for privacy of residents and occupiers of a building, and the positioning of more sociable and active uses in such a way that they create active frontages and signpost legible and safe routes through sites.

14.88 Development proposals should avoid situations where the street level is forced to accommodate too many service functions (for example, bike storage, plant space, waste storage, etc.), leading to excessive amounts of inactive frontage. These service functions are important, but in many instances may be better accommodated as part of a basement, rather than creating large areas of street level 'dead space'.

14.89 Part 3 provides more general principles for ensuring an attractive and well-designed public realm. Public realm should be comfortable and functional, well-integrated with surrounding areas (including London's green grid network), and support the delivery of successful and vibrant places.

14.90 Development should create streets and spaces with a degree of enclosure by assisting in defining the edges of the public realm, through continuous building lines and active frontages. Development should avoid creating concealment points and external lighting should be an integral component in ensuring safety and security within the public realm in line with the principles of secured by design. To reduce street



clutter, street lighting should be discreetly integrated into the design of buildings, where this is possible and does not adversely affect levels of light pollution for residents.

14.91 Balconies overhanging the public footway/ highway or onto neighbouring properties and buildings and spaces of civic importance have the potential to harm the safety and amenity of local occupiers, residents, and the public highway as well as cause overlooking, especially at the ground floor level.

14.92 Gated communities do not contribute to a well-connected, accessible, and permeable public realm, or socially inclusive and cohesive neighbourhoods. Such proposals will be resisted, in line with the London Plan, and alternative means of providing safety and perceived safety should be explored through the implementation of good urban design principles.

14.93 Proposals should also use complementary elements, such as materials, finishes, furniture, landscaping, signage, lighting, and public art, to ensure that development and the public realm is at a human scale and puts people at the heart of the design process, so that the importance of how people view and feel about their environment is recognised. This should include ensuring design features meet the health and well-being needs of people (e.g., the provision of shade, shelter, and places to rest, including seating with supportive backs and arm rests). With regard to public art, efforts should be made to ensure that any such installations are as inclusive as possible and have been developed with the engagement of the community.

14.94 The inclusion of high-quality public art into the public realm is encouraged. Proposals for public art should be durable and robust,

positioned so as not to create street clutter and obstruct the movement of pedestrians or cyclists, and make a positive contribution to the character of the local area, including by recognising local history and cultural heritage. Developers should engage with the council at an early stage in the process to best determine what will be appropriate and how public art can be successfully integrated within a site. The council will seek to secure appropriate maintenance of public art through conditions or other legal agreements.

14.95 The NPPF encourages new streets to be tree-lined, and this policy asks for new streets to incorporate trees where possible and to also include other forms of urban greening. This is an important component of creating healthy urban environments and can also help to ensure that developments meet requirements elsewhere in this Local Plan for biodiversity improvements and urban greening. Planting strategies should be discussed with biodiversity and tree officers from the council at an early stage to ensure that the selected species are appropriate and can be adequately maintained. Non-native trees may not be appropriate close to sensitive habitats due to the potential for negative ecological impacts.

14.96 Part 4 of the policy sets out the council's support for necessary safety measures on bridges and at waterfronts within the borough, where these have been identified as posing a potential suicide risk. Such measures should be proportionate to the risk and must be in conformity with other policies in this plan, including those relating to access to the transport and active travel networks, access to water spaces, and to heritage conservation. Where such proposals are to be put forward, discussions should be opened with planning officers at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that measures can be implemented appropriately.

14.97 Part 5 promotes the activation of spaces under the DLR viaducts, to include them into the network of public realm and ensure connectivity between areas across the line. These spaces are currently underused and could present opportunities for a number of community-focused uses.

**London Plan polices:**

- GG3 Creating a healthy city
- D5 Inclusive design
- D8 Public realm
- G5 Urban greening
- T2 Healthy Streets

**Local Plan policies:**

- TC2 Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres
- TC7 Evening and night-time economy
- BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network
- BO3 Water spaces
- BO4 Biodiversity and access to nature
- BO6 Play and recreation spaces
- RW3 Waste collection facilities in new development
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets

**Evidence base:**

- Characterisation and Growth Study, 2023
- Gender Inclusive Design: Creating a safe, inclusive and restorative borough, 2023
- Spatial Planning and Health Needs Assessment, 2023
- Homes (Secured by Design), 2023
- National Design Guide, 2021
- High Density Living SPD, 2020
- Planning and Social Cohesion Evidence Base, 2020
- Tree Management Plan 2020-2025
- Making London Child-Friendly: Designing Places and Streets for Children and Young People, 2020
- Healthy Streets for London, 2017
- Guide to the Healthy Streets Indicators, 2017
- Preventing Suicides in Public Places, 2015
- Character and Context SPG, 2014
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines

## Policy PS5 Creating inclusive places

1. Development proposals should demonstrate how gender inclusivity has been incorporated into the design, and that design is informed and shaped by the diverse communities of the borough, through:
  - a. the design of routes through and around the site, and how they connect to existing routes in the surrounding area – these should be legible, well-signed, appropriately lit, accessible, and ensure clear sight lines;
  - b. the design of communal and publicly accessible spaces in ways that encourage intergenerational sociability throughout the day and night and are not likely to encourage dominance of the space by a single group of people;
  - c. the provision of appropriate facilities for residents and the wider community, to ensure that the needs of the community are met;
  - d. the design of buildings, ensuring that they provide active and passive surveillance onto the street to increase the feeling of safety, and do not present avoidable obstacles to movement or accessibility;
  - e. ensuring pedestrian routes are surfaced with high-quality, easily maintainable material and are wide enough to give space to pass by, and to use a wheelchair or pushchair while also walking with one or more additional children;
  - f. safe access to less active parts of the development, such as bin and bike storage areas; and
  - g. inclusion of public art and street and building names that recognise people from diverse backgrounds who have contributed to shaping the borough, including women, disabled people, the LGBTQ+ community, and ethnic minorities.
2. Development proposals should demonstrate that reasonable efforts have been made to make the design process inclusive. This should include:
  - a. involving diverse sections of the community in co-design of development proposals from an early stage, including women and girls, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community, and ethnic minorities; and
  - b. demonstrating that local knowledge, captured through early engagement and co-design, has informed and shaped design proposals.

## Supporting text

14.98 This policy encourages all new development to consider inclusive design as part of the development process. This policy is based upon a gender-inclusive design evidence base document that has been prepared by the council, and a disability-focused local plan consultation workshop held with the disabled people's organization Real at Regulation 18 consultation stage. Evidence from the UN, the World Bank, and the GLA shows that if the needs of women and girls are considered and shape the development of the urban environment, outcomes will be more welcoming and work better for all. Therefore, designing with women and girls creates better places. Our own research with women and girls, disability and LGBTQ+ groups shows that meeting the needs of women and girls also helps to meet the needs of minority and marginalised groups.

14.99 Women make up 50% of the population, but historically the majority of places have been designed by men and for men. This can be seen in wider structural patterns of the urban environment, such as the focus in transport policy on moving people from the suburbs to the city centre, accommodating a standard 'commuter' pattern of travel that has historically been more likely to apply to men; while neglecting the more disparate patterns that are often attributed to women in their role as caregivers – for example, needing to travel between home and school, from school to the shops, back to the home, back to the school, then to swimming lessons, and so on. But it can also be seen in the smaller details of design – uneven pavements and unnecessary stairs, which make life harder for those with pushchairs (and for others, such as those in wheelchairs or with reduced mobility in other ways). In other instances, the design of cities can create spaces that feel unsafe and unwelcoming

– places that feel deserted and isolated, or places where women and gender-diverse people may feel like they are 'out of place'.

14.100 Statistics may indicate that that crime in these spaces is low, although this may be impacted by low rates of reporting crime. However, if people feel unsafe, they are unlikely to use the spaces, or will feel uneasy if they do. This can create a cycle of spaces becoming under-utilised, which creates opportunities for people to commit antisocial behaviour or illegal acts such as drug dealing.

14.101 A focus on gender inclusivity in design is not intended to exclude or polarise communities. Instead, by 'modelling' improvements that benefit women, girls, and gender-diverse people, we are able to rebalance urban design to the benefit of all people by improving the experience of those who do not adhere to the 'norms' of a cis-gendered white male population (whom much of the city was initially designed by and for). The policy does not indicate that men pose an inherent risk or are a 'problem' within the urban environment that must be 'solved', but rather to address how urban environments have often been designed in ways that disadvantage women, girls, and gender-diverse people. By remodelling the borough through the lens of gender inclusion we are able to ensure that everyone can use, enjoy and experience an equal city and that over time our built environment will be more representative and welcoming to all. And when women and girls feel welcome, it has a positive impact on the social and economic prosperity of a place – so proactively designing welcoming spaces that encourage women and girls to feel welcome also develops regenerated spaces that benefit the whole community.

14.102 To understand this topic, an evidence base document on gender inclusivity in the urban environment has been prepared. This



has included on-street interviews with women and girls across the borough, workshops with community organisations, online 'walks' around the borough to discuss safety concerns, and detailed surveys and questionnaires. Over 400 women and girls participated in this research and by listening to their lived experience of the borough we have developed a series of recommendations that suggest new approaches to development and the way development is planned and delivered, from a high level approach to specific fine grain recommendations to improve streets, public spaces and building exteriors (such as entrance ways and exits).

14.103 In addition to this work on gender-inclusivity, as part of the Regulation 18 consultation on the local plan, a disability-focused workshop was co-produced with the disabled people's organization Real. This attracted over 50 participants, who worked together to discuss clusters of questions relating to the local plan themes, and led to a greater understanding of the needs of disabled people within the urban environment. The conclusions from this workshop, along with consultation responses from other groups and individuals representing marginalized communities, has led to the refocusing of this policy towards a more generally inclusive design approach, and an intersectional approach that recognises that people may belong to a combination of marginalised communities based on gender, sexuality, ethnicity, disability and neurodivergence, and age. This further emphasizes that improvements to the public realm, building design, and community spaces that will benefit women and girls will also benefit the majority of people – including other marginalized communities such as disabled people, the LGBTQ+ community, and ethnic minorities, but also benefitting those who do not fall into any of these categories.

14.104 Alongside this specific policy, which sets out our understanding of some of the elements of inclusive design, we thread inclusivity

throughout the policies in the plan to help embed greater inclusivity in all development proposals.

14.105 Part 1(a) concerns routes, wayfinding, and connectivity. In line with policy PS4, sites should be connected, permeable, and legible – there should be multiple ways to get to destinations and development should be designed, laid out, and incorporate wayfinding in such a way that it is clear to a passerby which are the main routes through the sites, and which are more likely to be of interest only to residents. Consideration should be given to how routes may feel different in the daytime and the nighttime, and to how wayfinding measures clearly identify better lit and more populated routes at nighttime. Regular and visible naming of different areas within the development can also make it easier for people who need to call for help to describe where they are, and can help to make a place feel like a part of the public realm rather than a private space aimed only at residents.

14.106 Parts 1(b) and 1(c) regard community facilities, including new open spaces and other social facilities, including large elements of social infrastructure such as new schools or health centres that may be provided on particularly large development. Tower Hamlets has a shortage of high-quality open space, and as the density of the borough increases, the amount of open space per resident decreases further. Our evidence base on gender-inclusive design indicates that women often feel excluded from some open spaces in the borough, where these are felt to provide few facilities or to be poorly designed in terms of visibility and feeling welcome; and our disability-focused workshop also highlighted the importance of green spaces and a need for improved facilities within them. Women with children are particularly in need of accessible, welcoming open spaces with high-quality play facilities for children, and these spaces can also provide a means of socialising with other parents. Given the lack of access to private open spaces such as

gardens in Tower Hamlets, and that green and open spaces have been demonstrated to have significant health and environmental benefits, it is particularly important that developments aim to maximise the amount of high-quality open space they provide, that this space be as green as possible, and that it be as inclusive as possible, with good places to sit, complex planting, trees to provide shade, somewhere to have a picnic, somewhere to play, and somewhere teenage boys can meet away from the main path. The design and location of new open spaces should therefore be considered as carefully as the design of buildings or streets and should not be relegated to an afterthought.

14.107 Open spaces should be designed in collaboration with the community, and should include elements that promote intergenerational sociability (our gender-inclusive design evidence base has found that spaces that are occupied by a more diverse range of people, including people of different ages, feel safer and more welcoming), including benches and other forms of seating, areas of planting that create shade, and elements that can be used by children to play. Improved seating in parks was highlighted in our disability-focused workshop, and is helpful for older people as well as providing spaces for parents and others to socialise. Parks and green spaces need social infrastructure to feel safe and welcoming, including wardens, resident groups and opportunities to get involved in gardening and growing food, which can create opportunities for passive surveillance. Opportunities to play are important for all children and guidance on making space for teenage girls is suggested in the gender inclusive design guidance. In order to ensure that play space is well-used, there should be meaningful engagement with children to understand how they play in their area, and this should inform the play strategy rather than merely responding to a pre-prepared strategy. The different ways teenage girls and teenage

boys take up space should also be considered with consideration that both groups need access to outdoor space and both have a right to open space for health and wellbeing.

14.108 Beyond open space, other necessary facilities could include wheelchair-accessible public toilets with baby-changing facilities, water fountains, community hubs, youth provision, and generous, well-designed open spaces. There should be facilities near to play areas for mothers and caregivers to be able to meet and socialise outdoors, and facilities for young children, for girls and young women, as well as boys and young men.

14.109 In designing buildings, active frontages are encouraged in part 1(d) and through policy PS4, as they can provide feelings of safety and sociability through encouraging activity at different times of the day and night. This can assist in making women and other vulnerable users of streets feel safe and able to use streets throughout the day and into the evening and nighttime to create busy, intergenerational, connected places. Building entrances (including subordinate entrances such as back or side doors) should be well-lit and easily visible, avoiding narrow or concealed entranceways.

14.110 In line with the street hierarchy discussed under Policy PS4, the needs of pedestrians and those using the pavement should be given the highest priority. In many instances, existing pavements are narrow and filled with physical clutter (such as fixed street furniture or parked cars), or consist of uneven or easily damaged surface material that can make movement difficult for those with pushchairs or those in wheelchairs. Part 1(e) requires that pedestrian routes should be wide enough to accommodate the needs of all those who use them.

14.111 While active frontages are encouraged, there will always necessarily be some inactive spaces within a development, and these are considered in part 1(f). Some of these inactive spaces may be useful facilities, such as waste or bike storage, and consideration should therefore be given to how safe and well-lit routes can be provided to allow access to and from these spaces, while also ensuring that items like bins do not block walkways, entrances, or sightlines.

14.112 Part 1(g) should be read in conjunction with the general public art requirements in policy PS3. Research into public art in the UK has shown a severe lack of diversity, with only 2% of named statues representing ethnic minority people, and most of the statues of women that exist being fictional or allegorical representations or royal women. Statues of disabled people or members of the LGBTQ+ community are similarly rare.

14.113 The development of new public art provides an opportunity to somewhat redress this balance, as does the naming of new streets and buildings, by recognising the contributions that marginalised communities have made to the development of the east end of London and the history of our communities through direct representations or by commissioning work by women, ethnic minorities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, or disabled people to explore those stories.

14.114 In all circumstances, designing for inclusiveness means designing with the community, and ensuring the community feel that they have been able to co-design development, rather than having development imposed upon them. The gender-inclusive design evidence base shows that when women and girls are closely consulted, their lived experiences are listened to, and their needs inform design outcomes, this helps to create places with high social and economic prosperity and to build stronger social networks and climate resilience - that is, it

helps to create better places for all. Part 2 requires that constructive engagement and co-production with the community should begin at the earliest possible stage and the community should have an input into what is provided on a site rather than simply being asked to respond to pre-prepared proposals. The final design of a site must be grounded in an understanding of the community, and this means that particular consideration should be given to hearing the voices of women, girls, disabled people, the LGBTQ+ community, and ethnic minorities in the design of proposals, to ensure their views are considered.

14.115 Design and Access Statements or Consultation Statements should demonstrate that efforts have been made to consult widely from the beginning of the design process, and that specific efforts have been made to include diverse communities and marginalised communities in this consultation process. Engagement with these communities should aim to be accessible and participatory, and not simply provide pre-prepared options for comment. There should be a clear understanding of how different groups may interpret and use space differently, and a demonstration of how community responses have been considered and incorporated into the final proposed design of development, as well as into proposals for the wider public realm access routes and connections. Where an Environmental Impact Assessment is required, the data used should be disaggregated by gender and other protected characteristics where possible, to inform a greater understanding of how different groups will be affected by the proposals. The council may look to produce further guidance to set out a framework for inclusive engagement.

14.116 To fully implement inclusivity in the design process, applicants could go further than simply consulting the community. Gender parity in the project teams working on the proposal can help to encourage a greater consideration of women and girls throughout the process,

and the inclusion of workers from other marginalised communities can further help to inform an inclusive approach to design. This could include taking on people from the local area as graduates, apprentices, or for work experience, to encourage a longer-term approach to inclusiveness and diversity across the built environment industries, and consideration of social value throughout the development process.

14.117 This policy should be read in conjunction with policy DV3 on healthy communities, which provides further details around what is required of an applicant to ensure the needs of vulnerable groups have been understood and secured through the planning process. The early initiation of a Health Impact Assessment and community engagement will support the applicant in achieving inclusive design outcomes.

#### **London Plan polices:**

- D5 Inclusive design
- D8 Public realm
- S4 Play and informal recreation
- S6 Public toilets

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- DV3 Healthy communities
- HF9 Housing standards and quality
- TC2 Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres
- TC7 Evening and night-time economy
- Cl1 Supporting community facilities
- Cl2 Existing community facilities
- Cl3 New and enhanced community facilities
- Cl5 Arts and culture facilities
- BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network

- BO3 Water spaces
- BO4 Biodiversity and access to nature
- BO6 Play and recreation spaces
- RW3 Waste collection facilities in new development
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets

#### **Evidence base:**

- Gender Inclusive Design: Creating a safe, inclusive and restorative borough, 2023
- Spatial Planning and Health Needs Assessment, 2023
- Safety in Public Space: Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People, 2022
- High Density Living SPD, 2020
- Planning and Social Cohesion Evidence Base, 2020
- Making London Child-Friendly: Designing Places and Streets for Children and Young People, 2020



## Policy PS6 Heritage and the historic environment

1. Proposals must conserve or, where appropriate, enhance the borough's designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
2. Proposals affecting the significance of a heritage asset must:
  - a. provide a clear understanding of the asset's significance;
  - b. provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposal would contribute to the asset's conservation;
  - c. justify any harm to the significance of the heritage asset, having regard to the public benefits of the proposal when considering designated heritage assets;
  - d. demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain the existing use, find alternative uses that would avoid harm, or minimise and mitigate the extent of the harm to the asset;
  - e. demonstrate that the works proposed are the minimum required to secure the long-term use of the asset; and
  - f. demonstrate that efforts have been taken to retain, repair, or reinstate historic features where appropriate.
3. Substantial harm to or the total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset will only be supported where it is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or the following criteria can be satisfied:
  - a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
  - b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
  - c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of not-for-profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
  - d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
4. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
5. Proposals should conserve or, where appropriate, enhance the borough's non-designated heritage assets. Where there will be direct or indirect harm to the significance of a non-designated heritage asset a balanced judgement will be required, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
6. Proposals to alter or extend a heritage asset or proposals that would affect the setting of a heritage asset will only be permitted where:
  - a. they safeguard the significance of the heritage asset, including its setting, character, fabric or identity;
  - b. they are appropriate in terms of design, height, scale, form, detailing and materials in their local context;
  - c. they enhance or better reveal the significance of assets or their settings;

- d. the building retains its character and can provide housing or other appropriate uses without damaging its historic and cultural significance to the borough;
  - e. extensions to listed buildings, or new developments within the curtilage of listed buildings, remain subservient to the host building in terms of height, massing, and scale; and
  - f. where proposals affect the setting of a heritage asset, they should clearly demonstrate an understanding of the setting and how that setting contributes to the significance of the heritage asset concerned.
7. In the case of a change of use from a use for which a heritage asset was originally designed, it must be clearly demonstrated that any harm to the significance of the heritage asset caused by the new use, or by any changes to the building fabric required to implement the new use, is justified when weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including the benefit of securing the optimum viable use.
8. Proposals for development within a conservation area (as shown on the policies map) or its setting must:
- a. preserve or enhance those elements (including unlisted buildings) which make a positive contribution to the special character or appearance of the conservation area;
  - b. make a positive contribution to local character and the distinctiveness of the conservation area; and
  - c. explore opportunities for new development to enhance or better reveal the significance of the conservation area.
9. Proposals for development that would affect scheduled monuments (as shown on the policies map) or other archaeological sites of equivalent importance must:
- a. justify any harm to the significance of the asset having regard to the public benefits of the proposal;
  - b. demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made to mitigate the extent of any harm to the significance of the asset; and
  - c. demonstrate that the works proposed have the minimum impact upon the asset while ensuring that its significance is maintained.
10. Proposals that lie within Archaeological Priority Areas (as shown on the policies map) or other areas that have the potential to contain archaeological heritage assets must:
- a. include an archaeological evaluation report to assess the archaeological potential of the affected area; where necessary, a field evaluation may also be required;
  - b. conserve nationally important remains in situ, subject to consultation with Historic England;
  - c. where other archaeological heritage assets are identified, provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposal would contribute to the asset's conservation; and
  - d. where harm can be fully justified, make provision for archaeological excavation and/or recording as appropriate, followed by analysis and publication of the results.
11. Proposals for development that would affect historic parks, gardens and spaces (as shown on the policies map) must:

- a. include a heritage impact assessment setting out the likely impact which it would have upon its significance and the means by which any harm might be mitigated;
- b. conserve those features which form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park, garden or square; and
- c. ensure they do not detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance or setting, key views into and out of the space, or prejudice its future restoration.

12. Proposals that would affect heritage assets listed on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register will be supported where:

- a. they conserve or enhance the heritage asset in a manner appropriate to its significance;
- b. they provide a viable, long-term use for the heritage asset; and
- c. sensitive repair and restoration is proposed to elements of the heritage asset that have fallen into disrepair.

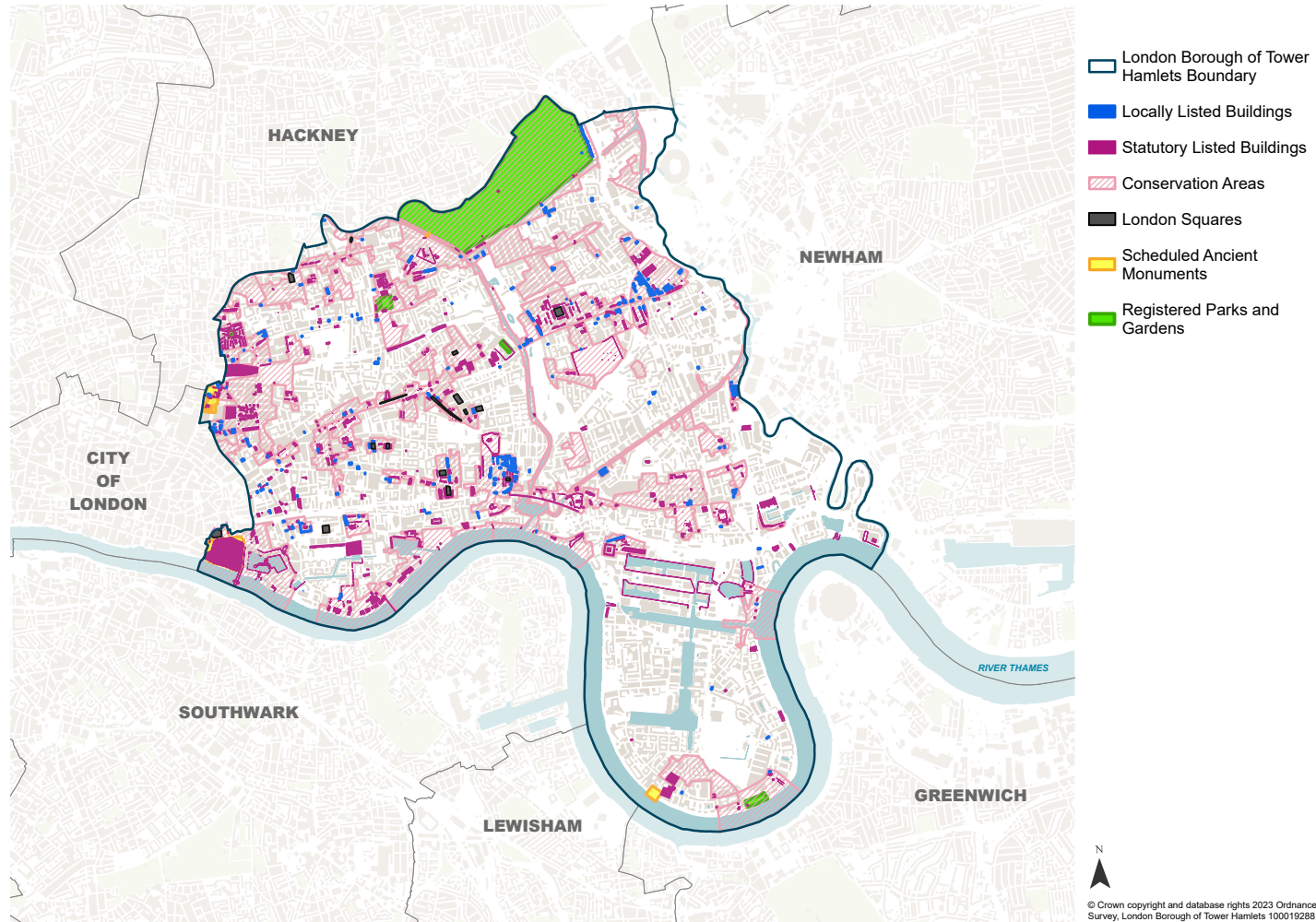
13. Where development proposals affect historic street surfaces or street furniture, these should be conserved and, where appropriate, restored as part of the public realm proposals on the site. Where development will require the temporary removal of historic street surfaces or street furniture, these should be reinstated in the same or better condition than before the development took place. Proposals for the loss of historic street surfaces or street furniture will not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the loss of the historic surfaces or street furniture, and no viable development proposal can be found that would allow for the retention of these features.



14. Retrofitting of heritage assets to achieve greater levels of energy efficiency and reductions in carbon emissions will be supported where it is proposed in a manner that conserves or enhances the significance of the heritage asset.



Figure 13: Map of heritage assets in the borough





## Supporting text

14.118 This policy aims to protect the borough's heritage and character in line with the council's statutory duties, and sets out how the historic environment should inform development, how planning applications will be assessed and how opportunities can be taken to improve the condition of the borough's historic environment (including individual assets and their settings) to ensure that its distinctive character is maintained.

14.119 The heritage of Tower Hamlets consists of an enormous variety and diversity of assets, including historic buildings, structures, parks and open spaces, views, archaeology, and heritage collections. These heritage assets are widely valued, cared for, and celebrated by Tower Hamlets residents, for whom they form a source of pride in the borough. They are also recognised more widely, and the borough is visited from across London, the country, and the world by those seeking to understand and experience the histories and heritage of Tower Hamlets and the wider East End of London.

14.120 Our heritage assets are exceptionally important – they are our most recognisable landmarks and most cherished places, and they contribute to reinforcing the unique character and distinctiveness of the borough (including its 24 places) as well as London as a whole through their individual and group value. Some of the key elements of the borough's heritage include:

- military and naval buildings (e.g. Tower of London);
- museums, art galleries, music halls and breweries (e.g. Young V&A and Wilton's Music Hall);
- squares, cemeteries and parks and gardens (e.g. Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park);



- indoor and outdoor markets (e.g. Spitalfields);
- industrial heritage and archaeology (e.g. the Docklands);
- residential streets and buildings of Georgian and Victorian origin (e.g. Fournier Street and around the Victoria Park Conservation Area);
- innovative post-war housing (e.g. Keeling House and Balfron Tower); and
- religious and education institutions (e.g. Christ Church Spitalfields and Toynbee Hall).

14.121 The importance of protecting heritage is reflected in the national and regional policy that informs this Local Plan. The council is required to have a positive strategy for understanding and conserving important aspects of our heritage, and the borough's Conservation Strategy sets out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in planning and design. This policy therefore reflects the Conservation Strategy, by setting out the parameters within which development can sustainably take place while also preserving the most important parts of the borough's heritage. The importance of heritage needs to be balanced with the borough's other needs, including the need to provide good-quality housing and reduce overcrowding, and this policy sets out a proportionate response to this challenge.

14.122 Part 1 of the policy sets out the overall aim of preserving and enhancing heritage assets throughout the borough.

14.123 Designated heritage assets include statutorily listed buildings and structures, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, world heritage sites and their buffer zones (see Policy PS7), and archaeological priority areas. These designations are shown on the policies map.

14.124 In addition to the above, there are many non-designated buildings and sites of heritage significance within the borough which contribute to its distinctive character, such as unregistered parks and gardens, London Squares, unlisted public houses, cemeteries, and places of worship. Details of some of these assets are available in the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy, Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines and the Local List. The Local List identifies locally important heritage assets which are of community

value and contribute to the special character and distinctiveness of the borough.

14.125 Alongside their physical characteristics, heritage assets can also have a more intangible cultural significance and can include sites that are not yet designated as heritage assets but which have significant cultural value for particular groups of people, including marginalised groups. Within Tower Hamlets, certain locations may have intangible cultural value for particular sections of the community. The initial process of consultation and engagement with the community around the design and development of sites should help to identify where significance exists, and to identify the elements of a site that the local community considers to be of heritage value. This further highlights the importance of that engagement taking place at the earliest possible stage to inform the design response.

14.126 Parts 2-6 set out the approach to be taken when development proposals affect the significance of heritage assets, while parts 7-12 provide additional detail about proposals that would affect the significance of specific classes of heritage asset. In all cases, the preference is for no harm to take place; but in circumstances where there is some harm to heritage assets, this must be robustly justified, and in the case of designated heritage assets any harm must be justified with reference to the public benefits of the proposal in question.

14.127 In order to satisfy the criteria set out in parts 2 to 12, developments will need to demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the relevant asset, including the contribution setting makes to its significance, submitting a statement of significance, including a heritage impact assessment, as part of the planning

application process. This should also consider an assessment of group value, as well as the individual significance of heritage assets.

14.128 At a minimum, this should include both desktop analysis and on-site investigation, with reference to the Greater London Historic Environment Record and other relevant documentation. The borough has a local history library, which provides a useful resource. Research undertaken into the heritage asset affected should describe the significance of the heritage asset in sufficient detail to determine its historic, archaeological, architectural, or artistic interest to a level proportionate to its importance.

14.129 Detailed plans to an appropriate level will need to be submitted with applications as part of design and access statements/heritage statements to demonstrate how the heritage asset and its setting will be impacted and to ensure that its significance is protected or enhanced.

14.130 Where a new heritage asset is discovered or previously unknown historic fabric revealed, the developer will be expected to work with us to seek a solution that protects the significance of the new discovery, so far as is practicable within the existing scheme. Depending on the importance of the discovery, modifications to the scheme being implemented may be required.

14.131 Under part 2 of the policy, proposals relating to works to a listed building or within the vicinity of a listed building or to other heritage assets will be required to demonstrate that they will not affect the special interest of the listed building or heritage asset. In addition to planning permission, listed building consent may also be required for works that will affect the special character of a listed building. Harm to the significance of a heritage asset will not ordinarily be supported. Where such harm is proposed, proposals will need to include robust



justification of why the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the harm to heritage significance, and will need to demonstrate that alternative options that avoid harm have been explored and found unfeasible, and that the proposed harm has been mitigated to the greatest degree possible.

14.132 The council will not permit substantial harm to or total loss of a designated heritage asset unless the criteria set out in part 3 can clearly be met. In instances of less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, the test in part 4 should be applied.



14.133 Part 5 emphasises that non-designated heritage assets should also be considered as part of development proposals, and proposals should aim to conserve or enhance these assets as well. Early engagement with planning officers is encouraged to help identify non-designated heritage assets. When considering applications that affect non-designated heritage assets (either directly or indirectly), the council will have regard to the scale of any harm or loss, and the significance of the heritage asset when making a planning decision.

14.134 The council will only permit proposals for alterations to heritage assets or for development that affects the setting of a heritage asset where the criteria set out in part 6 can be met.

14.135 In the case of changes of use of heritage assets, as set out in part 7, it is important to note that while a change of planning use class might be acceptable in theory, the practical implications of that change of use in terms of any alterations to the fabric of the building will need to be assessed in terms of how they affect the significance of the heritage asset, and whether they help to secure the optimum viable use of the asset. The optimum viable use of a heritage asset may not necessarily be the most economically viable use – if there is a range of economically viable uses, the optimum viable use is the one which will cause the least harm to the significance of the heritage asset. Before applying for a change of use of a heritage asset, careful consideration should be given to any physical changes that would be needed, and these should be clearly set out and justified as part of a planning application. The council's preference for changes of use to historic buildings is for buildings to be repurposed to help meet the borough's high need for housing, and particularly affordable housing. However, it is acknowledged that this will not always be possible given the particular sensitivities of heritage buildings and the difficulties that this can create in conversion to residential.

14.136 When considering proposals within conservation areas, as set out in part 8, consideration will be given to the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole and its setting. We have prepared a series of conservation area appraisals and management plans that assess and evaluate the character and appearance of each of our conservation areas and set out how we consider they can be preserved or enhanced. We will take these into account when assessing planning applications for development in conservation areas. We will seek to manage change in a way that retains the distinctive character and appearance of our conservation areas and will expect new development to contribute positively to this.

14.137 Proposals that would affect scheduled monuments must meet the criteria set out in part 9.

14.138 In relation to part 10, any development within or adjacent to archaeological priority areas is required to investigate and consider any archaeological interests in the area. The archaeology of the borough can best be protected if as much information as possible is available at the planning application stage. The evaluation, which may involve fieldwork, is needed so that we can assess the archaeological implications of proposals. Where appropriate, the evaluation may show how developments can be designed so that they do not harm a site of archaeological interest and/or how the remains will be preserved at the site.

14.139 Proposals that would affect historic parks and gardens must meet the criteria set out in part 11. This policy applies to both designated and non-designated historic open spaces, which includes registered parks and gardens, London Squares, and other open spaces of historic interest.



14.140 Where possible, we will seek to work with developers and other partners to secure creative solutions that would conserve heritage buildings, especially those at risk (as identified on the borough's heritage at risk register), and contribute positively to the character and vitality of the surrounding area. Under part 12 of the policy, proposals that bring heritage assets that are at risk back into viable, long-term use will be encouraged where they also preserve the heritage significance of the asset.

14.141 The borough contains some sites where historic street surfaces or street furniture (such as bollards, street signs, and coal hole covers) are present, and part 13 requires these features to be preserved and enhanced by development of adjacent sites. Historic surfaces can cause difficulties for those who use wheelchairs or have other mobility impairments, or for parents with pushchairs, and consideration should be given to accessibility and inclusivity in locations with historic surfaces. This could include ensuring that pavements to the side of cobbled streets are suitably wide and well-maintained, or clearly signposting alternative routes that avoid uneven surfaces.

14.142 Part 14 indicates that retrofitting of heritage assets to achieve greater energy efficiency is to be encouraged, in line with the council's policies on climate change and improved air quality. However, this needs to be done carefully to ensure that heritage assets are not damaged in a way that is contrary to the rest of the policy, and so in some instances a balance may need to be struck between the need to improve energy efficiency and the protection of heritage. Retrofitting of heritage assets should take a non- or minimally-invasive approach, and this may require that bespoke and non-standard approaches to energy efficiency are

taken. Regard should be had to Historic England's advice note on Energy Efficiency and Traditional Homes.

14.143 Where necessary, the council will consider using legal powers to ensure that essential maintenance of designated heritage assets is undertaken.

### London Plan policies:

- HC1 Heritage conservation and growth

### Local Plan policies:

- CG4 Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy

### Evidence base:

- Conservation Strategy, 2023
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines
- Local Heritage List
- Heritage at Risk register

## Policy PS7 World heritage sites

1. Development is required to ensure it safeguards and does not have a detrimental impact upon the outstanding universal value of the UNESCO world heritage sites: the Tower of London and Maritime Greenwich, including their buffer zones (as shown on the policies map) and settings.
2. Proposals affecting the wider setting of the Tower of London and Maritime Greenwich or those impinging upon strategic or other significant views to or from these sites (particularly around Tower Hill and Aldgate and within the buffer zone around Island Gardens) will be required to demonstrate how they will conserve and enhance the outstanding universal value of the world heritage sites.
3. Development within the vicinity of the Tower of London is required to demonstrate how it will improve local pedestrian and cycle access routes, particularly through signage and wayfinding in the surrounding area.



## Supporting text

14.144 This policy aims to ensure that new development safeguards and does not negatively impact on the 'outstanding universal value' of the Tower of London and Maritime Greenwich world heritage sites, including their attributes, settings, and views to and from them. In this context, outstanding universal value is defined by UNESCO as "areas of cultural and/or national significance so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity". Attributes of outstanding universal value are usually physical, but can also be processes or practices (such as tradition, or management regimes) that have an impact on physical qualities.

14.145 World heritage sites are areas of cultural and national significance which include both natural features and human-made structures. London has four world heritage sites, one of which is within Tower Hamlets (the Tower of London), and one of which is just across the river Thames in Greenwich, and with a buffer zone that extends into Tower Hamlets (Maritime Greenwich).

14.146 The Tower of London, one of the UK's most famous landmarks and tourist attractions, is a Grade I listed castle and royal fortress, which acts as the gateway into the borough from the west. Indeed, the borough is named after the villages and hamlets around the Tower of London. However, many of the streets and spaces in and around this area are dominated by vehicles/heavy traffic and offer a poor public realm and interchange experience from Tower Hill and Tower Gateway stations. These issues are also identified within the Tower of London World Heritage Site Management Plan.

14.147 Maritime Greenwich lies immediately south of the borough and

comprises an ensemble of buildings (including the Queen's House, Royal Observatory, and the Old Royal Naval College) set in landscaped parkland. Part of the buffer area lies within Tower Hamlets at Island Gardens on the Isle of Dogs, from where a classic view of the world heritage site can still be seen.

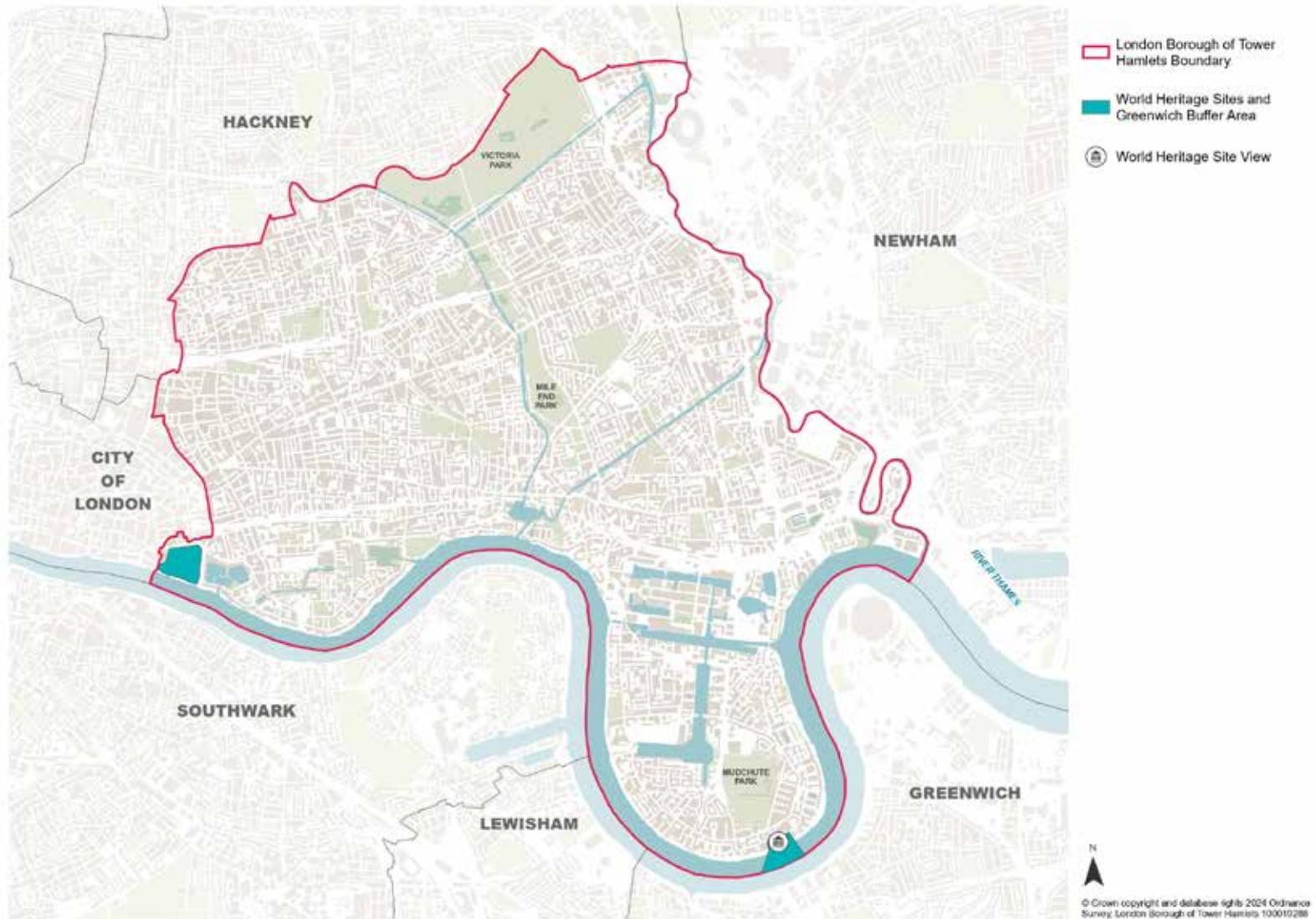
14.148 Part 1 of the policy sets out that these unique heritage assets must be safeguarded, and that development must not detract from the outstanding universal value for which they have been designated.

14.149 Under parts 2 and 3, proposals within close proximity to the Tower of London, or which have the potential to affect the setting and views of the Tower of London or Maritime Greenwich, will need to ensure they have regard to the Tower of London World Heritage Site Management Plan and/or the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site Management Plan.

14.150 Potential opportunities exist to enhance the setting immediately around the Tower of London and reinforce the outstanding universal value of the site, in line with the Tower of London Local Setting Study (2010).



Figure 14: World heritage sites – Tower of London and Maritime Greenwich buffer zone





## London Plan policies:

- HC1 Heritage conservation and growth
- HC2 World Heritage Sites

## Local Plan policies:

- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets

## Evidence base:

- Views and Landmarks Study, 2024
- Conservation Strategy, 2023
- Tower of London World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2016
- The Protection and Management of World Heritage Sites in England, 2015
- Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2014
- London View Management Framework SPG, 2012
- Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties, 2011

## Policy PS8 Shaping and managing views

1. Development is required to positively contribute to views and skylines within the borough, particularly those that are important components of the character of Tower Hamlets. Intrusive elements in the foreground, middle ground and backdrop of such views will be resisted. Development will be required to demonstrate how it:
  - a. complies with the requirements of the London View Management Framework and World Heritage Site Management Plans for the Tower of London and Maritime Greenwich;
  - b. positively contributes to the skyline of strategic importance, which is formed from the silhouettes of the cluster of tall buildings around Canary Wharf (as defined on the policies map);
  - c. preserves or enhances the prominence of borough-designated landmarks and the skyline of strategic importance in the borough-designated views, taking into account the reasons for designation and the guidance for future development provided in the Tower Hamlets Views and Landmarks Study;
  - d. preserves or enhances local views identified in conservation area appraisals and management guidelines;
  - e. preserves or enhances visual connections between the public realm and water spaces and open spaces; and
  - f. enhances, creates, or preserves townscape and views to and from the site which are important to the identity and character of the place.
2. Development in close proximity to, or within the sightlines of, borough-designated landmarks should apply the following principles, to ensure that the value of these landmarks is protected:

Landmark	Principles
Christ Church Spitalfields	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Future development on Brushfield Street must not step out beyond the existing building line to preserve the view of the church.</li> <li>b. Building heights should not be higher than the church in order to ensure the landmark stands out from its immediate context.</li> <li>c. Nearby development should ensure that the heights allow an unobstructed view of the church's rooftop, particularly its spire.</li> <li>d. The commercial and fine grain character of the ground floor on surrounding streets should be maintained to enhance the wider character of the Conservation Area.</li> </ol>

Landmark	Principles
Balfron Tower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Future development should maintain a view of the clear separation between the servicing/lift tower and the main body.</li> <li>b. Development should maintain the sky space to either side and at the top of the tower to preserve the clear views of Balfron Tower.</li> <li>c. The green and open character within these views should be preserved to enhance the setting of the tower.</li> </ul>
Canada Square Cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Development should not obstruct the gaps between buildings in the Canada Square Cluster to preserve readability, balance, and aesthetics.</li> <li>b. Development should not interfere with the Canada Square Cluster's long range views, to preserve Canary Wharf's distinctive skyline.</li> <li>c. Any future built interventions in Canada Square Park should not have a negative impact on legibility and wayfinding and should enhance the cluster's identity as a unified landmark.</li> </ul>
St Anne's Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The massing around the intersection of Commercial Road and West India Dock Road should be designed in a way that preserves and frames views to the church tower above the trees.</li> <li>b. Heights on Salmon Lane should remain low to accentuate the views of the church with Canary Wharf in the background.</li> </ul>
St George-in-the-East Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Heights along Chigwell Hill, Wapping Lane, and The Highway should remain low to maintain and frame views to the church tower and turrets.</li> <li>b. Building frontages on The Highway should be articulated to contrast the large composed southern façade of the church and to complement the historic terraces on Cable Street to the north.</li> </ul>
East London Mosque	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Future development along Whitechapel Road should consider an articulated massing to avoid overwhelming the mosque.</li> <li>b. Massing should respect views to the minarets to protect their visibility.</li> </ul>
The Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Heights should remain similar to the existing historic roofline on Mile End Road.</li> <li>b. Heights should not exceed the ridgeline of the church to maintain the primacy of the church tower and spire.</li> <li>c. Development should not exceed the existing building line to preserve views of the church.</li> <li>d. Street frontages of future development should be harmonious with the existing historical facades to maintain the character of the street.</li> </ul>

## Supporting text

14.151 This policy aims to ensure that important views within, into, and across the borough are preserved through appropriate management of development. This is in line with the council's statutory duties to protect heritage assets, the requirements of the London View Management Framework, and the requirement of the London Plan for boroughs to identify important local views in their local plans.

14.152 Views are important elements of townscape and local character, and can provide a positive image of the borough, enhance legibility, and increase the pride that residents feel in their local area. Townscape views can be valued for a variety of reasons, but often the most valued views will feature a prominent landmark building that terminates a vista, acts a focal point, or establishes some other form of spatial hierarchy and ordering. Such landmarks help to define and identify places and are considered to be a key component of high-quality urban design.

14.153 New developments are expected to make a positive contribution to the skyline, including in their use of palette and texture, in particular where these buildings will have an impact on long-distance views.

14.154 This policy identifies a skyline of strategic importance which is observed from multiple locations within and outside the borough, and a series of views and landmarks of a borough-wide importance.

14.155 Part 1(a) refers to strategic views identified in the latest versions of the London View Management Framework and Tower of London and Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site Management Plans which have impacts on developments within Tower Hamlets.

14.156 Part 1(b) refers to the group of tall buildings around Canary Wharf that form a distinctive cluster, referred to as the 'skyline of strategic

importance' (SSI). This cluster is visible across London and has become a globally recognised silhouette. The distinctive skyline is a prominent and recognisable feature in views from the surrounding areas, which are of a much smaller scale. The area of skyline of strategic importance covers the Canary Wharf tall buildings zone (zone B), as shown on the policies map and set out in Policy PS2. Building heights within the designation area should highlight the central emphasis of the SSI at One Canada Square, to ensure a consistent and coherent skyline. The heights in the setting of the skyline of strategic importance should be consistent and significantly lower than the buildings at the edge of the designation area.

14.157 Part 1(c) refers to borough designated landmarks, which are prominent buildings of high architectural and/or cultural value that can be seen in views to and from a number of places within the borough, including conservation areas. These views are referred to as borough designated views. Development should be tested against their impact on the prominence of borough designated landmarks in borough designated views. Intrusive development (as defined in the glossary) that competes with the prominence of borough-designated landmarks in the backdrop of the borough-designated views or obscures them at the mid or foreground will need to be reconsidered to reduce its intrusiveness. The council has prepared a Views and Landmarks Study that explains the significance of the borough landmarks and sets out guidance for future development within the setting of the landmarks. Proposals within these areas should demonstrate that they have taken account of this guidance.

14.158 Part 1(d) seeks to shape and manage the impact of development on views identified in the Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines covering each of the borough's 58 conservation areas. Development that is harmful to the special character of these views will be resisted.



14.159 Part 1(e) recognises that water space and open space are intrinsic elements of the borough's identity and that their presence is an essential element of the character of a place. Development should

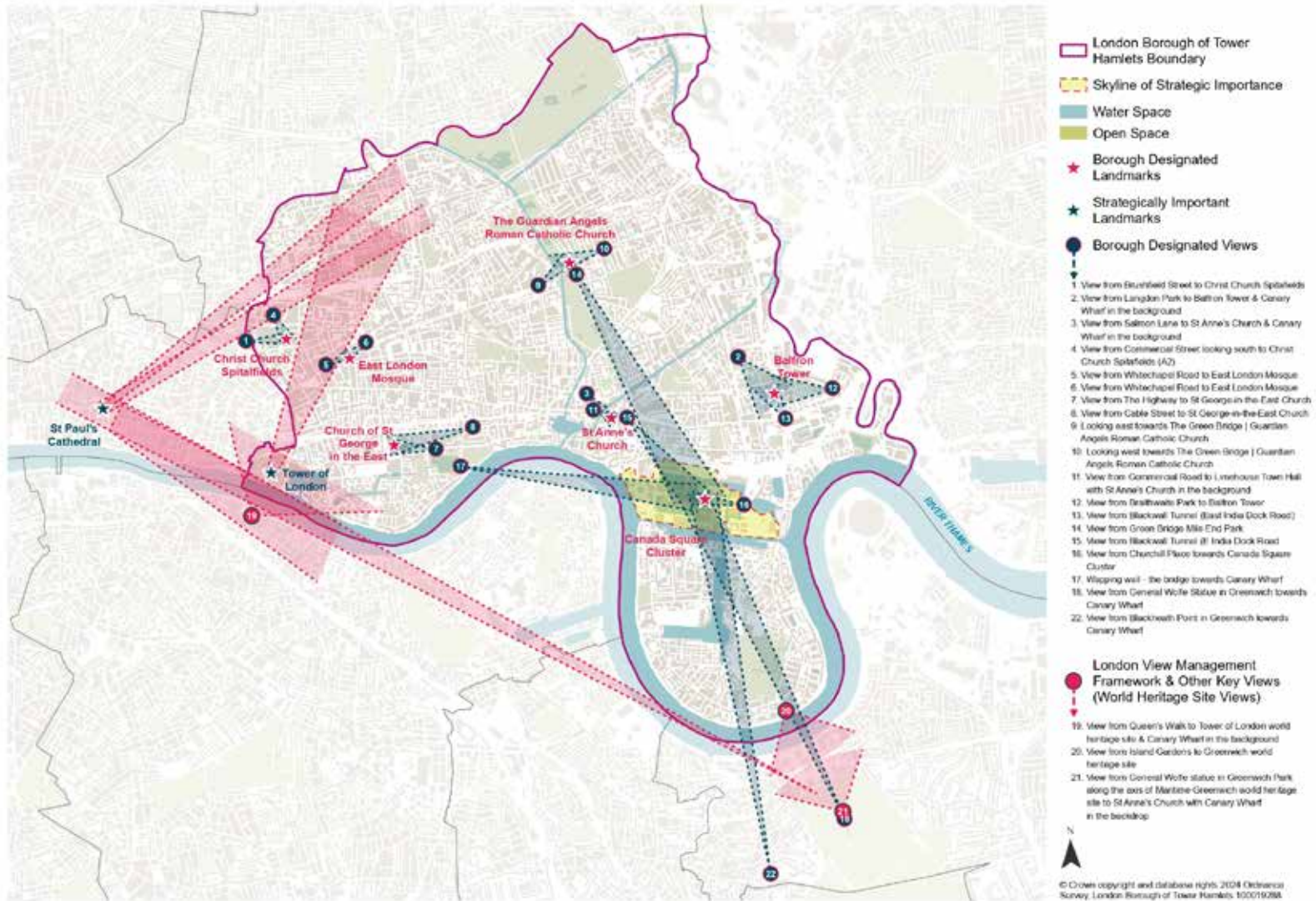
14.160 therefore avoid severing visual connections between the existing public realm and water or open spaces; and should aim to provide enhanced visual connections to water or open spaces through the layout and design of the development. Developments located adjacent to water or open spaces, or on streets in their direct vicinity which are parallel and perpendicular to them, should afford views and glimpses of these sites from the street level.

14.161 Part 1(f) seeks to shape and manage the impact that development would have on townscape and local views that are important to the identity of Tower Hamlets and its unique places. These will be identified on a case-by-case basis through the townscape and visual impact analysis in relation to a particular development. Due to relatively flat topography, tall buildings located in the borough can

14.162 be seen from significant distances. It is therefore important that tall buildings positively contribute to the legibility, character, and spatial structure of the borough's 24 places.

14.163 Part 2 sets out principles for development within close proximity to the borough-designated landmarks or within their sightlines. These principles have been derived from the Views and Landmarks Study developed as part of the plan's evidence base, and ensure that views of these important landmarks will be protected.

Figure 15: Protected views



## **London Plan polices:**

- HC1 Heritage conservation and growth
- HC3 Strategic and local views
- HC4 London View Management Framework

## **Local Plan policies:**

- BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network
- BO3 Water spaces

## **Evidence base:**

- Views and Landmarks Study, 2024
- Conservation Strategy, 2023
- Tower of London World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2016
- Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2014
- London View Management Framework SPG, 2012
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines

## Policy PSg Shopfronts

1. New or replacement shopfronts are required to be robust and well-designed and meet the following requirements:
  - a. The retention of historic shopfronts or features of architectural quality or interest, which may include signage. These elements should be retained, refurbished, and sympathetically incorporated into new development or changes of use. Lost features which are characteristic of adjoining properties should be reinstated;
  - b. shopfronts should remain active, with large, generous shop windows, adequate entrance doors, good proportions, and careful detailing;
  - c. a sensitive relationship between the shopfront and the upper floors is created, by ensuring that the new shopfront integrates well into the host building, and respects its scale, style, age, and character;
  - d. a sensitive relationship with surrounding shopfronts and buildings;
  - e. use robust and durable materials which are appropriate to and enhance the local character of the building and townscape. Where the shop is a heritage asset, appropriate heritage materials will normally be expected, including timber framing;
  - f. that shopfronts are designed in a way that is flexible and adaptable to alternative uses;
  - g. the provision of level entrances where possible – where ramps are required, they should be internal, unless exceptional circumstances apply. Materials and finishes of ramps should be appropriate and of high quality;
  - h. maintain or include independent access to upper floor accommodation from the street frontage as part of an integrated design;
  - i. clearly incorporate the street number; and
  - j. ensure security measures are integral to the overall design to avoid the need for retrofitting external shutters.
2. Shop signage should:
  - a. be accommodated solely within a defined fascia above the façade. Fascia signage should not noticeably exceed one-fifth of the height of the ground floor accommodation;
  - b. not be excessive, visually discordant, overly large, project excessively forward or extend the façade above the ground floor level;
  - c. be defined by permanent, integrated architectural detailing;
  - d. be restricted to one fascia above each shop window and one projecting or hanging sign per façade. A hanging sign should not exceed 600mm x 600mm x 80mm and should be at least 2.4m above the footway;
  - e. if required, illumination should be incorporated in a discreet and sensitive manner without overly dominant fittings, clutter, or cables. Lighting should be limited to the advertisement element (logos and words), and not the full width of the fascia; and
  - f. where significant historic fascia signage is present, it should be preserved, and proposals for changes to the shopfront should be designed to accommodate its retention.



## Supporting text

14.164 This policy seeks to ensure that shopfronts are attractive, well designed and make a positive contribution to the surrounding streets, spaces and public realm and thereby enhance the overall character and appearance of the borough.

14.165 Part 1 of the policy sets out the requirements for all new or replacement shopfronts. Heritage elements of shopfronts should be retained and enhanced in line with policy PS6, and should provide active frontages onto streets in line with policy PS4. Shopfronts which form part of a group of original shopfronts and/or are designated heritage assets or within conservation areas should be of a traditional design and incorporate traditional features and character, and use traditional materials. Such developments should avoid the use of neon lighting, animated electronic displays, and external solid shutters.

14.166 Shopfronts should incorporate a well-defined frame, including location of signage, stall-riser, door and window units which sit in a defined architectural surround, use appropriate high quality, sustainable materials and be of a scale which relates to the upper floors of the building and complements the quality and character of surrounding buildings.

14.167 Achieving a sensitive relationship between the shopfront and its surroundings means, for instance, that shopfront fascias should be within the width of a single building and should not extend above the ground floor or obscure architectural features of value. On a historic building, the fascia sign height shall be dictated by any prevailing original pilaster detailing. On new-build development, a projecting band or cornice should be built into the façade to clearly demark a line between the fascia and the floor above.



14.168 The introduction of planning use Class E has provided a significant amount of flexibility for town centre uses. The design of shopfronts should take into account this potential flexibility, and should be designed to be adaptable to plausible alternative uses. This could include a consideration of how to sensitively incorporate flues into the façade if the building is converted into a use that includes food production in the future.

14.169 Shopfront design should be an integral part of the design process with consideration given to how security measures are incorporated to maintain active frontages at all times. These should

include the use of security glass and internal retractable grills rather than the use of closed external roller shutters which result in unwelcoming environments.

14.170 Consideration should be given to the potential for including energy efficiency measures into the design of shopfronts, where these would be appropriate within the context. This could include double glazing, natural ventilation features, or awnings to provide shade.

14.171 Part 2 of the policy relates specifically to the requirements of shop signage, which should be carefully designed and located to contribute positively to the townscape.

14.172 In relation to part 2(f), historic signage provides valuable insight into a building's history and an area's social and economic development. Where historic signage with heritage significance needs to be preserved, it may be appropriate to consider placing the new signage within the shop window to enable this.

#### **Local Plan polices:**

- TC2 Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres
- TC3 Town centre uses outside our town centres
- TC5 Food and drink
- TC6 Entertainment uses
- TC7 Evening and night-time economy

#### **Evidence base:**

- Shopfront Design Guide, 2024
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines



## Policy PS10 Advertisements, hoardings and signage

1. Advertisements, hoardings, and signage must be well-designed and well-integrated within the public realm, host buildings and the surrounding area. Proposals will be supported where they demonstrate how they:
  - a. complement the character, appearance and visual amenity of the site and the surrounding area;
  - b. do not have an adverse impact on the setting or significance of heritage assets (including conservation areas and listed buildings) and do not obscure architectural features;
  - c. do not intrude into the outlook of nearby residents;
  - d. do not adversely affect public or highway safety or impede pedestrian access, including for those with visual impairment or impaired mobility;
  - e. enhance the visual amenity of construction sites and vacant or underused sites/buildings and the surrounding area, including through the use of appropriate lighting;
  - f. are subservient in relation to the streetscape or the buildings to which they are attached;
  - g. do not create or contribute to a proliferation of signs and advertisements which cause physical or visual clutter in the streetscape; and
  - h. minimise light pollution and intrusive lighting infrastructure.

2. Within conservation areas, advertisements, signage, and hoardings should:
  - a. complement the special character of the area;
  - b. not be above fascia or ground level;
  - c. be externally illuminated; and
  - d. Restrict projecting or hanging signs to one per frontage.
3. Applications for telephone kiosks which have display panels for advertisements (whether electronic or non-electronic) and are located within 400m of a school will only be permitted where there is a condition or other agreement with the council in place to restrict the advertising of high fat, salt, and sugar (HFSS) products.
4. Applications for telephone kiosks will only be supported where they do not create a distraction hazard for road users or pedestrians, lead to excessive visual clutter in the streetscape, or create an inappropriate restriction on the amount of space available to pedestrians

## Supporting text

14.173 This policy aims to ensure advertisements, hoardings and signage positively activate the streetscape and enhance the visual appearance of their host buildings or structures.

14.174 Part 1 provides guidance on the appropriate design and settings of advertisements, hoardings and signage (including fascia and hanging shop signs, A-boards, poster panels, digital billboards and free-standing advertisements).

14.175 The council recognises that well-designed features in the streetscape can make a positive contribution to the public realm and play an important role in providing local information and supporting local businesses. However, poorly designed, excessive, or overly dominant features can have negative impacts on the character and appearance of their surroundings and can create hazards for pedestrians and traffic.

14.176 Advertisements, hoardings, and signage should be in keeping with the character of the area and should not negatively affect the amenity of surrounding properties or highway/public safety. There is a particular need to avoid physical and visual clutter in the streetscape as well as problems arising from distraction among road users and pedestrians. For instance, the location of A boards in areas where the width of the footway is less than 2 metres will be resisted. Poster panels/freestanding adverts will generally be out of place within residential areas due to their scale, size, and intrusive nature.

14.177 External illumination for signage will need to be carefully considered at an early stage in the design process to ensure that lighting can be sensitively incorporated, where required.

14.178 Provision of public artwork or other visual concepts on hoardings will be supported and encouraged, where it can enhance the local streetscape and improve the appearance of construction sites.

14.179 Part 2 provides guidelines for advertisements, signage, and hoardings in conservation areas. The design should complement the historic character of the conservation area in terms of scale, location, composition, and materials applied. In some cases, projecting or hanging signs may need to be raised above the fascia to retain the historic features. In other instances, the height of some traditional shopfronts means projecting or hanging signs may need to be placed higher for safety reasons. Any lighting associated with advertisements, signage or hoardings should be discreet and well placed so that it does not interfere with the visual amenity of the historic environment. External lighting should generally be used within conservation areas rather than internal illumination, due to the potential impact on heritage assets; but proposals for such lighting will still need to be carefully considered in the design process to ensure they are sensitively incorporated into the area.

14.180 Part 3 aims to control the presence of unhealthy advertising in the vicinity of schools, in line with the council's adopted healthy advertising policy. Telephone kiosks are increasingly used as a method of displaying advertising, but due to recent changes to the General Permitted Development Order are no longer considered to be permitted development and now require planning permission. Within 400m of a school, this permission will only be granted where a condition can be placed on the permission (or some other form of acceptable agreement can be reached) to not allow the advertising of high fat, salt, and sugar (HFSS) products. This is to reduce the exposure of children and young people to HFSS advertising, which can negatively impact their health.



14.181 Part 4 of the policy also sets out general criteria for the placement of telephone kiosks.

### London Plan policies:

- D8 Public realm

### Local Plan policies:

- EG2 New employment space
- TC2 Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres
- TC3 Town centre uses outside our town centres
- TC5 Food and drink
- TC6 Entertainment uses
- TC7 Evening and night-time economy
- TC8 Short stay accommodation
- MC1 Sustainable Travel
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets
- MC3 Impacts on the transport network

### Evidence base:

- Spatial Planning and Public Health Needs Assessment, 2023
- Signs and Advertisements Guidance Document
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines

## Policy PS11 Siting and design of telecommunications infrastructure

1. Where new sites are proposed for the installation of telecommunications equipment, it must be demonstrated that co-location or mast-sharing on existing telecommunications installations has been explored and is not possible.
2. The installation of new telecommunications apparatus is required to minimise its impact on the street scene and townscape and not unacceptably harm the appearance of heritage assets or unacceptably detract from the amenity of surrounding properties.
3. Telecommunications equipment installed on tall buildings should be integrated into the building design to minimise the impact of its appearance. Where telecommunications equipment protrudes above the top of a building's roofline, this will be included in the calculation of the building's height and may trigger requirements relating to tall buildings.
4. The installation of telecommunications equipment must not create any unacceptable risks to the health, well-being, or security of residents or users of surrounding and nearby sites.

## Supporting text

14.182 This policy aims to ensure that the design and location of telecommunications equipment does not create a safety hazard or detract from the character of their surroundings, taking into consideration the potential impacts on the amenity of the area and local residents.

14.183 Under part 1, proposals to install new telecommunications equipment will be required to submit a written report alongside the planning application demonstrating that efforts have been made to source compatible equipment to existing installations and to identify opportunities for co-locations. Where co-location is not possible, the report should clearly set out the efforts that have been taken, and the reasons why co-location is not feasible.

14.184 Part 2 aims to ensure that the installation of telecommunications equipment does not conflict with the general design, streetscape, and heritage requirements of other policies in this section of the Local Plan.

14.185 Part 3 should be read in conjunction with Policy PS2 on tall buildings. The design of tall buildings needs to be of especially high quality due to their potential impact on the townscape of the borough, and telecommunications equipment has the potential to detract from this design unless it is carefully considered.

14.186 Under part 4, details should be included on the frequency modulation, power output and evidence of how the proposal meets the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection to demonstrate compatibility with surrounding uses.

14.187 The council will carry out further work in conjunction with mobile operators and developers to create a Public Realm Mobile Telecom Design Framework which will address design, type of structures, access, and safety. This will require that, prior to approval, future public realm designs must accommodate a 5G small cell capability.

### London Plan polices:

- D9 Tall Buildings
- D11 Safety, security and resilience to emergency

### Local Plan polices:

- CG10 Noise and vibration

### Evidence base:

- Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Guidelines

## 15. Inclusive economy and good growth

EG1 – Creating investment and jobs

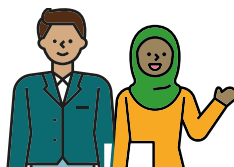
EG2 – New employment space

EG3 – Affordable workspace

EG4 – Loss and redevelopment of employment space

EG5 – Railway arches

EG6 – Data Centres



### Introduction

15.1 Tower Hamlets has a strong tradition of entrepreneurialism, playing host to some of London's oldest markets. The borough's industrial sites play host to a diverse range of businesses, from food production to building suppliers to clothing manufacturers. The borough's wide variety of office spaces house many small businesses from accountants and solicitors that serve their local neighbourhood to growing enterprises with markets across London and beyond. The local economy is essential to tackling economic inequality and the skills gap. It provides employment, training, and career progression opportunities to local residents.

15.2 Tower Hamlets also plays a significant role in London's global economy. The west of the borough forms part of the CAZ (see Figure 16) which contains London's core functions and activities, such as government administration, culture, and business. Canary Wharf and the surrounding area, located in the north of the Isle of Dogs, is classified as a CAZ Satellite by the London Plan and contains some of the world's largest financial and professional service organisations. In addition to supporting London's economy, these businesses also play an important role in providing employment opportunities to local residents.

15.3 The past few years have seen a significant change in the use and nature of employment space in the borough. The COVID-19 pandemic has hastened national trends that were already in evidence, including an increase in working from home and in e-commerce. This shift is still on-going, and it remains to be seen to what extent these trends will become permanent.

15.4 While there has been a reduction in demand for large offices spaces suitable for global and national corporations, particularly in

Canary Wharf, there remains strong demand for smaller spaces suitable for local independent businesses and start-ups. Over the past few years, the demand for local independent business and start-up workspace has spread from a cluster in the west of the borough around Whitechapel and Spitalfields to cover most areas of the borough.

15.5 Over the past several years, the UK has also seen a significant increase in demand for industrial spaces, with especially strong demand for logistics facilities to support the increase in e-commerce. While this trend began before the pandemic, the lock-downs and changed behaviours around visiting shops led to a rapid acceleration in online shopping, which requires significant warehousing and logistics space. This rise in demand for industrial space comes at the end of a long period in Tower Hamlets and London more widely of converting industrial land to residential and other uses. As a result, the pressure on the borough's remaining industrial land is significant, leading to higher rents that undermine the affordability of workspace for local businesses and entrepreneurs.

15.6 Table 6 presents the projected growth in employment within Tower Hamlets over the period 2023 to 2038.

15.7 Table 7 applies the projected change in jobs in the borough to the need for floorspace, demonstrating that there is sufficient supply of sites identified for future office floorspace. There is however a shortfall of industrial floorspace compared to demand as a result of significant losses of industrial land in the borough in recent years and the displacement of businesses into the borough from the City of London and other inner London boroughs where they have been forced out by higher rents and land values. As such, it is vital that existing provision is protected and that new floorspace is encouraged in appropriate locations to service the needs of local industry as well as the needs of central London more widely.

**Table 6: Jobs forecasts: 2023 to 2038**

Jobs	2023	2038	2023-38	2023-38
All jobs	326,629	359,896	33,267	10.2%
Office jobs	188,044	206,852	18,808	10.0%
Industrial jobs	15,753	16,905	1,152	7.3%

**Table 7: Floorspace (sqm) forecasts: 2023 to 2038**

Property type	Jobs change	Density ratio (sqm/worker)	Net additional floorspace (sqm)	Land required (ha)
Manufacturing	-400	36	-15,200	-3.8
Other Industrial	1,500	36	52,700	13.2
Distribution	100	50	5,500	0.8
Office	18,800	11.3	212,500	6.1
<b>Total land</b>				<b>16.3</b>

15.8 While the industrial projections cannot be met from identified sites in the development pipeline, potential additional capacity exists within designated employment locations through the intensification of existing provision. There are also numerous opportunities for new employment floorspace to be delivered through 'windfall' sites, generally through mixed-use developments across the borough and in the site allocations listed in Section 4.

15.9 This chapter relates to employment uses within the E(g) and B use classes (business, general industrial and storage and distribution) and



sui generis industrial functions (including 'dark kitchens', commercial laundries, etc.). While it is recognized that other use classes generate employment, these are covered within other policy chapters in the Local Plan.

15.10 This chapter also relates to many of the spaces where culture is produced, including film studios, set workshops, recording studios and visual artists' studios, among many others. Where spaces include both the production and consumption of culture, the policies in this chapter will apply alongside Policy CI5.

15.11 This section contains the following policies:

- Policy EG1: Creating investment and jobs
- Policy EG2: New employment space
- Policy EG3: Affordable Workspace
- Policy EG4: Loss and redevelopment of employment space
- Policy EG5: Railway arches

## Policy EG1 Creating investment and jobs

1. The council will support development proposals which provide opportunities to maximise benefits to local independent businesses (small and micro enterprises) and local residents, delivering investment, providing a range of skills training opportunities and enabling job creation in the borough through:
  - a. reinforcing the borough's designated employment locations, in which development proposals must demonstrate that the role and function of the designation will be maintained and enhanced;
  - b. supporting local traders, entrepreneurs, start-ups, micro, and local independent businesses with access to affordable workspace options across the borough;
  - c. ensuring that the benefits of the new Elizabeth Line, including the stations at Whitechapel and Canary Wharf and other transport schemes will act as a further catalyst for investment and growth in the borough;
  - d. supporting and promoting the competitiveness, vibrancy, and creativity of the Tower Hamlets economy;
  - e. protecting the borough's global, national, regional and local economic roles in delivering jobs and supporting businesses;
  - f. ensuring a range of job opportunities at all levels are provided throughout the borough, particularly within designated employment locations, the CAZ, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and Metropolitan, District and Neighbourhood Centres;
  - g. closing the current skills gap and wealth inequalities amongst the working population, through improving access to careers

and social mobility, education, training and development opportunities for residents and local businesses and increasing the mix of employment sectors; and

- h. ensuring availability of a range of workspaces and unit sizes, start-up space, co-working space and 'grow-on' space by protecting existing floorspace and encouraging the provision of new floorspace for a range of employment uses.

2. The council will support, protect, and enhance the role and function of the borough's designated employment locations (as defined on the Policies Map) and ensure that the provision of employment floorspace contributes to the borough's target of creating 33,267 new jobs over the period to 2038 in line with the roles and functions as set out below.

**Table 8: Designated office locations**

Designation	Role and function	Location
Canary Wharf Preferred Office Location (CW POL)	This area is a globally significant location for financial and business services. It will also expand and diversify its workspace to support local independent businesses and emerging industries. Canary Wharf's unique contribution to London's employment and economy should be promoted and enhanced. Residential development is only appropriate within the Canary Wharf Preferred Office Location (CW POL) where it comes through the retrofit of existing buildings and it does not undermine the supply of office space to meet the objectively assessed need as set out in Policy EG4.	Canary Wharf  (as illustrated on the Policies Map)
Canary Wharf Fringe	Within the North Isle of Dogs CAZ Satellite, but outside of the CW POL, offices and other strategic functions are to be prioritised. In the CW Fringe, residential uses should not exceed 75% of the gross floor area of any development.	Area surrounding Canary Wharf (shown in Policies Map)
City Fringe Preferred Office Locations (POLs)	These contain, or could provide, significant office floorspace to support the role and function of wider Central London. Greater weight is given to office and other strategic CAZ uses as a first priority. Although residential uses can be accommodated, these should not exceed 25% of the gross floor area of any development.	These are illustrated on the Policies Map

Designation	Role and function	Location
Central Activities Zone (CAZ)	This designation contains areas of the CAZ outside of the POLs. They include a greater diversity of uses than the POLs, while providing significant employment floorspace and capacity to accommodate future growth. There are opportunities for provision of office and other strategic CAZ functions as part of employment-led or mixed-use schemes. Residential uses are supported as part of mixed-use schemes although the proportion of residential floorspace should not exceed 75% of the gross floor area of any development.	This is illustrated on the Policies Map

Table 9: Designated industrial locations

Designation	Role and function	Location
Strategic Industrial Location (SIL)	This designation plays an important sub-regional industrial, warehousing and waste management role serving not just the borough but other parts of central London. Residential uses are not suitable in these locations due to potential conflict with existing and future industrial uses, and the pressure on industrial sites from high demand. These areas should be retained in industrial (Class E(g)(iii) or Class B) uses.	Empson Street (as illustrated on the Policies Map). This should be safeguarded in accordance with London Plan policies.  Fish Island/Bow Goods Yard – This area currently falls within the LLDC’s planning authority, but planning powers for this area will return to Tower Hamlets from 2025. This area includes the Bow Midland Rail Freight Terminal, which is safeguarded for freight transfer. It will be safeguarded in accordance with London Plan policies.

Designation	Role and function	Location
Local Industrial Locations (LIL)	<p>LILs provide important areas of light-manufacturing/ industry and warehousing to meet a more local need and provide local employment opportunities, as well as to support the needs of the global business centres of Canary Wharf and the City of London.</p> <p>Residential uses are not suitable in these locations due to potential conflict with existing and future industrial uses, and the pressure on industrial sites from high demand. These areas should be retained in industrial (Class E(g)(iii), Class B, or industrial Sui generis) uses.</p>	<p>Blackwall Trading Estate                      Gillender Street                      Poplar Business Park                      The Highway                      Thomas Road                      Cannon Workshop                      Wick Lane and Crown Close, Fish Island                      These are illustrated on the Policies Map.</p>



Designation	Role and function	Location
<p>Local Mixed-use Employment Locations (LMEL)</p>	<p>These are areas of high accessibility that provide or could provide significant capacity for employment accommodation meeting secondary, local or specialist employment needs, and to support the needs of start-ups, small-to-medium enterprises, grow-on space, and creative and digital industries. They are generally suitable for a wider range of uses than Preferred Office Locations and CW Fringe, and may include light industrial and/or residential uses alongside traditional office uses. Residential uses will be supported in these locations where they meet the criteria of Policy EG4.</p>	<p>Blackwall – which provides secondary large floorplate offices and, smaller units suitable for small-to-medium enterprises which support the needs of Canary Wharf and the City of London. This area has seen significant growth in the higher education sector, and is particularly suited to this type of use, given its good public transport connections and campus-like public realm. This area also includes a significant cluster of data centres that provide storage and data processing for businesses in Canary Wharf and the City of London.</p> <p>Cambridge Heath – which provides a range of office, industrial and studio workspaces meeting the needs of businesses serving a more local need, start-ups, small-to-medium enterprises, and creative industries.</p> <p>Tower Gateway East – which provides a variety of units supporting both local need and the needs of businesses within surrounding POLs and the City of London.</p> <p>Whitechapel – which provides small office spaces meeting local needs alongside a bio-tech and life sciences sector, creative and knowledge-based industries and growing demand from an eastwards expansion of the City of London.</p> <p>These are illustrated on the Policies Map.</p>

Designation	Role and function	Location
Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ)	<p>The Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ) contains a significant cluster of businesses working in the creative and cultural sectors. Development in this area will prioritise workspace that supports the creative industries and will have regard to Part C of London Plan Policy HC5.</p> <p>The CEZ also includes a significant warehouse living community that relies on informal spaces to both live and carry out creative production work. This space will be protected as both housing and employment space on the basis that it meets needs for both types of use.</p>	<p>The Hackney Wick and Fish Island CEZ is an area in the northeast of the borough. Historically, it was nearly entirely industrial but has become a mixed-use community with a large arts sector. The CEZ also extends into the London Borough of Hackney.</p>
Safeguarded Wharves	<p>Tower Hamlets includes two safeguarded wharves as designated by the London Plan. While these locations are not considered designated employment locations, they do play an important role in the borough's economy by allowing heavy goods to be transported by water.</p>	<p>Orchard Wharf Northumberland Wharf</p>

Designation	Role and function	Location
<p>Railway Arches</p>	<p>Railway arches house a wide range of industrial and other employment uses across the borough. They often provide lower-cost space than would be available in a purpose built building, and play an important role in the borough's economy. Where they are in employment use (use classes E(g), B2, B8 and Sui generis employment uses), this will be retained and development that includes or is adjacent to railway arches will retain access and not undermine the flexible use of the arches.</p> <p>Railway arches can also provide space for community uses and other forms of social infrastructure.</p>	<p>Shadwell-Mile End Arches – these arches are underneath the railway line into Fenchurch Street, extending from Lemn Street to Bow Road (including under the disused railway line alongside Tidworth Street) and contain a diverse range of uses, including a particular cluster of South Asian food wholesalers in Watney Market.</p> <p>Bethnal Green Arches – these arches are underneath the lines into Liverpool Street, extending from Vallance Road to Regent's Canal to the north and Globe Road to the east. These arches contain a diverse range of uses, including a cluster of arts and culture uses around Cambridge Heath.</p> <p>These are illustrated on the Policies Map.</p>

**Table 10: Other Employment Designations**

Designation	Role and function	Location
<p>Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and District, Specialist and Neighbourhood Centres</p>	<p>The Tower Hamlets Activity Areas, District Centres and larger Neighbourhood Centres also provide opportunities for office and other employment uses within existing and new buildings.. The Activity Areas in particular have the potential to accommodate substantial employment growth to support the strategic role of the POLs and other parts of the CAZ. These are illustrated on the Policies Map. Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and District and Neighbourhood Centres typically contain a diverse range of office and other workspace types and scales, therefore they are particularly well-suited to providing workspace suitable for local independent businesses.</p>	<p>The Tower Hamlets Activity Areas act as zones of transition between the high-density, business-oriented environments of the CAZ and Canary Wharf and the nearby residential communities. They typically include a mix of uses, including office, light industrial and residential and are generally suitable for mixed-use development including residential.</p> <p>District Centres serve the day-to-day needs of a large catchment area and can accommodate office development, typically at a smaller scale than the POLs, CAZ and Canary Wharf Fringe. These centres can also often accommodate light industrial uses away from the main shopping streets, where they support the vitality and viability of the centre (see town centre policies for more details).</p> <p>The Specialist Centres are town centres equivalent in scale to neighbourhood centres, but that include a unique cluster of businesses that attract visitors from a wider area. For the purposes of employment uses, Columbia Road should be treated as a neighbourhood centre. Redchurch Street includes small-scale offices that complement the ground floor uses, including creative businesses. New office development that supports the existing mix of uses will be supported. Hackney Wick includes a mix of town centre uses alongside light industrial and residential uses. Development of light industrial uses that are compatible with the existing mix of uses will generally be supported.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Centres serve the day-to-day needs of a smaller catchment and are likely to be suitable for more localised office uses.</p>



## Supporting text

15.12 This policy sets out the approach to employment provision in relation to the level and distribution of jobs across the borough over the period to 2038. This will help to ensure successful and sustainable local and sub-regional economies, promoting and facilitating a range of employment spaces to meet the needs of different types of occupiers across different locations (see Figure 16 and the Policies Map).

15.13 Part 1 describes how development should contribute to meeting our long-term objectives to support investment and job creation in the borough. Tower Hamlets has a diverse economy ranging from the globally significant financial centre of Canary Wharf and the associated services required to support it (and the neighbouring City of London) to creative and cultural industries, industrial uses, secondary offices, and businesses, meeting a very local need. Employment activities are distributed across the borough with specific locations supporting clusters of particular businesses or unit types. Development that contributes to meeting these objectives will be supported.

15.14 Development is expected to help reduce wealth and social inequality and support local enterprise, employment, education, and skills development and the council's social value aims. This is to support residents to take advantage of the opportunities created by development, both during the construction and end user phase.

15.15 Planning obligations will be used to ensure developments contribute to this aim, including by making financial contributions which will be used by the council to fund training and support for residents and local businesses to access employment and enterprise opportunities resulting from development. The approach to calculating these contributions is set out in Appendix 2. In addition, developments

are expected to work towards targets for local employment and enterprise which will be secured by planning obligation, including providing education and skills opportunities (including apprenticeships, internships, work placements and graduate placements) during construction and occupation, where appropriate.

15.16 Part 1 also supports the provision of a range of workspaces including affordable workspace, emphasising that spaces suitable for small-and-medium enterprises and microbusinesses are a vital element of the overall mix. This has the dual benefit of supporting new and emerging economic sectors and providing additional space for small-and-medium enterprises and micro-businesses that provide employment for a significant proportion of the borough's population.

15.17 Development incorporating a range of unit types and sizes will be encouraged, including where these are clustered within a single building and provide shared and networking facilities. Developments should address the most up-to-date requirements as part of pre-application discussions.

15.18 Part 2 establishes the designated employment locations. We will work with applicants to ensure that proposals are consistent with the needs and character of their locations, while addressing policies set out elsewhere within this section and the wider Local Plan.

15.19 Canary Wharf and the City Fringe contain a high proportion of primary and large floorplate offices which form part of globally significant employment clusters. The existing office space in these areas will be protected to ensure that these areas continue to play a globally significant role. However, there has been a reduction in the demand for large-floorplate corporate offices, and a shift, particularly in Canary Wharf, towards a greater mix of employment space – with a significant

emphasis on space suitable for local independent businesses – and a greater mix of uses more broadly on the fringes of Canary Wharf will be supported. This will be achieved through the designation of the CW POL, the Canary Wharf Fringe and the City Fringe POLs.

15.20 The CAZ, which includes the London Plan designated North Isle Of Dogs (NIOD) Satellite (including Canary Wharf) has been subdivided into four distinct areas. The commercial core of the NIOD has been designated as the CW POL and is unsuitable for housing, unless it is delivered through the retrofit of existing buildings in line with circular economy principles and does not undermine the supply of office space to meet the objectively assessed need as demonstrated in the council's Employment Land Review or other council-approved document, or other uses which would undermine the strategic functions of the CAZ. The area surrounding the CW POL has been designated as the CW Fringe. In this area a greater mix of uses is supported, including residential up to a maximum limit of 75% of the floor area of any new development. The 75% maximum may be considered strategically across multiple sites where appropriate. The CW Fringe is also expected to support the function of Canary Wharf as a Metropolitan Centre, with a diverse variety of town centre uses.

15.21 The City Fringe POL covers areas that are key existing or potential employment locations with offices and other strategic functions as the dominant land use. However, in contrast to the CW POL, residential uses will be acceptable so long as they do not undermine the future supply of offices and other strategic uses. This approach seeks to ensure residential development does not prejudice the future intensification of employment floorspace or undermine the predominant employment

function of these areas. While there has been a reduction in demand for large format office space across London, this reduction has been less acute in the City and City Fringe than in Canary Wharf. As a result, there continues to be a need to safeguard space for offices, including large-floorplate corporate style offices, in the City Fringe. This ensures that the larger businesses moving east from the City do not displace smaller businesses occupying the existing office stock in the west of the borough.

15.22 The remainder of the CAZ which is outside of the City Fringe POL contains a more diverse range of uses than the Secondary POL and includes the borough's three CAZ Centres, which function as town centres. Within this zone, proposals should consist of or provide a significant amount of employment floorspace or other strategic CAZ uses relative to the surrounding context of the site. Other uses which may include residential will be encouraged where the residential component of a scheme does not exceed 75% of the gross internal floor area. This will ensure that the area retains its mixed-use character, and that smaller-scale office space continues to be provided that meets the needs of local independent businesses in highly accessible locations.

15.23 Tower Hamlets has a relatively limited supply of industrial land and floorspace, despite high levels of market demand, in the face of increasing competition from other land uses, such as housing. There are clusters of existing industrial activity along key transport routes. These sites need to be protected to support the long term needs of the borough and the role of the City of London and Canary Wharf as global economic hubs (some services need to be in close proximity to the end user and immediately available). This will be achieved through the

designation of the Strategic Industrial Locations (Empson Street and Fish Island/Bow Goodsyrd) and Local Industrial Locations (see Part 1).

15.24 For the purposes of this chapter, industrial uses are considered to include:

- light and general industry (use Classes E(g)(iii) and B2);
- storage and logistics/distribution (use Class B8);
- secondary materials, waste management and aggregates (use Classes B2, B8 and Sui Generis);
- utilities infrastructure (such as energy and water);
- land for sustainable transport functions including intermodal freight interchanges, rail, and bus infrastructure;
- wholesale markets;
- emerging industrial-related sectors;
- flexible hybrid space to accommodate services that support the wider economy and population;
- Low-cost industrial and related space for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises; and
- research and development of industrial and related products or processes.

15.25 The borough's Local Mixed-use Employment Locations (LMELs) have relatively high public transport accessibility levels and support significant numbers of jobs but have unique individual characteristics. Applicants should aim to ensure that new employment space that is brought forward contributes to and meets the business and workspace demands of each area. The Whitechapel LMEL forms part of MedCity and plays a particularly important role in the development of the Life Sciences and Medical Research sector, with the Royal London Hospital,

a campus of Queen Mary University London, and the potential for a new life sciences research centre. The Blackwall LMEL is experiencing an increase in higher education facilities, benefitting from the campus-like feel of the area, its proximity to student housing and its good public transport connections. New development within LMELs will be expected to provide high-quality flexible workspace designed to meet the needs of emerging and growing sectors (e.g. research and development) as well as other SMEs and creative businesses.

15.26 Hackney Wick and Fish Island have been designated as a Creative Enterprise Zone in accordance with London Plan Policy HC5. Within this area, creative workspace and cultural venues are supported, and there is particular emphasis on the provision of affordable workspace to support creative industries. In addition, the HWFI CEZ includes a significant Warehouse Living community, which relies on low-cost, communal spaces that provide both living accommodation and workspace. Warehouse Living provides both housing and employment and is therefore considered to be both a residential and an employment use.

15.27 In addition to the SILs and LILs, the borough's railway arches play an important role in providing relatively low-cost space for a very wide variety of uses including light industrial. These spaces will be protected through a railway arches designation that secures them for employment and other creative uses. The borough's railway arches also contain and can be suitable for community and cultural uses, such as sports facilities and art galleries. Where railway arches are in an existing community use, or a community facility is proposed within a railway arch, regard should be had to the Community Infrastructure policies.

15.28 Part 2 also highlights that town centres are locations in which employment uses will be supported, subject to the provision of active frontages at ground floor level, where relevant. This is because town

centres are located throughout the borough and are able to offer smaller spaces which meet the needs of businesses serving the local community. Within the Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and some District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres (as shown on the Policies Map), purpose-built office buildings can be supported where they are of a nature and scale which corresponds with their surroundings. Within the Primary and Secondary Frontages, employment spaces should be located on upper floors so as not to undermine the retail and leisure functions of those areas.

15.29 Proposals outside of designated employment locations and the town centre hierarchy (see Part 1) will be supported where they demonstrate that there is a need and demand for such employment uses, with further detail set out in Policy EG2.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- GG5 Growing a good economy
- SD4 The Central Activities Zone (CAZ)
- SD5 Offices, other strategic functions and residential development in the CAZ
- E1 Offices
- E2 Providing suitable business space
- E3 Affordable workspace
- E4 Land for industrial, logistics and services to support London's economic function
- E5 Strategic Industrial Locations (SIL)
- E6 Locally Significant Industrial Sites
- E7 Industrial intensification, co-location and substitution
- E8 Sector growth opportunities and clusters
- E11 Skills and opportunities for all

#### **Local Plan policies:**

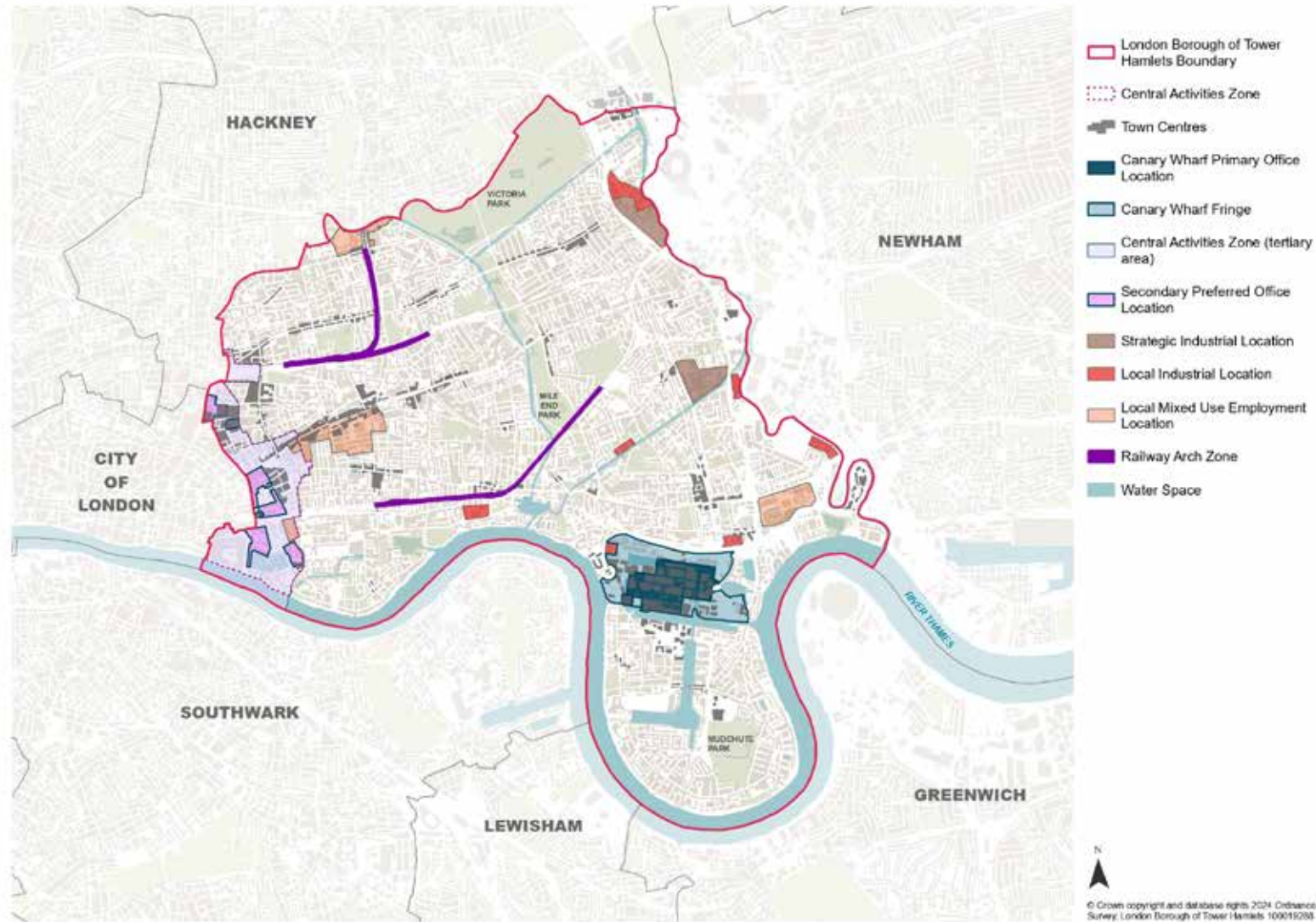
- DV1 Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets
- DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- CI5 Arts and culture facilities
- RW1 Managing our waste
- RW2 New and enhanced waste facilities
- MC1 Sustainable travel
- MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing and construction

#### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Employment Land Review, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Affordable Workspace Study, 2023
- Central Activities Zone SPG, 2016
- London Industrial Land Supply, 2023
- London Office Policy Review, 2017
- Central Activities Zone Economic Futures Research, 2021



Figure 16: Distribution of employment hubs and locations



## Policy EG2 New employment space

1. Development proposals for new or intensified industrial floorspace (use classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2, B8 and industrial Sui Generis uses) will be supported in Strategic Industrial Locations, Local Industrial Locations, Railway Arches, Site Allocations which include industrial space and the Creative Enterprise Zone (where they support the creative economy). Additionally, development proposals for new or intensified light industrial floorspace (use classes E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii)) will also be supported in Local Mixed-use Employment Locations. Development proposals for Warehouse Living (Sui generis) floorspace will be supported in the Creative Enterprise Zone.
2. Development proposals for new or intensified office floorspace (use classes E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii)) will be supported in Preferred Office Locations, Local Mixed-use Employment Locations, the Central Activities Zone, Site Allocations which include office space and the Creative Enterprise Zone (where they support the creative economy).
3. Outside of the locations cited in Parts 1 and 2, development proposals for new employment space will be directed to town centres, having regard to the town centre hierarchy and the London Plan's Town Centre Office Growth Potential Classifications, the Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and locations with good public transport accessibility or along major transport routes.
4. Development proposals for new employment space will be supported at other locations to those specified in Parts 1-3 above where it can be demonstrated that there is a reasonable prospect of occupancy by way of a detailed marketing strategy, and:
  - a. the employment use would contribute towards integrated place making; or
  - b. the area forms part of a cluster of similar employment uses; or
  - c. the employment space is being provided as part of a temporary meanwhile use.
5. Development proposals for new employment space must ensure that it does not have a negative impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings or the operations of neighbouring businesses.
6. Planning conditions may be used to secure Classes E(g)(i), E(g)(ii), and/or E(g)(iii) within designated employment locations or on sites where other Class E uses would not be appropriate.
7. Development proposals for new employment space must demonstrate that:
  - a. Where relevant, floorspace will allow for flexibility for a range of occupiers including future subdivision or amalgamation;
  - b. Where relevant, they will provide a range of unit types and sizes including a significant proportion of micro- and small units well-suited to micro- and small independent businesses;
  - c. they will provide a good level of amenity for occupiers;
  - d. they will provide adequate servicing and delivery accommodation; and
  - e. they incorporate the highest standards of inclusive design.
8. Development proposals for employment and residential use in the same self-contained unit (i.e. live-work and work-live) will not be supported, except in the form of Warehouse Living (Sui generis) in the Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone.

## Supporting text

15.30 Parts 1 and 2 of the policy encourage the provision of additional employment floorspace to meet demand and the needs of different business types. Where new provision is proposed, it must be located in the most viable locations to support the role and function of the borough's designated employment locations and to proactively avoid long-term vacancy or subsequent conversion to other uses. This policy seeks to direct new provision to the designated employment locations, activity areas and site allocations which include employment space as a first priority, then to locations of highest activity, accessibility and visibility (see Part 3) and finally to other locations (see Part 4) where it meets specific criteria.

15.31 Part 4 supports the development of employment uses outside of designated employment locations, provided they meet certain criteria. Part 4(a) supports employment uses where they serve a place-making function within a development, for example by activating inactive spaces or providing a focal point. Part 4(b) recognises that there are areas of the borough outside of designated employment locations that contain clusters of employment uses, and that these areas are likely to be suitable for new employment uses. Part 4(c) recognises the positive role that temporary uses can play in activating and making efficient use of spaces while they await development. In order to allow for flexibility and ensure that temporary uses can occupy spaces quickly, the policy allows flexibility for temporary employment uses to occupy spaces that might otherwise be considered unsuitable for employment uses, provided these uses do not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity through, for example, noise or air pollution. Meanwhile uses would be expected to only remain in place for a defined period of time,

or until the site comes forward for development to meet its full potential or allocated use(s). Proposals for meanwhile uses should include a 'move-on' plan showing how the temporary use will move to a new suitable premise when a permanent occupier takes on the space or it is redeveloped. Where the application can demonstrate that the use is genuinely temporary in nature – meaning that there will be no loss of employment when the use ceases – a 'move on' plan may not be necessary.

15.32 Part 5 seeks to ensure that new employment development does not have a negative impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings, including as a result of noise, air and light pollution, odours, vibration or reduction in daylight, sunlight or privacy. It is also essential that new employment development does not undermine the operations of existing businesses, including ensuring that full access, operations, and servicing are maintained. Where existing businesses in close proximity to the development site have the potential to cause noise, pollution, or vibration issues, the proposed development must ensure that it is designed to mitigate these issues, in accordance with the London Plan's Agent of Change principle.

15.33 Part 6 recognises that designated employment locations play an important role in ensuring a future supply of land and floorspace to meet the borough's economic needs over the course of the plan period. The flexibility of use class E risks undermining that supply, so the policy supports the use of planning conditions that restrict changes of use.

15.34 Part 7 aims to prevent long-term vacancy caused by high fit-out costs and lack of supporting infrastructure deterring interest from potential tenants.

15.35 Part 7(a) promotes flexibility to minimise the risk of spaces becoming vacant and ensuring that they can adapt to changing market demands.

15.36 Part 7(b) seeks to ensure that space is provided to meet the needs of local independent businesses, which may require smaller spaces.

15.37 Part 7 (a) and (b) also recognise that flexibility may not be possible or desirable in all cases. Development proposals that are designed for a specific operator or a specific industrial use may not be able to provide flexibility or smaller units. Site constraints may also limit the ability of a development proposal to meet these criteria.

15.38 Part 7(c) promotes a working environment that supports the health and well-being of occupants. Development proposals should demonstrate that they include adequate levels of daylight and sunlight and access to ancillary communal facilities for smaller occupiers such as meeting rooms, breakout spaces, and kitchen facilities.

15.39 Part 7(d) seeks to ensure that the delivery and servicing needs of the occupiers can be met within the proposed development.

15.40 Development proposals should include off-street loading where necessary, and demonstrate that they can meet the needs of a range of occupiers and have sufficient clear ceiling heights and goods lifts and can handle heavy loads.

15.41 Part 7(c) requires developments to be designed to be inclusive for occupiers with mobility constraints, including ensuring that all workspaces are accessible to those with mobility constraints, sufficient Blue Badge parking is provided to meet the requirements of London Plan Policy T6.5, and ensuring that there are no potential conflicts

between the Blue Badge parking and the servicing and delivery accommodation.

15.42 In the case of office developments, high-speed broadband connectivity should be provided to serve the end-user. Industrial units would be expected to provide double-height units with appropriate access and good standards of internal sound insulation to minimise conflict with surrounding uses.

15.43 Part 8 recognises that, in most parts of the borough, live-work units do not contribute to the overall provision of employment floorspace and are difficult to enforce. Applications to convert live-work units into purely residential units and certificates of lawful development (where the units have not been used for employment purposes) demonstrate a lack of need to secure live-work or work-live within the same self-contained unit. Applications for live-work will not be supported outside of the Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone. Instead, the council supports development proposals that offer a range of uses (including employment and housing) as separate units within the same site. There is an existing cluster of Warehouse Living in the Hackney Wick Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone that provides low-cost work space alongside housing. This cluster plays an important role in the borough's creative economy and will be preserved.



## London Plan policies:

- SD5 Offices, other strategic functions and residential development in the CAZ
- SD6 Town centres and high streets
- SD7 Town centres: development principles and Development Plan Documents
- E1 Offices
- E2 Providing suitable business space
- E4 Land for industry, logistics and services to support London's economic function

## Local Plan policies:

- TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- MC1 Sustainable travel

## Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Employment Land Review, 2023

## Policy EG3 Affordable workspace

1. Development proposals that include more than 1,000sqm gross commercial floorspace (use Class B2, B8, E(a), E(b), E(c), E(g) and commercial Sui Generis uses) should provide at least 15% of the commercial floorspace at a peppercorn rent and in perpetuity.
2. Development proposals that will result in affordable workspace of 300sqm or more will lease the space directly to the council (or an organisation approved by the council).
3. Development proposals that will result in affordable workspace of less than 300sqm are required to lease the space either to an affordable workspace operator directly or to an end occupier(s). Development proposals must provide an affordable workspace strategy, which sets out their approach to allocating and marketing the subsidised space.
4. Affordable workspace should be designed and fitted out to the current, local industry requirements.
5. The affordable workspace will have an affordable service charge that is no more than 50% of a fair and reasonable proportion of the costs associated with the space.
6. In exceptional circumstances, an affordable workspace financial contribution may be accepted in lieu of on-site affordable workspace provision, where it can be demonstrated that on-site provision is not feasible and/or that a greater economic impact would be achieved through this route.
7. Where a single applicant intends to develop multiple sites within an area, the council may take a strategic approach, considering the requirements for multiple sites collectively.

## Supporting text

15.44 LBTH's Employment Land Review (2023) and Affordable Workspace Study (2023) identify a gap in the affordability of commercial space within the borough for many types of businesses. In accordance with the London Plan, affordable commercial space is intended to support: (1) specific sectors that have social value such as charities, voluntary and community organisations or social enterprises; (2) specific sectors that have cultural value such as creative and artists' workspace, rehearsal and performance space and makerspace; (3) disadvantaged groups starting up in any sector; (4) educational outcomes through connections to schools, colleges or higher education; and (5) start-up and early stage businesses or regeneration.

15.45 Increasing rents and sales costs in Tower Hamlets are making commercial space increasingly unaffordable for the types of businesses and organisations listed above. For this reason, Policy EG3 requires the provision of affordable commercial space in all developments that provide 1,000sqm or more of gross commercial floorspace. Where a development proposal is below this threshold, the council is open to working with developers to secure affordable workspace, particularly in cases where it is necessary to offset harm in relation to another policy.

15.46 In the Strategic Plan 2022-26, the council commits to adopt a community wealth building approach – socially just use of land is a key principle of community wealth building and affordable workspace policy can be used as a mechanism to maximise wider social, economic and community benefits through assets in the borough.

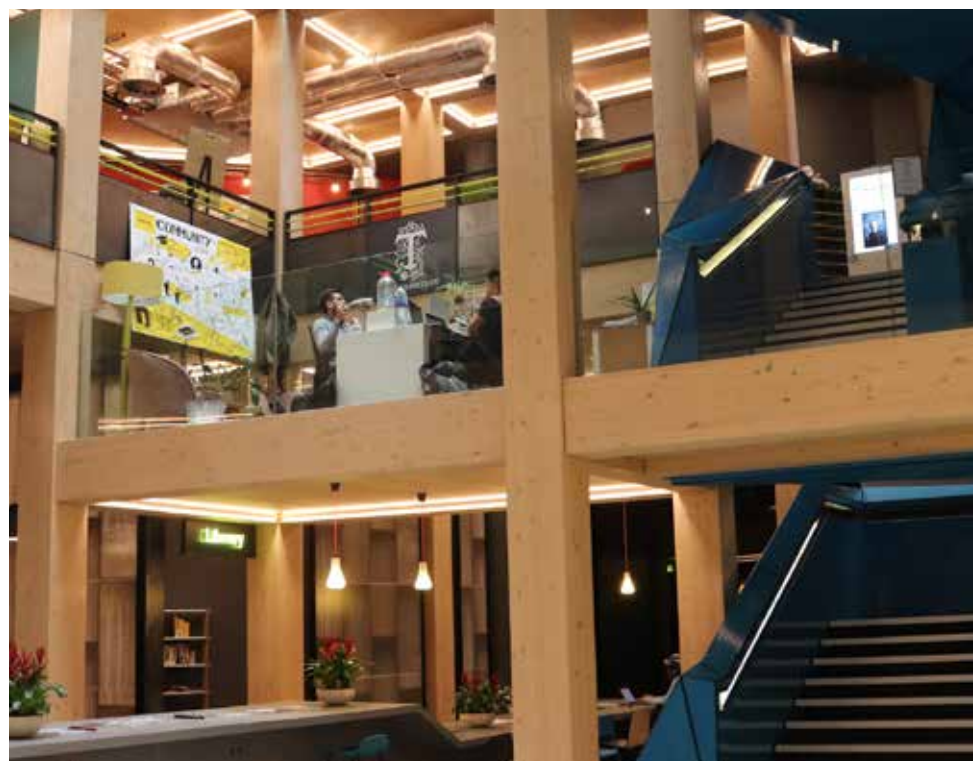
15.47 Given the varied needs and diverse economy of the borough, different types of affordable commercial space will be sought depending on the nature of the development, the need for specific

types of space, and the surrounding context. The types of spaces that may be sought could include:

- Ground floor retail or other public-facing commercial space;
- Arts and cultural facilities;
- Light industrial/maker space;
- Arts production spaces, including artists' studios, performance rehearsal spaces, set design workshops;
- Heavy industry/manufacturing;
- Logistics facilities and last-mile distribution hubs;
- Life science and other laboratory space;
- Traditional office space;
- flexible/shared workspace; and
- serviced office space.

15.48 Developers should engage early in the planning process with LBTH planning officers and the council's economic development team to ensure that the proposed affordable commercial space supports the sectors with the greatest need. In town centre locations, this may include ground floor retail/café/restaurant space or space for arts and cultural facilities; in industrial locations this may include light industrial/maker spaces or space for logistics and last-mile distribution. Depending on the location of the site and the needs of that particular area, it may be appropriate to provide a mixture of different types of affordable commercial workspace.

15.49 In the case of applications for minor material amendments that include a change in the amount of commercial floorspace in a development, this policy should be applied to the overall commercial floorspace of the development as a whole, not just to the uplift.



15.50 In order to ensure stability and continuous provision for the relevant affordable commercial space operators and occupiers, Part 1 of the policy expects the space to be provided for the full lifetime of the development, and this will be secured through a S.106 agreement. Where a development proposes the provision of affordable commercial space for a shorter period, the proposal will need to provide robust viability testing to demonstrate that the period proposed is the longest viable period of time that the space can be provided. In no case will a period of less than 20 years be accepted, to ensure certainty for both the operators and the end users, and to allow the space to support multiple businesses from start-up to move-on.

15.51 In accordance with part 2, development proposals that include 300sqm or more of affordable workspace are required to offer the headlease to the council at peppercorn rent. An operator will be appointed to manage these spaces, provide 'affordable' memberships and deliver wider social value objectives. Having ownership of spaces gives the council more autonomy over what will be delivered, ensuring that affordable workspace supports the council's strategic priorities.

15.52 In accordance with Part 3, for provisions less than 300sqm, the developer is required to lease the space to either an affordable workspace operator(s) or directly to an occupier(s). The developer must provide an affordable workspace strategy, which considers:

- the allocation policy – including the criteria for selecting tenants and a 'graduation' approach as their business grows to become self sufficient;
- the approach to marketing and promoting the space – the council can nominate suitable operators or occupiers for consideration;
- how they intend to prioritise the subsidised space to support aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups and/or local independent businesses most in need of space;
- how they intend to prioritise the subsidised space to support businesses that can provide specific social, cultural and/or economic development outcomes; and
- wider social value objectives that could be created through the provision of the affordable workspace.

15.53 Given the complexity of the provision of affordable commercial space, applicants are expected to engage with the council as early in the process as possible. The council's economic development team can support the applicant with identifying a suitable affordable workspace operator or occupier(s).

15.54 The design and fit-out of affordable commercial space are key considerations in its suitability for the end-users. Part 4 of the policy seeks to ensure that all affordable workspace is designed and fitted out to a minimum level that is usable by any end user to ensure that the final occupiers or operators are not responsible for large fit-out costs that then significantly reduce the affordability of the space.

15.55 Development proposals for affordable workspace are expected to meet the following standards:

- development proposals should accommodate with regular plan and flexibility for either open-plan or more compartmentalised modes of occupation;
- all internal walls to be plastered and painted;
- all soffits and structural columns to be exposed fair-faced polished concrete or plastered and painted;
- where thermal/acoustic insulation is applied to soffits, finish suitable for decoration;
- installation of mechanical and electrical services – including ventilation, heating and basic fire detection systems;
- installation of toilets and a kitchenette(s);
- power supply outlets and data cabling points – provision should assume a demand based on maximum possible occupancy;



- raised floors and boxes – floors should have a minimum 5kN loading capacity (4+1kN);
- floor coverings – carpet tiles deemed the most suitable though it may differ depending on typologies (i.e. light industrial or artist studios);
- floor-to-ceiling height to be as generous as possible, with a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 3m - 3.8m depending on the layout and use of the space;
- the workspace to comply with all relevant accessibility regulations – including disabled toilets/parking, bicycle storage and arrangements for loading/unloading;
- the entrance must be secure and should not be separated to the main entrance(s) of the development (i.e. a fire exit or back door);
- adequate levels of sunlight/daylight – there is a reluctance to accept a basement or lower ground provision without sufficient access to natural light; and
- other amenities – the affordable workspace should benefit from any other amenities provided within the building (i.e. provision of showers, reception facilities, informal breakout areas, outdoor space and on-site childcare).

15.56 In exceptional circumstances, some variation from the minimum requirements in part 4 may be acceptable where the space is designed for a specific occupier and that occupier has requested a different level of fit out.

15.57 The Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone plays an essential in providing workspace for arts and culture-producing

organisations. In order to ensure that the provision of affordable workspace supports this role, space in this part of the borough should be designed to meet the needs of creative businesses.

15.58 Part 5 recognises that high service charges can be an impediment to the take up of affordable workspace by operators and tenants. The overall service charge should reflect only what the affordable workspace tenants have access to and should not include unnecessary additional amenities or overly expensive facilities. The service charge paid by the affordable workspace tenants will be capped at 50% of their reasonable proportion of the overall workspace service charge, including any costs associated with the entrance and internal common parts of the building which the space has rights to. Development proposals should ensure that fit-out of the affordable workspace allows for easy and inexpensive maintenance where possible.

15.59 Part 6 of the policy recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where a final contribution is more appropriate in lieu of on-site affordable workspace. Examples include (subject to evidence and ultimately at the council's discretion):

- if the developer sufficiently demonstrates they cannot viably provide policy compliant affordable workspace;
- in circumstances where the developer (or council) is unable to let the space after the marketing period (18-24 months) and it can be demonstrated greater economic impact can be achieved through a contribution;
- in exceptional circumstances where the developer (or council) is unable to let the space due to a significant economic shock; and

- affordable workspace contributions will be used to support the development of affordable workspace across the borough.

15.60 Part 7 recognises that, in some circumstances, it may not be viable for development proposals to meet the full affordable workspace requirement. In these cases, development proposals should demonstrate through viability evidence that they are providing the maximum viable amount of affordable workspace. In these cases, the council may apply flexibility on other elements of this policy, including rent, where it would result in a greater proportion of affordable workspace.

15.61 Part 8 recognizes that there may be circumstances in which a strategic approach that considers multiple sites collectively can deliver a better outcome in terms of the quality and function of the affordable workspace, for example, where multiple proposed developments are coming forward concurrently and in close proximity, their affordable workspace obligations can be pooled to deliver a single larger affordable workspace that can achieve greater operating efficiency and better serve occupiers.

**London Plan policies:**

- E2 Providing suitable business space
- E3 Affordable workspace
- HC5 Supporting London's culture and creative industries

**Local Plan policies:**

- DV5 Developer contributions
- TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- CI5 Arts and culture facilities

**Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Employment Land Review 2023
- Tower Hamlets Affordable Workspace Study 2023
- London Office Policy Review 2017
- Affordable Workspace Evidence Base 2018

## Policy EG4 Loss and redevelopment of employment space

1. Development proposals resulting in a net loss of industrial floorspace (use classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2, B8 and industrial Sui Generis uses) within Strategic Industrial Locations (SILs) and Local Industrial Locations (LILs) will not be supported. Development proposals resulting in a net loss of Warehouse Living (Sui generis) floorspace within the Creative Enterprise Zone will not be supported.
2. Development proposals resulting in a net loss of employment floorspace within the Canary Wharf Preferred Office Location (CW POL) and the Canary Wharf Fringe (CW Fringe) will be supported where the proposal is for an alternative Strategic CAZ function, it can be demonstrated that the loss will not undermine the ability of the borough to meet its objectively assessed need for office floorspace and:
  - a. active marketing has been carried out over a continuous period of at least 12 months at a reasonable market rent which accords with indicative figures, or
  - b. in exceptional circumstances, provide robust demonstration that the site is unsuitable for continued employment use due to its condition, reasonable options for restoring the site to employment use are unviable, and that benefits of alternative use would outweigh the harm of loss of employment floorspace.
3. Development proposals resulting in a net loss of employment floorspace in the City Fringe POL and the rest of the CAZ will be supported where the proposal is for alternative Strategic CAZ functions and it can be demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been

taken to preserve the space in employment use, including evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to increase the flexibility of the space for employment uses and:

- a. active marketing has been carried out over a continuous period of at least 12 months at a reasonable market rent which accords with indicative figures; or
  - b. in exceptional circumstances, provide robust demonstration that the site is unsuitable for continued employment use due to its condition, reasonable options for restoring the site to employment use are unviable, and that the benefits of alternative use would outweigh the harm of loss of employment floorspace.
4. Development proposals resulting in a net loss of employment floorspace within the Canary Wharf Fringe, City Fringe POL and rest of the CAZ where the proposal is for a use other than a Strategic CAZ function will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the loss will not undermine the ability of the borough to meet its objectively assessed need for office floorspace, all reasonable efforts have been taken to preserve the space in employment use or alternative Strategic CAZ functions, including evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to increase the flexibility of the space for Strategic CAZ functions and:
    - a. active marketing has been carried out over a continuous period of 24 months, the first 12 months in accordance with part 3, and the following 12 months for office space and alternative Strategic CAZ functions; or
    - b. in exceptional circumstances, provide robust demonstration

that the site is unsuitable for continued use in an employment use or an alternative Strategic CAZ function due to its condition, reasonable options for restoring the site to employment use or alternative Strategic CAZ functions are unviable, and that the benefits of proposed development would outweigh the benefits of an employment use or other Strategic CAZ functions.

5. 5. Development proposals in LMELs and non-designated locations that would result in a net loss of employment floorspace will be supported where it can be demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been taken to preserve the space in employment use, including evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to increase the flexibility of the space for employment uses, and:

- a. the site has been actively marketed for its existing use, alternative employment uses, and alternative community uses such as education uses for a continuous period of at least 12 months at a reasonable market rent which accords with indicative figures; or
- b. In exceptional circumstances, the site is unsuitable for any commercial or community use due to its condition; reasonable options for restoring the site to commercial or community use are unviable; and that the benefits of a residential use would outweigh the benefits of employment, commercial or community use.

6. Development proposals that involve the redevelopment of existing occupied workspace, even where there is no net loss of employment floorspace, will not be supported unless:

- a. the workspace is provided with equivalent layout, fit-out and rent levels based on that which has been lost and existing tenants are given the right of first refusal for the re-provided space; and proposals provide a decanting plan to ensure that the businesses can continue to operate during the construction phase, including finding suitable temporary accommodation, at equivalent rents, within the borough unless it can be shown that the needs of the business are better met elsewhere; or
- b. the development proposal identifies alternative space with a size, layout, rent and connectivity equivalent to the existing that is available and considered suitable by the occupier. The alternative space should be located within the borough unless it can be shown that the needs of the business are better met elsewhere.



## Supporting text

15.62 This policy describes the criteria that will be used to assess the potential loss of employment space within the borough in line with the vision and objectives of the plan (see Section 2).

15.63 In accordance with Part 1, any development proposals that would result in a net loss of employment floorspace within a SIL or a LIL will not be supported. This reflects the significant level of demand for industrial floorspace in the borough and the important role it plays in providing employment and entrepreneurial opportunities to local residents.

15.64 In addition, Part 1 recognises the important role that the Warehouse Living community in Hackney Wick and Fish Island plays in providing low-cost living and working spaces to those in creative and other industries. Given the decline of this community in recent years and its importance to the creative economy, this space will be protected and proposals that include a net loss will not be supported.

15.65 Part 2 recognises that changes in demand for office floorspace in the borough may allow for a net loss of office floorspace within the Canary Wharf POL where this can be justified in relation to the borough's objectively assessed need for office space. The objectively assessed need for office floorspace comprises two elements, the existing stock of office floorspace (both occupied and vacant) and need for new office floorspace projected by the Employment Land Review (2023) for the plan period. Within the Canary Wharf POL and Fringe, the existing stock is estimated at 1.5m sqm. The projected need within the Canary Wharf POL and Fringe is calculated by taking 86% of the borough-wide projection to reflect that 86% of the office pipeline is located in Canary Wharf, then adding a buffer of 33% to reflect the lack of certainty in the

final 5 years of the 15 year plan period. This amounts to a projected need for 243,380sqm of office floorspace during the plan period, and means that development should not result in existing and pipeline office space falling below 1.75m sqm within the Canary Wharf POL and Fringe.

15.66 Part 3 recognises that there may be opportunities within the Canary Wharf Fringe, City Fringe POLs and other parts of the CAZ to deliver alternative Strategic CAZ functions where a loss of employment floorspace can be justified. For the purposes of parts 3 and 4 of the policy, alternative CAZ strategic functions include:

- functions associated with the State, Government and Monarchy;
- diplomatic organisations (such as embassies and high commissions);
- uses connected with science, technology, media, communications and cultural sectors of regional, national and international importance;
- centres of excellence for higher and further education and research;
- centres of medical excellence and associated specialist facilities;
- legal establishments of regional, national and international importance;
- arts, culture, leisure and entertainment activities and areas of regional, national and international importance;
- retailing, including specialist outlets, of regional, national and international importance; and
- specialist creative clusters including for example clothing, fashion, jewellery, printing, antiques, musical instruments, art, and culture.

15.67 Tourism facilities including hotels and conference centres are considered an alternative Strategic CAZ Function only in the Canary Wharf POL and the Canary Wharf Fringe. This is on the basis that

allowing for the loss of office floorspace in the City Fringe to allow for hotel development risks resulting in an oversupply of hotels and an uncoordinated and piecemeal loss of office space.

15.68 Parts 3-5 require marketing evidence covering a continuous period of at least 12 months (or 24 months in the case of Part 4) in order to prevent unnecessary loss of existing employment space which would put pressure on the ability of the borough to meet projected need, and to ensure that temporary or seasonal changes to the economy do not result in a longer term loss of office floorspace. In order to demonstrate that the site has been marketed for a continuous period of 12 months, applicants must submit a marketing report showing all methods used to market the space (including active hyperlinks to websites where the space has been marketed). The report should demonstrate that the asking rent has been at a realistic rate for the type, size, and condition of the space. Such information should accord with our indicative guidance which is regularly updated. It would be expected that the property or site has been actively marketed, including appearing on local and national commercial property websites and visible display boards being displayed at the site. Applicants are also expected to engage with the council's employment and economic development team to ensure that the property or site is marketed via the relevant council channels. The report should detail the level of interest in the property over the 12-month (or 24-month) period, details of any viewings and offers, and details of why any interest had not been taken forward. Where the application pertains only to part of a building or office complex, the marketing report should show what floorspace the application pertains to.

15.69 It is recognised that, in some cases, requiring 12 months marketing evidence may be counterproductive to enhancing local character if the condition of the property is such that attempting to let it would be

unrealistic. In such cases, the applicant should submit a report on the history and condition of the property to justify why marketing evidence should not be required and how and why re-providing employment space as part of redevelopment would not be viable. It should be demonstrated that the proposed development would not prejudice wider land-use objectives or the delivery of site allocations, and that reverse-sensitivity issues would not arise through conflict with surrounding existing uses, particularly where it lies within a cluster of other employment uses. The report should also demonstrate that the benefits of an alternative use would outweigh the benefits of the employment use to meet other local plan objectives, such as the need for complementary town centre uses or to maintain active frontages within town centres.

15.70 Part 5 recognises that LMELs play a particularly important role in supplying workspace for local independent businesses, start-ups, and emerging industries, often at a lower cost than in POLs. Given the challenges of forecasting demand for space to support smaller businesses and emerging industries, it is essential to ensure that there is a pipeline of workspace that supports these businesses. Education uses can operate synergistically alongside local independent businesses, start-ups and emerging industries, providing academic expertise and a supply of graduates, as well as incubator spaces and other shared facilities. Therefore, education uses will be prioritised where it can be demonstrated that there is no demand for employment uses within LMELs. Where the site is also within a town centre, other main town centre uses will also be prioritised where they accord with the town centre policies. Applications for residential use in these locations will need to demonstrate that there is no demand for any employment or education uses (or, where located in a town centre, main town centre uses).

15.71 Part 6 seeks to ensure that the disruptions to businesses from the redevelopment of employment space are minimised, even where the proposal does not result in any net loss of employment floorspace. Given the relatively low cost of much of the borough's existing workspace, and the higher cost of new-build floorspace, the redevelopment of existing, occupied employment space can risk displacing established businesses, or even rendering them unviable where they serve a local customer base and cannot move to lower-cost areas. In order to minimise the disruption to established businesses, redevelopment of employment space will be required to re-provide the existing floorspace to an equivalent fit-out, with an equivalent layout and at equivalent rents. Proposals for redevelopment are also required to provide a decant plan, showing that suitable equivalent workspace that meets the needs of the existing businesses at rents equivalent to their existing rents are available in the borough, or elsewhere where this can better meet the needs of the business, to accommodate the businesses during the construction phase of the development.

## London Plan policies:

- SD4 The Central Activities Zone (CAZ)
- SD5 Office, other strategic functions and residential development in the CAZ
- E1 Offices
- E2 Providing suitable business space
- E4 Land for industry, logistics and services to support London's economic function
- E5 Strategic Industrial Locations (SIL)
- E6 Locally Significant Industrial Sites
- E7 Industrial intensification, co-location and substitution
- E8 Sector growth opportunities and clusters

## Local Plan policies:

- Cl1 Supporting community facilities
- Cl3 New and enhanced community facilities
- Cl5 Arts and culture facilities

## Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Employment Land Review, 2023
- Central Activities Zone SPG, 2016
- London Office Policy Review, 2017
- Central Activities Zone Economic Future Research, 2021

## Policy EG5 Railway arches

1. Development proposals involving railway arches will be supported where:
  - a. The principal use is for an appropriate commercial, industrial, community, cultural or similar Sui Generis use; or
  - b. An operational use associated with the railway or public highway; and
  - c. The use will not cause harm to the environment and amenity of neighbouring uses and properties.
2. Development proposals resulting in a net loss of industrial uses (use Classes E(g)(iii) and B) in railway arches will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. active marketing has been carried out over a continuous period of at least 12 months at a reasonable market rent which accords with indicative figures; or
  - b. in exceptional circumstances, provide robust demonstration that the site is unsuitable for continued employment use due to its condition; reasonable options for restoring the site to employment use are unviable; and that the benefits of alternative use would outweigh the benefits of employment use; and
  - c. all reasonable efforts have been taken to preserve the space in employment use, including evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to increase the flexibility of the space for employment uses.
3. Development proposals connecting through arches must investigate opportunities to improve accessibility by walking and cycling, where feasible and appropriate.
4. Development proposals for development on sites that include, or are adjacent to railway arches must ensure that access into the arches is retained and that the proposal does not have a detrimental impact on the ability of occupiers to use the arches for appropriate uses.
5. Development proposals involving railway arches must demonstrate that they will not have an adverse impact on the public highway and railway network or preclude the delivery of planned transport infrastructure.



# INCLUSIVE ECONOMY AND GOOD GROWTH

## Supporting text

15.72 The Tower Hamlets Employment Land Review (2023) and the Affordable Workspace Study (2023) acknowledge the important role played by railway arches in providing low-cost workspace to a range of occupiers. Given the shortfall of available industrial land in the borough to meet the demand, it is essential to preserve spaces that can support industrial uses even where they fall outside of SIL and LSIS designations.

15.73 Part 1 of the policy seeks to retain railway arches in uses that make a positive contribution to the economy, culture, and community of Tower Hamlets. Railway arches in the borough contain a wide variety of uses, including light and heavy industry, food and drink production, arts, and culture and public-facing town centre uses. Given the variety of these uses, other policies may also be relevant; for example, proposals for 'dark kitchens', where there are regular food delivery pick-ups must have regard to Policy TC5; proposals for an arts and culture facility, or where there is an existing arts and culture facility, must have regard to Policy C5; proposals for public-facing town centre uses must have regard to the town centre policies.

15.74 Part 2 requires evidence covering a continuous period of at least 12 months in order to prevent unnecessary loss of existing industrial space which would put pressure on the ability of the borough to meet projected need. In order to demonstrate that the site has been marketed for a continuous period of 12 months, applicants must submit a marketing report showing all methods used to market the space (including active hyperlinks to websites where the space has been marketed). The report should demonstrate that the asking rent has been at a realistic rate for the type, size, and condition of the space. Such information should accord with our indicative guidance which is regularly updated. It would be expected that the property or site has been



actively marketed, including appearing on local and national commercial property websites and visible display boards being displayed at the site. Applicants are also expected to engage with the council's employment and economic development team to ensure that the property or site is marketed via the relevant council channels. The report should detail the level of interest in the property over the 12-month period, details of any viewings and offers, and details of why any interest had not been taken forward.

15.75 There may be cases where a net loss of industrial floorspace in railway arches, by virtue of their location, can support other policy objectives. For example, where a railway arch fronts onto a primary

or secondary shopping frontage in a town centre location, a public-facing main town centre use may better support the vitality and viability of the town centre. These will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and a strategic approach may be supported where an applicant can demonstrate that they are bringing a comparable amount of railway arch floorspace into industrial use elsewhere.

15.76 Part 3 seeks to ensure that railway arches make a positive contribution to the connectivity and public realm of the local area.

15.77 Part 4 recognises that, given the nature of the uses within railway arches, they often have specialised or complicated access arrangements, including the need for 24/7 access and access for larger vehicles and equipment. It is essential that new development does not undermine that access or more broadly the ability of the occupiers to operate.

15.78 Part 5 seeks to ensure that development involving railway arches does not prejudice the delivery of any planned transport infrastructure. This reflects the fact that railway arches form part of the existing transport infrastructure and are often the primary locations for the development of new or enhanced transport infrastructure. The development of this infrastructure may require special access arrangements within and around the railway arches. Therefore, early engagement with Network Rail, TfL and/or the Highways Authority will be essential to any proposals involving railway arches.

## London Plan policies:

- E2 Providing suitable business space
- E4 Land for industry, logistics and services to support London's economic function
- E7 Industrial intensification, co-location and substitution

## Local Plan policies:

- PS4 Attractive streets, space, and public realm
- MC3 Impacts on the transport network
- MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing and construction

## Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Employment Land Review, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Affordable Workspace Study, 2023

## Policy EG6: Data centres

1. Development proposals for data centres in Local Industrial Locations and Local Mixed-use Employment Locations will be supported where they:
  - a. do not undermine the supply of land or floorspace for employment uses, including office and industrial uses;
  - b. demonstrate that there is a need or demand for the facility in the proposed location;
  - c. can demonstrate that there is sufficient electrical capacity in the local area to power the facility without placing a limit on other types of development in the area;
  - d. provide affordable workspace in accordance with Policy EG3;
  - e. can demonstrate that any negative amenity impacts on neighbouring residential uses;
  - f. provide a design that enhances adjacent public realm and supports or enhances the character of the area; and
  - g. demonstrate that efforts have been made to ensure that the waste heat generated by the facility will be reused or supplied to a local heat network.
2. Development proposals for data centres outside of locations listed in Part 1 will not be supported.

## Supporting text

15.79 Data centres play an important role in ensuring that there is sufficient broadband capacity to serve the residents, businesses and educational institutions in the borough. They also provide data storage capacity for businesses, making Tower Hamlets an attractive location for businesses with substantial data needs.

15.80 Data centres are generally considered to fall into use Class B8 given that they act as storage facilities for data. In some cases, they may be considered Sui Generis uses where their role is related more to data processing.

15.81 While data centres are important to the functioning of the borough's businesses, they have low employment densities relative to other employment uses and can take up substantial amounts of land and floorspace. In order to ensure that the borough can continue to meet its employment targets and provide sufficient space for new and growing businesses, part 1(a) requires development proposals for data centres to demonstrate that they will not undermine the supply of land or floorspace for employment uses. To satisfy this criterion, development proposals should carry out an assessment of the demand for both office and industrial workspace and clearly demonstrate that the demand can be satisfied without the floorspace that is, or could be, provided on the development site. This assessment should include vacancy rates for nearby industrial and office facilities and have regard to the Employment Land Review (2023). For the purposes of this policy, employment uses include use Class E(g)i-iii, B2, B8 and appropriate Sui Generis uses.

15.82 Part 1(b) recognises that there is a particular demand for data centres to serve businesses in the City of London and Canary Wharf and that they should be located with regard to high capacity fibre optic lines. Data centres that do not serve this specific function or cannot identify a specific locational requirement will not be supported.

15.83 As data centres have high electricity demands and can monopolise capacity in the local supply, placing a limit on the amount of residential development that can be accommodated in an area, Part 1(c) sets requirements on how to manage this resource better / effectively. Capacity should be proven at primary substation, distribution, grid supply point and transmission level, as applicable. It requires development proposals for data centres to engage with electricity suppliers and receive confirmation from those suppliers that the electricity requirements of the proposed data centre can be accommodated without limiting electricity supply such that it would prevent delays to other types of development being delivered in the area.

15.84 Given that data centres are classified as an employment use, part 1(d) requires data centres to provide affordable workspace in accordance with the requirements of Policy EG3. The amount of affordable workspace to be provided will be calculated using the full GIA of the data centre, including space only used for servers. Particular constraints unique to data centres, including their plant needs, floorplates and security concerns, may make on-site provision unfeasible. In these cases, off-site provision or a payment-in-lieu may be accepted.

15.85 Existing data centres in Tower Hamlets often present blank frontages onto pavements and other pedestrian routes. This creates unpleasant spaces and can result in spaces that feel unsafe. Part 1(f) requires the design of data centres to enhance adjacent public realm. This could be through greening or public art. Data centres should also be designed sensitively to ensure that ground floor servicing and plant spaces do not undermine adjacent pedestrian or cycle routes.

15.86 Data centres generate large amounts of heat, which is often rejected to the air outside of the building. In order to help the borough achieve its net zero carbon target, and to reduce the cost of heating

for local residents and businesses, Part 1(g) requires data centres to reuse that heat or to provide it to a local heat network. Cumulative noise impact assessment must prove that sensitive receptors are not negatively affected.

15.87 SILs and POLs play an essential role in ensuring that there is sufficient floorspace to meet the needs of office and industrial businesses in the borough. Given the large amounts of land that data centres occupy, their low employment density and their general inability to co-locate with other employment uses, part 2 of the policy restricts data centres from these designated locations. There may be some circumstances, such as upwards extensions, where an expansion to an existing data centre would not result in a loss of land that could be used for other purposes; these may be considered acceptable where they meet all other policy requirements.

## London Plan policies:

- E2 Providing suitable business space
- E3 Affordable workspace
- E4 Land for industry, logistics and services to support London' economic function
- •SI6 Digital connectivity infrastructure

## Local Plan policies:

- DV7 Utilities and digital connectivity
- CG2 Low energy buildings
- CG10 Noise and vibration

## Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Employment Land Review, 2023



## 16. Town centres



- TC1 – Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- TC2 – Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of town centres
- TC3 – Town centre uses outside centres
- TC4 – Markets
- TC5 – Food and drink
- TC6 – Entertainment uses
- TC7 – Evening and night-time economy
- TC8 – Short-stay accommodation

### Introduction

16.1 This chapter focuses on ensuring that our town centres remain vibrant and sustainable while continuing to meet the needs of the people that use them. They also underpin our strategic mission as set out in the Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan to 'support small businesses, start-ups and markets.'

16.2 Town centres form an important part of the borough's distinct identity and character, acting as anchors for local neighbourhoods with a mix of uses and activities that draws our diverse communities together and provide spaces for local entrepreneurs and independent businesses and employment opportunities for local residents. The nature of our town centres continues to change and evolve – they are increasingly becoming hubs for leisure, social and community activities, not just for shopping. They also provide significant opportunities for employment and housing, particularly on upper floors. Additionally, across the borough, there are other areas of commercial, leisure, and retail activity (including individual stand-alone units) which have a role in supporting the borough's needs.

16.3 Town centres continue to be at the heart of the borough's communities, providing spaces for social interaction and leisure and ensuring that residents can meet their day-to-day needs in an accessible and sustainable location.

16.4 In 2020, changes to the Use Class Order resulted in the creation of a new use class, Class E, which incorporates most of the main town centre uses (formerly A Class uses). Retail (Class E(a)), restaurants and cafes (Class E(b)), and professional and financial services (Class E(c)) now fall within Class E, alongside gyms (Class E(d)), health centres and GP surgeries (Class E(e)), nurseries and creches (Class E(f)), and offices,

research and development facilities and light industrial businesses (Class E(g)).

16.5 In 2021, a new permitted development right was introduced across England to allow Class E uses to change to residential use without the need for a full planning permission. Tower Hamlets has introduced an Article 4 Direction, which restricts that permitted development right within most parts of our town centres and designated employment locations.

16.6 The purpose of the Article 4 Direction is to ensure that changes to the use of spaces within our town centres is managed through the

16.7 planning process in accordance with the policies in this chapter and the local plan more broadly. It also ensures that the development of housing in town centres complies with the policies of this plan, including the requirement to provide affordable housing.

16.8 This section contains the following policies.

- Policy TC1: Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- Policy TC2: Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres
- Policy TC3: Town centre uses outside our town centres
- Policy TC4: Markets
- Policy TC5: Food and drink
- Policy TC6: Entertainment uses
- Policy TC7: Evening and night-time economy
- Policy TC8: Short-stay accommodation



## Policy TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres

1. The council will support the vitality and viability of the borough's town centres by:

- a. promoting a mix of uses focused on retail, food and drink, professional and financial services, leisure, arts and culture, community facilities, recreation and housing;
- b. promoting Primary and Secondary Frontages as the locations within our District Centres where retail uses are located and should be concentrated;
- c. promoting inclusive design, including ensuring that all users feel safe in our town centres throughout the day and night;
- d. promoting night-time economy uses that contribute to the inclusiveness, activity and economic vitality of town centres, including vibrant food and drink, entertainment, leisure and arts and culture uses, alongside late-opening shops and services that meet the needs of those who work at night;
- e. promoting mixed-use and multi-purpose town centres (which include new residential uses where appropriate) with a mix of unit sizes and types, including affordable retail space, to assist in the creation of vibrant centres that offer a diversity of choice, and the meet the needs of local communities;
- f. promoting multifunctional, diverse and inclusive leisure and cultural venues and promoting associated uses;

- g. promoting and focusing markets in town centres and recognising their role in adding variety, promoting local enterprise and contributing to local character;
- h. supporting meanwhile and community uses where they help to activate and revitalise vacant town centre units and sites; and
- i. prioritising street level activity along the borough's primary and secondary frontages and key pedestrian routes to encourage opportunities for social interaction.

2. The council will expect development proposals to support the town centre hierarchy and to maintain and enhance the role and function of the town centres:

**Table 11: Town Centre Hierarchy**

Tier	Location	Functions / roles	Night-time economy designations
Central Activities Zone (CAZ)	Refer to the Policies Map	Apply the London Plan's approach to development within the CAZ.	
Metropolitan Centre	Canary Wharf	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide a large number of leisure, cultural and civic facilities to support a growing residential community.</li> <li>2. Provide a high proportion of comparison retail compared to convenience to reflect the importance of Canary Wharf as a shopping destination.</li> <li>3. Continue to support its role as a key global commercial and employment centre.</li> <li>4. Expand the mix of uses including the introduction of housing where possible.</li> </ol> Improve local accessibility to Canary Wharf and its strategic transport interchange, and legibility and way-finding across the area.	Canary Wharf is a night-time economy centre of regional significance.
Tower Hamlets Activity Areas	Refer to the Policies Map	Provide areas of transition between the scale, activity and character of the CAZ and Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre and their surrounding areas. Support a mix of town centre, employment and community uses. Promote active uses at ground floor level.	



Tier	Location	Functions / roles	Night-time economy designations
District Centres	Bethnal Green Brick Lane Chrisp Street Crossharbour Roman Road East Roman Road West Three Mills Lane Watney Market Whitechapel City	<p>1. Act as the borough's primary hubs for employment, shopping, leisure, culture, community and civic uses.</p> <p>2. Provide a higher proportion of comparison retail compared to convenience retail.</p> <p>For Whitechapel City, act as civic hub for the borough through the new Town Hall, and provide a concentration of health-related community services and employment in life sciences.</p>	<p>Brick Lane – centre of regional significance</p> <p>Bethnal Green – centre of local significance</p> <p>Whitechapel City – centre of local significance</p>
Specialist Centres	Columbia Road Redchurch Street Hackney Wick	<p>Columbia Road – support the specialist shopping and leisure role of Columbia Road by retaining the very small-scale commercial units and promoting their continued occupation by independent, artisanal businesses.</p> <p>Redchurch Street – support the specialist shopping role of Redchurch Street as a centre for independent clothing retailers and a centre for food and drink and the nighttime economy.</p> <p>Hackney Wick – working with the London Borough of Hackney, support the strong mix of employment and town centre uses, with a particular emphasis on culture and the arts, as well as evening and night-time leisure uses including micro-breweries.</p>	<p>Columbia Road – centre of local significance</p> <p>Redchurch Street – centre of local significance</p> <p>Hackney Wick – centre of local significance</p>

Tier	Location	Functions / roles	Night-time economy designations
CAZ Centres	Wentworth Street Spitalfields Aldgate South	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wentworth Street (CAZ Retail Cluster) – support the area's role as home to the historic Petticoat Lane Market and retain the existing concentration of textile and clothing businesses.</li> <li>2. Spitalfields – support the diverse mix of town centre and employment uses within and around Spitalfields Market, protect its role as an attraction to visitors from across London and beyond and as a vibrant centre of night-time activity.</li> <li>3. Aldgate South – provide a diverse mix of town centre uses to serve the local residential community and attract visitors from further afield.</li> </ol>	Spitalfields – centre of local significance
Neighbourhood Centres	Aberfeldy Street Barkantine Estate Ben Johnson Road Burdett Road South Cambridge Heath Devons Road Limehouse London City Island Mile End Poplar High Street Salmon Lane South Quay Stroudley Walk Stepney Green Thomas More Wapping Lane	<p>Provide a range of shops and services to meet the needs of their local catchments, with a higher proportion of convenience retail compared to comparison retail.</p> <p>Ensure development is appropriate to the nature and scale of each individual centre.</p>	Cambridge Heath – centre of local significance

Tier	Location	Functions / roles	Night-time economy designations
Neighbourhood Parades	Bow Road Burslem Street Cambridge Heath Road Caspian Wharf Castalia Square Cleveland Way Manchester Road Mile End Road Old Ford Road St Leonards Street St Pauls Way Westferry Road West India Dock Road/ Pennyfields Boundary Estate	Ensure that Neighbourhood Parades meet the needs of their local catchments and complement the role of other centres further up the hierarchy. Ensure development is appropriate to the scale of the parade and that it is sensitive to residential amenity.	

## Supporting text

16.9 This policy defines the network of centres across the borough (as illustrated on Figure 17) and describes the role and function of each centre and how they will continue to serve the needs of the borough and the wider area. The boundaries of these centres are shown on the Policies Map.

16.10 Town centres act as hubs for the borough's communities and, as such, should incorporate a mixture of complementary uses. This should include housing development where appropriate. The development of housing in town centres can have a positive impact on other uses within the town centre by introducing a larger customer base for local businesses and increasing the overall vibrancy and vitality of the town centre. Town centre housing also ensures that residents are in well-connected locations and can meet their day-to-day needs within easy walking distance from their homes.

16.11 Development within these centres will need to demonstrate how it accords with policies and guidance within the hierarchy as appropriate.

16.12 The western part of the borough (as shown on Figures 6 and 18) lies within the CAZ. The CAZ is the geographical, economic, and administrative heart of London, one of the world's most important financial and business centres, and contains the Metropolitan employment, leisure and retail designations within London.

16.13 All development proposals within this zone should refer to the relevant policies set out in the London Plan and the CAZ Supplementary Planning Guidance.

16.14 Within the CAZ, three areas are designated as 'CAZ Centres'. These are areas within the CAZ that play the role of a neighbourhood centre, with clusters of main town centre uses that serve the needs of the surrounding residential, worker and student community as well as visitors to Central London. Wentworth Street is designated as a CAZ Retail Cluster in the London Plan and includes a particularly significant cluster of clothing and fabric shops and hosts Petticoat Lane Market, which has been in operation for at least 400 years. Spitalfields is locally designated and includes the well-known covered market as well the adjacent streets to the south, which contain a mixture of food and drink businesses that contribute to the evening and night-time economy. Aldgate South (within the Goodman's Fields development) is locally designated and primarily serves the surrounding high-density residential community, but also includes businesses that attract customers from further afield, including a cinema.

16.15 Development within the Metropolitan Centre of Canary Wharf would be expected to demonstrate that it contributes to the continuing growth of Canary Wharf and supports its role as an important centre for international business and finance within the CW POL, as well as its emerging residential neighbourhood at Wood Wharf.

16.16 The Tower Hamlets Activity Areas (as shown on the Policies Map) are specific areas bordering the CAZ and the CW POL where the scale, continuity and intensity of town centre activity and land use is different to that found across the rest of the borough. Within the Tower Hamlets Activity Areas, applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the proposals will enhance movement and connectivity to and through the designation, in particular improving links between Canary Wharf and surrounding areas to the north and south.



16.17 District Centres (as shown on the Policies Map) generally meet more local needs, with catchments of around 800 metres and provision of convenience goods and services. Typically, they contain around 10,000-50,000 square metres of retail, leisure, and service floorspace. They have high levels of accessibility. They are also generally suitable locations for housing and employment.

16.18 Neighbourhood Centres (as shown on the Policies Map) contain clusters of retail and services to meet the needs of a more local catchment and typically contain at least sixteen units. Units are predominantly small-in-scale, with convenience supermarkets of around 500 square metres tending to be the largest occupants. Larger neighbourhood centres may also be appropriate for some leisure and night-time economy uses.

16.19 While of a similar scale to neighbourhood centres, Redchurch Street, Columbia Road, and Hackney Wick serve specialist roles and are therefore given a different designation. Redchurch Street contains a significant cluster of fashion shops that attracts customers from across London as well as a strong food and beverage offer that supports the night-time economy; this cluster will be protected and enhanced by ensuring that new development within Redchurch Street Centre includes small retail and other commercial units that meet the needs of fashion retailers, restaurants, and bars. Columbia Road is known across London for its Sunday flower market and for its mix of small artisanal businesses and village-like character. This character will be supported by ensuring that the commercial units remain very small in size and by resisting any consolidation of ground floor commercial units. Hackney Wick contains a unique mix of industrial and leisure uses, including a regionally significant cluster of arts production and consumption spaces, as well as a strong night-time economy. This area's unique character will be protected and enhanced by retaining existing arts, employment



and leisure uses and ensuring that new development is mixed-use and supports the Creative Enterprise Zone designation.

16.20 The night-time economy refers to all economic activity taking place between the hours of 6pm and 6am, and includes evening uses. Night-time economic activities include eating, drinking, entertainment, shopping, and spectator sports, as well as hospitality, cleaning, wholesale and distribution, transport, and medical services, which employ a large number of night-time workers. The night-time economy plays an important role in the borough's economy and Tower Hamlets has a number of town centres that play a particularly significant role

16.21 in the night-time economy. The London Plan designates centres of significance to the night-time economy. In Tower Hamlets these are Canary Wharf, which is designated as a night-time centre of regional significance, and Brick Lane, which is designated as a night-time centre of sub-regional significance. In addition to these centres, the Local Plan designates a number of additional centres that play an important local role in the night-time economy. These includes centres that have large concentrations of food, drink, and entertainment businesses, as well as Whitechapel City, with the arrival of the Elizabeth line and the hospital which brings large numbers of workers and patients through the night.

16.22 Development of night-time uses, particularly food, drink, and entertainment uses, should be related in scale and nature to the centre in which they are proposed. This is to ensure that larger night-time businesses can benefit from existing infrastructure and so that businesses can contribute to the vitality and viability of the centres at night, while limiting their impact on the amenity of other users. The development of night-time uses is addressed in more detail in Policy T7.

16.23 In accordance with Policy EG3, development proposals that include at least 1000sqm of commercial floorspace are expected to provide affordable commercial floorspace. More details can be found in Policy EG3. Where sites are located within town centres, the council may seek the provision of affordable retail or other public-facing commercial space.

**London Plan policies:**

- SD4 The Central Activities Zone (CAZ)
- SD6 Town centres and high streets
- SD7 Town centres: development principles and Development Plan Documents
- SD8 Town centre network
- Eg Retail, markets and hot food takeaways
- E10 Visitor infrastructure

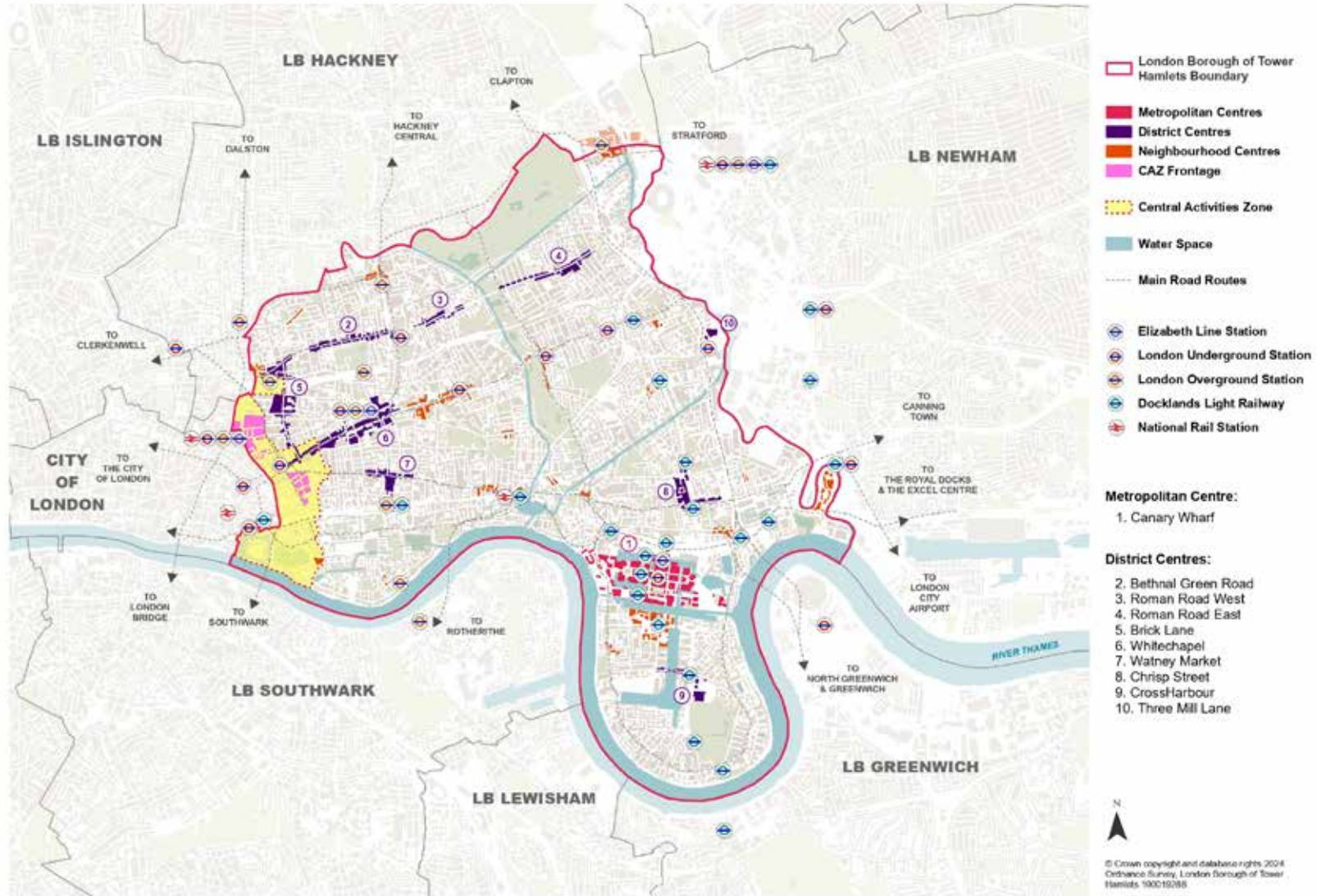
**Local Plan policies:**

- DV1 Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets
- DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- PS9 Shopfronts
- CI1 Supporting community facilities
- CI4 Public houses
- CI5 Arts and culture facilities
- MC1 Sustainable travel
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets
- MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing and construction

**Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Retail and Town Centres Study, 2023
- London Town Centres Health Check, 2018
- Culture and the Night Time Economy SPG, 2017
- Night Vision: Rebuilding London's Night-Time Economy, 2021

Figure 17: Town centre hierarchy





## Policy TC2 Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres

1. Development proposals are expected to support the retail function of Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages and the Redchurch Street and Columbia Road Specialist Centres, prioritising Class E(a) retail uses in these locations. Non-Class E(a) retail uses in Primary Shopping Frontages will only be supported where they can demonstrate that the proposal will not undermine the vibrancy vitality and viability of the town centre, or the level of access to goods and services for local residents.
2. Planning conditions may be used to secure Class E(a) uses that contribute to the retail function of Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages and the Columbia Road and Redchurch Street Specialist Centres.
3. Where retail development is conditioned for Class E(a) use, development proposals seeking a change to another main town centre use, including full flexibility for Class E commercial, business and service uses, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that active marketing has been carried out over a continuous period of at least 6 months at a reasonable market rent which accords with indicative figures.
4. Development proposals for uses other than Class E(a) retail uses (including residential development) within town centres and neighbourhood parades should demonstrate that the development, whether individually or cumulatively with others, will support the retail functions of the town centre by:
  - a. Contributing to the vitality, viability and character of the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontage;
  - b. ensuring access to a range of goods and services;
  - c. being of a type and scale appropriate to the size and function of the centre;
  - d. contributing positively to the quality of public realm, being inclusive, open in character and engaging to the public;
  - e. providing for well-managed and maintained street edges to the town centre;
  - f. where appropriate, responding to neighbourhood and place-specific visions and challenges;
  - g. providing an appropriate main town centre use at the ground level that will attract visitors, and generate footfall; and
  - h. ensuring that they will not result in a negative impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
5. Development proposals within the Columbia Road and Redchurch Street Specialist Centres should support the existing character by:
  - a. in Columbia Road, retaining small-scale shopfronts no wider than 4m; and
  - b. in Redchurch Street, retaining or re-providing small shopfronts that are suitable for independent fashion retailers.
6. Development proposals for residential uses on the ground floor level or below, within town centres and Neighbourhood Parades will not be supported.
7. Development proposals resulting in a reduction of Class E(a) retail floorspace in town centres and Neighbourhood Parades will not be supported unless they can demonstrate that:



- a. where there is a sub-division of a large unit, the new units are of a size and scale conducive to supporting the role and function of their surroundings;
  - b. the existing level of floorspace cannot be maintained and that appropriate height, width and depth of floorspace would remain for town centre uses; and
  - c. within Primary Frontages and the boundaries of Columbia Road and Redchurch Street Specialist Centres, any loss of floorspace is of a scale that will not materially alter the nature of the unit, its future viability, and the function of the host shopping area.
8. Meanwhile uses in town centres will be supported in vacant shopfronts and on vacant sites in town centres where:
- a. the proposed uses contribute to the diversity, vitality and viability of town centres having regard to the scale of the proposal in relation to the position of the town centre in the Town Centre Hierarchy;
  - b. the proposal will not result in any negative impacts on the amenity or operations of neighbouring occupiers; and
  - c. a 'move on' plan is provided that makes arrangements for relocation when the site comes forward for development or demonstrates that the use can operate on a temporary basis.
9. Development proposals for payday loan shops will only be permitted in the CAZ, Metropolitan Centre, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and secondary frontages of the District Centres where they would be at least 400m walking distance from the nearest existing payday loan shop.

## Supporting text

16.24 For the purposes of this policy, town centre uses include those listed in the NPPF as 'Main Town Centre Uses': retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels, and conference facilities).

16.25 Part 1 identifies a series of Primary and Secondary Frontages within the District Centres (as shown on the Policies Map). Primary Frontages include a high proportion of (Class E(a)) retail uses, while Secondary Frontages provide opportunities for a greater diversity of main town centre uses to support the vitality and viability of the town centres.

16.26 Part 1 expects development proposals to maintain the predominantly retail character of Primary Shopping Frontages and the mixed character of Secondary Shopping Frontages. Retail uses are directed to Primary Shopping Frontages first and Secondary Shopping Frontages second. In order to demonstrate that development proposals will not undermine the vibrancy, vitality and viability of the town centre, applications should provide an assessment of the current level of retail provision in the Primary Shopping Frontage and across the town centre, demonstrating that a range of goods and services will continue to be provided.

16.27 Within the Secondary Frontages, a wider mix of uses (e.g. financial and professional services, community and leisure facilities) which contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre will be supported.



16.28 Undesignated frontages are areas within the District Centres that contribute to the overall offer of the centre but perform a more tertiary function (e.g. small offices, wholesalers and market storage) or community functions with little or no retail use.

16.29 Frontages have not been designated within the Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre. This is because it is a predominantly undercover shopping complex in single, private ownership that functions differently to other town centres in the borough.

16.30 For the purposes of this policy, impacts on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers include odours, fumes and other air pollution,

excess noise and vibrations, reduction in daylight and/or sunlight to habitable rooms, reduction in level of privacy for residents. It is also essential to ensure that development within a town centre does not undermine the operations of other businesses operating in the centre, this includes retaining access routes at all necessary times, retaining sufficient yard or servicing space where relevant, and retaining any existing amenity space such as external seating.

16.31 Parts 1 and 4 expect all types of businesses occupying ground floor spaces in town centres to engage with the street, including maintaining visibility into the business, and providing engaging window displays. Regard should also be had to the Tower Hamlets Shopfront Design Guidance. The Primary Frontages (see Part 1) will have the highest levels of activity and footfall. As such, non-retail uses in these locations should be of a type that enhances the character and attractiveness of the town centre as a place to visit, such as cafés, restaurants and drinking establishments. Other uses would be appropriate on upper floors within the primary frontages, such as offices, gyms, or residential uses. However, access to upper levels must be designed to promote street-level activity and not undermine the viability of ground-level units.

16.32 Due to their unique characters and mix of businesses, part 5 gives specific policy protection to Columbia Road and Redchurch Street. Columbia Road is mainly composed of very small commercial units that house independent artisans. Both the uses and scale of the units contribute to the unique character of street, therefore consolidation of shopfronts and changes of use away from Class E will not be supported. Redchurch Street hosts a mix of small to medium sized retail units that house high-end fashion boutiques and small bars, restaurants and cafes that contribute to their area's night-time economy. In order to protect this important cluster of fashion boutiques, new developments should

ensure that they provide spaces that support these uses, and any proposals non-Class E(a), E(b) or drinking establishment (Sui Generis) uses at ground floor level should demonstrate that they will complement and not undermine the existing mix of uses. More detail regarding night-time uses is provided in Policy T7.

16.33 Part 6 of the policy recognizes that residential uses at ground or basement levels in town centres can provide a substandard level of amenity for residents, with particular issues around privacy. They can also have a sterilising effect on town centres, reducing the vibrancy and vitality of a shopping street and undermining its continuity. Exceptions will be made for residential entrances and lobbies as well as communal space where they support the activation of the street frontage.

16.34 The design, accessibility and layout of town centres will have an important impact upon their success. This policy seeks to promote a range of unit sizes and types within each centre to meet the needs of different users and occupants. In relation to Part 7(a), applicants need to demonstrate that development proposals would not lead to an over-

16.35 supply of particular unit types which confirms that there is a range of unit types across the wider town centre and that there is a need for the size and type of unit being proposed. In addition, the Transport for London's Healthy Streets principles should be applied to the design, accessibility, and layout of town centres in order to ensure they remain attractive and competitive.

16.36 Whilst the changing nature of town centres and consumer demands may mean less need and demand for retail space in some locations, the requirements set out in part 7 where loss of retail (Class



E(a) use) is proposed ensures that any loss will need to be clearly justified (e.g. where units are too large to let as a single entity; therefore subdivision would increase attractiveness to potential occupants).

16.37 However, it is acknowledged that there may be instances where some loss of floorspace within the Primary Frontages contributes to achieving wider objectives, such as the redevelopment of the site or improving access to upper levels. In such cases, street-level retail units should remain of a size and scale that is viable to current or future



occupants and that access to upper levels has been designed so as to not undermine the activity and function of the Primary Frontage. In order to satisfy Part 7, applicants will need to provide examples of other retail units of similar proposed size and layout in the area which are occupied and the types of occupants that such units attract. Information on the local market should also be submitted, including details of retailer demands and lettings in the local area to ensure that development does not result in 'token' retail units being created that are too small for the requirements of occupants.

16.38 Part 8 recognises that the presence of vacant shopfronts and vacant land in town centres can have a significant negative impact on the vitality and viability of the town centres, by reducing the attractiveness of the town centre for customers and reducing footfall. Where a permanent occupier cannot be secured or a site is awaiting redevelopment, the council will support the use of the site for meanwhile uses. These should be uses that enhance the diversity, vitality, and viability of the town centre which, in most cases, will mean uses that engage with the public, such as retail, food and drink, cultural or community uses. The scale of the proposed use, and the traffic it is likely to generate, should reflect the scale of the town centre and its position in the Town Centre Hierarchy as set out in Policy T1. These uses will need to demonstrate that they will not result in significant negative amenity impacts on surrounding occupiers, meaning excess noise pollution, odour, air pollution or light pollution. They will also need to demonstrate that they will not undermine the operations of other businesses within the town centre by, for example, limiting access for deliveries and servicing. The 'move on' plan will need to show how the temporary use will move to a new suitable premise when a permanent occupier takes on the space or it is redeveloped. Where the application

can demonstrate that the use is genuinely temporary in nature – meaning that there will be no loss of employment when the use ceases – a 'move on' plan may not be necessary.

16.39 In accordance with local plan policy EG3, development proposals that include 1,000sqm or more of commercial floorspace are required to provide affordable commercial space. Within town centres, the council may seek affordable space for retail or other public facing, town centre uses.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- Eg Retail, markets and hot food takeaways

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- PS9 Shopfronts

#### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Retail and Town Centres Study 2023

## Policy TC3 Town centre uses outside our town centres

1. Development proposals for main town centre uses outside of the borough's Metropolitan, District and Neighbourhood Centres, and Site Allocations that include town centre uses, will be subject to:
  - a. a sequential test; and
  - b. an impact assessment where individual units or extensions exceed 200 square metres gross floorspace.
2. Development proposals resulting in the loss of Class E(a) retail uses outside of Metropolitan, District or Neighbourhood Centres will only be supported where:
  - a. the shop is within 300 metres walking distance of the nearest alternative Class E(a) retail units; and
  - b. the shop has been vacant for a period of more than 12 months and robust evidence is provided of efforts made to market the shop unit over that period at an appropriate rent (providing examples of three comparable shop units in the vicinity); or
  - c. the site is unsuitable for continued retail use due to its accessibility, size or condition and there is no viable prospect of a retail use on the site, taking account of the projected residential growth in the vicinity.

## Supporting text

16.40 New retail development will be directed towards existing centres in accordance with the sequential approach set out in the NPPF which assesses the suitability of alternative sites in the following order of priority: town centres, edge-of-centre sites and other out-of-centre locations which are well connected to existing centres. However, subject to meeting the requirements set out in part 1, we recognise that demand for retail also exists in locations outside of Metropolitan, District and Neighbourhood Centres to meet the immediate convenience needs of local people and/or support the function of designated employment locations.

16.41 New retail units or extensions outside of the centres set out in part 1 should not exceed 200 square metres gross floorspace to ensure that they are local in nature and do not harm the vitality and viability of existing centres. Where individual retail units exceed the size limit set out in part 1, applicants will be required to submit an impact assessment in accordance with the NPPF. The primary shopping areas of the Metropolitan and District Centres are illustrated on the Policies Map. For Neighbourhood Centres, their boundaries (as illustrated on the Policies Map) will equate to the primary shopping areas of these centres.

16.42 The CAZ and Tower Hamlets Activity Areas have a unique role in the town centre hierarchy. New retail uses may be appropriate in these areas, especially those of a smaller scale, where they would not detrimentally affect the vitality and viability of Metropolitan, District or Neighbourhood Centres. A judgement-based approach will be taken to proposals within these areas and a sequential test and/or impact assessment may still be required where a proposal has a potentially adverse impact on one or more Metropolitan, District or Neighbourhood Centre.



16.43 Part 2 contains a general presumption against the loss of retail space outside of town centres to ensure that residents have access to essential goods and services in close proximity to their homes. However, in certain circumstances, such losses may be justified. Applicants should outline where and how marketing has been undertaken, including evidence of advertising on national commercial and retail property websites and a realistic asking rent. However, it is recognised that in some cases requiring marketing evidence may be counterproductive to enhancing local character if the condition of the property is such that attempting to let it would be unrealistic. In such cases, the applicant should submit a detailed report on the history and condition of the property to robustly justify why marketing evidence should not be required and that re-provided retail space as part of redevelopment would not be viable at the location.

**London Plan policies:**

- Eg Retail, markets and hot food takeaways

**Local Plan policies:**

- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- PS9 Shopfronts

**Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Retail and Town Centres Study 2023



## Policy TC4 Markets

1. Development proposals must support the protection, retention, and enhancement of existing markets. Development proposals in the vicinity of an existing market must demonstrate that:

- a. they demonstrate that the overall quality of the market and public realm will be improved;
- b. the capacity for existing numbers of pitches is maintained, and
- c. they protect or re-provide appropriate storage, waste collection and servicing facilities.

2. Development proposals in the vicinity of existing markets should seek out opportunities to enhance those markets through the provision of storage, welfare facilities for market traders, enhanced public realm and facilities for customers, and complementary uses.

3. Development proposals for new markets, including farmers' markets and 'street food' markets, will be encouraged where they do not undermine the viability or vitality of existing markets. They will be directed to Metropolitan, District or Neighbourhood Centres and should enhance the centre's existing offer and contribute to vitality and cohesion.

4. Development proposals for new markets outside of Metropolitan, District or Neighbourhood town Centres will only be supported where they:

- a. are temporary in nature;
- b. bring vacant sites back into use;
- c. do not undermine the borough's existing markets and town centres; and
- d. do not cause unreasonable harm to the amenity of surrounding properties, particularly where evening and night-time markets are proposed.

## Supporting text

16.44 Tower Hamlets is known for its distinct and diverse markets. Whitechapel, Roman Road, Bethnal Green and Watney Market play an important role serving local immigrant communities. Crisp Street retains a tangible link to East End History. Columbia Road attracts visitors from across London and beyond to its weekly flower market. Brick Lane Market reflects the changing and mixing communities of the new East End.

16.45 It is widely recognised that markets act as magnets to create interest and draw people into town centres and support footfall which benefits other businesses. They can also act as incubation space for new ideas and small-to-medium enterprises. This policy aims to protect the borough's existing markets and ensure that new development does not undermine their future role and function (e.g. ensuring that storage facilities are maintained).

16.46 Part 1 of this policy refers to the protection of our existing street markets at Bethnal Green, Brick Lane, Crisp Street, Columbia Road, Petticoat Lane, Roman Road, Roman Road Square, Stroudley Walk, Watney Street and Whitechapel City, as well as the Spitalfields covered market.

16.47 Part 2 supports development proposals in the vicinity of existing markets to enhance the functionality, viability, and vitality of those markets through the provision of secure storage space and other servicing facilities, welfare spaces for market traders, enhanced public realm and facilities for customers (including public toilets), and complementary uses. Where a proposal is in the vicinity of an existing market, the applicants should engage with the council's markets team and the market trader associations at an early stage to ensure that any opportunities to enhance the market are pursued.



16.48 In order to meet the requirements of part 3, applicants and developers proposing new markets should work with our markets team at the earliest opportunity so that information can be provided with the planning application to show that sufficient space will be safeguarded to meet the needs of traders in terms of servicing and storage. Proposals should also detail how the types of goods and services proposed would complement rather than compete with surrounding town centres, as well as how they could contribute to other priorities such as improving access to healthy, affordable food. In addition, a written management and design strategy should be provided which outlines how the proposal will avoid causing negative impacts on markets, such as congestion on footpaths and roads, litter, poor refuse storage and noise.

16.49 While new markets within Metropolitan, District or Neighbourhood Centres are favoured, part 4 also recognises that there may be opportunities for markets outside of town centres where they activate vacant spaces.

16.50 Where proposals seek to re-activate vacant spaces or empty shops, temporary permissions will be favoured. Applicants should demonstrate that the proposed market will have a different offer to nearby Metropolitan, District or Neighbourhood Centres to avoid undermining them. They should also demonstrate that noise impacts will be mitigated to protect the amenity of surrounding properties, especially housing.

### **London Plan policies:**

- Eg Retail, markets and hot food takeaways

### **Local Plan policies:**

- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design

### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Retail and Town Centres Study 2023



## Policy TC5 Food and drink

1. Development proposals for cafes, restaurants and drinking establishments (Use Classes E(b) and Sui Generis) will be supported within the CAZ, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas, and town centres (as shown in the Policies Map) provided that:
  - a. they support the role and function of the town centre, having regard to its position in the hierarchy; and
  - b. where proposed within Primary or Secondary Frontages or Columbia Road or Redchurch Street Specialist Centres, they meet the requirements set out in Policy TC2.
2. Development proposals for cafes/restaurants and drinking establishments (Use Classes E(b) and Sui Generis) in Neighbourhood Parades and outside of the town centre hierarchy will be supported provided that:
  - a. cafes and restaurants (Class E(b) uses) can demonstrate that the proposal would support surrounding uses and would not
  - b. undermine the function of nearby town centres, or form part of a concentration of uses that would cumulatively cause harm to the viability of the borough's town centres;
  - c. drinking establishments (Sui Generis use) are local in nature and scale; and
  - d. a drinking establishment outside of a town centre that is associated with, and on the same site as or adjacent to a brewery or distillery may be acceptable where it does not have a significant negative impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
3. The use of outdoor areas that are ancillary to the relevant use, including garden areas, rooftops, forecourts, and pavements in association with food and drink uses will be supported where:
  - a. this would not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of adjoining occupiers and uses and the area generally, taking into account the size and type of the proposal, the hours of the use proposed and the nature and character of the area; and
  - b. in the case of pavements, the width of the footway is adequate to allow this without obstructing pedestrian flow, and the use is arranged so as not be a hazard to people with disabilities, older people, and families with small children.
4. Development of hot food takeaways (Sui Generis use) will only be supported within the CAZ, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas, Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre, Secondary Frontages of District Centres, Neighbourhood Centres and Neighbourhood Parades where they meet the following criteria:
  - a. there must be a separation distance of at least four non-hot food takeaway units between each new hot food takeaway unit;
  - b. the percentage of hot food takeaway units would not exceed 5% of the total number of units within Metropolitan, District or Neighbourhood Centres;
  - c. within Neighbourhood Parades there would be no more than one hot food takeaway unit;
  - d. the proposal is not within 400 metres walking distance from an existing or proposed school and/or local authority leisure centre;
  - e. the proposal will not harm the amenity of surrounding properties;



- f. drive-through takeaways will not be supported and proposals for the redevelopment of existing drive-through takeaways for other uses will be supported, subject to other development plan policies; and
  - g. hot food takeaway businesses are expected to achieve and operate in compliance with the Healthier Catering Commitment standard.
5. Development proposals for food and drink uses where home delivery of food is proposed will be supported where they demonstrate that:
- a. the scale of the operation, locations of delivery collection points, locations for parking of delivery vehicles and hours of operations will not result in negative impacts on the amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings and the operations of neighbouring businesses;
  - b. sufficient welfare facilities are provided on site to meet the needs of the delivery drivers/riders, including toilets and rest areas; and
  - c. delivery operations will not impede the footway or roadway, taking into account the needs of people with disabilities, older people, and families with small children.

## Supporting text

16.51 Where the policy refers to food and drink uses, these include restaurants, cafés, pubs, and other drinking establishments. Hot-food takeaway uses (Sui Generis) are addressed separately within part 3 of the policy.

16.52 Part 1 recognises that food and drink businesses play an important role in town centres. As the demand for traditional retail has diminished, restaurants, cafes, bars, and pubs are increasingly acting as anchors and Metropolitan attractors to town centres. These businesses can also play an important role in supporting their local communities. Cafes and pubs provide spaces for local residents, workers, students and visitors to meet and socialise. They also often host events and provide space for formal community meetings. Restaurants can often reflect the diverse backgrounds of the local community and establish a sense of place within a town centre. This is evident in all the borough's town centres, but especially in Brick Lane, where the South Asian restaurants are a key element in the character of the high street and attract visitors from across London and beyond. Food and drink businesses are encouraged to support and reflect the diverse communities within their local areas.

16.53 Primary Retail Frontages are the core shopping areas of district centres. While food and drink businesses can contribute to the vitality and viability of these areas, it is important that they not undermine their retail function. As such, uses other than E(a) retail proposed on Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages are required to meet the test of Policy TC2.

16.54 While food and drink uses are directed to Metropolitan, District and Neighbourhood Centres and the CAZ and Tower Hamlets Activity Areas, part 2 recognises that there are some circumstances in which these businesses may be appropriate in Neighbourhood Parades and

outside of the town centre hierarchy. Examples might include facilities that enhance the enjoyment of open spaces and water spaces; serve transport interchanges or serve out-of-town-centre employment areas. For instance, pubs play an important role as community meeting spaces and can often be located in otherwise wholly residential areas or industrial areas. Tower Hamlets also contains a number of micro-breweries and distilleries. These are often located within industrial areas and may include tap rooms or bars. The primary use of these facilities should be the production of beverages, and the bar or tap room should take up a relatively small proportion of the floor area. A condition may be imposed limiting the size of the bar or tap room to ensure that it remains a secondary use.

16.55 Within Neighbourhood Parades and non-designated locations, proposals involving food and drink uses should be of a more modest scale than might be expected in larger town centres. Applicants should robustly state why a café, restaurant or drinking establishment would be appropriate in such a location. Details of any other cafés, restaurants or drinking establishments in the local area should also be provided to mitigate the risk of clusters developing that could undermine nearby town centres. In respect of drinking establishments, a detailed management plan should be submitted alongside the planning application confirming that it will be run as a 'community' public house and that conflicts with neighbouring properties would be avoided. Applicants would also be encouraged to consider our statement of licensing policy.

16.56 Part 3 recognises that the use of outdoor space, including garden space and front pavement/forecourt space, by food and beverage businesses can enhance the vitality of a town centre by making the use more visible and engaging with the public realm. It can also improve the viability of the businesses by increasing their space to accommodate



customers and making the businesses more attractive to potential customers. While the use of outdoor spaces for food and drink uses is broadly supported in town centres, it is essential to ensure that these uses do not have a negative impact on neighbouring occupiers in terms of amenity. Applicants should demonstrate that the use of the outdoor space will not have a significant negative impact on neighbouring residential occupiers in terms of noise, odours or fumes and will not impede the operations of other businesses through a reduction in useable yard, street, or alley space. Where the outdoor use is proposed adjacent to the footway, the applicant will need to demonstrate that it will not impede pedestrian traffic or undermine access by those with

disabilities and other street users who require additional clear footway space.

16.57 With a commitment to improve the health of its residents and to reducing childhood obesity, part 4 of this policy restricts hot food takeaway businesses within 400 metres from a school or council leisure centre, which equates to a walking time of 10 minutes and will help to reduce young people's access to unhealthy food options. 400 metres will be calculated on the basis of the shortest walking distance from the entrances and exits of an existing or proposed primary or secondary school. In order to satisfy part 4, planning applications will be expected to include information (including town centre surveys) in order to ensure that any provision of new hot food takeaways would not exceed the levels set out in parts (a) to (c). Development proposals for hot-food takeaways should also have regard to the Health Impact Policy. This policy may be applied flexibly within the Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre, where hot food takeaways typically support local workers and are unlikely to attract young people.

16.58 Drive-through takeaway businesses encourage the use of private vehicles and create unfriendly and in some cases unsafe pedestrian and cycle environments. Therefore, new drive-through takeaways will not be supported, and the council will generally support schemes that propose to redevelop existing drive-through takeaways where they accord with other relevant policies.

16.59 Food businesses where all, or a significant proportion, of the business is via delivery can have a significant impact on the public realm and on the amenity of surrounding occupiers. This includes both 'dark kitchens' – food businesses that cater only to delivery customers, and traditional restaurants and takeaways with a high level of delivery business. Where these businesses are located on busy

high streets, delivery drivers waiting for orders and their cycles can act as obstacles to pedestrian traffic and in particular to disabled and mobility-impaired users, those with visual impairments, parents with buggies and other pedestrians with large baggage. Businesses with a significant delivery component should provide a Delivery Management Plan that demonstrates that waiting delivery drivers and their cycles can be accommodated off the pavement, and the pavement should only be used in exceptional circumstances where the pavement is particularly wide and has an exceptionally low level of pedestrian traffic. The Delivery Management Plan should also demonstrate the provision of welfare facilities for the delivery drivers, including toilets and rest areas. The Delivery Management Plan, and the level of accommodation proposed should be proportionate to the scale of the business and its expected level of delivery; for example, an application for a 'dark kitchen' will need to provide more significant welfare facilities for drivers and dedicated space off-street to accommodate drivers and their cycles.

### London Plan policies:

- Eg Retail, markets and hot food takeaways

### Local Plan policies:

- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- PS9 Shopfronts
- Cl4 Public houses

### Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Retail and Town Centres Study, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Hot Food Takeaway Topic Paper, 2023
- London Takeaways Toolkit, 2012

## Policy TC6 Entertainment uses

1. Development proposals for new betting offices/shops (Sui Generis use) will only be supported within the CAZ, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas, Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre or Secondary Frontages within District Centres where they can demonstrate that:
  - a. the proposed development is not within 400m walking distance of an existing gambling establishment;
  - b. the site is not in close proximity to a school or sensitive community or cultural facility; and
  - c. the proposal would not have a negative impact on the amenity or character of the area.
2. Casinos and other gambling establishments will only be supported within the CAZ or Canary Wharf Metropolitan centre where they can demonstrate that:
  - a. the proposed development is not within 400m walking distance of an existing gambling establishment;
  - b. the site is not within close proximity to a school or sensitive community or cultural facility; and
  - c. the proposal would not have a negative impact on the amenity or character of the area.
3. Development proposals for other commercial leisure uses, including gaming arcades and competitive leisure businesses (e.g. escape rooms, mini golf, bowling alleys and VR sports) will be directed to the CAZ, Metropolitan Centre, District Centres, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and Neighbourhood Centres in accordance with the scale of the proposed facility.
4. The commercial leisure uses listed in part 3 will only be supported in Neighbourhood Parades or outside of the town centre hierarchy where:
  - a. it can be demonstrated that such uses will not result in adverse impacts on the amenity of the surrounding area; and
  - b. the location has good public transport accessibility.

## Supporting text

16.60 Parts 1 and 2 recognise that concentrations of betting shops, casinos and other gambling establishments present a high level of risk to those with gambling addictions or those susceptible to addiction. Concentrations of these businesses allow those with addictions to by-pass safeguards limiting betting levels by visiting multiple establishments. Given that Tower Hamlets has a high proportion of residents at risk of problem gambling, parts 1 and 2 set a strict limit on the concentration of these establishments, requiring a separation distance of 400m, which is about a 5-minute walk. Betting shops and other gambling establishments also have a negative impact on the wider town centre by reducing footfall relative to other town centre uses and by creating an impression of blight in the area. They also carry a risk of attracting anti-social behaviour.

16.61 It should be noted that facilities for gambling, including betting shops and casinos require a license from the council to operate. This is separate from the planning regime.

16.62 Part 3 recognises that commercial leisure businesses can act as attractors and support the vitality and viability of town centres. These uses will be directed to town centres in accordance with their scale and with regard to the town centre hierarchy. Proposals for these uses, where they intend to operate in the evening or at night should have regard to Policy TC7. Where these uses are Arts and Culture facilities (including cinemas, theatres, live music venues and nightclubs) they should also have regard to Policy C5.

16.63 Part 4 recognises that commercial leisure businesses may be appropriate in neighbourhood parades and outside the town centre hierarchy, but must demonstrate that the site has good public transport access to ensure that visitors can access the business sustainably, and that it will not have a negative impact on surrounding residents.

### London Plan policies:

- HC5 Supporting London's culture and creative industries
- HC6 Supporting the night-time economy

### Local Plan policies:

- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- PS9 Shopfronts
- CI5 Arts and culture facilities

### Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Retail and Town Centres Study, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Betting Shops Topic Paper, 2023
- Culture and Night Time Economy, SPG 2017



## Policy TC7 Evening and night-time economy

1. Proposals for food, drink, leisure, and entertainment uses operating in the evening and at night will be supported in Metropolitan, District and Neighbourhood Centres and in the CAZ and Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone, where they:
  - a. have regard to the strategic night-time economy designations listed in Part 2 of Policy T1 of the London Plan;
  - b. do not contribute to an overconcentration of particular uses that could give rise to negative cumulative social impacts;
  - c. contribute to the diversification of the evening and night-time activities within the town centre; and
  - d. are accompanied by a management plan, setting out mitigation measures for any negative impacts.
2. Proposals for evening and night-time activities outside of the town centre hierarchy will only be supported where:
  - a. they provide robust justification demonstrating why the use cannot be located in a town centre;
  - b. the location has a high level of night-time public transport accessibility; and
  - c. they are accompanied by a management plan, setting out mitigation measures for any negative impacts.
3. Proposals for late-opening and 24-hour shops, services and cafes will be supported in Metropolitan, District and Neighbourhood Centres, particularly where they serve an area with a large number of evening and night-workers, such as around the Royal London Hospital and Brick Lane. Proposals for late opening and 24-hour shops and cafes should ensure that they do not give rise to significant negative amenity impacts for neighbouring occupiers.
4. The Agent of Change principle will be applied to all new noise-sensitive development in close proximity to existing night-time economy uses and in designated night-time economy centres.

## Supporting text

16.64 The evening and night-time economy refers to businesses, organisations and activities that operate between the hours of 6pm and 6am. While it is traditionally associated with food and drink and cultural activities, it also includes late-opening retail businesses, as well as the many workers outside of these industries that work at night, including hospital workers, bus drivers, and wholesale market workers among many others.

16.65 Part 1 recognises that evening and night-time food, drink, leisure and culture businesses and organisations are an important part of the Tower Hamlets economy and contribute to the vitality, vibrancy, and sense of place of our town centres.

16.66 Proposals for night-time economy uses should be related in scale and nature to the centre in which they are proposed and its classification as a night-time economy centre in Policy TC1 and in the London Plan. Larger-scale night-time leisure uses, such as nightclubs and larger cinemas would normally be directed to the Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre and Brick Lane District Centre, while smaller-scale night-time uses such as bars, smaller cinemas, small to medium sized theatres and music venues would be directed to all centres listed in point 2 of Policy TC1.

16.67 Large concentrations of night-time uses, particularly those that are focused on alcohol consumption, can have negative impacts on the amenity and safety of the surrounding area. They can also reduce the daytime vitality and viability of the town centre if they are only open from the evening. It is, therefore, important to ensure that the development of new night-time uses does not result in an overconcentration. Applicants should provide information on the number of similar uses that operate



in the evening and at night within the centre to demonstrate that the proposed development will not result in an overconcentration.

16.68 Tower Hamlets is a diverse borough and includes many residents for whom night-time activities involving the consumption of alcohol are not desirable. As such, the council will generally be supportive of proposals that seek to diversify the night-time economy and propose uses operating at night that are not oriented around the consumption of alcohol; for example, late-opening cafes and dessert parlours. In addition, many night-time activities exclude those who lack the resources to pay for drinks or food. The council will generally support proposals that include night-time activities that are free or low-cost and

particularly those that provide space and activities for young people.

16.69 In order to ensure that any impacts of night-time uses are adequately mitigated, proposals for evening and night-time entertainment and leisure uses will be expected to submit a management plan. The management plan must show how any potential amenity impacts arising from the proposed development, including noise, odours, fumes, and anti-social behaviour will be mitigated. The management plan should be proportionate to the scale of the proposal and to the type of use being proposed. It may include measures to disperse customers after an event, details of security arrangements to limit anti-social behaviour, proposed hours of operation and methods to limit smoking outside of the building among other matters.

16.70 The council also encourages night-time uses to sign up to schemes that seek to improve the safety of leisure and night-time activities, particularly those that involve the consumption of alcohol. Such schemes include 'Ask for Angela' and National Pubwatch.

16.71 Given the town centres first approach taken by the Local Plan, the London Plan and the NPPF, Part 2 requires proposals for night-time uses outside of town centres to robustly demonstrate that they cannot be accommodated in a town centre location. Where night-time uses are proposed outside of the town centre hierarchy, they should demonstrate that the site has good night-time public transport accessibility, meaning that the site is within 400m (roughly a 5-minute walk) of a night bus stop or night tube station.

16.72 Tower Hamlets has many workers and residents who work in the evening and at night. In order to better serve those who do not have access to shops and services during normal business hours, part 3 encourages late-opening and 24-hour shops and services in

the borough's town centres, and in particular those centres with large concentrations of night workers, such as Whitechapel City and Brick Lane.

16.73 Part 4 recognises that the London Plan has established the 'Agent of Change' principle, whereby it will be the responsibility of a new development to sufficiently mitigate any impact existing uses might have on its occupiers. In the case of development in town centres with a significant night time economy, new residential development will be required to provide sufficient soundproofing and to be oriented in a way to ensure that residents do not experience unreasonable levels of noise from night-time uses.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- HC5 Supporting London's culture and creative industries
- HC6 Supporting the night-time economy

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- PS9 Shopfronts
- CI4 Public houses
- CI5 Arts and culture facilities

#### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Retail and Town Centres Study, 2023
- Night Vision: Rebuilding London's Night-Time Economy, 2021
- Culture and Night Time Economy SPG, 2017

## Policy TC8 Short-stay accommodation

1. Development proposals for visitor accommodation will be supported in locations within the CAZ, Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and District Centres (as shown on the Policies Map) or along primary routes where adjacent to transport interchanges, where it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. the size, scale and nature of the proposal is proportionate to its location;
  - b. the applicant can demonstrate that there is sufficient demand for the proposal within the local area;
  - c. the proposal would not compromise the supply of C3 self-contained homes and would not undermine the Borough's ability to deliver against strategic housing and employment targets; and
  - d. the applicant can demonstrate adequate access and servicing arrangements appropriate to the scale, nature, and location of the proposal.

## Supporting text

16.74 For the purposes of this policy, visitor accommodation refers to provision within the C1 Use Class, such as hotels, bed and breakfasts, traveller hostels, serviced apartments, and self-catering apartments.

16.75 Part 1 seeks to steer visitor accommodation towards the CAZ, Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas, and the borough's District Centres, or in other locations with very good public transport accessibility.

16.76 Part 1(a) expects development proposals for short stay accommodation to be of a size that reflects their surrounding built environment and reflects the function of the location within town centres or employment areas. For example, a large-scale hotel that is appropriate in the Metropolitan Centre of Canary Wharf may not be suitable within a smaller District Centre.

16.77 Part 1(b) seeks to ensure development proposals for short stay accommodation are responding to demand. In order to comply with this policy requirement, applications should include an assessment of the level of demand and supply of visitor accommodation within the relevant sub-area. This assessment should have regard to the type of accommodation proposed and its price point, and should include consented and proposed visitor accommodation in addition to that currently operating.

16.78 In order to comply with Part 1(c), development proposals will need to demonstrate that the proposed site is not allocated for residential or employment development within a site allocation or employment designation and does not have an extant planning permission for residential or employment development.

16.79 In accordance with Part 1(d), development proposals for short stay accommodation will need to submit information detailing how customers would access the accommodation - there is a general expectation that most visitors staying in hotels in Tower Hamlets will be accessing their accommodation by public transport, but taxi and other vehicle drop-off spaces may be required depending on the scale of the proposal. This would also apply to any vehicles required to service the accommodation (e.g. to handle laundry and deliver other supplies to the accommodation).

16.80 It should be demonstrated that such movements would not create unacceptable impacts on residential amenity or highway safety in accordance with Policies D.DH8 and D.TR2.

16.81 This policy applies a flexible approach to the assessment of new visitor accommodation. This recognises the different markets that various forms of visitor accommodation may serve, and the way in which customers and service vehicles may access such accommodation. For example, traveller hostels, budget hotels and small boutique hotels are less likely to require significant space for coaches and other vehicles setting down and picking up movements as customers are more likely to arrive via public transport.

16.82 For serviced apartments, development will be required to provide the following details:

- management will ensure rooms will not be occupied for periods of 90 days or more;
- management will provide 24-hour servicing;
- management will ensure rooms will be charged out at a maximum at weekly rates;

- the use will be secured in the form of a licence, not a lease;
- the occupants of the room will not have exclusive possession of the room; and
- management will have access to the room.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- E10 Visitor Infrastructure

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- HC1 Meeting housing needs
- PS1 Design- and infrastructure-led approach to development
- PS2 Tall buildings
- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- PS8 Shaping and managing views
- EG1 Creating investment and jobs

#### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Retail and Town Centres Study, 2023
- London-wide projections of demand and supply for visitor accommodation, 2017



## 17. Community infrastructure

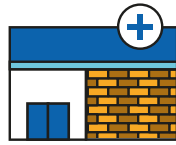
Cl1 – Supporting community facilities

Cl2 – Existing community facilities

Cl3 – New and enhanced community facilities

Cl4 – Public houses

Cl5 – Arts and culture facilities



### Introduction

17.1 Tower Hamlets has a range of community facilities such as health, social, education, leisure, cultural, and sport facilities providing valuable services to both local communities and visitors. The provision of these essential community facilities plays a vital role in creating and sustaining healthy and liveable neighbourhoods.

17.2 Parks and open spaces are also key elements of community infrastructure that are a vital part of the borough, improving the health and well-being of communities by enabling social interaction, providing informal meeting spaces, and facilitating active lifestyles and recreation. These spaces must be protected and enhanced and are covered in the biodiversity and open space section of this Local Plan.

17.3 Community facilities are facing increased pressure from higher land value uses, such as housing and employment. In the face of limited public funding and a fast-growing population, it is important these facilities are still able to maintain their offer of such valuable services. In particular by opening up opportunities for all residents, including young people and women, to participate in a wide range of local sporting and cultural opportunities. Facilities away from home, work, and school – such as libraries, community centres and parks – provide an important space for social interaction to occur and for the community to gather, bringing people from different backgrounds together and promoting understanding. The protection and support of these community facilities is essential to help empower communities, fight crime and support underrepresented groups in Tower Hamlets.

17.4 The following policies will seek to promote and facilitate the delivery of essential community facilities through new development (including changes of use, extensions, and new builds) in line with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which outlines the existing capacity and future needs and priorities facing some of the community facilities in the borough. In particular, the policies in this chapter aim to ensure that sufficient facilities are provided to meet the needs of the borough's growing population in the areas of greatest need and growth, such as the borough's site allocations.

17.5 This section contains the following policies:

- Policy CI1: Supporting community facilities
- Policy CI2: Existing community facilities
- Policy CI3: New and enhanced community facilities
- Policy CI4: Public houses
- Policy CI5: Arts and culture facilities



## Policy C11 Supporting community facilities

1. The council will support development proposals which seek to protect, maintain, and enhance existing community facilities.
2. The council will expect development proposals to contribute to the capacity, quality, usability, inclusivity, and accessibility of existing community facilities, particularly where development will increase demand for the facility.
3. The council will expect development proposals to maximise opportunities for the provision of high-quality community facilities, designed to maximise adaptability and flexibility to offer a mix of different functions 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 best meet the needs of different groups and delivering social value to the community.
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.
5. The council will expect strategic development proposals for residential development to deliver a community facility on-site, where evidence demonstrates a need for the local area.

## Supporting text

17.6 This policy seeks to maintain an adequate supply and range of community facilities across the borough to serve local needs and support the creation of more liveable and sustainable places. Delivery of new and improvements to existing community facilities will be achieved through the use of developer contributions (as identified in Policy DV5) and working together with partners to ensure adequate services are in place to support the sustainable growth of the borough.

17.7 For the purpose of this policy, community facilities include a range of social infrastructure that provide services to the community such as:

- indoor sports and leisure facilities (e.g. leisure centres and swimming pools);
- health facilities (e.g. hospitals and doctor surgeries);
- cultural facilities (e.g. art galleries, music venues, museums, nightclubs, cinemas and theatres);
- education facilities (e.g. schools, nurseries and universities); and
- social facilities (e.g. places of worship, libraries, Idea Stores, local presence and public houses).

17.8 Playing fields and outdoor sport facilities, such as multi-use games areas and tennis courts, are also important community facilities. These are addressed within policies BO1 and DV1.

17.9 Part 1 of the policy states that development proposals that will protect, maintain, and enhance community facilities will be supported, to ensure that sufficient and high-quality provision is available to meet local needs.

17.10 Part 2 promotes opportunities to expand or improve the capacity and accessibility of existing facilities, taking account of future projected



community needs (as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan).

17.11 Part 3 seeks to encourage the provision of multi-purpose and shared services which provide opportunities to co-locate or integrate a range of community uses and functions, such as community halls and sport facilities. Consideration should be given to promoting community facilities which can be easily accessed, support a wide range of users in line with the principles of active and inclusive design and make relevant provision outside of core hours, particularly in respect of childcare provision, external recreation space, sport facilities and appropriate classroom space.

17.12 Part 4 seeks to ensure that community facilities are located within or at the edge of town centres in line with policies TC1 and DV1. These locations are considered to be the most accessible places in the borough and such uses contribute to the vitality and viability of town centres. In addition, new facilities will be directed towards locations which are accessible to their catchment areas through strong public transport links and by prioritising active travel.

17.13 This policy will be delivered in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and other relevant strategies, including the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, Open Space Strategy, Green Grid Strategy, and area-based masterplans. We will continue to work with key stakeholders and other service providers to ensure that new community facilities are provided at locations where there is a clearly demonstrated need.

17.14 Part 5 of this policy requires development proposals to provide an on-site community facility as part of strategic residential development applications where up to date evidence demonstrates that this is required. Such provision would need to support and reflect the needs of the borough's culturally diverse community. Applicants must engage with the council's planning team as early as possible to determine the nature of the community facility, and ensure it will be meeting the needs of the local area. Applicants must demonstrate through the pre-application and application stage how the provision of the community facility has been considered as part of the design process, and that consultation has been undertaken with local residents and key stakeholders to determine what facilities are likely to be appropriate. The council will expect such provision to be made unless design constraints and/or viability make such a facility undeliverable or there is a clear justification that residents of the proposed development and surrounding area have access to a proximate community facility.



## London Plan policies:

- S1 Developing London's social infrastructure
- SD8 Town centre network

## Local Plan policies:

- DV1 Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets
- DV5 Developer contributions
- DV6 Promoting Social Value
- TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- BO1 Green and blue infrastructure
- MC2 Active Travel and healthy streets

## Evidence base:

- Planning for Sport Guidance, 2019
- Active Design, 2015
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2023
- Planning and Social Cohesion Evidence Base, 2020
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Water Space Study, 2017
- Leisure Facilities Strategy, 2018
- Leisure Needs Assessment, c. end of 2023
- Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, 2019
- Tower Hamlets Community Facilities Audit, 2023





## Policy CI2 Existing community facilities

1. Development proposals must retain existing community facilities unless it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. there is no longer a need for the facility or any alternative community use within the local community; or
  - b. a replacement facility of similar nature that would better meet the needs of existing users is provided.
2. Where community facilities are re-provided on site as part of the development proposal, the quality, inclusivity, and accessibility of these facilities (including public access) should be enhanced.
3. Development proposals should ensure the re-provided facility remains viable and accessible to the local community, while prioritising the existing use staying open until the re-provided facility is operational. The development proposal must demonstrate the following measures have been taken as part of any re-provision:
  - a. early engagement with the facility operator, and an agreement met on the quality of the re-provided space;
  - b. analysis of market rents for comparative uses in the area to demonstrate the affordability of the re-provided facility;
  - c. re-provision of a sufficient fit out for the successful operation of the facility as agreed with the existing operator; and
  - d. a local decant strategy is put in place where appropriate when maintaining no break in provision of the facility on site is demonstrated to not be possible, with costs of this met by the development proposal.
4. Extensions to existing schools should demonstrate that:
  - a. there is a local need; and
  - b. the current level of child play space will be enhanced and increased.
5. Development proposals that would result in an existing community facility remaining closed for an extended period of time should provide a temporary facility that allows the community facility to continue operating until a permanent space can be occupied.

## Supporting text

17.15 This policy seeks to protect and enhance the borough's existing community facilities where they are still needed to adequately meet local needs.

17.16 Part 1 seeks to resist the loss of the borough's valuable community facilities, except in certain circumstances, see (a) and (b). Statements from relevant providers confirming that the existing or any alternative community uses would not be needed or possible in the premises will be required. Where the loss of a community facility is justified, the applicant will need to explore the opportunity to accommodate an alternative community use which would better meet local needs, in accordance with relevant strategies, including the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, Open Space Strategy, and Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Loss of sports and recreational facilities will only be justified where an applicant can provide a robust assessment demonstrating surplus provision or where the proposal includes a replacement of the facility with at least an equivalent function, quality and quantity of sport provision that better meets the needs of the community.

17.17 The council recognises that in certain circumstances site redevelopment will require the relocation of existing uses to a location where the needs of the users will be more adequately met. To ensure that there is no unacceptable disadvantage to existing users, re-provision of community facilities should be within the relevant catchment area and should result in quality and access improvements, reflecting the principles of active and inclusive design. Proposals should also demonstrate that adequate floorspace in an appropriate configuration is provided to ensure the continued viability of the facility including any amenity space that can be used for wider community



uses, and this should not result in a net loss of floorspace unless justified by demonstrating that the floorspace lost is surplus to need.

17.18 Part 2 seeks to ensure that new development facilitates and promotes greater public access through good and inclusive design and signage.

17.19 Part 3 seeks to ensure that the re-provided community facility remains viable for the operator and stays affordable for the local community and users. Early engagement and an agreement with the facility operator must be established to ensure their requirements would be met and that the re-provided facility remains viable for them.

Analysis of market rents for comparative uses in the area should be provided in order to demonstrate the affordability of the re-provided facility. The development proposal must include the reprovision of a sufficient fit out for the successful operation of the facility as agreed with the existing operator. Where practicable, the replacement facility should be provided before the existing facility ceases operation to ensure that local people continue to receive a high-quality service. However, where maintaining no break in provision of the facility on site is not possible, a local decant strategy should be put in place, with the developer and not the community facility operator meeting the costs of this, agreed via a planning obligation.

17.20 Part 4 seeks to ensure that any extension to an existing school results in an increase of existing child play space to accommodate the additional needs arising from the development, with a view to promoting shared community use in line with Sport England's guidance. Proposals to replace indoor sports and recreational facilities must be of at least equivalent function, quality, and quantity and in a suitable location.

17.21 Part 5 seeks to ensure that there is no significant gap in the provision of a community facility as a result of redevelopment. The length of time that would constitute 'an extended period of time' for the purposes of this policy will vary depending on the nature of the community facility and the community it serves, but in any case a closure of more than three months will require the provision of a temporary facility. The temporary facility should be designed in conjunction with the community facility operator and should meet their needs. Its location should be in close proximity to the existing facility, and should be easily accessible to the community that the facility serves.

**London Plan policies:**

- S2 Health and social care facilities
- S3 Education and childcare facilities
- S4 Play and informal recreation
- S5 Sports and recreation facilities

**Local Plan policies:**

- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- MC2 Active Travel and healthy streets
- DV5 Developer contributions
- DV6 Promoting Social Value

**Evidence base:**

- Planning for Sport Guidance, 2019
- Active Design, 2015
- Health Building Note 00-01, General design guidance for healthcare, 2014
- Baseline designs for schools: guidance, 2014
- Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools, Building Bulletin 103, 2014
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2023
- Planning and Social Cohesion Evidence Base, 2020
- Tower Hamlets Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, 2017
- London of Borough of Tower Hamlets School Design Guide, 2021
- Tower Hamlets Leisure Facilities Strategy, 2018
- Tower Hamlets Leisure Needs Assessment, 2023
- Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, 2019
- Tower Hamlets Community Facilities Audit, 2023

## Policy CI3 New and enhanced community facilities

1. Development proposals for new community facilities will be directed towards the identified town centre locations. Development proposals involving the provision of community facilities located outside the borough's town centres will be supported where an up-to-date and robust local need can be demonstrated.
2. Development proposals for new community facilities should demonstrate that early consultation has been undertaken with the intended operator and users of the space. All community facilities must be culturally sensitive and reflect the needs of the diverse communities living in the borough. This should include evidence of a co-design process to ensure the new facility best meets the needs of the local community.
3. New community facilities should ensure they charge fees affordable to members of the community, and community facilities within larger developments should be easily accessible to people, and inclusive of the borough's diverse range of users who live and work outside of the host development.
4. Development proposals for new community facilities or for extensions and enhancements to existing facilities should be of high design quality, including:
  - a. being designed to maximise adaptability over their lifetime demonstrating that the space can accommodate a range of role requirements, to ensure it serves the changing needs of the local community; and
  - b. making efficient and effective use of the site to maximise the opportunities for multi-purpose and shared use facilities.
5. Development proposals for new primary and secondary schools which respond to local need will be supported where:
  - a. they are in locations which are accessible to the residents of their indicative catchment areas;
  - b. they can demonstrate appropriate learning spaces (including external play space) can be provided; and
  - c. the design and layout of these facilities and play space provision reflects the relevant guidance from the Department for Education and Sport England, taking account of the level of air quality and other amenity considerations.
6. Development proposals for new early education and care facilities which respond to local need will be supported where:
  - a. they are in locations which are accessible to the local residents or working community, with new housing and/or commercial developments encouraged to provide childcare facilities within the development where there is a need;
  - b. they can demonstrate the design and layout of the facility considers the relevant Ofsted and Department for Education guidance, meeting the needs of young children and promoting their development; and
  - c. they can demonstrate the facility is located within an area of acceptable air quality and incorporates suitable and accessible outdoor space to provide both indoor and outdoor learning opportunities. Where possible, facilities should be located within

proximity to accessible parks, green spaces or outdoor play space, to promote the health and well-being of young children.

7. Development proposals for new adult, further and higher educational facilities will be required to provide information of the relevant certification and registration details from the Department for Education and meet Sport England's design guidance and other relevant national governing bodies' guidance.
8. Development proposals for community uses on meanwhile or vacant sites will be supported, particularly where they bring into use vacant developable land on a temporary basis, when:
  - a. they can demonstrate there is a local need for such use;
  - b. they can demonstrate the site is easily accessible and affordable for the local community;
  - c. they can provide evidence of preventing or mitigating any adverse amenity impacts; and
  - d. they provide a 'move on' plan that makes arrangements for relocation when the site comes forward for development or demonstrate that the need for the use is temporary.

### Supporting text

17.22 This policy seeks to ensure that appropriate high quality community facilities are provided in accessible locations throughout the borough, particularly via methods of active travel and public transport, to adequately support the growing population and meet identified needs.

17.23 Part 1 seeks to ensure that expansion of existing and delivery of new community facilities is directed towards accessible locations such as town centres. However, new community facilities outside of town centres will only be supported where sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate that there is a local need not being met elsewhere in the neighbourhood. Facilities provided in these locations need to ensure that they are local in nature and scale and that there is no adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding residents. This includes the impact of people coming and going to the facility and the impact of users within the facility when it is in use, as well as the impact on the highway network and parking facilities. Where the provision of a community facility is proposed as part of a residential development, it should be demonstrated that it is accessible to people living outside of the development and designed to be visible from the street.

17.24 Part 2 aims to ensure early consultation and co-design is undertaken with the intended operator and users of a community facility to help inform the design and to ensure community facilities are culturally sensitive and reflect the needs of the diverse communities living in the borough.

17.25 Part 3 aims to ensure that new community facilities remain affordable to the community and those facilities which form part of a wider development are designed to facilitate and encourage wider community use and do not look and feel exclusive to the occupants of



the development. Consideration should be given to ensuring that the facility can be easily accessible to a wide range of users.

17.26 Part 4 encourages new development to consider adaptable and flexible design, considering future-proofing new development and pursuing a more sustainable future for the borough by minimising the need for intensive redevelopment if a change of use were to be required in the future to better accommodate the needs of the community. Development proposals should demonstrate that they have factored in adaptability principles in the design process, examples of which include:

- clear structural spans; allowing for wider, more open and flexible interior spaces;
- non-load-bearing and flexible interior partitions,<sup>30</sup> which help spatial programs be adapted over time with minimal need to alter the structure of the building, or during the use of the facility as it caters to different needs; and
- sufficient storage provision, allowing different uses to cohabit the provided space.

17.27 Part 5 encourages the provision of primary and secondary schools in appropriate locations, where they meet local need and demonstrate high quality and inclusive design in line with the relevant guidance from the Department for Education, Sport England, and other relevant national governing bodies.

17.28 In order to ensure that education facilities are suitably located, applicants should outline the indicative catchment area for the recruitment of pupils and assess the impact of people (including pupils, parents, carers and staff) arriving and leaving the facility as well as the impact on the highway network and parking facilities.

17.29 Early education and care facilities (see part 6) refer to places where a number of children under five years of age are brought together during part or all of a working day on a regular basis where they can play, learn and receive care (e.g. primary school nurseries, children's centres, pre-school and 'wrap-around' childcare). Demand for these facilities is expected to rise, with the large increase of new homes in the borough as well as an extension in the free statutory childcare provision now covering children from as young as 9-months and increasing the number of hours of care provided. Therefore future provision will increasingly require innovative approaches to the use of land and floor space, for instance, suitable locations for early years could include the ground floor of residential blocks or secondary frontages in existing town centres as well as including the co-location of early education and care facilities with compatible uses, such as primary and secondary schools and office buildings. However, development proposals are still required to meet the needs of young children and promote their development, meeting the spatial requirements set out in the Department for Education's EYFS statutory framework, and demonstrating they are designed and located with the health of young children in mind, away from areas of poor air quality and incorporating easily accessible outdoor space to provide both indoor and outdoor learning opportunities.

17.30 Further and higher education (see Part 7) refers to the stage of education after secondary school and includes a wide range of institutions including universities and colleges (as defined in the glossary in Appendix 1) which provide lifelong learning. It is noted that some further education colleges do include sixth form provision. In order to meet these requirements, the applicant will need to provide evidence of the relevant certification from the Department for Education as well as details of student and staff numbers, enrolment criteria and curriculum

details. Sport and recreation facilities within schools should also reflect Sport England and other relevant national governing body guidance.

17.31 Part 8 supports the use of vacant and meanwhile sites to be utilised for community uses, when it can be shown that the facility is serving an identified need and can be easily accessed. This is a great way of using under-utilised sites to serve a community need, adding life and vibrancy into spaces that would otherwise be vacant and unoccupied. As part of an application for a meanwhile use, the applicant will need to provide a 'move on' plan, which makes arrangements for the facility once the development of the site commences. This should demonstrate that the facility can be re-provided elsewhere within the local catchment area, where the facility serves a local need, or within the borough or London more widely where the need is not local. Alternatively, a 'move on' plan may not be necessary where the applicant can demonstrate that the need is truly temporary.

**London Plan policies:**

- S1 Developing London's social infrastructure
- S2 Health and social care facilities
- S3 Education and childcare facilities
- S4 Play and informal recreation
- S5 Sports and recreation facilities
- S17 Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy

**Local Plan policies:**

- TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS5 Gender Inclusive Design
- MC2 Active Travel and healthy streets
- BO1 Green and blue infrastructure

**Evidence base:**

- Planning for Sport Guidance, 2019
- Active Design, 2015
- Health Building Note 00-01, General design guidance for healthcare, 2014
- Baseline designs for schools: guidance, 2014
- Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools, Building Bulletin 103, 2014
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2023
- Planning and Social Cohesion Evidence Base, 2020
- Tower Hamlets Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, 2017
- London of Borough of Tower Hamlets School Design Guide, 2021
- Tower Hamlets Leisure Facilities Strategy, 2018
- Tower Hamlets Leisure Needs Assessment, TBC
- Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, 2019
- Tower Hamlets Community Facilities Audit, 2023

## Policy CI4 Public houses

1. Development proposals for the loss of a public house will not be supported, unless the following can be demonstrated:
  - a. that all reasonable efforts have been taken to preserve the facility as a public house, including evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to diversify the business;
  - b. that the public house has been marketed for at least 12 months as a public house at a reasonable market rent and free of tie and restrictive covenant and following this exercise there has been no interest in the property and there is no realistic prospect of continuing its current use; and
  - c. that there has been no interest in the property for an alternative community use over a further 12-month period following the marketing period in Part 1(b).
2. Development proposals that include the replacement or re-provision of a public house will be supported where it can be demonstrated:
  - a. adequate floorspace in an appropriate configuration is provided to ensure the continued viability of the public house including any performance or amenity space that can be used for cultural or community uses, and this should not result in a net loss of floorspace unless fully justifiable; and
  - b. the new facility is provided with a sufficient fit out, protecting the character of the pub, so the operation of the new facility remains viable as agreed with the operator of the facility and secured via a planning obligation.
3. Development proposals within the curtilage of a public house must demonstrate that the continued operation and viability of the public house would not be compromised, and demonstrate they have taken the necessary action to mitigate any issues that might arise from being in such proximity to the public house (e.g. providing sufficient sound insulation) in line with the agent of change principle. Loss of converted pubs on the grounds of viability as a result of previous development will not be supported.

## Supporting text

17.32 As set out in the Pubs in Tower Hamlets Evidence Base Study, a public house (pub) can be distinguished from a bar based on the following:

- It genuinely has open access to all members of the community (albeit with possible minimum age restrictions) regardless of background and dress code.
- Typically, they will be places that individuals or groups can visit to engage with others and provide an informal meeting place at different times of day or night.
- Bars on the other hand might have more control over who can enter, sometimes through prohibitive pricing or dress code (actual or perceived), be less conducive to holding community meetings, and be geared more towards the 'town centre' night-time economy.

17.33 There is room for discrepancy between these definitions, but the categorisations put forward give a robust basis for assessment. Pubs play a key role in supporting community interaction, often hosting quizzes and live music, showing live sports, offering space for parties and other gatherings, and having links with external clubs and societies.

17.34 In order to satisfy Part 1(b), applicants will need to submit a full detailed marketing report outlining the asking price or rent for the public house and the terms on which it was offered (e.g. freehold or leasehold; whether or not it included living accommodation and whether any part of the property was excluded). The report should include details of any interest in the property, viewings, and why such interest was not taken forward. This information should also be provided for a subsequent



17.35 Like many other London boroughs, Tower Hamlets had witnessed a significant net loss of public houses (otherwise known as pubs) between 2000 and 2020. However, since the introduction of specific planning policies protecting public houses, the rate of decline has been reversed. This policy therefore aims to maintain the greater protection given to the borough's public houses and guard against their unnecessary loss.

17.36 In order to satisfy Part 1(a), applicants seeking to demolish or replace an existing public house will need to provide evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to diversify the



business. Details of pub accounts for current and previous trading years should also be provided. 12-month period outlining attempts to let the property for alternative community uses as described under Part 1(c).

17.37 Part 2 seeks to avoid future examples in the borough of what are termed 'trojan horse' pubs. This term refers to developments that have met policy requirements through the re-provision of floorspace for pub use but at a level that is insufficient to be practically let as a pub, resulting in a subsequent application to convert the space to an alternative use. This part of the policy seeks to ensure that there is a genuine intention to continue pub use where redevelopment is proposed. It must also be demonstrated that appropriate soundproofing is to be installed to minimise conflict between the pub and any residential use. In order to satisfy this criterion, applicants should submit indicative floorplans demonstrating that, at a minimum, the proposed floorspace for pub use can support a bar area, appropriate seating, storage, toilets and no loss of any additional community and amenity space that could be used for cultural uses.

17.38 Applicants seeking to reduce or remove outdoor space must demonstrate that the remaining space is of sufficient size and quality for the needs of pub users, and that the pub could continue to operate viably following any loss or reduction.

17.39 Where loss or conversion of ancillary function space or living accommodation is proposed, it must be demonstrated that the pub use would not be undermined through such loss. For the loss of function space, evidence is also required to demonstrate the availability of sufficient and suitable alternative facilities available within the local area.

## London Plan policies:

- HC7 Protecting public houses
- D13 Agent of Change

## Local Plan policies:

- TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- TC2 Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres
- TC5 Food and drink
- TC7 Evening and Night-time Economy
- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS6 Heritage and the historic environment
- CG11 Noise and vibration

## Evidence base:

- Pubs in Tower Hamlets – Evidence Study, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Pubs Addendum, 2023

## Policy CI5 Arts and culture facilities

1. Development proposals which include the loss of an arts or cultural facility will not be supported unless the following can be demonstrated:
  - a. that all reasonable efforts have been taken to preserve the facility in its current use, including evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep;
  - b. that the facility has been marketed for at least 12 months as an arts or culture use at a reasonable market rent and free of restrictive covenant and following this exercise there has been no interest in the property and there is no realistic prospect of continuing its current use;
  - c. that there has been no interest in the property for an alternative community use over a further 12-month period following the marketing period in part 1(b); and
  - d. that where an existing Arts and Culture facility caters to a specific community group, this group will not be negatively affected by the loss of the facility.
2. New arts and cultural facilities will be directed towards Town Centre locations, in accordance with the Town Centre Hierarchy and the Strategic Night Time Economy Designations as set out in policy TC1, the Creative Enterprise Zone in Hackney Wick and Fish Island, the Hackney Wick Specialist Centre, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and the CAZ as identified in the Local Plan:
  - a. major residential, commercial and mixed-use development proposals in these locations should contribute to enhancing the cultural offer of the area and will be encouraged to incorporate arts and culture facilities in the development;
- b. new arts and culture facilities proposed outside of these locations must demonstrate that they are serving a specific need, have been designed with an end user in mind, that their scale is in keeping with the surroundings and that they will be easily accessed by the local community; and
- c. where use of the facility is only intended to operate during evening/night-time hours, potential for allowing daytime uses to activate the space, including on a meanwhile basis, should be investigated.
3. Where an arts or culture facility is replaced or re-provided, the following requirements apply:
  - a. the new facility must remain accessible, affordable and inclusive to the existing community that use the space, ensuring that the new facility remains affordable to the operator, providing evidence of re-provision at the same rent levels and conducting and providing an Equalities Impact Assessment where required;
  - b. evidence of thorough early engagement with the facility operator so the provision of the new facility is an improvement on the existing, enhancing its function and performance and is provided with a sufficient fit out with the development proposal meeting costs of this, so the operation of the new facility remains viable;
  - c. adequate floorspace and volume in an appropriate configuration must be provided to ensure the continued viability of the

facility including any amenity space that can be used for wider community uses, and this should not result in a net loss of floorspace unless justified by demonstrating that the floorspace lost is surplus to need and the loss has been agreed with the operator;

- d. prioritising the existing use staying open until the re-provided facility is operational, and where this is demonstrated to not be possible a local decant strategy is put in place, with costs of this met by the development proposal; and
- e. where a re-provided arts or culture facility that is likely to produce high noise levels is proposed as part of new development, residents should be informed of the normal operation of the noisy use, this can be in the form of an informative as part of the planning permission.

4. Development proposals in proximity to an arts or cultural facility must demonstrate that the continued operation and viability of the facility would not be compromised, and demonstrate they have taken the necessary action to mitigate any issues that might arise from being in such proximity to the facility in line with the agent of change principle. This would include providing enhanced noise mitigation measures for the existing venue as well as providing sufficient sound insulation for the new development.

5. Development proposals for arts or cultural facilities on meanwhile, pop-up or vacant sites where they bring into use vacant developable land on a temporary basis are encouraged and will be supported where:

- a. they are located within a Town Centre location, the Creative Enterprise Zone in Hackney Wick and Fish Island, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas or the CAZ as identified in the Local Plan; or
- b. on sites outside of these locations, they can prove that they are serving a required need, that their scale is in keeping with the surroundings and that they will be easily accessible to the local community;
- c. the proposal can provide evidence of preventing or mitigating any adverse amenity impacts; and
- d. the temporary proposal does not preclude the permanent use of the site for future development.

## Supporting text

17.40 Cultural facilities play a key role in developing the borough's vibrancy and character, delivering social value to communities by facilitating social integration, strengthening identities, providing employment, and offering destinations for residents and visitors alike to take part in cultural activities. They also are vital in supporting the creative economy of the borough and contributing to the rich cultural offer in London as a whole. To ensure this vibrancy is retained and grown, it is important that arts and cultural facilities are offered increased support and protection.

17.41 Arts and cultural facilities can be defined as any development where arts and culture is consumed or participated in. Examples of these facilities include theatres, music venues, rehearsal spaces, cinemas, night clubs, galleries, museums, and historic culture sites.

17.42 The London Plan defines arts and culture facilities as spaces where arts and culture are produced, consumed or participated in. for the purposes of this plan, spaces where arts and culture are produced are addressed in the Inclusive Economy and Good Growth chapter. Where there is overlap, and spaces include both production and consumption or participation, both this policy and the policies in the Inclusive Economy and Good Growth chapter will apply.

17.43 The definition of arts and cultural facilities used in this policy includes both charity/not-for-profit organisations, such as theatres, museums and art galleries and for-profit businesses, such as cinemas, nightclubs, and live music venues. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list, and other uses may also be considered as an arts or culture facility. More detail on the types of uses that would be considered arts and culture uses, and detailed definitions, are available as part of the GLA's Cultural Infrastructure Dataset.

17.44 In order to satisfy Part 1(a), applications for development resulting in the loss of an existing arts or cultural facility will need to provide evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to diversify the business.

17.45 In order to satisfy Part 1(b), applicants will need to submit a full detailed marketing report outlining the asking price or rent for the facility and the terms on which it was offered. The report should include details of any interest in the property, viewings, and why such interest was not taken forward. The report should outline comparative rent prices for other arts and culture uses in the area to justify the asking price. This information should also be provided for a subsequent 12-month period outlining attempts to let the property for any alternative community use as described under Part 1(c).

17.46 Part 2 directs new arts and culture facilities to Town Centre locations (having regard to the Town Centre Hierarchy and the Strategic Night Time Economy Designations set out in Policy TC1), the Creative Enterprise Zone in Hackney Wick and Fish Island, the Hackney Wick Specialist Centre, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas and the CAZ. These locations are accessible to the public, will benefit from the vibrancy and vitality created by the addition of arts and culture uses and can support the evening and night-time uses they bring, contributing to the night-time economy.

17.47 Part 2(a) ensures that any major residential, commercial, and mixed-use development in these locations recognises the importance of arts and culture to the area and contributes to the enhancement of culture in the borough. Development is encouraged to provide arts and cultural facilities as part of the contribution to the community, for example by providing a new cultural venue, new studio space, or facilities and space for outdoor cultural events.



17.48 Where arts and culture facilities are only operating in the evening/night-time, Part 2(c) ensures that there is a substantial investigation into allowing an alternative daytime use to co-habit and activate the space on a shared basis. Evidence of this should be provided and demonstrate that inquiries had been made to other cultural or community organisations with explanation as to why this did not progress further if efforts were unsuccessful.

17.49 Part 3 ensures that when an arts or culture facility is re-provided, the new facility remains accessible, affordable, and inclusive to the existing community that use the space, demonstrated that the re-provided facility is rented at the same levels to ensure the continued affordability of the use. The new facility should be an improvement on the existing and should be provided with a sufficient fit out to remain viable for the existing operator, this will be secured via a planning obligation to ensure the cost of this is met by the developer. Early consultation with the existing operator must be conducted to establish the necessary requirements for this and an agreement with the operator must be provided to demonstrate this.

17.50 In line with the agent of change principle, Part 4 of the policy requires any development within the proximity of an arts or cultural facility to demonstrate that the continued operation and viability of the facility would not be compromised, and demonstrate they have taken the necessary action to mitigate any issues that might arise from being in such proximity to the facility. Examples of this would be to provide evidence of sufficient sound insulation in the new development, and where improvements might need to be made on the existing arts and culture facility these will be the responsibility of the new development.

17.51 Part 5 of the policy supports development proposals for arts or cultural facilities on meanwhile, pop-up or vacant sites where they

bring into use vacant developable land on a temporary basis as long as they are within the specified locations in Part 5(a)(i) or can prove that they are serving a required need, that their scale is in keeping with the surroundings and that they will be easily accessible to the local community (Part 5(a)(ii)). They also must prevent or mitigate any adverse amenity impacts (Part 5(b)) and must not preclude the permanent use of the site for future development (part 5(c)). This policy looks to encourage arts and culture facilities on meanwhile, pop-up or vacant sites, as it is recognised that these facilities bring great social, community and place-shaping benefits.

### London Plan policies:

- HC5 Supporting London's culture and creative industries
- HC6 Supporting the night-time economy
- D13 Agent of Change

### Local Plan policies:

- TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- TC2 Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres
- TC5 Food and drink
- TC7 Evening and Night-time Economy
- PS3 Securing design quality
- CG11 Noise and vibration

### Evidence base:

- Arts and Culture Topic Paper, 2023
- Mayor of London's Culture Strategy, 2018
- London Culture Infrastructure Plan, 2019

## 18. Biodiversity and open space

BO1 – Green and blue infrastructure

BO2 – Open spaces and the green grid networks

BO3 – Water spaces

BO4 – Biodiversity and access to nature

BO5 – Urban greening

BO6 – Play and recreation spaces

BO7 – Food growing

### Introduction

18.1 Tower Hamlets has over 170 publicly accessible parks and open spaces which are a source of local pride, popular with residents and visitors to the borough. Well-designed and accessible green and blue spaces offer many social, environmental, and economic benefits, including:

- enhancing amenity;
- contributing to healthy lifestyles through providing opportunities for active travel and leisure;
- providing sport and recreation opportunities;

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<sup>28</sup> Based on figure from Open Space Strategy (2017) and 2023 Census population data for the borough

<sup>29</sup> Parks and Open Space Strategy, 2017

<sup>30</sup> Parks and Open Space Strategy, 2017



- providing places to meet, play, socialise, and access community
- activities and cultural events;
- providing free and accessible spaces for children and young people, adult carers, and vulnerable and deprived people;
- inclusive and supportive of mental health and well-being
- helping to manage storm water drainage and flood risk;
- mitigating the effects of climate change;
- enhancing biodiversity; and
- providing a cooling effect to reduce elevated urban air temperature.

18.2 The overall provision of publicly accessible open space in Tower Hamlets is 260.58 hectares, which equates to 0.84 hectares per 1,000 residents,<sup>28</sup> significantly less than the borough's open space standard of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 residents.<sup>29</sup> Some parts of the borough are more acutely deficient in access to open space than others - particularly the Isle of Dogs, Shoreditch, and Whitechapel. Across the borough, there is a substantial shortfall in the provision of playing pitches for outdoor sports, as most grass pitches are located at parks or areas of open space where they often serve multiple functions, such as recreational open space and non-sports related activities.<sup>30</sup>

18.3 Tower Hamlets is a densely populated borough which faces significant development pressure, and there is limited scope to provide major additional open space to accommodate the needs of the growing population, such as new parkland and woodland. Nevertheless, the borough's open spaces make a significant positive contribution to the character and appearance of the borough, reflecting their popularity

among residents and visitors, relatively good condition, and varied use. Some parks (e.g. Victoria Park) are nationally renowned and have been awarded Green Flag status.

18.4 As the population continues to grow there will be an increasing need to protect and revitalise our existing open spaces as well as secure additional publicly accessible open space and our access to these spaces, especially within deficient areas (see Figure 19). Reflecting the limited opportunities for significant new open space, and to ensure residents can enjoy the benefits of urban greening where new open space cannot be accommodated, the greening of council housing stock, estates, existing public realm, and place, and the overall enhancement of these areas, will be prioritised and encouraged.

18.5 Tower Hamlets has access to more water spaces than any other London borough, comprising the rivers Thames and Lea and the other connecting water spaces (e.g. Limehouse Cut, Regents Canal and Hertford Union Canal) as well as several docks and basins. However, much of the potential of the borough's water spaces remains untapped, due to fragmented public access and limited active recreation and leisure opportunities. Tower Hamlets has also experienced significant historic water loss, particularly around Shadwell Basin and the Ornamental Canal, while a considerable amount of water space has been reclaimed and reused to frame development around West India Docks, Blackwall Basin, and Poplar Dock in Canary Wharf. This has further limited the availability of water spaces for recreation, transport, and Despite its urban character, Tower Hamlets has areas of notable biodiversity value, including three Local Nature Reserves and 38 Sites

of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). However, parts of the borough, including the City Fringe, Poplar, and the western edge of the Isle of Dogs, are considered to be nature deficient<sup>31</sup>.

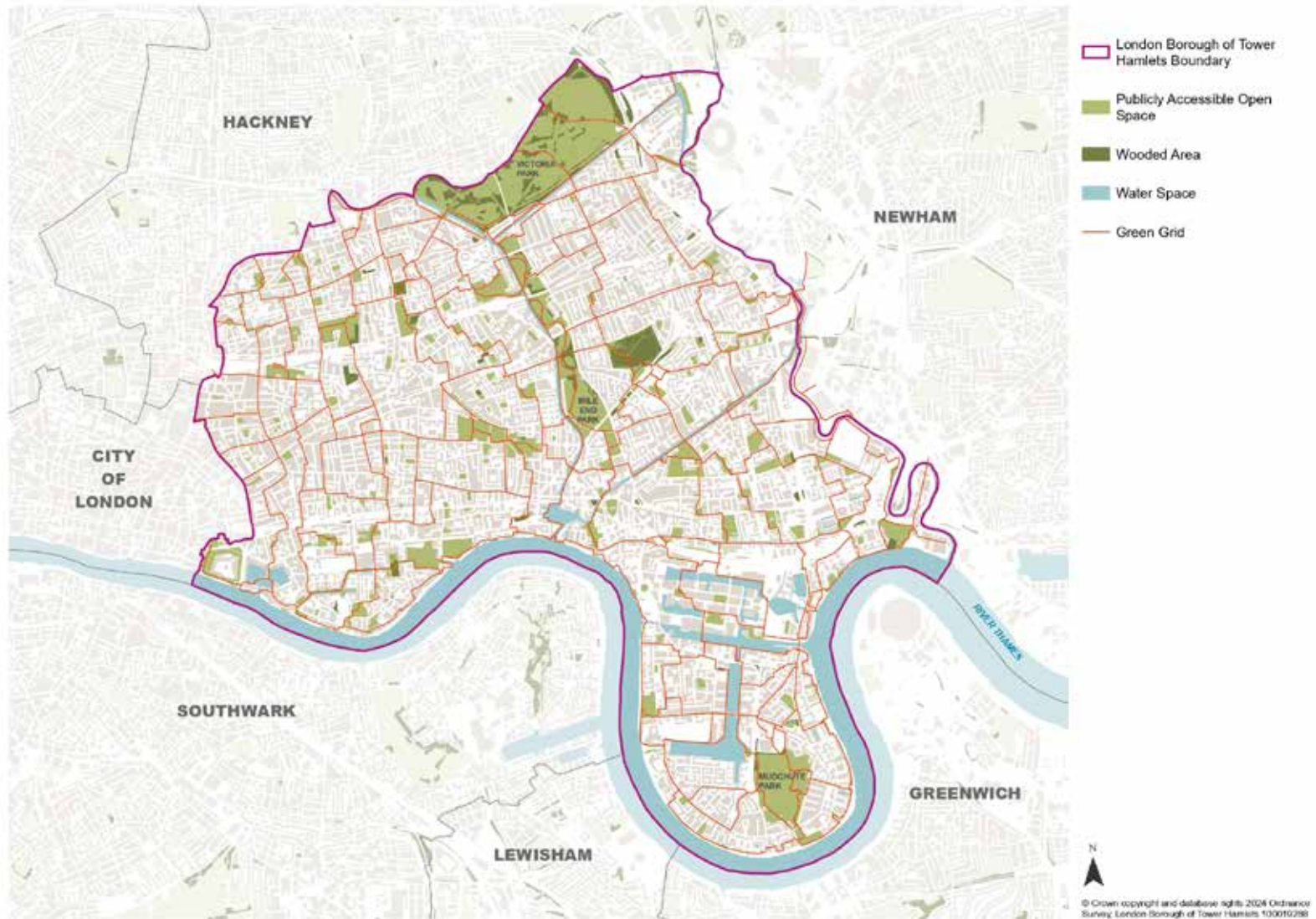
18.6 This section contains the following policies:

- Policy BO1: Green and blue infrastructure
- Policy BO2: Open spaces and the green grid networks
- Policy BO3: Water spaces
- Policy BO4: Biodiversity and access to nature
- Policy BO5: Urban greening
- Policy BO6: Play and recreation spaces
- Policy BO7: Food growing

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<sup>31</sup> Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy (2017)

Figure 18: Network of open and water spaces





## Policy BO1 Green and blue infrastructure

### Green spaces

1. The council will maintain and enhance the provision of green infrastructure across the borough, delivering an improved network of accessible open spaces through:
  - a. protecting all existing open space to ensure that there is no net loss, except where it meets the criteria set out in Policy BO2;
  - b. maintaining the open character of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) in accordance with the London Plan;
  - c. requiring strategic development proposals to deliver an increase in new high quality publicly accessible open space on-site, in proportion to the scale of development;
  - d. improving the quality, value, functionality, and accessibility of existing publicly accessible open space across the borough and neighbouring boroughs, in line with the Green Grid Strategy, Open Space Strategy, Local Biodiversity Action Plan, Sport England's Active Design Guidance, the Tree Management Plan, and through urban greening initiatives detailed in Policy BO5 – especially on council-owned properties where the introduction of additional open space is difficult to achieve;
  - e. delivering an improved network of green grid links in line with the Green Grid Strategy to ensure:
    - i. enhanced access to key destination points (neighbourhood parades and town centres, services, community facilities, and publicly accessible open spaces) and to and along water spaces,
    - ii. the physical consolidation of open spaces delivered across adjacent sites,
    - iii. Pleasant, sociable green walk ways that enhance the day to day lives of residents with green walking routes, space to exercise, socialize, walk and play with children, improved local commute, access to the positive mental and physical health effects of time spent in nature.
    - iv. spaces are designed to be safe, inclusive, multi-functional and accessible, and
    - v. ecological corridors for wildlife are provided.
  - f. maximising opportunities to create/increase publicly accessible open space with a focus on creating inter-generational activity, a range of activity (including playing pitches and ancillary sporting facilities) with a range of sizes and for a range of users with attention paid to women and girls. Locations identified with the highest level of open space deficiency will be prioritised; and
  - g. the delivery of enhanced new strategic publicly accessible open spaces at Lea River Park (including the Leaway) and within site allocations.
2. The council will not support inappropriate development proposals on areas designated as MOL (as shown on the Policies Map).

## Blue spaces

3. The council will support the management and enhancement of the existing network of high quality, usable, and accessible water spaces network through:
  - a. protecting the integrity of the borough's water spaces;
  - b. maximising opportunities for enhancing the aesthetic, ecological and biodiversity values of the borough's water spaces (including the immediate and surrounding areas) and the water quality, in line with the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan;
  - c. improving accessibility and wayfinding to and along water spaces to maximise opportunities for public use and enjoyment;
  - d. promoting water spaces for cultural, recreational and leisure activities that are free or low-cost to use, to ensure they are accessible for all residents and visitors, as well as movement, including passenger and freight transport (e.g. along the River Thames);
  - e. working in partnership with the Port of London Authority and the Canal and River Trust to ensure that residential and commercial moorings are in appropriate locations that do not negatively impact on navigation, water quality, the openness and character of the water space and the amenity of surrounding residents;
  - f. supporting the aims of the Water Framework Directive, Thames River Basin Management Plan, Thames Estuary 2100 Plan including its riverside strategy approach, Thames Vision, and any relevant Marine Plans (e.g. South East Marine Plan); and
  - g. rehabilitating and restoring existing waterways that are neglected or in poor health through measures such as rewilding.

## Green infrastructure

4. The council will contribute to nature recovery in Tower Hamlets by protecting and enhancing biodiversity by requiring:
5.
  - a. major development proposals to contribute to the greening of Tower Hamlets by including urban greening and nature-based storm water management as a fundamental element of site and building design; and
  - b. all development proposals to achieve minimum urban greening factor (UGF) and biodiversity net gain (BNG) targets as set out in this plan.

## Supporting text

18.7 This policy seeks to protect and enhance the borough's valuable network of green and blue spaces and promote the creation of publicly accessible open spaces which are better connected and provide a wide range of opportunities for local communities and visitors in line with the Open Space Strategy, Green Grid Strategy, and other relevant strategies. It also seeks to protect and enhance the borough's water spaces, which enhance the borough's character, provide open space, recreation opportunities, and significant biodiversity benefits.

18.8 The Open Space Strategy sets out where strategic open space (i.e. one hectare or above) will be provided across the borough. This includes the requirements relating to the provision of playing pitches and a detailed action plan on how our open space priorities will be addressed. Further details on the specific needs and priorities for the provision of playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities are outlined in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Green Grid Strategy identifies opportunities to improve connections between existing open spaces and create smaller scale open spaces in areas of need.

18.9 For the purposes of the Local Plan, open space is defined as all land that offers opportunity for play, recreation, and sport, or is of amenity value, whether in public or private ownership, and where public access is unrestricted, partially restricted, or restricted. This includes all open areas consisting of major parks (e.g. Victoria Park and Mile End Park), local parks, gardens, squares, playgrounds, ecological spaces, housing amenity land, playing fields (including playing pitches), allotments, SuDS features, and burial grounds, whether or not they are accessible to the public. This definition does not include water bodies.



18.10 Water spaces make a positive contribution to the economy, society, and the environment, and should be safeguarded for water-related purpose with priority given to water management, improving water quality, managing land drainage, and avoiding, reducing, and managing flood risk. This policy seeks to protect and enhance the borough's valuable network of water spaces and ensure that they are easily accessible and provide a wide range of water-related opportunities for local communities and visitors.

18.11 For the purposes of the Local Plan, water space is defined as an area of water (permanently or intermittently covered by water) and includes rivers, canals, docks, basins, ponds, marshland, and other water bodies.

18.12 Figure 18 illustrates the distribution of publicly accessible open spaces across the borough. Detailed boundaries of the borough's publicly accessible open spaces are shown on the Policies Map. Some of the borough's open spaces and water spaces are designated as Metropolitan Open Land (including East India Dock Basin and Brunswick Wharf, Island Gardens, Lee Valley Regional Park, Meath Gardens, Mile End Park, Mudchute Park, Millwall Park, Tower Hamlets Cemetery and Victoria Park) which form part of London's strategically defined open space network.

18.13 Part 1(a) seeks to protect all open spaces regardless of their size, type, ownership and where access is unrestricted, partially restricted, or restricted.

18.14 Part 1(b) seeks to protect the open character of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). MOL is a unique open space designation in London and is afforded the same level of protection as the Green Belt within the London Plan.

18.15 Part 1 (c) seeks to ensure that strategic development proposals provide proportional contributions to the borough's network of publicly accessible open space. Such developments will have an impact on the capacity of existing open spaces and must therefore ensure that an increase can reduce the pressure on those spaces. The publicly accessible open space should aim to meet the local standard of 1.2 hectares per 1000 residents (as identified in the Open Space Strategy).

18.16 Certain site allocations (as specified within Section 4 of the plan) will be required to provide a minimum of 1 hectare consolidated open space in order to meet wider strategic needs. Part 2 of policy BO2 (Open spaces and the Green Grid network) outlines the quality and standards required for new and enhanced open space provision.

18.17 Part 1(d) promotes the enhancement of the borough's existing open spaces to improve their quality and multi-functionality to serve a variety of users. This will be delivered through the provision of new outdoor sport facilities, such as playing pitches, outdoor gyms and multi-use games areas within existing parks (e.g. Victoria Park, Mudchute Park and Mile End Park).

18.18 Proposals should also incorporate the principles of Sport England's Active Design Guide.

18.19 Part 1(e) promotes the delivery of a well-connected and high-quality network of publicly accessible open spaces through new and improved green grid connections, in accordance with Transport for London's healthy streets initiative. This can be achieved through new planting in the public realm, creating access to nature, natural play and educational elements along the green grid, as well as improved signage to enhance wayfinding. The Green Grid Strategy has identified a series of strategic green grid projects to improve cross-borough connections and help address deficiencies across the borough as well as other parts of London.



18.20 Parts 1(f) and (g) promote the provision of new publicly accessible open spaces to serve the borough's growing population, particularly where they are of a wider strategic importance (e.g. Lea River Park) and in areas of significant open space deficiency (see Figure 19<sup>32</sup>).

18.21 The consolidation of open spaces increases their recreational and biodiversity values. Once the total area of new open space provided across development sites reaches 1ha, this can lead to a reduction in deficiency in access to open space. Locating public realm adjacent to water spaces also expands visual amenity, which is important for general well-being. To ensure new developments achieve these outcomes, development proposals must locate new open space in a manner that enables their expansion – either by situating them next to existing open space on adjacent sites, or in a location where further pieces of open space may be delivered on adjacent sites in future.

18.22 The provision of new or improved publicly accessible open space and green grid linkages will be promoted throughout the borough in accordance with the principles set out in the Open Space Strategy, Green Grid Strategy and Mayor of London's All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance, notably at the following locations:

- d. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (i.e. improving links to open spaces and the Lea Navigation and Hertford Union canals);
- e. Lea Valley (including a series of new open spaces as part of the Lea River Park and a new continuous north-south route through Lea Valley connecting the Lea Valley Regional Park to the River Thames as well as new pedestrian footbridges);

- f. Mile End Park and Victoria Park (including green grid extensions to the existing canal walkways and nearby schools);
- g. Whitechapel (including the delivery of the Green Spine – a new north-south pedestrian route linking Whitechapel District Centre with Commercial Road along with a series of open spaces featuring new public squares behind the proposed civic centre and next to St Augustine with St Philip's Church); and Thames Path (i.e. maintaining and expanding the Thames Path to provide continuous public access to the river).
- h. Larger open space (i.e. one hectare and above) provision will be secured on selected allocated sites (as identified in Section 4) through new development.

18.23 Delivery of smaller publicly accessible open spaces such as pocket parks, nature-based storm water management, and linear verges will be promoted through new development to connect to the green grid. These should be designed in line with Inclusive design principles from Policy P5 and the High Density Living SPD & consider long term stewardship and community inclusion

18.24 Innovative approaches to delivering new open space (e.g. rooftop gardens/greenhouses, community gardens) in these areas as well as locating parks in areas of the borough where accessibility to public open space is poor will be promoted. These areas may be but are not limited those with high densities and tall buildings.

18.25 There is a general presumption against inappropriate development on areas designated as MOL (as shown on the Policies Map).

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<sup>32</sup> Publicly accessible open space deficiency is mapped using 400 metre catchment areas from parks of 1 hectare or above.



Exceptional circumstances for development proposals on MOL must be demonstrated in line with the requirements set out in the NPPF.

18.26 Part 3(a) seeks to ensure that development does not result in further loss or over sailing of the borough's valuable water spaces unless it is a water dependent use at appropriate locations. Water-dependent uses are defined as an activity which can only be conducted on, in, over or adjacent to the water because its function requires direct access to, along and across the water or involves, as an integral part of the activity, the use of the water. Appropriate infrastructure to support water-dependent uses includes:

- a. walkways and slipways for pedestrians, boaters and cyclists;
- b. bridges and tunnels (e.g. across the rivers Lea and Thames);
- c. water-based sport and leisure (e.g. sailing and kayaking);
- d. security and safety (e.g. lifebuoys and other life-saving equipment);
- e. water-based passengers, tourism, transport support and freight infrastructure (e.g. piers and clippers);
- f. marine support facilities;
- g. moorings (including permanent and visitor moorings) and their support infrastructure; and
- h. flood defences and their strengthening and raising in line with the TE2100 Plan.

18.27 In addition, other water-related uses may also be considered at suitable locations where there is clear evidence that they are specifically designed to enhance the public access, use or enjoyment of the water space and will have a positive contribution to the character of the water space without causing any adverse negative impacts on biodiversity or flood risk (e.g. activate the water space to enhance it as a waterside destination). An important consideration in decision making will be the cumulative impact of existing and proposed new water related uses to ensure that that there is no adverse impact on the character and openness of the borough's water space and the amenity of surrounding residents.

18.28 Despite their urban setting and heavily modified nature, the borough's network of rivers, canals and docks are important for



biodiversity, supporting a wide range of species of wild plants and animals (including rare and protected species) and allowing people to come into contact with nature. In accordance with part 3(b), development will be expected to preserve and enhance biodiversity and increase the resilience of wetland ecosystems. This can be achieved through a range of measures, including the restoration and creation of priority habitats, planting native species along the waterways to create more natural landscapes, and preventing overspill of artificial lighting and excessive shade onto water bodies and adjacent areas of soft landscaping to protect the ecosystems' natural patterns of activity.

18.29 Some of the borough's water spaces are difficult to find and access from nearby transport hubs (e.g. River Lea, Shadwell Basin and West India Middle and South Docks) or have restricted and disjointed access (e.g. River Thames). Part 3(c) of the policy seeks to ensure that access to all water spaces is improved through appropriate signage for better way finding. Many of the borough's water spaces (including Blackwall Basin, Hermitage Basin, Limehouse Basin, East India Dock Basin, Limehouse Cut Canal, Millwall inner and outer docks, Poplar Dock, St Katherine's Dock, Wapping Canal, West India Docks and the rivers Lea and Thames) are located within or adjacent to areas of open space deficiency. These water spaces and the adjacent land therefore provide important open space functions and make a valuable contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

18.30 In delivering Part 3(d), additional opportunities will be explored to maximise the use of the borough's water spaces for transport and freight at suitable locations (e.g. Trinity Buoy Wharf and along the River Thames), including the introduction of additional Thames Clipper stops. Policies MC1 and MC4 provide further guidance on sustainable transport and freight.

18.31 Creating and enhancing the borough's high quality, usable and accessible network of water spaces will be delivered through a coordinated approach with a wide range of stakeholders, including the Canal & River Trust, Port of London Authority, Inland Waterways Association, the Environment Agency, neighbouring boroughs, and other relevant organisations, see parts 3(e) and (f).



18.32 This policy also recognises the importance of several strategic documents which provide the framework for the sustainable development of the borough's water spaces and, more specifically, the river Thames and its tributaries (see Part 1(f)).

- a. The Water Framework Directive provides a framework for protecting and improving the ecological quality of all water bodies.
- b. Following on from the Water Framework Directive, the Thames River Basin Management Plan sets out actions to protect and enhance the river's natural environment.
- c. The Thames Strategy East sets out a long-term framework to guide the sustainable management of the Thames Policy Area (as shown on the Policies Map) and promotes development principles, such as greater connectivity through improved foot and cycle access to and along the river Thames and the provision of water support infrastructure (e.g. bridges, piers, and flood defences, etc) which respects and contribute to the river's character.
- d. The Thames Estuary 2100 Plan sets out a comprehensive action plan to manage tidal flood risk across the River Thames and the River Lea including the raising of defences by the riparian owners, which will require adaptation of the adjacent public realm.
- e. The Thames Vision sets out the goals and priority actions to help manage and promote the river Thames, which include: more trade

and more jobs associated with the river; improved use of the river for the transportation of passengers and freight; and an improved environment and river heritage.

- f. Tower Hamlets falls within the remit of the Marine Plan for the South East inshore area. Adopted in 2021, the Marine Plan for the South East seeks to enhance and protect the marine environment and achieve sustainable economic growth and marine development and applies when development proposals include a section of coastline or tidal river. The detailed boundaries of the Marine Plan for the South East inshore area (within the borough) are shown on the Policies Map. Any development and activities within the rivers Thames and Lea should policies set out in the South East Marine Plan.

18.33 Tower Hamlets has a diverse range of sites of biodiversity value, including areas of open space, waterways, and formally designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Part 4 recognises that development can contribute to enhancing the borough's biodiversity through urban greening measures. The London Plan establishes the Urban Greening Factor model to determine the appropriate provision of urban greening for new developments.



## London Plan policies:

- G1 Green infrastructure
- G2 London's Green Belt
- G3 Metropolitan Open Land
- G4 Open Space
- G5 Urban Greening
- G6 Biodiversity and access to nature
- G7 Trees and woodlands
- G8 Food growing
- S14 Waterways – strategic role
- S16 Waterways – use and enjoyment
- S17 Protecting and enhancing London's waterways

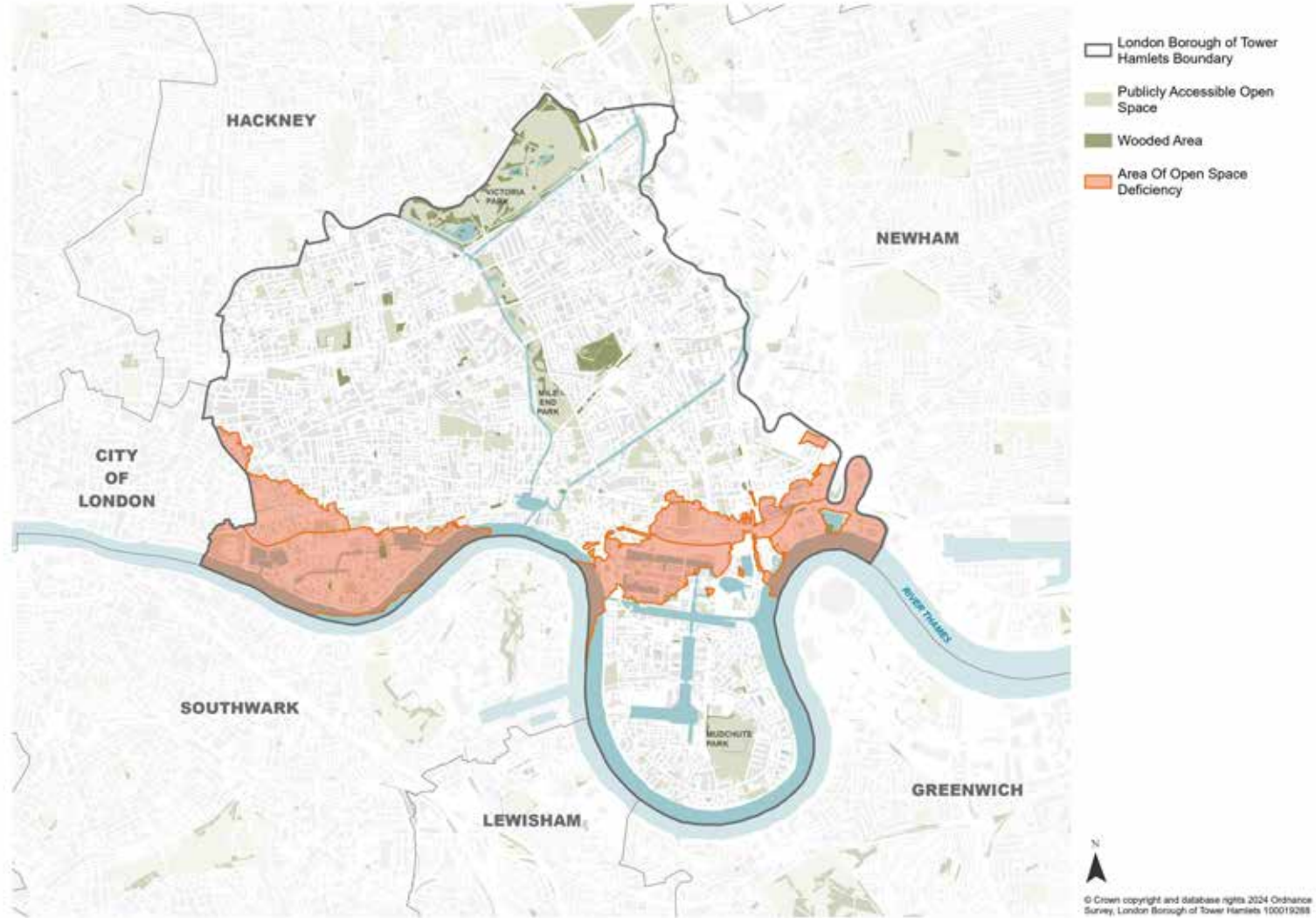
## Local Plan policies:

- DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- DV3 Health impact assessments
- DV5 Developer contributions
- PS1 Design-and Infrastructure-led approach to development
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm
- PS5 Gender inclusive design
- HC10 Housing standards and quality
- Cl1 Supporting community facilities
- CG1 Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate
- CG7 Managing flood risk
- CG8 Sustainable drainage
- CG9 Water efficient design
- MC1 Sustainable travel
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets

## Evidence base:

- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Water Space Study, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan, emerging
- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan, 2019
- All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2012
- Active Design Guidance, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Playing Pitch Assessment, 2017
- High Density Living Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2020

Figure 19: Areas of open space deficiency



## Policy BO2 Open spaces and the Green Grid network

1. Development proposals on areas of open space (excluding MOL) will only be supported in exceptional circumstances where they:
  - a. provide essential facilities that enhance the function, use and enjoyment of the open space (e.g. ancillary sport facilities to the playing field use); or
  - b. demonstrate they achieve a higher quality of open space, by meeting specific criteria which sets out appropriate and acceptable improvements;
  - c. it is an outdoor sport and recreational space or facility, the sporting and recreational benefits of which would outweigh the harm resulting from its loss; and
  - d. in any of the circumstances described in parts 1(a), (b), and (c), it is demonstrated that it will not result in any adverse impacts on the existing ecological, heritage or recreational value of the open space and the flood risk levels within and beyond the boundaries of the site.
2. Major development proposals should contribute to the delivery of new or enhanced publicly accessible open space on-site which should:
  - a. be visible and accessible from the public realm surrounding the site;
  - b. be of a high quality and inclusive design that complements local character
  - c. provide facilities to promote active recreation

- d. and healthy lifestyles, including facilities like sport pitches, playgrounds, and outdoor gyms;
- e. be well-connected and way-marked to other open spaces, in accordance with the Green Grid Strategy and Open Space Strategy;
- f. be consolidated and facilitate potential future extensions of open space on adjacent sites;
- g. remove existing barriers such as gates to and fences around green spaces and remove steps or other impediments to accessibility;
- h. contribute towards meeting the demand that they generate through the provision of on-site sport facilities and/or providing additional capacity off-site;
- i. incorporate soft landscaping, shading, and sustainable drainage systems consistent with Policy CG8;
- j. enhance biodiversity, contributing to the objectives identified in Policy BO4 and the Local Biodiversity Action Plan;
- k. be designed to be enjoyed by people of all ages, gender identities, and physical abilities, with adequate facilities and amenities such as toilets, water fountains, seating and picnic areas, lighting and wayfinding signage, accessible footpaths, nature or running trails;
- l. integrate play and space for informal recreation as per requirements set out in Policy BO6; and
- m. integrate food growing opportunities, where feasible and practical as per Policy BO7.

3. Development proposals should not solely rely upon existing publicly accessible open space to contribute towards on-site communal amenity space and child play space.
4. Development proposals should not adversely impact the enjoyment, openness, ecological and heritage value of the borough's publicly accessible open spaces.
5. Major development proposals adjacent to the existing and proposed Green Grid network must contribute to the expansion and the enhancement of Green Grid links to connect communities to publicly accessible open spaces and water spaces as well as other main destination points, such as town centres, schools, health facilities and transport hubs.
6. Development proposals adjacent to the existing and proposed Green Grid network must demonstrate that they will not have adverse impacts on the access, design, usability, biodiversity, and recreational value of the green grid network.
7. Development proposals that provide community allotments, gardens, greening, and pocket parks will be encouraged, particularly where they bring into use vacant developable land on a temporary basis or as part of a meanwhile use.

### Supporting text

18.34 This policy aims to ensure that development proposals do not negatively impact the existing network of publicly accessible open space and contributes to its expansion and enhancement. It also seeks to maximise the opportunities for delivery of new open space and for enhancing accessibility and connectivity to the wider network, which is considered crucial to addressing the borough's open space deficiency (as shown on Figure 19).

18.35 Development proposals on areas of open space will be resisted unless in the circumstances specified in part 1. The types of development that are considered to be acceptable in principle within areas of open space include changing rooms, play equipment and seating. They should be of a scale and function proportionate to the open space in which they are to be located and should be purely ancillary to it.

18.36 In relation to part 1(b), the starting point for all development proposals will be no net loss of open space, and any development proposal resulting in an increase in population will be required to provide an amount of open space in accordance with the principles set out

18.37 in Policy BO1. However, there may be certain circumstances (e.g. in housing estate regeneration schemes) where building on fragmented, unused, and poor quality open space enables the provision of a larger, consolidated, and enhanced area of open space which is more usable for the local community and provides better urban greening and biodiversity outcomes than the existing open space.

18.38 For a net loss of open space to be considered, the development proposal must demonstrate it will achieve the above by successfully consolidating smaller and less functional areas into a larger open space



and delivering as many of the following enhancements as possible, including:

- a. improving the openness and passive surveillance of a green space;
- b. removing barriers such as fences or steps to make green spaces more welcoming, usable, and accessible, with better connections through or across sites;
- c. introducing furniture or features such as benches, seating and tables, drinking fountains, planter boxes for food growing, waste bins, lighting, and signage;
- d. the installation of new or replacement of dilapidated play equipment, public toilets, fitness equipment, public art, or other such facilities;
- e. Installing bird and bat nesting boxes, planting appropriate species, and other interventions that provide maximum benefit for biodiversity, and exceeding minimum requirements detailed under Policy BO4; and
- f. installing nature-based SuDS to manage rainfall and reduce surface water run-off.

18.39 Part 1(c) allows for provision of outdoor sport and recreation facilities on open space in circumstances where the public benefit from the facility outweighs the harm from the loss of openness. This recognises the value of recreational facilities to residents of the borough and their importance to health and well-being and acknowledges that there are likely to be few sites in the borough that would be suitable for outdoor sports and recreation facilities that are not designated open spaces.

18.40 Part 1(d) seeks to ensure that where they are determined to be acceptable on other grounds, development proposals on open space do not compromise other significant features of the site or increase the level of flood risk as a result of developing open space.

18.41 Part 2 seeks to promote delivery of new publicly accessible open space and, in particular, the provision of new publicly accessible open space on major schemes (between 10-100 residential units or between 1,000-10,000 square metres floor space) and strategic schemes (more than 100 homes or over 10,000 square metres floor space), or where development is considered to place significant additional demand on existing publicly accessible open space, particularly in identified areas of open space deficiency (see Figure 19).

18.42 Where publicly accessible open space is provided on site, it should aim to meet the local standard of 1.2 hectares per 1000 residents (as identified in the Open Space Strategy). New publicly accessible open space will be expected to meet the design criteria in part 1. Notwithstanding, given the extent of residential development required and forecast for the borough, development proposals that maintain the existing 0.84ha per 1,000 residents standard will be considered. Reflecting the limited opportunities for significant new open space, and to ensure residents can enjoy the benefits of urban greening where new open space cannot be accommodated, the greening of council housing stock, estates, existing public realm, and place, and the overall enhancement of these areas, will be prioritised and encouraged.

18.43 Future management and maintenance of new publicly accessible open space will be secured through planning conditions or legal agreements to ensure the highest possible level of public access, function, and use.

18.44 The provision of amenity space or landscaping required as part of good design to mitigate the impact of development will not be counted towards the provision of appropriate publicly accessible open space. The level and nature of any sports provision should take account of the recommendations set out in Sport England's guidance and our Open Space Strategy and its associated action plan.

18.45 Where on-site provision of adequate publicly accessible open space is not possible, a contribution will be sought from the developer towards the delivery of the opportunities and the strategic projects identified in the Open Space Strategy and Green Grid Strategy in accordance with the Planning Obligations SPD.

18.46 Part 3 seeks to ensure that residential developments will not place undue pressure on publicly accessible open space and will not be allowed to solely rely upon nearby public open space to contribute to adequate outdoor communal amenity space, including child play space in line with the principles set out in Policy BO6.

18.47 In accordance with part 4, development will be expected to demonstrate that it will enhance and not negatively affect the borough's publicly accessible open space, including the Lee Valley Regional Park (consisting of East India Dock Basin and linear towpaths along the River Lea Navigation, Hertford Union Canal and Limehouse Cut) the Lea River Park (including the Leaway) and TfL's Lea Valley Walk initiative.

18.48 The Lee Valley Regional Park forms an important part of the borough's green grid and water spaces network and has the potential to contribute to creating healthy and liveable communities, particularly where links into this network can be enhanced and complemented with new open space delivered as part of development. The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority is a statutory authority, with responsibilities to either provide directly or work with partners to provide facilities

for sport, recreation, leisure, entertainment, and nature conservation throughout the park. As such, the council will work together with the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and the Environment Agency to support proposals set out in the Tower Hamlets' Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the Park Development Framework where they relate to the borough. We will also work with neighbouring authorities and relevant stakeholders to support the delivery of the Lea River Park (including the Leaway), which connects Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the Lee Valley Regional Park to the Royal Docks and the River Thames through a new continuous walking and cycling route along the River Lea. Further development principles and guidance are included in the Lea River Park Primer and Lea River Park Design Manual.

18.49 Parts 5 and 6 require development proposals located adjacent to the green grid (i.e. within the Green Grid Buffer Zone, (as shown on the Policies Map) – including the Lee Valley Regional Park, Lea River Park, Thames Path National Trail and canal towpaths – to contribute to linking and improving the connectivity of green grid links in accordance with the Green Grid Strategy and the Mayor of London's All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance. This should be supported with adequate signage and facilities for visitors and tourists. Public realm improvements will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may include:

- a. new or enhanced/widened footpaths or cycleways;
- b. road realignment;
- c. street crossings or other safety measures;
- d. cycle parking including space for cycle hire;
- e. external lighting;

- f. landscaping;
- g. tree planting or other urban greening measures;
- h. drinking water fountains;
- i. public conveniences;
- j. electrical connection points for concessions; and
- k. way-finding signage.

18.50 Opportunities should be sought to improve the quality of TfL signed cycle routes, in line with the London Cycle Design Standards (2014) and TfL's New Cycle Route Quality Criteria (2019) and Policy MC2 Part 7 encourages the creation of community allotments, gardens and pocket parks which promote healthier lifestyles and greater social interactions.

### **London Plan policies:**

- G1 Green infrastructure
- G2 London's Green Belt
- G3 Metropolitan Open Land
- G4 Open Space

### **Local Plan policies:**

- DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- DV3 Health impact assessments
- DV5 Developer contributions
- PS1 Design-and Infrastructure-led approach to development
- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm
- PS5 Gender inclusive design
- HC1 Meeting housing needs
- HC10 Housing standards and quality
- Cl1 Supporting community facilities
- CG1 Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate
- MC1 Sustainable travel
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets
- MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing, and construction

### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan, emerging
- All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2012
- Active Design Guidance, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Playing Pitch Assessment, 2017

## Policy BO3 Water spaces

1. Development proposals in, adjacent to, or affecting the borough's water spaces must:
  - a. not result in loss or covering of the water space or harm the openness of the water space, unless it is a water-related or water-dependent use at appropriate locations and of appropriate scale;
  - b. not result in adverse impacts on the existing water spaces network, including navigation, biodiversity, water quality, visual amenity, character and heritage value of the water space, taking into consideration the adjacent land and the amenity of existing surrounding developments;
  - c. not adversely impact other existing active water uses;
  - d. enhance the ecological, biodiversity and aesthetic quality of the water space, responding appropriately to the setting of the adjacent land area, in line with the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan, the Water Framework Directive and the Thames Tidal Masterplan: Tower Hamlets and Newham;
  - e. activate riverbanks and dock edges, and provide improved amenity space, increased opportunities for public access, and use of the water space for water-related uses and sport and recreational activities (where appropriate, and where proposals do not adversely impact the biodiversity, ecology, or health of the water space) in line with the TE2100 riverside strategy approach;
  - f. improve the safety and accessibility of the borough's water spaces, consistent with requirements set out in the Port of London Authority's guidance 'A Safer Riverside'(where appropriate to the waterspace). This should include provision of riparian lifesaving equipment where necessary (such as grab chains, access ladders, and lifebuoys) where appropriate, improved lighting and wayfinding, and managing competing spaces between users;
  - g. respond positively and sensitively to the setting of water space, while respecting and animating water space to improve usability and safety;
  - h. provide suitable setbacks from water space edges to allow maintenance of defences, which mitigate flood risk, emergency access, future upgrades to flood defences and river banks and to allow riverside walkways, canal towpaths and cycle paths for equal access, where appropriate; and
  - i. where relevant, contribute to the restoration of river channels and water spaces through rewilding and re-naturalisation.
  - j. not involve the culverting of a watercourse, development proposals should actively seek to de-culvert and provide better provision of daylight exposure to a waterbody wherever possible, developers should consider opportunities for removal of toe-boarded watercourses. Development proposals within the Thames Policy Area (as shown on the Policies Map) are required to consider the guidance provided within the most up-to-date Thames River Basin Management Plan and the relevant Southeast Marine Plan, where applicable.



2. Development proposals adjacent to and along the borough's water spaces are required to integrate with and enhance the waterside environment, including improving the area's links with the water space, contribute to the delivery of continuous walkways, canal towpaths and cycle paths where appropriate (e.g. completion of the Thames Path), and consider flood defence raising and the management of historic wharves in line with TE2100 riverside strategy approach.
3. Development proposals for eco-moorings will be considered acceptable at suitable locations, and where they do not cause any adverse impact on navigation, biodiversity, microclimate, safety, amenity of surrounding residents and the public enjoyment of the water space.

## Supporting text

18.51 This policy provides details of how the borough's water spaces will be protected and how the various functions they offer are maintained and enhanced.

18.52 Part 1 requires development to demonstrate that it will not result in loss or covering of water space and that it will not compromise the suitability of the water space for water-related uses (as defined in Policy BO2). Further water loss and over-sailing from development will be resisted throughout the borough, particularly at locations that have experienced significant water space loss, such as West India South Dock, West India Middle Dock, West India North Dock, Blackwall Basin, and Poplar Dock in Canary Wharf.

18.53 In line with London Plan policies and guidance, provision of appropriate water space support infrastructure (including but not limited to: transport and essential access infrastructure into and alongside water spaces, boatyards, eco-moorings, jetties and safety equipment) will be supported at suitable locations. Further details on infrastructure for water-related and water-dependent uses are included in Policy BO2. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides information on the current need for some water support infrastructure (e.g. bridges).

18.54 The sense of openness greatly contributes to a person's perception and enjoyment of water spaces. This is of particular importance in a borough like Tower Hamlets where there is a high deficiency of open space. When assessing planning applications, consideration will be given to the water coverage and human experience of the open character of water space in terms of its visibility and visual connections across the water from the surrounding public realm (see part 1(a)).



18.55 Tower Hamlets benefits from its location on the rivers Thames and Lea, and its many basins and canals. The health, navigability, character, and heritage of the borough's water spaces are ongoing function, including their use for social, leisure, economic, and cultural purposes. Development proposals should seek to protect and enhance water networks within the borough, their settings, and the amenity of adjacent developments, and not compromise existing water-based operations or uses (see parts (b) and (c)).

18.56 The ecology and biodiversity of the borough's water networks as well as their appearance and surroundings are crucial to their ongoing health and public enjoyment of these areas.

18.57 Biodiversity Action sets out measures to enhance rivers and waterways, including controlling invasive species, providing vegetation on river walls or on floating rafts, encouraging schemes to improve water quality, and increasing habitat. The Water Framework Directive focuses on ensuring good qualitative and quantitative health of water bodies, including reducing and removing pollution, and ensuring there is enough water to support wildlife at the same time as human needs (see part 1(d)).

18.58 Where a Water Framework Directive assessment is required to undertake works on or adjacent to a watercourse, the developer is required to contact the Environment Agency and provide information to demonstrate that the Water Framework Directive objectives can be met or to otherwise justify the development.

18.59 Public access to and along the borough's water spaces will be improved, particularly where access is currently restricted, including the docks around Canary Wharf (including West India Middle Dock and Blackwall Basin), the river Lea and the river Thames (e.g. the Thames Path) (see Part 1(e)).

18.60 Safety and public use of the borough's water spaces will be improved through development design which provides good pedestrian access, active frontages to improve surveillance and riparian lifesaving equipment, where appropriate. Increased appeal through active frontages will be particularly important for the docks in Canary Wharf as well as areas around Trinity Buoy Wharf, Limehouse Basin and along the river Lea which can have significant potential to attract visitors (see part 1(f)).

18.61 The edges of water space are an extremely important part of the functioning of water space as ecosystems, open space, and transport networks. Development proposals must ensure that such areas are protected and provide setbacks from the edges of the water space as well as contribute to restoration following the Environment Agency's Estuary Edges guidance. How this restoration should be undertaken will need to be considered against the functions of the water space and an appropriate balance will be sought between uses on the water space and access to and interaction with the water space and ecological enhancements in line with the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Setbacks from waterways are also required for flood management purposes and further details outlining their use are provided in Policy CG7. Where setbacks are required they provide an opportunity to increase enjoyment of the waterways and should be designed to look and feel publicly accessible (e.g. through the use of signposting) (see part 1(h)).

18.62 The river Thames provides important additional opportunities to that of other water spaces within the borough, acting as a transport link of strategic and historical importance. Developments in the Thames Policy Area (as identified on the Policies Map) should ensure that their use and design establishes a positive relationship with the river in accordance with the most up-to-date guidance within the

18.63 Thames Policy Area (e.g. Thames Strategy East and Thames River Basin Management Plan) and supplementary planning documents (see Part 2).

18.64 Part 3 promotes the improved public access to and along the borough's water spaces, particularly where it is currently restricted, partially restricted or fragmented (e.g. along the River Thames, the River Lea and the docks around Canary Wharf, including West India

Middle Dock and Blackwall Basin). The Thames Path forms part of the National Trail. We are committed to maintaining the existing National Trail and expanding the Thames Path along the eastern part of the Isle of Dogs to connect it to the Leaway as a publicly accessible continuous route. Developments adjacent to the river Thames should contribute towards the delivery and maintenance of this route. This will be secured by planning obligation. Where the Thames Path cannot be delivered adjacent to the river Thames, due to heritage reasons, we will require the development to contribute towards the signposting, design and maintenance of an alternative route.

18.65 Wharves and terminals with limited accessibility also pose a challenge to finding appropriate routes. It is encouraged that developers consider pragmatic solutions which would allow for safer access around these sites.

18.66 The TE2100 Plan sets out the raising of flood defences by up to 500mm by 2050 and a further 500mm by 2090. Having monitored sea level rise, the Environment Agency has moved the earlier deadline forward by 15 years to accommodate the higher level of rise that has occurred, when compared with what was modelled when the Plan was first produced. Further changes are anticipated as the effects of climate change manifest themselves. It is clear though, that the raising of defences will have significant implications for riparian owners and the environment and development adjacent to rivers. A Riverside Strategy will be developed before 2034 and detail approaches to defence raising, including the defences provided to historic wharfs.

18.67 However, riparian owners are advised that any works on riparian sites and to river defences in advance of the Strategy, need to include clear plans for raising and strengthening defences and ensuring that these do not reduce the amenity value of the riverside environment.

18.68 The council will work together with the Port of London Authority and Canal and River Trust to determine the suitability of moorings (including residential and commercial moorings) on the borough's water spaces. Key considerations in assessing the impact of mooring proposals will include: navigation, water quality, biodiversity, openness and character of the water space and surrounding area, surrounding residential amenity, waste management and air quality as well as the adequate supply of electricity provision. All sites adjacent to waterways should investigate the opportunity to provide residential moorings and should engage with the Canal and River Trust early in the planning process'. The Tower Hamlets Water Space Study identifies some of the locations which may be considered suitable for further development of residential moorings. Development proposals for permanent eco-moorings will be considered acceptable at suitable locations, including Regents Canal, Blackwall Basin, Poplar Dock, Millwall Inner and Outer Docks and the West India South Dock and where they do not cause any adverse impact on navigation.

**London Plan policies:**

- S14 Waterways – strategic role
- S16 Waterways – use and enjoyment
- S17 Protecting and enhancing London's waterways

**Local Plan policies:**

- DV5 Developer contributions
- PS1 Design-and Infrastructure-led approach to development
- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm
- PS5 Gender inclusive design
- CG1 Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate
- CG7 Mitigating flood risk
- CG8 Sustainable drainage
- CG9 Water efficient design
- MC1 Sustainable travel
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets
- MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing, and construction

**Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Water Space Study, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan, emerging
- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan, 2019
- Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan, 2023



## Policy BO4 Biodiversity and access to nature

1. Development proposals must protect and enhance biodiversity and contribute to nature recovery in the borough through:
  - a. protecting and retaining existing habitats and features of biodiversity value. If this is not possible, these features must be replaced within the development, and additional measures must be incorporated to enhance biodiversity, proportionate to the development proposed;
  - b. maximising the provision of 'living building' elements to provide opportunities to create new onsite habitats, including integral nest boxes; and
  - c. demonstrating that the development does not have an adverse impact on open spaces, including watercourses and water bodies and their hydrology.
2. Development proposals for all major development, and minor developments which are not exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain under national guidelines, must deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
  - a. The BNG benchmark is a minimum 2.5 biodiversity unit (BU) per hectare or 30% gain (whichever is higher) in habitat value for wildlife compared with the pre-development baseline, calculated using an appropriate Biodiversity Metric and secured in perpetuity (at least 30 years);
  - b. Minor development that is exempt from mandatory BNG will be

expected to deliver biodiversity enhancement in line with the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, appropriate to the scale of the development.

- c. Where BNG requirements for a 10% minimum gain cannot be met on site, unless the development is exempt from mandatory BNG under national guidance, they will need to be offset via the purchase of offsite biodiversity units, secured through section 106 planning obligation or planning condition.
3. Major development is required to submit an ecology assessment demonstrating biodiversity enhancements that contribute to the objectives of the latest Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the Thames River Basin Management Plan.
4. Development proposals must not negatively impact on any designated European site such as Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation or Ramsar sites. Developments which might have the potential to adversely impact a Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation outside the borough will be required to submit a Habitat Regulations Assessment.
5. Development proposals must avoid harm to biodiversity. In line with London Plan Policy G3 (Biodiversity and access to nature), where it is demonstrated that harm to a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or the population or conservation status of a protected or priority species is unavoidable, and where the benefits of the development proposal clearly outweigh the impacts on biodiversity, the following mitigation hierarchy must be applied to minimise impacts:



- a. avoid damaging the significant ecological features of the site;
  - b. Where avoidance is not possible, proposals must minimise and mitigate the impact to the biodiversity interest by improving the quality or management of the rest of the site; and
  - c. as a last resort for exceptional cases, deliver off-site compensation of better biodiversity value.
6. Planting and landscaping around developments must not include 'potentially invasive non-native species' or plants known to produce nectar that is toxic to bees. Invasive non-native species listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act must be controlled, and eradicated where possible, as part of redevelopment.



## Supporting text

18.6g While Tower Hamlets is a densely built-up urban area, it nevertheless is home to a diverse range of flora, fauna, and different habitats of biodiversity value, including areas of open space, waterways and formally designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). There are two Local Nature Reserves in the borough at Mudchute and Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park.

18.70 Living building elements can enhance biodiversity, both directly through planting and indirectly through providing habitats. They also have flood reduction, climatic and air quality benefits, helping to remove carbon dioxide from the air and reduce temperatures.

18.71 In implementing Part 1(a), consideration will be given to the size, scale, and nature of the development, and whether an appropriate level of provision is proposed. Even minor development, such as rear extensions, have the ability to provide biodiversity measures through features such as living roofs, walls, habitat structure (e.g. bat and bird boxes).

18.72 In implementing Part 1(b), 'living building' elements need to contribute to local biodiversity through providing priority habitats, and/or features for priority species, as identified in the latest Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan. The types of 'living building' techniques we consider appropriate include living roofs, walls, terraces, and other building greening techniques.

18.73 Swift bricks or nest boxes that meet the requirements of the British Standard BS 42021:2022 for nest boxes should also be provided in all new developments for swifts and other small birds at 5m or greater in height to the eaves. Built-in swift bricks are preferred to external boxes



as they are integrated into the building, cannot be removed, provide better temperature control and require less maintenance. Unless circumstances make the swift brick or similar product impractical, this system should be chosen over external nest boxes. For minor developments, the minimum number of swift boxes required on residential development is three, or two per residential unit, whichever is greater (noting it is not necessary that two boxes are placed on each unit, but that the equivalent number should be applied across the development). For major developments specific requirements will be recommended by the ecology advisor. The requirement will be secured by attaching a condition to planning consents.

18.74 'Living building' elements should also be considered alongside the sustainable urban drainage system requirements outlined in Policy CG8, and green grid requirements outlined in Policies BO1 and BO2. Providing living building elements is considered particularly beneficial in areas of sub-standard air quality or in areas at particular risk of experiencing the urban heat island effect, or the phenomenon of urban areas generating their own microclimates resulting in significantly higher temperatures than surrounding rural areas. The risk of experiencing the urban heat-island effect should be considered over the lifetime of the development. Details of ongoing maintenance of the 'living building' elements will also be required.

18.75 Areas at particular risk of experiencing the urban heat island effect include areas of deficiency of access to nature, areas of high density development with clusters of tall buildings, (including developments within identified Tall Building Zones (see Policy PS2)), and areas experiencing high levels of pollution. This includes developments within identified areas of sub-standard air quality (as shown on the Policies Map and Figure 8).

18.76 Part 1(c) requires development to demonstrate that they will not have a negative impact on open or water spaces. This is particularly applicable to tall buildings, as the overshadowing and light spill effects of tall buildings can have negative impacts on ecosystems in both blue and green spaces, and in many cases it is preferable to set taller buildings back from the edge of these spaces and step heights down as developments approach the water. Tall buildings can also create problems with bird strike, which is a particular risk on bird migration or commuting routes such as along the river Thames and river Lea, and between the Thames and other water bodies, and the design

process should consider options for reducing this risk. However, tall buildings also have the potential to have a unique positive impact on some elements of biodiversity – for example, as the site of nest boxes for peregrine falcons, who prefer to nest on taller buildings. Further examples of biodiversity features that can be included in tall buildings can be found in the High Density Living SPD.

18.77 Part 2 implements the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) approach to development, where the biodiversity on the site and its surroundings are improved relative to the pre-development baseline. Where biodiversity is reduced as a result of development, the enhancements to biodiversity provided through the development should provide greater overall biodiversity value than that lost. Given the nature of development sites in the borough, many are likely to have very low baseline levels of biodiversity. To ensure that this does not result in an excessively low biodiversity increase, developments must deliver a minimum of 2.5 biodiversity unit (BU) per hectare or 30% gain (whichever is higher) in habitat value for wildlife, as measured against the pre-development biodiversity baseline. BNG must be calculated using an appropriate Biodiversity Metric. This applies to all major development proposals, and minor developments which are not exempt under national guidelines. Minor developments that are exempt from mandatory BNG are still expected to deliver biodiversity enhancement in line with the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, appropriate to the scale of the development, but need not use the Defra Biodiversity Metric. Further guidance can be found in the Mayor of London's Biodiversity Net Gain SPG. It should be noted that simply delivering the required BNG is not sufficient justification for developers to argue for an 'acceptable' loss of good quality habitat.



18.78 As part of major development proposals, BNG commitments will be secured and monitored by planning obligation or condition.

18.79 The policy applies to all major development proposals and most minor proposals, with only the following development being exempt from mandatory BNG, consistent with national guidance:

- a. for minor development proposals only, development impacting habitat of an area below a 'de minimis' threshold of 25 metres squared, or 5m for linear habitats such as hedgerows and watercourses;
- b. householder applications;
- c. BNG sites (where habitats are being enhanced for wildlife); and
- d. small scale self-build and custom housebuilding.

18.80 While change of use applications are not specifically exempt, the majority of types of change of use applications will be exempt through the de minimis habitat exemption.

18.81 The latest Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan gives details of priority habitats and/or features for priority species (see parts 1 and 2). Features of biodiversity or ecological value include:

- a. linear corridors, such as watercourses, hedgerows and buffer zones;
- b. veteran trees;
- c. old hedges; and
- d. habitats or species identified as local, London or national priorities, and features which might support such species.



18.82 Where geographically relevant, the Thames River Basin Management Plan objectives should also be incorporated.

18.83 Where a development proposal is located within the Canal & River Trust's statutory consultee notified area, (especially within 10m of the waterway), the developer is encouraged to undertake pre-application discussions with the Canal & River Trust to ensure that appropriate BNG requirements and opportunities are discussed.

18.84 Any development in proximity to a watercourse (10m, or 5m for ditch) is required to achieve 10% uplift in watercourse units.



Developments whose Red Line Boundary is within 10m of a watercourse must carry out the Watercourse Unit Module element of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, with a minimum of 10% net gain in watercourse units gained.

18.85 Part 3 requires major developments to submit an ecology assessment. The ecology assessment should include: (a) information assessing the characteristics and situation of the site, and (b) details on how the proposals will protect or replace, and enhance existing biodiversity on the proposed site, including measures for wildlife habitats and features aimed at particular species.

18.86 Applications should also detail how recommendations are being included in the development proposals. Should the ecology assessment indicate an adverse impact on the biodiversity interest of the site, this will be managed using the hierarchical approach set out in part 5. Should compensation be sought, it would be at the level required to adequately offset the impact on the SINC or protected/priority species, through the provision of an alternative site or habitat.

18.87 Part 4 seeks to protect the integrity of any European or nationally designated site of nature conservation importance. There are no such sites within Tower Hamlets, but development may have the potential to adversely impact sites beyond its boundary – such as the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation and the Lea Valley Special Protection Area – through air pollution, water abstraction and/or increased visitor pressure. Where the application is of such a scale, location, or nature as to potentially have such an effect on a European site, applicants should seek advice from Natural England as to whether a Habitat Regulations Assessment would be required. The assessment will need to demonstrate that the development will not adversely impact on the integrity of the European site. Proposals will be resisted where they will

have significant adverse impact on European sites.

18.88 Part 5 seeks to protect locally designated SINCs and important species. The presence of protected species is a material planning consideration where a development is likely to result in harm to a habitat or species. Priority species are those identified in the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan, Species of Conservation Concern in London and Species of Principal Importance in England, as identified under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act. Developers should ensure that they comply with regulations requiring time-restricted ground works due to the time periods of specific protected species activity.

18.89 Under part 6, 'potentially invasive non-native species' includes plants listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and plants identified as species of concern by the London Invasive Species Initiative and those listed as 'species of special UK concern' within (IAS) (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019. Some plants that are regularly used in horticulture produce nectar that is toxic to bees. These include several non-native species of lime trees. These species should not be included in the landscaping of development. In addition, planting schemes should be selected according to their suitability for local growing conditions (soil, temperature ranges, rainfall, periods of inundation, sunlight and shade), their ability to attract wildlife (e.g. nectar rich planting) and to conserve water. Planting along river corridors should only include native species. This will need to be evidenced in the ecology statement.

## **London Plan policies:**

- G6 Biodiversity and access to nature
- G7 Trees and woodlands

## **Local Plan policies:**

- CG1 Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate
- CG7 Managing flood risk
- CG8 Sustainable drainage
- CG10 Air quality

## **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan, emerging
- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan, 2019
- All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2012
- London Plan Guidance – Urban Greening Factor, 2023
- Review of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Tower Hamlets, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Study, 2023

## Policy BO5 Urban greening

1. The council will expect development proposals to maximise opportunities for urban greening. This includes the integration of high-quality and species diverse landscaping, street trees, wildlife habitat, green roofs and walls, and sustainable drainage systems. They must be designed with consideration given to the site context and the wider landscape setting as well as the layout, design, construction and long-term management of buildings and spaces.
2. Development proposals are required to meet the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) target set out in the London Plan of 0.4 for residential development or 0.3 for non-residential development, based on the factors set out in this policy.
3. The urban greening factors are as follows:

**Table 12: Urban Greening Factors**

Surface cover type	Factor
Semi-natural vegetation (e.g., trees, woodland, species-rich grassland) maintained or established on site.	1
Wetland or open water (semi-natural; not chlorinated) maintained or established on site.	1
Native wetland vegetation established in an area of adjacent river or canal if appropriate and agreed with the Canal & River Trust which previously lacked vegetation.	1
Intensive green roof or vegetation over structure. Substrate minimum settled depth of 150mm.	0.8
Standard trees planted in connected tree pits with a minimum soil volume equivalent to at least two thirds of the projected canopy area for the mature tree.	0.8
Mixed native hedges (line of mature shrubs, two shrubs wide and comprised of at least five native shrub species).	0.8
Extensive green roof with substrate of minimum settled depth of 80mm (or 60mm beneath vegetation blanket) that meets the requirements of GRO code 2014.	0.7
Flower-rich perennial planting.	0.7

Surface cover type	Factor
Rain gardens and other vegetated sustainable drainage elements.	0.7
Standard trees planted in pits with soil volumes less than two thirds of the projected canopy area of the mature tree.	0.6
Green wall – modular system or climbers rooted in soil.	0.6
Allotment gardens or similar community or residential growing spaces.	0.6
Shrub planting (including hedges that don't meet the definition of native mixed hedges)	0.5
Groundcover planting.	0.5
Amenity grassland (species-poor, regularly mown lawn).	0.4
Extensive green roof of sedum mat or other lightweight systems that do not meet GRO code 2014.	0.3
Water features (chlorinated) or unplanted detention basins.	0.2
Permeable paving.	0.1
Sealed surfaces (e.g., concrete, asphalt, waterproofing, stone).	0

4. Development proposals must be consistent with the provisions of the Tree Management Plan 2020-2025 including protecting and increasing the provision of trees through:

- a. protecting all trees, including street trees;
- b. incorporating native trees, wherever possible; and
- c. providing replacement trees, including street trees, where the loss of or impact on trees in a development is considered acceptable.

5. Development proposals involving the regeneration of existing council property – including housing stock, estates, public realm, and place improvements – must seek to maximise urban greening, whether through tree planting, green roofs, or any other measures that will enhance the biodiversity and greening of existing developments.



## Supporting text

18.90 Urban greening is a term used to describe a wide range of measures that can be incorporated into buildings and spaces to increase green cover in the borough. These measures include but are not limited to: tree planting, naturalised biodiverse landscaping, green roofs and walls, hedges, climbers, plants for pollinators, de-paving, rain gardens and sustainable drainage systems using natural or semi-natural features. Urban greening can provide multifunctional benefits such as for climate change resilience, amenity including air quality, nature conservation and local character (see part 1).

18.91 Part 2 is based on Policy G5 of the London Plan, which sets the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) requirement for major developments.

18.92 The UGF is a model used to provide a baseline for the amount of green cover that development will be expected to achieve, taking into account various site development factors. In addition to setting minimum UGF requirements, the London Plan allows boroughs to develop a tailored approach to the factors set out in that policy to encourage amenity space, enhance biodiversity, address the urban heat island effect, and provide sustainable storm water drainage.

18.93 The London Plan explains that the urban greening factor for a proposed development is calculated using the formula:  $(\text{Factor A} \times \text{Area}) + (\text{Factor B} \times \text{Area}) + (\text{Factor C, D, etc} \times \text{Area}) / \text{Total Site Area}$

18.94 A site of 1,000sqm total area which provides 600sqm of extensive green roof, 250sqm of hard sealed car parking, 100sqm of open water, and 50sqm of amenity grassland would score as follows:  $(0.7 \times 600) + (0 \times 250) + (1 \times 100) + (0.4 \times 50) / 1000 = 0.54$ . This would exceed the target score of 0.4 and therefore meet the requirements of the policy, and provide a number of benefits to the health and well-being of residents



18.95 Part 3 sets out our approach to the urban greening factor in the borough. Unlike the London Plan policy, this is intended to be applied to developments of all sizes, and the non-residential approach does not exclude B2 and B8 uses. This approach is justified on the basis of the urgency of the climate crisis, its effects on biodiversity and flood risk, the presence of a large area of deficiency of access to nature in parts of the borough, and the importance of providing additional green spaces throughout the borough.

18.96 Table 12 sets out the factors to be used in calculating the urban greening factor score for developments. This table is based on table 8.2 of the London Plan, but with the following changes:

- Addition of native wetland vegetation along rivers and canals, to support the rehabilitation and rewilding of the Borough's water spaces.
- Addition of allotments and growing spaces, to encourage delivery of these kinds of spaces on new developments. These spaces do not provide as high a biodiversity benefit as wetland habitat creation but provide similar benefits to groundcover planting with additional social and community benefits, and have therefore been given a slightly higher factor than groundcover planting. These spaces should ideally be located on ground level, but rooftop growing spaces may also be appropriate where they are made widely accessible to residents and the surrounding community.
- Hedges have been separated into mixed native hedges, and other kinds of shrubbery planting. The former are felt to provide a much higher biodiversity benefit than the latter, and this has been reflected in the scoring.

18.97 Due to the environmental importance of trees, at least a 'one for-one' replacement rate is required for any trees affected by a development (see part 3). Where development proposals can demonstrate that these cannot be incorporated on site, we will consider the provision of a replacement tree on a suitable site, as close to the development as possible, subject to investigation and submission of details of any below ground utilities, to establish tree planting is appropriate and practical in that location. We will also expect development proposals to incorporate additional trees, wherever possible. Their location must be carefully considered to ensure there is no adverse impact on overshadowing, wind effects, air quality, ecology, or flood risk. Where trees are proposed along the river corridor, their positioning must be carefully considered to ensure there are no adverse impacts on ecology or flood risk. A buffer of at least five metres is

suggested between the bank and tree. We will take a 'right tree for the right site' approach which takes account of historic context, availability of space, soil conditions, wildlife value, potential improvements to air and soil quality, provision of shade and reducing the effects of and adapting to climate change. This will need to be evidenced in the ecology assessment.

18.98 Part 5 emphasises the need for urban greening measures to improve the overall quality of the public realm within the borough, particularly in regeneration projects where the ability to introduce additional green open space may be limited.

### **London Plan policies:**

- G5 Urban Greening
- G6 Biodiversity and access to nature
- G7 Trees and woodlands

### **Local Plan policies:**

- CG1 Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate
- CG7 Managing flood risk
- CG8 Sustainable drainage
- CG10 Air quality

### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan, emerging
- All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2012

## Policy BO6 Play and recreation spaces

1. Development proposals must provide or help to ensure that people of all ages and abilities have access to a wide range of opportunities for sports, recreation, and play. This will be achieved through:
  - a. protecting existing play, informal recreation, and sporting facilities. The loss of play and informal recreation facilities will be resisted unless replacement space of equivalent size, quality of amenity, and functionality is provided either onsite or in the local neighbourhood, with unrestricted public access, and
  - b. maximising opportunities to deliver new and improved play and informal recreation facilities, along with public realm enhancements, so that sports and recreation facilities and play spaces can be reached safely and easily throughout the borough.
  - c. adapting play space to be accessible for those with disabilities through providing areas which contain accessible facilities such as the provision of equipment adapted for children with additional needs, quiet seating areas and visual aids.
2. New play and informal recreation facilities should be designed to meet the needs of Tower Hamlets' population, be inclusive, accessible, and safe, through:
  - a. co-design with local adults, children and young people, parents, and carers on the design of new provision early on in the development of an application; and
  - b. designing play and informal recreation facilities which are exciting and engaging for all abilities and ages. Facilities should be well-designed, secure, and free to use. They should provide for a range of interests and address barriers to play by tackling issues of inclusion and equity; and reduce the harm caused by poor air quality through the favourable location of play and informal recreation facilities to minimise exposure to pollutants and careful layout and choice of soft landscaping.
  - c. ensuring play space is accessible from surrounding all public spaces; enabling a range of users.
  - d. providing play public space nearby existing community amenities, not solely existing park spaces such as GP surgeries, community centres and areas which have a high deficiency of play space.
3. The net-loss of play space will not be acceptable as development proposals will instead need to redevelop these spaces into higher value play spaces. This would include, but would not be limited to; enhancing the accessibility and facilities available to the public. Where construction requires the redevelopment of an existing play space, a temporary play space of the same dimensions and quality will need to be provided within the vicinity of the development site until the improved play space is completed.

## Supporting text

18.99 Part 1 recognises that play space is essential for the cognitive and physical development of children and young people and their ongoing health and well-being. Space for recreation is also essential for people of all ages and supports improved physical and mental health and well-being and provides spaces for residents to meet and interact socially, particularly with those outside of their existing social spheres.

18.100 It is important that play space is not restricted to parks but is integrated into a range of public spaces. This can help enable liminal spaces to become areas where people can play and rest, enabling good design. This will allow for the environment to become more engaging and connected to existing public space facilities.

18.101 Part 1(a) resists the loss of existing play, recreation, and sporting facilities on the basis that the borough's open space and indoor recreation and sports facilities face pressure from the borough's increasing population. For the purposes of this policy, the local neighbourhood is defined as an area within 15-minute walking distance (1km) using existing pedestrian routes.

18.102 The Play Space Strategy, based on findings from the Tower Hamlets Child Play Space Audit (2024), sets out an indicator of where existing play spaces need to be protected and enhanced throughout the borough due to the overall deficiency of play space.

18.103 It is encouraged that high value play spaces are identified and developed in areas which are deficient in play space as indicated in the Play Space Audit. Developers will be required to ensure play space is under review and will be monitored by the consent and delivery of new high-value play spaces through planning applications.

18.104 Development proposals must consider the existing play space identified within the most recent play space audit to consult and understand what is required on the site. The temporary provision and re-provision of high value play space would then be delivered through a Construction Management Plan.

18.105 Poor access, or perceptions of poor access can be a major factor limiting use of play and informal recreation spaces and formal sports facilities. Where development proposals include the provision of new play and informal recreation spaces and sports facilities, these should be designed to be welcoming to all communities in the borough, with clear routes to the spaces and facilities and wayfinding or signage from the nearest major route where necessary. Where a development proposal is in close proximity to an existing play or informal recreation space or sports facility, it should provide public realm enhancements that improve the routes to the space or facility, particularly where it is a larger space or facility that is likely to draw users from the wider neighbourhood.

18.106 Play and recreation spaces and facilities should serve all members of the Tower Hamlets community and should be genuinely inclusive.

18.107 To achieve this, development proposals are encouraged to engage in co-design with local residents, with a particular emphasis on engaging children and young people in the design process. This should occur as early in the design process as possible to ensure that the co-design is meaningful and can influence the layout of other elements of the development proposal (see part 2(a)).

18.108 Part 2(b) provides key design criteria for play and informal recreation facilities. Play spaces should be positioned at least 50m



away from highly used roads to ensure vulnerable residents that are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes, due to exposure to air pollution and high ambient noise level sources, are not impacted when playing. More information and guidance can be found in the Mayor of London's Play and Informal Recreation SPG. New development should also be consistent with Play England Design Principles.

**London Plan policies:**

- S4 Play and informal recreation
- S5 Sports and recreation facilities

**Local Plan policies:**

- CG10 Air quality
- HC10 Housing standards and quality
- PS3 Securing design quality
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm
- PS5 Gender inclusive design
- MC2 Active travel and healthy streets

**Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy, 2017
- Active Design Guidance, 2023
- Tower Hamlets Playing Pitch Assessment, 2017
- Tower Hamlets Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2023

## Policy BO7 Food growing

1. The council will seek to protect existing allotments and community gardens and maximise the provision of new food growing spaces to support sustainable food growing locally, and to enhance opportunities for leisure, social interaction, improved physical and mental health, and education.
2. Major development proposals that include housing, and development proposals for community facilities, will be encouraged to include and equip space for community gardening and food growing. Where such provision exists and a site is to be redeveloped, development proposals will not be supported unless the existing provision is retained or re-provided, and if necessary, enhanced (i.e., increased in size and/or improved in quality).
3. Where it does not conflict with other policy objectives, land use priorities or exceed the Soil Guideline Values set by the Environment Agency, the council will support the use of land and buildings as new allotments for local food growing spaces and production including:
  - a. the temporary use of vacant or derelict land; and
  - b. the use of incidental open space on housing estates and other open space areas.

## Supporting text

18.109 Food growing can have a positive impact on physical and mental health and well-being, creating opportunities for social interaction and cross-cultural engagement, as well as providing a source of fresh and low-cost food for local communities. In recognition of these positive impacts, part 1 seeks to ensure that all lawful existing allotments and community gardens are retained and enhanced where possible.

18.110 Given the high level of demand for existing allotments and community gardens and the increased pressure that new development is placing on all such facilities, part 2 encourages development proposals for community facilities and major residential developments to provide and properly equip space within their sites for community gardening and food growing. Any new allotment space should be accessible and inclusive and should be considered in the context of the wider public realm. Maximising the reuse of rainwater for watering and the provision of watering points should be considered when providing new facilities.

18.111 Allotments and community gardens are good for community activities and should be developed with accessibility in mind, considering adequate space provision for wheelchair access and wayfinding.

18.112 Vacant sites and incidental open spaces or lawn spaces within housing estates and elsewhere in the borough have the potential to be used for community gardening and food growing with relatively minimal investment. Part 3 provides support for such uses.

18.113 There is potential for land to contain contaminated soil with harmful substances such as heavy metals and asbestos. Prior to the use of a site for food growing, a land contamination assessment will need to be undertaken to ensure that the soil does not exceed the Soil Guideline Values and would not pose an immediate risk to public health. This would be undertaken prior to a development proposals approval or as a condition.

**London Plan policies:**

- G8 Food growing

**Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy, 2017

## 19. Movement and connectivity

MC1 – Sustainable travel

MC2 – Active travel and healthy streets

MC3 – Impacts on the transport network

MC4 – Parking and permit-free

MC5 – Sustainable delivery, servicing and construction



### Introduction

19.1 This chapter focusses on how residents and visitors travel across the borough, considering how easy, accessible, and safe it is to walk, wheel, cycle, and take public transport in Tower Hamlets. This chapter also sets out to address how the borough can support those in the community who depend on private vehicles for work or mobility in accordance with the Mayor's commitments outlined in the 'Cleaner and greener future for Tower Hamlets' document (2023).

19.2 Tower Hamlets is a well-connected borough, with access to the London Underground, Docklands Light Railway, National Rail connections and an extensive bus network. There has been significant increase in public transport infrastructure to accommodate growth, most recently including the opening of the Elizabeth Line at Whitechapel and Canary Wharf stations. The borough has good levels of sustainable travel; in 2023, Tower Hamlets was ranked 7th out of all London Boroughs on the Healthy Streets Scorecard, and improvements to walking and cycling connections means that over 80% of trips last year were by sustainable modes (public transport, walking, and cycling). However, there are some areas of the borough which are less well served by public transport, particularly towards the east of the borough.

19.3 Planned growth in new homes and jobs, coupled with London's overall growth, will significantly increase resident, commuter, and freight movement within and through the borough. This will create further pressure on the road and wider public transport network which is already at or close to saturation in some parts of the borough at peak times, as well as adversely affect air quality and the natural environment.



19.4 Many areas of the borough face significant issues with traffic and congestion. The major highway connections, particularly the A11, A12 and A13 trunk roads carry large numbers of motor vehicles through the borough, which results in areas of high air pollution. This is linked to lower-than-average life expectancies for residents, high levels of asthma and reduced lung capacity in children.

19.5 Furthermore, it is estimated that nearly a quarter of borough residents do not get the recommended minimum amounts of physical activity levels to support health and well-being. The health implications of physical inactivity are also an important local issue, which the promotion of active travel can help to address.

19.6 This Plan seeks to facilitate change to increase healthy and sustainable travel by supporting the development of a healthy, safe, and inclusive transport network across Tower Hamlets that incentivises a modal shift to walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport. This will reduce traffic congestion and pressure on the public transport network, while contributing to a cleaner and healthier environment for borough residents and visitors.

19.7 This section contains the following policies:

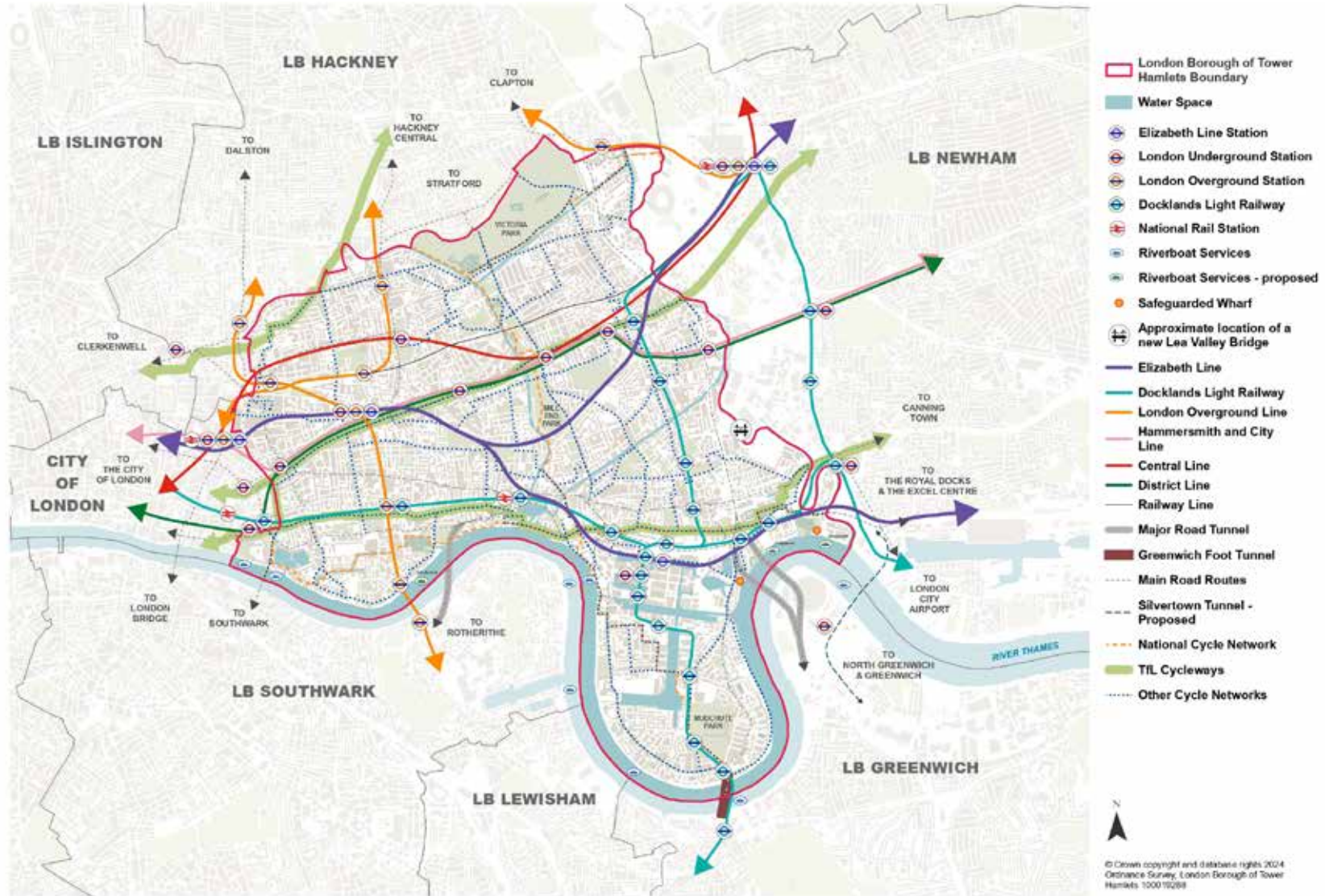
- MC 1: Sustainable travel
- MC 2: Active travel and healthy streets
- MC 3: Impacts on the transport network
- MC4: Parking and permit-free
- MC5: Sustainable delivery, servicing, and construction



## Policy MC1 Sustainable travel

1. The council will promote the development of a healthy, safe, and environmentally friendly transport system that is inclusive, accessible, and affordable for all who live, work, study in, and visit the borough, in accordance with the latest guidance. Development proposals will therefore be expected to:
  - a. ensure the primary mode of travel for short trips in the borough is focused on active travel modes, enabling more people to walk and cycle, in line with 15-minute city principles, by utilising a Healthy Streets Approach in the design and management of the development;
  - b. improve access to public transport, including water transport, to reduce reliance on private vehicles;
  - c. be integrated effectively alongside public transport, walking, wheeling, and cycling routes to maximise ease of access to sustainable travel modes in line with the sustainable mode hierarchy, reduce severance and increase permeability across the borough;
  - d. be focused within areas with high levels of public transport accessibility and the town centre hierarchy, in respect of developments generating significant levels of trips; and,
  - e. not adversely impact the capacity, quality, accessibility, and safety of the transport network in the borough.
2. Where appropriate, development must support and safeguard land for transport and freight infrastructure enhancements to meet the demands arising from future growth, including improvement to capacity, connectivity, quality, and interchanges across the network.
3. The council will also support applications for new standalone micro-consolidation centres within the borough in appropriate locations.

Figure 20: Connectivity map





## Supporting text

19.8 To address the significant issues surrounding highway congestion, poor air quality and capacity constraints across the public transport network, a number of strategic and local transport improvements are underway, planned, or have been recently delivered across Tower Hamlets. However, further infrastructure investment will be required to accommodate the predicted population and employment growth, and in some locations development could be significantly hindered without appropriate enhancements to the transport network. There is a particular need to invest in active, efficient, and sustainable transport infrastructure, to make the most efficient use of space in a rapidly growing borough, and ensure that those who are still required to drive for employment, caring, or family reasons are able to do so.

19.9 Tower Hamlets has a low car ownership ratio with only 33.6 % of households owning one or more cars, compared to 57.9% across Greater London. Before the pandemic, data indicated that residents preferred sustainable transport modes to travel to work, such as public transport (60%), walking or cycling (26%), with commuting by car at 12%, which was lower than the London average, at 30%. While travel-to-work patterns have shifted dramatically following the COVID-19 Pandemic, recent demand patterns indicate that weekday bus demand has recovered to 82% and underground to 80% of pre-pandemic levels. This reinforces the need for developers to prioritise sustainable travel in the design and delivery of their schemes, particularly walking, cycling and public transport, helping to relieve congestion, reduce air pollution and improve journey times.

19.10 This policy seeks to manage growth to ensure it does not increase traffic congestion and crowding on public transport due to



trip generation from developments and through-trips. The location of development proposals close to services and amenities, integration with the transport network, prioritising the most sustainable forms of travel, and facilitating and enabling behaviour towards the use of public transport and active forms of travel are crucial factors in accommodating the predicted population and economic changes over the plan period. Development proposals must accord with the latest guidance and policy approach set out in the London Plan, The Mayor of London's Transport Strategy, the Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy (2019) and seek to achieve the targets of the most recent Local Implementation Plan (LIP).

19.11 Part 1(a) seeks to ensure that development proposals support walking and cycling as a primary means of travel in line with the London Plan (2021) Healthy Street Approach. Development should incorporate and improve pedestrian and cycling environment that is safe, accessible, and permeable both within the borough and into neighbouring boroughs. It also identifies the necessity to link development to the borough's pedestrian networks, such as the Green Grid network and Thames Path, and strategic cycling networks, and improve access to river transport where possible, in accordance with the borough's Transport Strategy (2019).

19.12 Part 1(c) ensures that development proposals support the use of, and connect to, public transport, cycling and walking facilities that surround the site. The design, management, and operation of a development should encourage its users to travel in a sustainable manner. It should also be permeable and provide links to existing or planned infrastructure as well as relevant on-site infrastructure, such as bicycle storage, workplace showers and changing facilities.

19.13 Part 1(d) identifies the need for development proposals to be located in an area appropriate to the number trips it generates. The scale of development must reflect the level of public transport available. Transport for London (TfL) has mapped the Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL) across the whole of London; the PTAL toolkit is a measure of accessibility to the public transport network, taking into account walk access times and service availability. Areas are graded on a scale between 0 and 6b, with a score of 0 is very poor access to public transport, and 6b is excellent access to public transport. In Tower Hamlets, ratings range from highly accessible areas – such as Canary Wharf, Whitechapel, Bethnal Green, Bow and Mile End - to areas with lower levels of public transport accessibility, including parts of the Lower

Lea Valley. It should be noted that PTAL values are regularly updated, and the latest values should be used to assess accessibility levels.

19.14 The scale of development should also have regard to the town centre hierarchy, whereby development densities should consider the availability of nearby shops, services, and amenities, thereby reducing the need to travel.

19.15 Part 1(e) seeks to ensure that development proposals do not have a detrimental impact to the safety and efficient operations of existing transport networks. In particular, development proposals must ensure consideration of:

- the safety of the highway user and/or the ability of public transport providers to safely operate services which includes consideration of adequate driver welfare facilities and bus stands;
- the demand on the borough's transport networks beyond operational limits and/or capacity;
- the potential reduction in the quality of stations, stops, or services; or
- restrictions on access to the same services.

19.16 Development proposals are expected to be well-integrated with the public transport network and contribute to its efficient running and service improvements. Developers should ensure they engage early with relevant bodies (e.g. Transport for London) to establish the likely impacts and/or appropriate mitigation measures towards public transport to be funded through developer contributions in accordance with Policy DV1.

19.17 Part 2 identifies the role of development proposals in supporting improvements and enhancements to the borough's transport and freight infrastructure (including safeguarded wharves and consolidation



centres). Applicants should work with the council to support planned and future transport initiatives that underpin new growth; any development that adversely affects or planned infrastructure improvements will not be supported.

19.18 Where infrastructure enhancements will be required to meet the demands arising from future growth, the council will work in partnership with neighbouring boroughs, Transport for London and other agencies (e.g. Highways England) to understand and address the future transport needs of the borough and cross-boundary transport needs.

19.19 The list below sets out a number of planned interventions that are required to support the borough's transport network.

- New pedestrian and cycle networks, by reducing severance of major arterial roads, improving cross-river and other waterways connections, and improving connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists;
- New cycle infrastructure, including Cycleway routes and the Mayor of London's cycle hire network;
- Enhancements to the bus network to South-East London facilitated by the Silvertown Tunnel (2025), including new route SL4 Grove Park – Canary Wharf, which will form part of the emerging Superloop London orbital bus network;
- Improvements to DLR network capacity, station improvements (including improving step-free access and improved modal interchange) and other rail network improvements; and
- Improved river services and potential new piers at Wapping, Canary Wharf East and Trinity Buoy Wharf and Blackwall Reach.
- North South Route from Hackney Wick Station, across the Hertford Union Canal via the new Roach Point Bridge, to Fish Island.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> As identified in the LLDC Local Plan and the Hackney Wick Fish Island SPD

19.20 In addition, as set out in the Lower Lea Valley Connection and Movement Study, development proposals in the Leaside Valley area to the east of the borough are expected to contribute to the delivery of the following priority interventions to improve walking and cycling connections:

- High-quality cycle provision along the B140 (Devas Street and Devons Road), including potentially through removal or relocation of on-street parking.
- Junction re-design at Campbell Road, Violet Road and Devons Road to replace roundabouts with T-junctions, remove guard rails, and relocate pedestrian crossings closer to desire lines.
- Signalise junction of Devas Street, A12, and Twelvetrees Crescent, and open up east-west walking and cycling movement across the A12 at this location.
- High-quality cycle provision along Violet Road, Morris Road and Chrisp Street, including potentially through removal or relocation of on-street parking.
- Creation of an east-west walking and cycling 'spine' from the River Lea to Langdon Park DLR Station by delivering high-quality cycle provision and improved footways along Lochnagar Street, Zetland Street, St Leonard's Road, and Langdon Park. Closure of the slip road from the A12 onto Teviot Street, to allow a wide footway and easier north-south movement.
- Creation of an east-west walking and cycling 'spine' between Abbott Road and Chrisp Street Market by delivering dedicated cycling provision and continuous footway crossings along Blair Street and Brownfield Street. This should include environmental improvements to the subway crossing at Balfron Tower, a new crossing between

the top of Abbots Road and Jolly's Green, and aligning the Chrisp Street crossing with Brownfield Street and converting it to a 'toucan' crossing.

- Traffic calming on Abbott Road, including high-quality cycling provision and continuous footway crossings. Upgraded, 'toucan'-style crossings should be provided at the junctions with Aberfeldy Street, Dee Street, and Blair Street.
- Remodeling of Leamouth Junction for safe cycle and pedestrian movement, including introduction of high-quality cycling provision on the roundabout and on Leamouth Road.

19.21 These interventions should be delivered through funding mechanisms including S106 agreements, CIL payments, and other sources of funding.

19.22 Further interventions that the council will support include ensuring partnership with the London Borough of Newham and developers on relevant sites, to deliver up to five new crossings of the River Lea, and one additional bridge entirely within Tower Hamlets. Where relevant, development proposals on the Tower Hamlets side of the river will be expected to safeguard land to contribute towards the delivery of:

- Lochnagar Bridge, from Lochnagar Street to Canning Town Riverside
- Poplar Reach Bridge, from the north of the Leven Road site to Cody Dock
- Mayer Parry Bridge, from the south of the Leven Road site to Canning Town Riverside
- Leamouth Crossing, from Orchard Place to the Limmo Peninsula
- Trinity Buoy Wharf to Thames Wharf Bridge
- A13 walkway, from the Blackwall Trading Estate, under the A13, to the Leamouth Depot site

19.23 In addition to safeguarding land, that the layout and design of development proposal on or adjacent to these crossings responds to these new connections with active and viable routes that are safe and welcoming for all users.

19.24 These lists are not exhaustive, and new interventions may arise from other transport strategies and assessments alongside regional policies, such as the emerging Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Development Plan. Development may also be required to contribute financially towards new transport infrastructure and improvements in accordance with Policy DV5.

#### **London Plan policies:**

- S115 Water transport
- T1 Strategic approach to transport
- T2 Healthy Streets
- T9 Funding transport infrastructure through planning

#### **Local Plan policies:**

- CG9 Air quality
- DV1 Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets
- DV5 Developer contributions

#### **Evidence base:**

- Mayor's Transport Strategy
- Strategic Transport Assessment, 2016
- Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy, 2019-2041
- Lower Lea Valley Connection and Movement Study, 2020
- East of the Borough AAP Transport Report, 2020

## Policy MC2 Active travel and healthy streets

1. All development proposals that involve changes to streets should implement the Healthy Streets Approach.
2. Development proposals must demonstrate how they have applied the London Plan Healthy Streets Approach in the design process. This will be achieved by requiring:
  - a. all major development proposals to submit a Healthy Streets Assessment as part of the transport assessment; and
  - b. positive engagement with the Healthy Streets Approach to deliver public realm and other improvements that support walking, wheeling, cycling, and the use of public transport.
3. Development proposals must be designed to maximise the contribution of the public realm to encourage and enable active travel modes by:
  - a. safeguarding, maintaining, and enhancing the Borough's network of walking routes and cycleways, including the Thames Path and the Green Grid Network;
  - b. providing unobstructed footway widths of at least 2 metres, or as calculated using the TfL Pedestrian Comfort Level tool, whichever is greater;
  - c. ensuring contiguously permeable public realm by foot, wheeling and cycle, and connect to local walking and cycling networks as well as public transport;
  - d. providing legible routes for walking, wheeling, and cycling to and within sites, ensure signage, street signs and place names are easy to read; where appropriate contributing to the 'Legible London' programme;
- e. ensuring an inclusive-by-design approach, with consideration for the accessibility and safety of all users, giving particular attention improving accessibility of streets for older users and users with disabilities, and consider the safety and comfort in the public realm of women, girls, and gender diverse people, by:
  - i. having well-maintained streets which are free from clutter and meet minimum width requirements (above);
  - ii. ensuring good sight lines and visibility with plenty of well-lit entrances and exits;
  - iii. maximising opportunities for passive surveillance by using ground floor units to create active frontages, where feasible;
  - iv. considering the needs of both daytime and night-time uses; quieter daytime routes that favour access to green spaces and avoid busy roads, and night-time routes that pass by transport hubs and busier pedestrian ways; and
  - v. providing segregated routes for pedestrians and cyclists where possible, and shared use routes in streets with high pedestrian or cyclist flows should be avoided.
- f. supporting the delivery of the Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy (2019) and the Mayor of London's Cycling Action Plan 2 (2023), by:
  - i. contributing to the expansion of the strategic cycle network, providing protected cycle lanes where required; and

- ii. providing high-quality long- and short-term cycle parking within new developments that is fit-for-purpose, secure, well-located, and is suitable for a wide range of cycle types, including adapted cycles and cargo bikes (see Policy MC4).
4. Development proposals that adversely impact the safety, accessibility, legibility, connectivity, and convenience of the Borough's walking and cycling network will not be supported.

### Supporting text

19.25 Active travel aims to promote and encourage walking, cycling, and other active modes of transportation to improve public health by increasing physical activity levels, reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, reduce traffic congestion, and improve road safety, and create more liveable cities and communities. Overall, active travel aims to create sustainable and healthier transportation options for individuals and communities. In committing to becoming one of the best places to walk and cycle in London, Tower Hamlets can fulfil these aims.

19.26 Physical inactivity is a major cause of disease, and nearly a quarter of Tower Hamlets' residents do not get the recommended minimum levels of daily physical activity. In addition, encouraging more people to choose active travel will reduce reliance on private vehicles, especially for short journeys, and help to relieve pressure on the public transport network.

19.27 The 'Healthy Streets Approach' prioritises the health and well-being for all those who live, work, study in, and visit the borough, by putting human needs and experiences at the centre of public realm and transport design. Streets should be welcoming places where everyone feels able to spend time, engage in physical activity, or socialise with other people. Healthy streets support many types of active travel, from commuting to work, walking for pleasure, or cycling with children to school, all of which require different kinds of route. Healthy streets support vibrant and lively communities, where different groups can come together to socialise and enjoy public spaces. The design of healthy streets should have regard for other relevant best practice guidance, such as Sport England's Active Design Guidance (2023).

19.28 This policy embeds the council's road user hierarchy, which prioritises walking and cycling, then public transport use, as sustainable modes of travel, followed by all other modes of motorised transport.

19.29 Part 1 of this policy requires development proposals to improve the quality and connectivity of walking, wheeling, and cycling routes in the area. Development proposals are required to demonstrate how they have applied the Healthy Streets Approach as set out in the London Plan as part of the transport assessment.

19.30 Part 2 requires major development proposals to submit a Healthy Streets Assessment as part of the transport assessment. By utilising the Healthy Streets Design Check tool which scores proposed street design interventions against the 10 Healthy Street Indicators, the results can be used to measure how design features may improve a potential street, as well as identify areas of poor street design opportunities to make further improvements.<sup>34</sup>

19.31 Part 3 sets out how development proposals should engage positively with the design of high-quality public realm within and in the vicinity of the development, to encourage and enable active travel. Walking and cycling networks must be:

- safe;
- accessible;
- legible and easy to use;
- connected; and
- convenient.



19.32 Part 3(a) requires development proposals to safeguard and contribute to maintaining and enhancing the boroughs network of walking routes and cycle ways, particularly the Thames Path and Green Grid Network. The Green Grid Strategy identifies a series of strategic projects to improve cross-borough connections and improve active travel and urban greening. This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network.

19.33 Part 3(b) requires developments to provide a minimum unobstructed footway width of at least 2 meters. To support active

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<sup>34</sup> Healthy Streets Design Check England, DfT (2021)



travel, footpaths should be spacious enough to support a wide range of users and uses. Street clutter can be anything which takes up additional space on the pavement, such as signage, cycle parking, café seating, planters, and EV charging points. While many of these items individually can contribute to improved look or comfort of the street, such as urban greening, improved lighting, and places to rest and socialise, when crowded together they can obstruct the footway and hinder pedestrian movement. Obstacles can significantly hinder the ability to navigate the public realm, and particularly impact people with mobility or visual impairments. In some instances, such as within town centres and other high traffic areas, minimum unobstructed footway widths of 2 metres may not be sufficient to enable adequate flow of pedestrians. The Pedestrian Comfort Level tool should be used determine appropriate footway widths based on the number of pedestrians per square metre and pedestrian flows per minute.

19.34 Part 3(e) requires developments to be inclusive-by-design, considering the needs, comfort, accessibility, and safety of all users. Safety can be described as a spectrum of exclusion, which can be experienced in the form of mild inconvenience, significant discomfort, to severe danger. This is more commonly experienced by women, girls, and gender diverse people; from the inconvenience of having to carry pushchairs and small children up flights of stairs, or struggling to find a public bathroom; or feeling uncomfortable taking certain routes home at night, to being threatened by verbal harassment and physical violence. The intersection of marginalised identities can compound and exacerbate experiences of exclusion from the public realm, while also considering that the lived experiences of women, girls, and gender diverse people is incredibly varied. Ultimately, streets that are inclusive-by-design will improve the experiences, comfort, and safety for all users.

19.35 In addition, to minimise potential risk of conflict or collision



between users, where possible pedestrian footways and cycle lanes should be clearly designed to be perceived as separate facilities, and mixing pedestrian and cyclist should be avoided. This is particularly important to protect vulnerable road users, for example, those who may not be able to see or hear an approaching cyclist. Best practice guidance such as the DfT Inclusive Mobility Guidance should be followed.

19.36 Part 3(f) requires development proposals to support the uptake of cycling in Tower Hamlets. Safety and perceptions of safety is often cited as a key reason why people choose not to take up cycling, with particular risk from heavy traffic, HGVs, and hostile motorists.

19.37 To overcome this, cycling routes, networks, and facilities should be designed to a high quality as outlined in the Healthy Streets Approach, with clear separation from pedestrian and motor traffic where possible.

19.38 Part 4 requires development to ensure the safety, accessibility, legibility, connectivity, and convenience of the borough's walking and cycling network to help ensure we meet the aims related to active travel aims and creating a sustainable and healthier transportation options for individuals and communities.

## **London Plan policies:**

- GG3 Creating a healthy city
- T2 Healthy Streets
- T5 Cycling

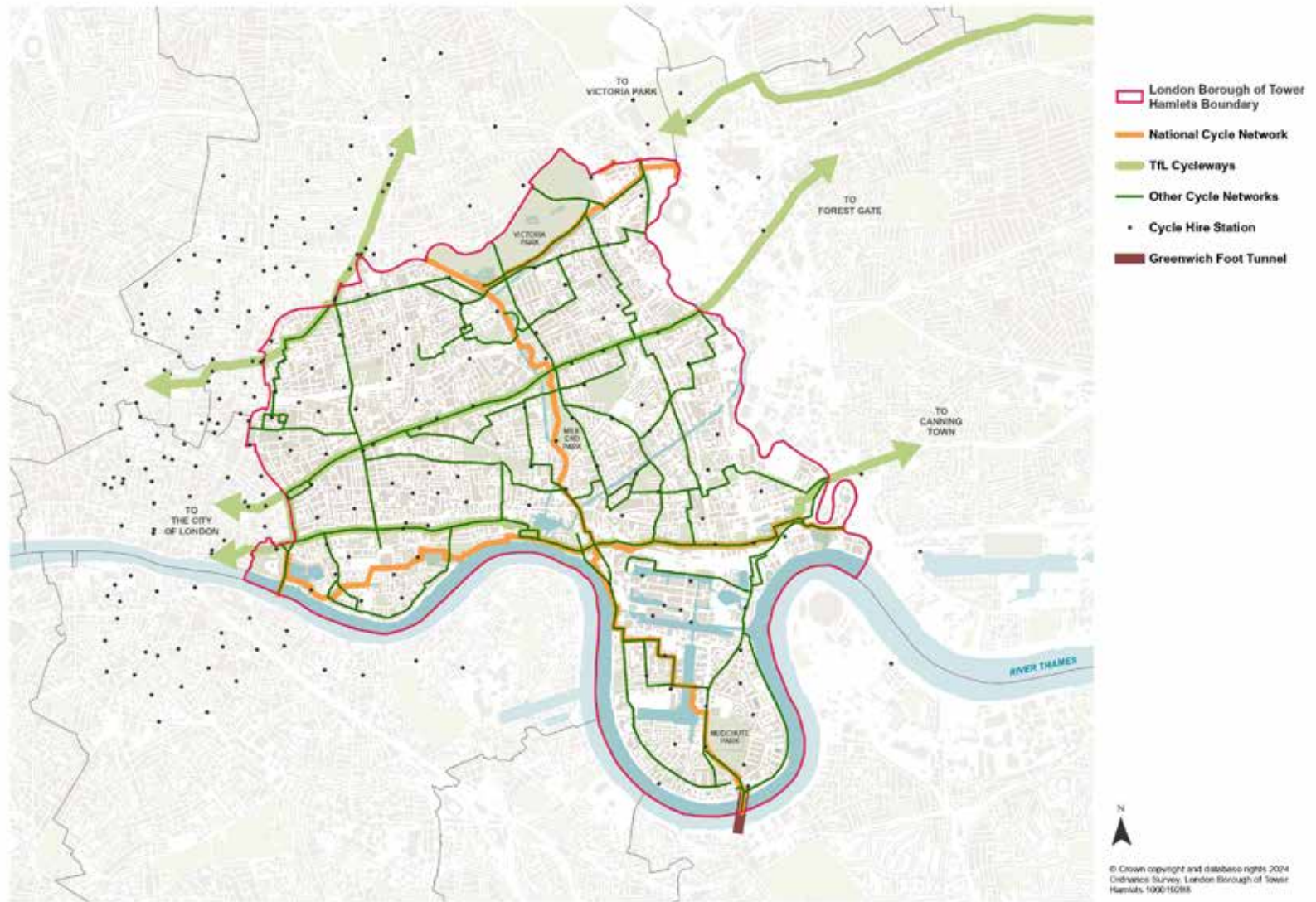
## **Local Plan policies:**

- CG9 Air quality
- PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm
- PS5 Gender inclusive design
- BO2 Open spaces and the green grid network

## **Evidence base:**

- Mayor's Transport Strategy
- Sustainable Transport, Walking and Cycling LPG, 2022
- Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy, 2019-2041
- Healthy Streets for London, 2017
- Active Design Guidance (Sport England) 2023
- Inclusive Mobility (DfT) 2021
- Gender Inclusive Design, 2023
- London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), 2014
- Pedestrian Comfort Guide, 2019
- Cycle parking implementation plan, 2019
- New cycle route Quality Criteria, 2019
- Tower Hamlets – A Cycling Borough, 2016

Figure 21: Map of the cycle network



## Policy MC3 Impacts on the transport network

1. Development proposals must ensure impacts on the transport network are mitigated and avoided. This will be achieved by ensuring that:
  - a. impact to the transport network is reduced by promoting and enabling active and sustainable travel; and
  - b. environmental impacts are reduced, including reducing congestion, emissions, and improving air quality and public health.
2. Major development proposals and any development that is likely to have a significant impact on the transport network are required to submit a transport assessment or transport statement, and/ or travel plan, as part of the planning application. Transport assessments should focus on embedding the Healthy Streets Approach within and around new developments. Transport assessments should be accompanied by an Active Travel Zone (ATZ) assessment, as well as a Night-time ATZ assessment where necessary.
3. Development proposals that will have an adverse impact to traffic congestion on the highway network and/or the capacity and function of the transport network will be required to contribute and deliver appropriate transport infrastructure and/or effective mitigation measures.
4. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate, in accordance with TfL's latest Construction Logistics Plan Guidance and the Tower Hamlets Code of Construction Practice (CoCP), that any impacts on the transport network during the construction phase of the development will be managed and mitigated.
5. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate that proposals will not result in any detrimental impact on road safety.
6. Development proposals are required to support the delivery of, and safeguard land required for, future strategic transport schemes, as well as protect and enhance existing transport infrastructure. Development proposals that would prevent the delivery of future strategic transport schemes will not be supported.



## Supporting text

19.39 This policy seeks to address the impact that development has (both individually and cumulatively) on the transport network, particularly issues of congestion, air quality, severance, safety, and accessibility for cyclists and pedestrians. It sets out how development proposals should assess the severity of impact it has on existing transport infrastructure and services, including the approach taken to mitigate any adverse impact on capacity, connectivity, and congestion.

19.40 Tower Hamlets has a high-density of strategic roads designed to carry high volumes of traffic through and within the borough, which has a severe impact on air quality, traffic congestion, and road danger.

19.41 Congestion levels in many parts of the borough are severe, and the interconnectedness of the highway network – whether local or strategic – plays a significant role in contributing to this congestion. A development's impact on congestion is not just a matter of building size but depends on its location, use, design, density, and operational factors (for instance, a relatively small development could be judged to have a severe impact if it generates a high number of vehicle trips and/or is in a sensitive location). Given the significant capacity constraints on the public transport and highway network, any development that generates a net-increase in vehicle trips has the potential to have a severe impact on the safety and operation of this network within Tower Hamlets.

19.42 Part 2 seeks to ensure applications provide an independent, objective, and accurate transport assessment or transport statement appropriate to the scale of development. A transport assessment or statement must be prepared in accordance with the latest guidance from Transport for London. The level of detail required will be dependent on the type and scale of the development. Applicants

should seek pre-application advice to determine whether a transport assessment or statement will be required. A transport assessment should be submitted with a draft construction management and logistics plan and a delivery and servicing plan.

19.43 A transport statement is a simpler document that identifies the likely transport impacts of a proposal and seeks to mitigate the negative transport impacts of development in order to promote sustainable development. A transport statement may be accompanied by a construction management and logistics plan or a delivery and servicing plan depending on the type of land use and its location; this should also be established and scoped out with our transport and development management teams at the pre-application stage.

19.44 Transport assessments and statements will be required to provide detailed information on the range of transport users and modes, including the movement of people and goods, both before and after a proposed development has been constructed. A transport assessment or statement should identify and address transport impacts on all modes of transport and set out the measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate identified impacts of the development.

19.45 Where transport assessments are required, they should be accompanied by an Active Travel Zone (ATZ) assessment. The ATZ should identify and assess key routes to major trip attractors, using latest TfL guidance. It should also consider evening/night-time use, and the safety of marginalised or vulnerable groups, including women, girls and gender diverse people, children and older people, and people with disabilities.

19.46 Applicants should submit a travel plan alongside the planning application, where appropriate. The requirement for a travel plan should

be agreed with relevant teams such as the council's highways team, school team and Transport for London (TfL) before an application is submitted. TfL provides guidance that sets out the requirements for travel plans. Such plans must promote and provide a long-term strategy to meet sustainable transport objectives. They should contain a package of measures that will seek to minimise the number of trips undertaken by private car (e.g. restricting car parking provision), encourage use of sustainable transport and generally reduce the need to travel to and from the development. Travel plans must set targets, objectives and provide detail on implementation, funding, and monitoring. This will be secured as a planning obligation for major development proposals and as a condition on minor development proposals.

19.47 Part 3 seeks to ensure that development does not exacerbate or overload transport networks through trips associated with its uses. Where appropriate, conditions and/or planning obligations will be sought to secure mitigation measures required to make a development acceptable. This is in addition to CIL contributions which fund transport infrastructure improvements on a borough-wide scale. All contributions towards new transport infrastructure improvements must be in accordance with Policy DV5 and the Planning Obligations SPD.

19.48 Areas in the borough anticipated to accommodate higher levels of the population and economic growth such as the Isle of Dogs and City Fringe are where existing highway and/or public transport demand is already close to or exceeding supply during peak travel times. Other areas of the borough also experience local highway or public transport stress during these times. Development that increases demand without appropriate mitigation (including infrastructure contributions to service improvements and/or delivering effective modal shift) will not be supported.

19.49 Part 4 requires development proposals to demonstrate that any impacts on the transport network during the construction phase of a development will be managed and mitigated. Traffic generated by construction and demolition of all scales is a significant contributor to poor air quality throughout the borough and can also significantly impact on the flow of traffic, road safety, and pedestrian convenience.

19.50 Applicants are required to provide a Construction Management Plan, including details of any demolition works, and a Traffic Management Plan, as per the Tower Hamlets CoCP. For major developments a Construction Logistics Plan is also required.

19.51 Part 5 seeks to support the Mayor of London's Vision Zero objectives. The aim of Vision Zero is to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries on London's transport system. Road safety is fundamental to the creation of healthy streets, where all users feel safe while walking, cycling, and using public transport.

### **London Plan policies:**

- T3 Transport capacity, connectivity and safeguarding
- T4 Assessing and mitigating transport impacts

### **Local Plan policies:**

- DV4 Planning and construction of a new development
- CG9 Air quality

### **Evidence base:**

- Mayor's Transport Strategy, 2022
- Strategic Transport Assessment, 2016
- Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy, 2019-2041
- LBTH Code of Construction Practice, 2023

## Policy MC4 Parking and permit-free

1. Development proposals must prioritise sustainable approaches to parking in areas that have, or will have good public transport accessibility, in order to support the delivery of healthy, safe, liveable neighbourhoods, and consider the needs of the wider community.
  - a. In line with the London Plan, car-free development should be the starting point for all development proposals;
  - b. for areas with a PTAL rating between 1-3, residential developments have regard for the maximum car parking standards set out in the London Plan;
  - c. residential car parking will not be supported in the borough's Opportunity Areas, the Central Activity Zones (CAZ), Metropolitan and Major town centres, and any areas with a PTAL rating of 4 and above, except from providing required Blue Badge parking spaces for disabled people in accordance with London Plan Policy T6.1;
  - d. disabled parking spaces in residential developments must be reserved for use by Blue Badge holders who are occupiers of wheelchair accessible homes within the development. Disabled parking spaces must not be sold or leased to other residents;
  - e. residential development is required to be permit-free in terms of on-street car-parking, with any parking associated with a development to be located off-street;
  - f. designated parking spaces for car clubs will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that car club use would reduce the overall car-use of the development and there are active charging facilities;
  - g. development proposals for specialist and supported housing should provide short stay parking bays which must be restricted to support and care services needed by residents; and
  - h. car parking for commercial or industrial uses will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated to the council to be essential to the operational requirements of the business of service, and must be the lowest justified quantity. Car parking for staff will not be permitted.
2. All new or re-provided parking spaces (in residential and non-residential development) should be equipped with active electric vehicle charging facilities.
  - a. When located on pavements, electric vehicle (EV) charging points should be integrated into the streetscape design and should not obstruct pedestrian movement. Where practicable, installation of EV charging points in the carriageway is preferred.
3. All new development proposals must deliver high-quality cycle parking in line with the London Plan and the London Cycling Design Standards. Developments will be required to ensure:
  - a. cycle parking is well-located, safe, secure, and accessible, and provide a balance of short-stay and long-stay provision;
  - b. cycle parking and storage caters to all types of cycles, including bicycles, adapted cycles, e-bikes, and cargo bikes, and;
  - c. complementary facilities to support cycle use are provided where appropriate, including accessible showering and changing facilities, storage lockers, and basic maintenance equipment such as bike pumps.
4. Where suitable, developments should provide or contribute towards new or expanded publicly accessible shared cycle hire facilities.

## Supporting text

19.52 This policy seeks to ensure that new developments adopt a sustainable approach to managing parking, to prioritise land uses such as housing, facilitate sustainable travel patterns, address congestion and poor air quality, and respond to the needs of the community.

19.53 Car parking takes up large amounts of space and can reduce the area available for development, can put pressure on the public realm that otherwise could benefit all residents by providing increased space for outside amenity space, parks, and urban greening. Where parking is provided in basement accommodation, this can add to the cost of a development and impact the viability of a scheme. However, it is noted that the use of cars can support community members who rely on their vehicle for work, mobility, or other important and necessary reasons.

19.54 Part 1(a) sets out that a car-free approach is required in areas of Tower Hamlets where there are good levels of existing or planned public transport accessibility and where there is significant residential growth expected in the coming years. Furthermore, in line with the London Plan, all development proposals within the borough's Opportunity Areas, CAZ, Metropolitan and Major town centres must be car free. Where there are high levels of public transport accessibility, alternative modes of transport will be promoted.

19.55 When applying the residential parking standards from the London Plan, development proposals should consider future changes to public transport accessibility levels (PTAL) as a result of new infrastructure provision, particularly in areas of low public transport accessibility (PTAL 1 and 2).



19.56 Part 1 (b) recognises that in areas of low public transport accessibility, some residents, businesses, and organisations rely on private vehicle use as their only transport option, to provide care to family members, or as a primary source of income. If car parking is deemed essential, it must be justified in the transport assessment and provided entirely on-site. Likewise, if parking can be considered essential for certain commercial or industrial uses, the amount provided must be of the lowest possible quantity.

19.57 Parking may be required for those with rely on private vehicles for



mobility, accessibility, or wheelchair needs. Part 1(d) requires accessible parking bay provision to be provided even in developments which are otherwise car-free, with minimum numbers provided in accordance with London Plan policy T1.6.1- T6.5. This parking must be safeguarded for use by Blue Badge holders, and cannot be leased or sold to other residents.

19.58 Part 1 (e) sets out that all residential development parking must be permit-free, and any parking required must be provided on-site and off-street. This will be secured by planning obligation. The required accessible parking spaces are exempted from this requirement.

19.59 Demand for on-street parking can create a significant amount of stress across the borough's street network. This demand has also increased significantly in recent years due to population growth. In addition, the issue of on-street parking outside of controlled hours (usually overnight and at weekends) often overcrowds streets, resulting in unacceptable safety and accessibility issues for vulnerable road users; as well as restricting traffic flows, delaying busses, and increasing journey times.

19.60 Part 1 (f) sets out that in some instances, car clubs can be cheaper alternatives to individual car ownership and allow for occasional car use while also discouraging shorter car journeys. However, car clubs can encourage car usage over more sustainable transport modes and share many of the negative impacts of private car ownership. Designated parking spaces for car clubs will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that car club use would reduce the overall car-use of the development. Spaces allocated for car clubs are included in the overall maximum allowance of permitted car-parking spaces. Any car club spaces should have active charging facilities.

19.61 Part 1 (g) recognises that in some instances, short-term parking for specific uses, such as specialist and supported housing, are essential for the function or operational requirements of the development. Where on-street drop-off or other essential parking is proposed, the need for specific parking spaces must be demonstrated.

19.62 A Parking Design and Management Plan that outlines how parking will be designed, managed, and enforced must be submitted with all applications that include car parking provision, in line with Transport for London Guidance.

19.63 Part 2 requires all parking spaces provided as part of a new development should be fitted with electric vehicle (EV) charging points. This goes significantly beyond the London Plan requirement of at least 20% parking spaces to have electric charging, with passive provision (the infrastructure capacity to install electric charge points at a later date) serving the remaining spaces.

19.64 However, taking into consideration the UK Government's commitments to end the sale of new combustion engine vehicles by 2030, it is justified to maximise the provision of electric vehicle charge points to have necessary infrastructure in place to support the transition to low-emissions vehicle use over the next decade. As per the Tower Hamlets Electric Vehicle Delivery Plan (2021-2025) accelerating the switch to electric vehicles will require potential users to feel confident that there is an adequate number of charging points and that are conveniently located to meet their needs. Passive provision is not considered appropriate, as there is no longer a question of if or when the demand for EV charge points will increase. Responsibility for installing them should be taken on now, to avoid dispute in the future over who has responsibility for upgrading all car parking spaces in development.

19.65 As per London Plan Policy T6, EV charging points should be integrated into the streetscape design and should not obstruct pedestrian movement. Where practicable, installation of EV charging points in the carriageway is preferred.

19.66 Part 3 requires all new developments to deliver high-quality cycle parking in line with the London Plan and London Cycling Design Standards. Around 80% of Tower Hamlets residents live in flats, and much of this accommodation has extremely limited cycle parking, cycle storage or cycle hire docking space. A lack of appropriate cycle parking and storage facilities is often cited as a barrier to cycle use and ownership. Applicants and developers to the detailed parking standards for vehicles and bicycles in. A sufficient amount of cycle parking should be provided to accommodate current demand and to encourage further use over time. Design of cycle parking has been extensively covered in the Transport for London's Cycle Design Standards and developers are required to take account of this when designing cycle facilities. Development proposals are required to provide cycle parking at least in accordance with the minimum standards as set out in Table 10.2 in the London Plan.

19.67 However, even in instances where cycle storage is currently provided, these facilities are not well-used: in a residents' survey undertaken for the Tower Hamlets High Density Living SPD, 76% of respondents reported never having used cycle storage in their building, and a further 26% of residents who own a bicycle responded that they stored it within their home, instead of the communal storage. This was largely attributed to accessibility of bike storage and perceptions of safety.

19.68 Both long- and short-term cycle parking provision must be

designed to the highest standard, taking into consideration the needs of all users, to help encourage the take-up of cycling in the borough. Providing cycle parking must not be seen as a tick-box exercise to provide required quantity at the expense of quality; for example, while stacked two-tier cycle racks can provide a large amount of storage in a limited space, they are only suitable for standard two-wheel bikes and can require significant upper-body strength to use. Consideration should also be given to a variety of users and mobility options, such as space for non-standard cycles, mobility scooters, and cargo bikes.

19.69 To increase cycle uptake by offering greater flexibility for residents, minimum cycle storage requirements should be provided in different locations. Preferably cycle storage should be located in the vicinity of a more active usage, such as the street or lobby. Indoor cycle storage should be fully accessible for all users, have step-free access via a ramp or direct lift, with suitably wide automated doorways to accommodate all types of cycle.

19.70 Furthermore, short-term cycle parking in key delivery destinations should include provision for accessible cargo-bikes, e-bikes, and e-mopeds (with charging facilities) to support the growth of cycle and last-mile logistics operations.

19.71 Part 4 requires developments to provide, or financially contribute to, publicly accessible cycle hire facilities as part of the development, where suitable. To increase access to cycling in the borough, the council is working closely with the Mayor of London and Transport for London to extend the existing Santander Cycle Hire scheme with new docking stations in appropriate locations. Where appropriate, development will be expected to safeguard land within the site where Transport for London has identified a need to accommodate publicly accessible

shared cycle hire stations. In addition, dockless cycle hire schemes run by private operators are becoming increasingly popular within the borough. The provision of cycle hire schemes should be managed to ensure that docking stations and cycles do not result in a cluttered public realm, which would adversely impact safety, accessibility of pedestrian movement.

19.72 To support increased cycle use and particularly cycling to work, new office developments should include complementary cycling amenities where appropriate, such as accessible showers, changing rooms, and storage lockers.

19.73 This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy MC5 and London Plan Policy T6 to ensure that along with on-site parking provision, development provides adequate delivery and servicing facilities within the site as well as encouraging shared servicing arrangements and timing of deliveries.

**London Plan policies:**

- T5 Cycling
- T6 Car parking

**Local Plan policies:**

- DV7 Utilities and digital connectivity
- CG9 Air quality

**Evidence base:**

- Mayor's Transport Strategy
- Cycle parking implementation plan, 2019
- Strategic Transport Assessment, 2016
- Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy, 2019-2041
- Tower Hamlets electric vehicle delivery plan: 2021-2025
- East of the Borough Transport Study, 2020
- Tower Hamlets High Density Living SPD
- Tower Hamlets Sustainable Freight, Servicing, and Delivery (2024)

## Policy MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing, and construction

1. New development proposals should facilitate sustainable freight through water, rail, and road. They should also encourage safe, low emission and efficient delivery and servicing, particularly through 'last-mile distribution' and active travel. Delivery and servicing requirements should be considered at the early stages of the design-led approach, with sufficient space allocated off-street and integrated within the site boundary to accommodate growth and future demand.
2. New development proposals should use zero emissions vehicles for servicing wherever possible and consolidated deliveries are expected to be of this type. Servicing by cycle and other non-motor vehicular modes should be used wherever possible. Any loading bay required for a development should be supplied with an electric vehicle rapid charge point to allow zero emissions vehicles to operate from the bay.
3. Development proposals that generate a significant number of vehicle trips for goods or materials during its construction and/or operational phases are required to submit a Construction Logistics Plan and/ or Delivery and Servicing Plan as part of the transport assessment. This should demonstrate how:
  - a. impact to the transport network and amenity will be avoided, remedied or mitigated;
  - b. delivery of goods and servicing will be provided within the site to encourage shared arrangements and timing of deliveries;
  - c. movement by water and/or rail and the use of low emission vehicles, electric vehicles, bicycles and freight consolidation facilities have been prioritised;

- d. where possible, development will use existing consolidation and distribution facilities to minimise the number of trips required to service the site, and smart or joint procurement measures will be considered to reduce the numbers of deliveries and servicing trips as should the use of micro-consolidation centres; and
  - e. new micro-consolidation centres will be provided within developments where appropriate.
4. Development proposals adjacent to safeguarded wharves, rail depots and bus depots are required to ensure they do not compromise their operation in line with the 'Agent of Change' principle.
  5. Development proposals that provide new or improved wharves or other facilities for freight transfer between road, rail or water will be supported where they:
    - a. minimise impacts on the environment and neighbouring amenities;
    - b. support modal shift; and
    - c. facilitate the use of zero or low emissions vehicles.



## Supporting text

19.74 Deliveries and servicing are essential to the economic growth of the borough. In recent years, we have seen a surge in demand for e-commerce and home delivery services, which combined with continued population growth, is driving an increase in vehicle trips across London. Fuelled in part by changing behaviours during the COVID-19 pandemic, customer expectations have also changed, with deliveries expected to be fulfilled in a matter of hours, rather than days or weeks. Typical freight and delivery vehicles are some of the most polluting vehicles on our roads. Increased delivery demand is contributing to increased traffic congestion, air pollution, and could result in obstructions to local and strategic roads while loading and unloading of goods takes place, which could impact bus journey times and access for emergency service vehicles. Furthermore, the projected growth and development in the borough will increase the demand for building materials, which, if not carefully managed, which result in increased construction traffic, air pollution, noise, and dust.

19.75 This policy seeks to address the challenges the borough faces in ensuring the efficient, safe, timely and sustainable movement of goods and materials across the borough, while also seeking to improve air quality and reduce impacts arising from the freight network such as accidents, spillages, or wastes.

19.76 As the proportion of cyclists and pedestrians has increased, pedestrian and cycle safety has become an area of increasing concern in Tower Hamlets, particularly given the rise in fatalities on busy arterial roads. Across London, nearly two-thirds of cyclist deaths and around a quarter of pedestrian deaths involve a heavy goods vehicle. This policy seeks to reduce the impact of delivery, servicing, and construction traffic



on the environment and the health and well-being of residents in terms of noise disturbance and its contribution to road congestion and air pollution.

19.77 Part 1 seeks to support the aims of the Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy (2019-2041) to maximise the use sustainable transport methods for freight, making use of the rivers and waterways where practicable for business cargo and freight delivery.

19.78 Part 2 seeks to encourage the use of zero emissions vehicles wherever possible for deliveries. This includes deliveries by cycle,

cargo-bike, and other non-motor vehicles. Loading bay requirements for developments should be supplied with EV rapid charge points to allow for zero emissions vehicles to operate and recharge on delivery routes.

19.79 Part 3 ensures that development generating a significant number of vehicle trips for goods or materials will be assessed in relation to its likely impact on the transport network, with reference to the most up-to-date Transport for London guidance relating to deliveries, servicing, and construction logistics. An assessment will also be required where a development has the potential to have a significant impact on the transport network. The level of assessment required will be decided through the development management process.

19.80 Development proposals will need to plan and manage its freight movements through the construction and operational phases of the development. Construction management plans and/or delivery and servicing plans are required to show how the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standard has been incorporated and that fleets serving the site have Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) silver accreditation. In addition, development will need to provide sufficient space for deliveries and servicing within the site curtilage and off the public highway, including refuse collection.

19.81 Development proposals must seek to prioritise sustainable methods in the movement of goods and services, particularly sites with significantly greater delivery and servicing frequencies and sizes. Construction can make significant environmental and cost savings through more sustainable methods of recycling existing materials; this can significantly reduce freight movements by vehicles such as tipper trucks which tend to be more polluting and more hazardous to cyclists compared to other vehicles.

19.82 Part 3 (b) seeks to ensure that the delivery of goods and servicing will not take place on-street wherever possible, to avoid negative impacts on highway safety and traffic flow. In addition, off-peak deliveries and servicing operations should be considered where appropriate to reduce motor traffic and road danger, minimising the impact of servicing at the busiest times, particularly in areas of high footfall. In these cases, quiet delivery agreements should be considered.

19.83 Part 3(d) requires development to minimise the number of daily vehicle trips to and from the site. by consolidating and coordinating deliveries and servicing. Residential development will require bespoke management and delivery accommodation when compared to commercial development. The rapid acceleration of internet shopping has resulted in a significant growth of smaller light goods vehicles, which increase congestion and pollution at peak times as well as traditionally quieter times. Delivery vehicles to residential addresses often park on the highway causing traffic flow and safety concerns. This disruption increases with missed deliveries whereby the same address receives a second or third delivery attempt. Development should provide space for these deliveries and help ensure all such deliveries are completed on the first attempt.

19.84 The Tower Hamlets Sustainable Freight Study (2023) concluded that the use of a construction consolidation centre can help reduce and control the number of deliveries to site by up to 50%. Holding areas located on nearby vacant sites can be used to control the number of construction deliveries and vehicles dwell times.

19.85 Parts 4 and 5 requires developments adjacent to safeguarded wharves to recognise the role of wharves and depots, and ensure that their continued function is not negatively impacted. The borough's river and rail network represent an underused resource and priority should

be given to utilising the railways, rivers, and canals to facilitate the movement of waste and goods, particularly the safeguarded wharves such as Northumberland Wharf and Orchard Wharf.

**London Plan policies:**

- S115 Water transport
- T7 Deliveries, servicing and construction

**Local Plan policies:**

- Policy DV4 Planning and construction of new development
- Policy CG9 Air quality
- Policy CG10 Noise and vibration

**Evidence base:**

- Mayor's Transport Strategy
- Mayor of London's Freight and Servicing Action Plan, 2019
- Mayor of London's Vision Zero Action Plan, 2018
- Construction Logistics Plans Guidance, 2021
- Delivery and Servicing Plans Guidance, 2020
- Tower Hamlets Transport Strategy, 2019
- Tower Hamlets 'Code of Construction Practice (CoCP), 2023
- Tower Hamlets Sustainable Freight, Servicing, and Delivery (2024)

## 20. Reuse, recycling and waste



RW1 – Managing our waste

RW2 – New and enhanced waste facilities

RW3 – Waste collection facilities in new development

### Introduction

20.1 The management of waste is one of the most challenging issues facing Tower Hamlets. To address this the Council has brought the collection and management of household waste under its direct control, declared a waste emergency and developed a detailed management strategy for local authority collected waste. The borough will continue to have significant population and development growth in the coming decades and this is expected to give rise to a growing quantity of waste to be managed, from homes, businesses and construction work. The Council wants to ensure that as much of this waste as possible is, reused, recycled, and has value extracted from it while facilitating a shift towards a circular economy where the quantity of waste produced falls.

20.2 As a unitary authority Tower Hamlets performs the roles of waste planning authority, waste collection authority, and waste disposal authority in the borough. In our capacity as a waste planning authority, we have a statutory duty to prepare a waste local plan in line with legislation. This is being fulfilled through the inclusion of waste policies in this Local Plan. A key purpose of these policies is to ensure waste produced in the borough is properly managed through

access to suitable management facilities. These policies have been prepared within the context of the requirements of the London Plan, with particular focus on the requirement to provide for quantities of household and commercial and industrial waste apportioned and the management targets set.

20.3 The management of waste rarely respects administrative boundaries and hence waste is considered to be a strategic cross-boundary issue and is subject to the duty to co-operate<sup>35</sup>. In the interests of proper planning and sustainable development Tower Hamlets, through the duty co-operate mechanism, will seek to secure access to sufficient waste management capacity to meet the borough's apportionments as set out in the London Plan and ensures construction, demolition and excavation waste is also properly managed. We will support the transition to the circular economy through the establishment of Material Hubs. Material Hubs can be used to store otherwise unused material which can be reused, repaired, or repurposed within or outside the borough. It is expected that Materials Hubs will be initially trialled in the early part of the plan period and scale up in the medium to long term reducing the quantity of construction and demolition waste requiring management in particular.

20.4 The LLDC is currently the planning authority for part of the borough of Tower Hamlets, but it does not have a separate apportionment. The Council is therefore planning for waste across its whole administrative area. We will continue to work closely with the LLDC on delivering our strategic plan for waste.

20.5 Our duties as a waste collection authority and waste disposal authority include helping households to prevent waste as well as reuse items and recycle as much waste as possible. The London Plan sets a

<sup>35</sup> Tower Hamlets Waste Data Update – Identification of Strategically Significant Cross Boundary Waste Movements BPP Consulting June 2024



target of recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2030 and zero biodegradable waste to landfill by 2026. However, in 2021/2022, only 20% of household waste was reused, recycled, or composted in Tower Hamlets and it is recognised this needs to increase for those targets to be met.

20.6 Whilst London boroughs have not been set individual targets, Tower Hamlets is working towards meeting the London-wide target. The design of new development is required to ensure integrated waste collection and bulking systems are included which contribute to the borough's ability to implement the waste hierarchy and increase recycling/ composting rates (see Policy RW/3).

20.7 The Local Plan must identify sufficient opportunities to meet the identified needs of an area for the management of waste, aiming to drive waste management up the Tower Hamlet's waste hierarchy (see Figure 22). The Council is required to plan for seven waste streams, including household, business, and construction waste. The London Plan 2021 requires boroughs to provide sufficient capacity to manage the tonnages of household and commercial/industrial waste apportioned in the London Plan 2021. The intention is for London to be net self-sufficient in managing all waste, other than excavation waste, by 2030.

20.8 The following tonnages of waste are predicted to arise from Tower Hamlets over the Plan period:

**Table 13: Tower Hamlets' waste capacity need 2026-2041 (tonnes)<sup>36</sup>**

Waste stream	2026	2031	2036	2041
Apportionment (LACW and C&I)	197,000	199,000	203,000	207,000
Non hazardous C,D&E waste	286,000- 303,260	286,000- 323,290	286,000- 329,000	286,000- 337,2000
Hazardous waste included in LACW, C&I apportionment. Overall arising predicted to be c16,200 tpa <sup>37</sup>				
All other waste streams	0	0	0	0

20.9 Providing for the predicted arisings within the constraints of the borough presents a particular challenge because parts of the borough are densely built-up and there are competing pressures from higher value land uses such as meeting housing and employment land needs.

<sup>36</sup> Derived from Table 9.1 of the London Plan 2021

<sup>37</sup> Tower Hamlets Waste Data Update – Management requirements for Hazardous Waste in Tower Hamlets to 2042 BPP Consulting June 2024

20.10 The London Plan also has a target of 95% reuse/recycling/recovery of Construction and Demolition waste and 95% beneficial use of excavation waste overall and 100% of inert excavation<sup>38</sup>. The available evidence indicates that Tower Hamlets is likely to be meeting these targets although the data is not definitive.<sup>39</sup>

20.11 Tower Hamlets is also required to plan for hazardous waste, wastewater, agricultural waste, and low-level radioactive waste. The evidence concludes that no additional facilities are required within the borough for these waste streams because they are only produced in very small quantities and/or they are managed at specialist facilities outside the borough.<sup>40</sup>

20.12 Capacity offered by existing waste sites in the borough has been assessed to be insufficient to meet the management needs for C&D waste arisings in particular. It is estimated that an area of approximately 0.65 to 1 hectare would be required to provide sufficient capacity to manage this waste<sup>41</sup>.

20.13 To continue to provide for the London Plan apportionments for household and business waste, Tower Hamlets will safeguard existing waste sites, identify suitable land where facilities offering additional capacity may be located under Policy RW1 and work with the GLA and other boroughs to secure access to suitable capacity elsewhere in



London. Policy RW2 will guide the development, delivery and operation of facilities offering additional waste management capacity within the Borough.

<sup>38</sup> London Plan Footnote 164.

<sup>39</sup> Tower Hamlets Waste Data Update – Management requirements for Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste in Tower Hamlets to 2042 BPP Consulting June 2024

<sup>40</sup> Tower Hamlets Waste Data Study 2023 Vitaka

<sup>41</sup> Tower Hamlets Waste Data Update – Management requirements for Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste in Tower Hamlets to 2042 BPP Consulting June 2024

20.14 Policy CG5 – Retrofit and the Circular Economy will ensure that construction and demolition waste continues to be utilised as a resource in the construction and regeneration of new development in the borough and London. The Council will explore opportunities to take waste management in house or work in partnership in order to maximise the extraction of resources and financial returns from the waste the borough generates.

20.15 The borough is not allocating individual sites for waste but instead identifying areas of search within which individual sites could come forward; this approach is supported by both national policy and the waste industry. The total amount of suitable industrial land in the borough is just under 22 hectares. It has been calculated that up to 5.28 hectares of land could come forward within the areas of search for new waste management sites (see Policy RW1) through business turnover and vacancies<sup>42</sup>. The assessment of existing waste management capacity evidences that the safeguarded existing waste sites along with the areas of search should be sufficient to serve the Borough’s projected waste management needs<sup>43</sup>.

20.16 The Council will continue to monitor arisings of waste, the availability of land capable of providing additional waste capacity within the Borough and the continued availability of suitable capacity elsewhere in London over the course of the Local Plan period.

<sup>42</sup> See Appendix 2 of Tower Hamlets Waste Data Update – Management Requirements for Construction, Demolition & Excavation Waste in Tower Hamlets to 2042 for examples.

<sup>43</sup> Tower Hamlets Waste Data Update – Management Requirements for Construction, Demolition & Excavation Waste in Tower Hamlets to 2042 + Management Requirements for Apportioned HIC Waste in Tower Hamlets to 2041 BPP Consulting June 2024

<sup>44</sup> Tower Hamlets Waste Data Update – Management Requirements for Apportioned HIC Waste in Tower Hamlets to 2041 BPP Consulting June 2024

## Capacity Assessment

20.17 The figures below set out the findings of an assessment of the potential capacity of existing waste management facilities provided in Tower Hamlets.

**Table 14: Capacity Assessment of Existing facilities managing apportioned waste in Tower Hamlets (tonnes per annum<sup>44</sup>)**

Capacity source	LACW/C&I management capacity
Existing licensed waste sites	160,000tpa
Exempt waste sites	40,000tpa
Onsite segregation facilities	17,600tpa
Total assessed capacity	217,600tpa
<b>Total potential capacity</b>	<b>217,600tpa</b>

20.18 When the value of c220,000 tpa is compared with the apportioned tonnages presented in Table 14 above, it shows that the assessed capacity ought to be sufficient to meet the apportionment requirement. However given the identified shortfall in capacity for the management of construction and demolition waste predicted to arise in the borough over the Plan period, it is still considered appropriate to identify areas of search where facilities offering additional waste management capacity may be developed, on a precautionary basis.

20.19 Areas listed in policy RW1 Managing our waste are considered to be suitable in principle to accommodate new waste management facilities. This is primarily due to their industrial nature and access to the strategic transport network so that waste and vehicle movements can avoid local roads and protect the safety and amenity of residents and heritage assets. Areas of search are not exclusively designated for waste management purposes as they are also considered to be suitable, in principle, for other uses that are considered appropriate for their respective policy designations.

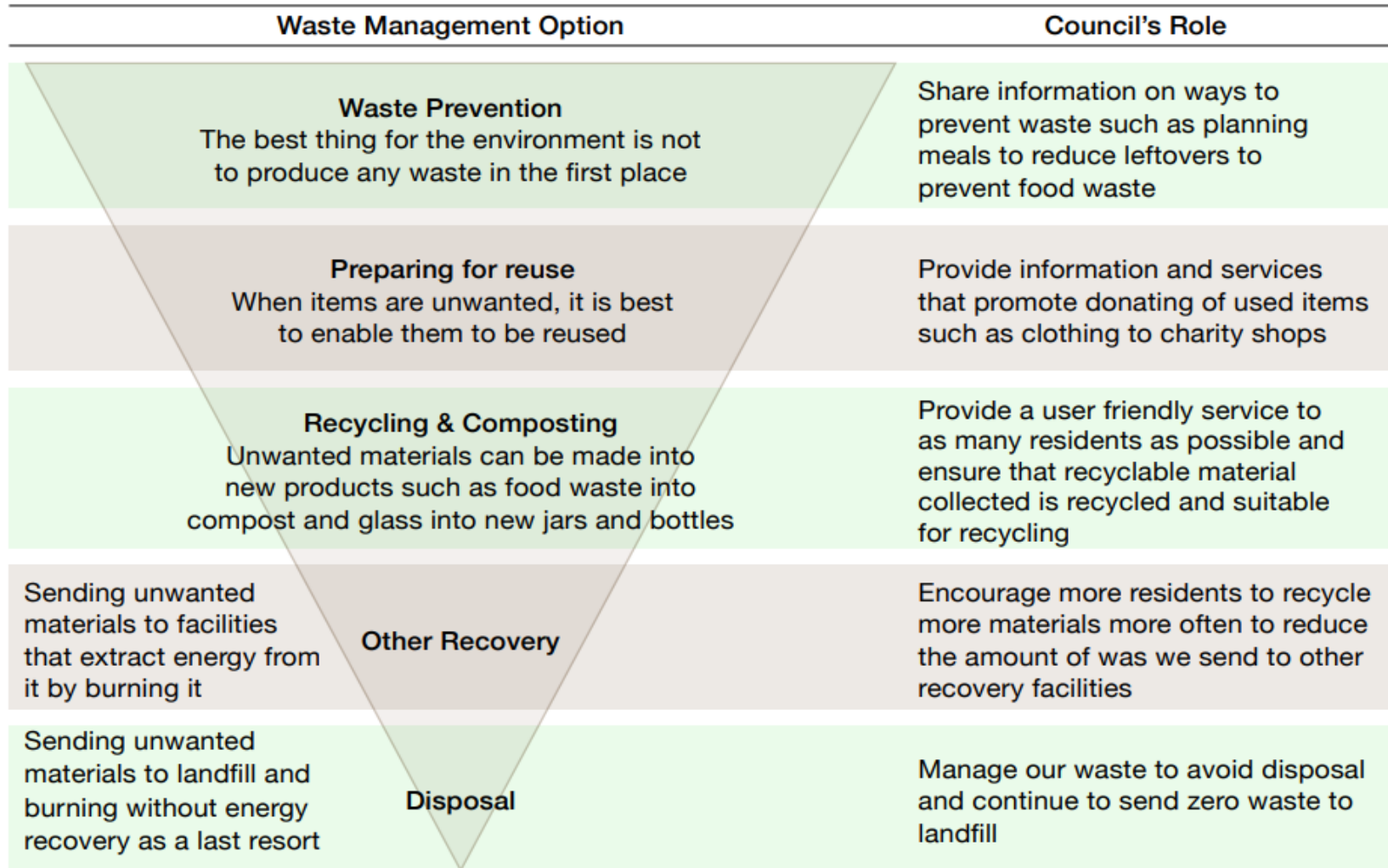
20.20 Any proposals for new or extended waste management facilities in Tower Hamlets will be assessed against criteria in the National Planning Policy for Waste, the London Plan and Local Plan policies. The Council is actively exploring opportunities for the development of further waste management facilities to manage the Borough's waste through its waste management strategy.

20.21 The construction of new, extended or replacement of existing waste management facilities must include, where possible, technologies that seek to extract as much material and value as possible through the repurposing, recycling, storage, and management of waste. Where opportunities arise for synergies or partnerships with delivery of the Council's waste management services these will be explored.

20.22 The London Plan is seeking to move towards a future where goods are designed to be reused and recycled and very little waste will require disposal in the future (a 'circular economy'). Tower Hamlets will contribute to this approach in various ways (e.g. new developments will be required to recycle and reuse construction materials – see Policy RW1).



Figure 22: Waste Hierarchy Diagram



## Policy RW1 Managing our waste

1. The following existing waste sites within Tower Hamlets (as shown on the Policies Map) are safeguarded for waste use over the plan period.

**Table 15: Schedule 1: Existing waste sites in Tower Hamlets**

Reference	Name/Location	Other designation(s)	Site area (hectares)	Operational capacity/ contribution to apportionment (tonnes per year)
1	Northumberland Wharf, Yabsley Street	Safeguarded Wharf	0.88	160,000
2	Ailsa Street		0.53	0/23,850 – 34,450

2. The following is the existing waste site in the London Legacy Development Corporation area (LLDC) and is subject to Planning Policies in the LLDC Local Plan.

**Table 16: Schedule 2: Existing waste site in LLDC**

Reference	Name/Location	Other designation(s)	Site area (hectares)	Operational capacity/ 5 yr peak(tonnes per year)
3	455 Wick Lane	LLDC Local Plan: Strategic Industrial Location and Preferred Industrial Location	0.47 (0.027 currently used for waste purposes ancillary to civil engineering works)	64,610

3. Development proposals which seek to maximise the efficiency and/or enhance the capacity of existing waste facilities in the borough will be supported.

4. Applications for non-waste uses on safeguarded sites or the reprovision of existing waste management facilities will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated and ensured through a legal agreement that compensatory capacity at least equivalent to, the maximum annual throughput that the existing site can achieve will be delivered on a suitable replacement site within the borough in the first instance or another part of London which provides.

5. Development proposals that prevent or prejudice the continued availability of capacity of these sites will only be supported where alternative capacity provision is made.
6. Areas in Schedules 3 and 4 are considered suitable for new waste management facilities (as shown on the Policies Map).

**Table 17: Schedule 3: Areas of search for new waste sites in Tower Hamlets**

Reference	Name/Location	Other designation(s)	Waste facility type	Site area (hectares)	Assessed potential capacity contribution (tonnes per year)
4	The Highway	Local Industrial Location	Reuse/ refurbishment/ repair	2.7 (of which an estimated 0.65 to become available over the plan period)	Up to 32,500
5	Empson Street	Strategic Industrial Location	Recycling, composting or recovery	10.07 (of which an estimated 2.42 to become available over the plan period)	Up to 121,000

**Table 18: Schedule 4: Areas of search for new waste sites in LLDC**

Reference	Name/Location	Other designation(s)	Waste facility type	Site area (hectares)	Assessed potential capacity (tonnes per year)
6	Fish Island	LLDC Local Plan: Strategic Industrial Location	Recycling, composting, recovery	9.21 (of which an estimated 2.21 to become available over the plan period)	Up to 110,500

7. Small-scale waste management facilities integrated within new developments outside of the Areas of Search listed in Schedules 3-4 may be acceptable where they contribute to managing apportioned waste and are of a scale and nature that does not compromise adjacent existing and proposed land uses.
8. New development will be expected to reuse and recycle construction, demolition, and excavation waste on or close to the site where it arises.
9. Development proposals in the vicinity of existing, safeguarded or consented waste management facilities must consider the agent of change principle to ensure the proposed use and operations do not constrain the assessed potential.

## Supporting text

20.23 This policy seeks to support the development of a well-planned and integrated network of waste management facilities that provides for identified future capacity needs and contributes towards managing waste generated within the borough (and beyond) over the plan period.

20.24 Meeting this need will require the management of waste arising from new development to be provided for, retention of existing waste management facilities (operational and non-operational), and provision of additional facilities in identified Areas of Search and other suitable locations which comply with the criteria set out in Policy RW2 (and the development management criteria contained in this Local Plan). Proposals for waste management facilities within the Areas of Search will be guided towards locations within these areas so they are located as far away as possible from sensitive receptors (such as residential uses, schools, nurseries, and healthcare facilities) and mitigation measures are provided to ensure any significant detrimental environmental and amenity impacts are adequately addressed. Where existing facilities can be enhanced to maximise their use, subject to the requirements of Policy RW2, this will be encouraged.

20.25 The LLDC is the planning authority until December 2024 for those sites and areas of search within its boundary (as shown in Schedules 2 and 4). The LLDC Local Plan (2020-2036) safeguards existing waste sites (listed in Schedule 2) and identifies areas of employment land suitable for waste uses (listed in Schedule 4). To secure the delivery of an effective waste plan for the borough as a whole Tower Hamlets and the LLDC agree that the Area of Search listed in Schedule 4 is potentially suitable for waste management use. Acceptability of proposals for waste management uses in this location will be determined with reference

to policies within the LLDC Local Plan 2020 and any other relevant material considerations that apply to that proposal. Until December 2024 applications for planning permission in these locations will be determined by the LLDC.

20.26 The existing safeguarded waste site of Ailsa Street is within an area of regeneration and may be released for other uses, providing the requirements set out within Policy RW1 (see Part 4) are met.

20.27 Compensatory capacity will be sought which is at least equivalent to the maximum annual throughput over the last five years, where reported through the Environment Agency's Waste Data Interrogator. Compensatory provision should be provided locally within Tower Hamlets in the first instance, or failing that, elsewhere in London. Compensatory provision will be secured through conditions requiring proof of commencement of operation and operational capacity and a legal agreement at the planning permission stage.

20.28 Competition for land means the borough must look beyond traditional industrial locations when seeking space for facilities to manage its waste. There is an opportunity for innovative technologies to be incorporated into new development to manage waste generated over its lifetime. Part 7 of the policy therefore allows modern waste facilities to be integrated within new development outside the areas of search. Small scale facilities which come forward will be assessed on a case-by-case basis against criteria in Policy RW2 and regional and national policy.

20.29 On-site materials processing systems for food are an important aspect to consider in this borough due to the particular challenges to collection services within blocks of flats. The principle of these systems is two-fold:



- a. To carry out processing of materials at source, thereby reducing the tonnage and volume of solid waste to be managed and the subsequent burden on collection services; and
- b. To make use of valuable end products such as unlocking the energy held within the waste material itself.

20.30 There are a number of pieces of equipment, which may provide appropriate on-site waste processing including, but not limited to, micro digesters and composting units.

20.31 The flexibility of these systems is such that it reduces the need for separate collections of food waste to be carried out within the development and thereby reducing vehicle movements. Where such systems are proposed, it will be the responsibility of the managing agent to maintain the system/facility. An agreement will also need to be made with the Council with regards to securing the long-term availability of this capacity so it may be relied upon to contribute towards Tower Hamlets' apportionments prior to permission being granted.

20.32 Integrated waste collection systems are also required for new developments under Policy RW3. We will also consider the allocation of community infrastructure levy contributions towards provision of strategic waste management facilities located elsewhere in the borough.

20.33 For part 7 of the policy, developers should submit a plan for the management on-site waste to demonstrate how much construction, demolition and excavation waste will be reused and recycled, taking account of the London Plan target of 95%. The sustainable transportation of waste (by water and rail) will be assessed as part of Policy RW2, see Part 1(i).

20.34 All sites and areas of search listed under Policy RW1 are shown on the relevant policies maps for Tower Hamlets and the LLDC

#### **London Plan policies:**

- D13 Agent of Change
- SI7 Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy
- SI8 Waste capacity and net waste self-sufficiency
- SI9 Safeguarded waste sites

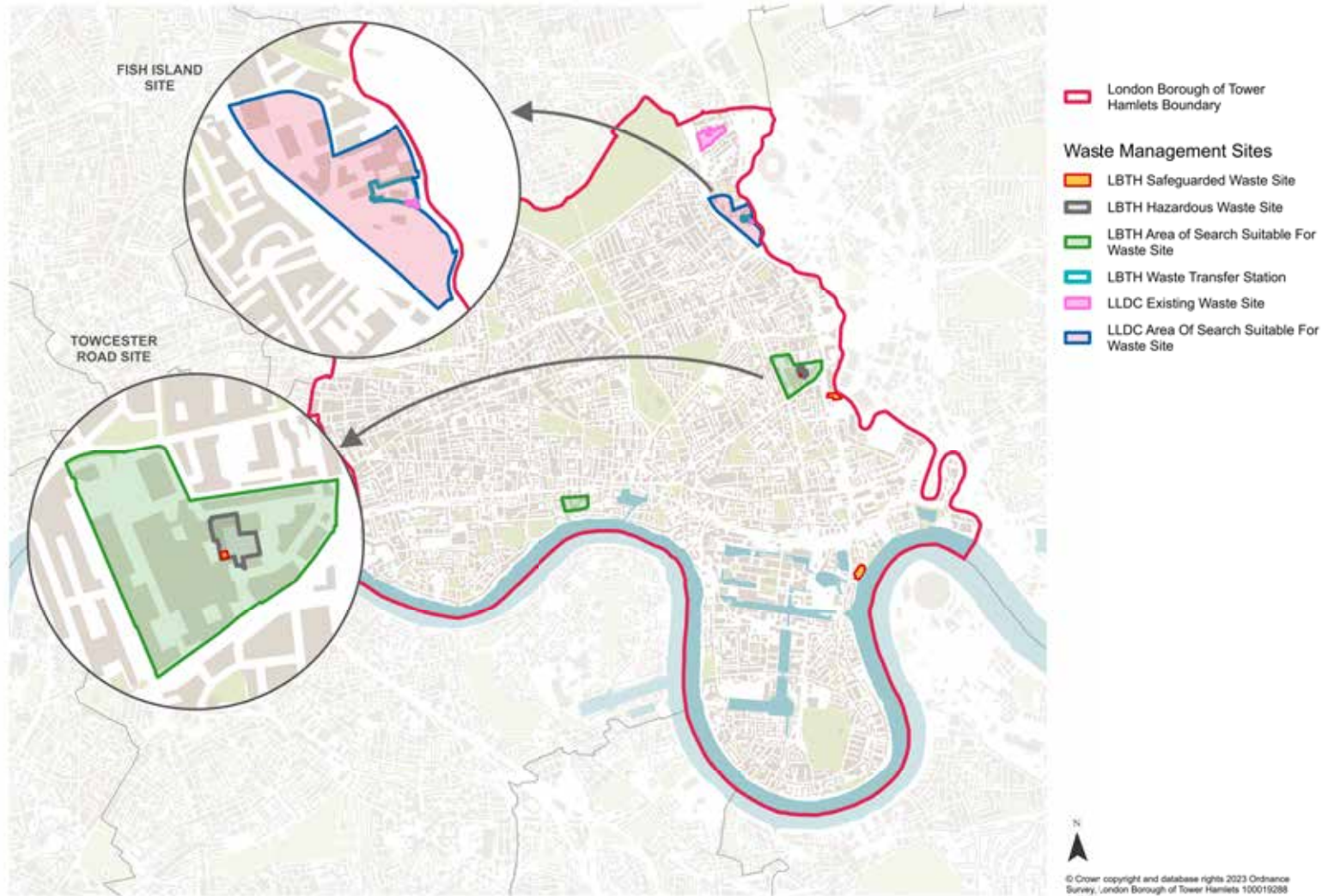
#### **Local Plan policies:**

- CG3 Low carbon energy and heating
- CG4 Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy
- CG6 Managing flood risk
- CG7 Sustainable drainage
- CG9 Air Quality
- CG10 Noise and vibration

#### **Evidence base:**

- Tower Hamlets Waste Data Update 2024
- Tower Hamlets Waste Data Study, 2023
- Don't let our future go to waste, Waste Management Strategy, 2018-2030
- Reuse, Recycling and Waste SPD, 2020
- National Planning Policy for Waste, 2014

Figure 23: Waste sites map



## Policy RW2 New and enhanced waste facilities

1. Development proposals to construct new waste facilities or replace or extend existing waste facilities will be supported where:
  - a. they are located on safeguarded waste sites or existing waste sites or strategic industrial land or local industrial locations;
  - b. they observe the 'Proximity Principle', dealing with waste as close to its source as possible;
  - c. there is good access to the strategic transport network and where feasible, they prioritise rail and water transport over use of the principal road network;
  - d. infrastructure to facilitate any road based vehicle fleet's transition to Zero and Ultra Low Emission Vehicles is provided on site;
  - e. they demonstrate that the waste will be managed in accordance with the application of the Waste Hierarchy in priority order and its contribution to the circular economy and, where possible, seek to achieve a positive carbon outcome in accordance with the requirements of the London Plan (2021) Policy SI 8;
  - f. they incorporate high-quality design, are of a scale and nature which integrates into its surroundings and ensures compatibility with adjacent existing and proposed land uses (including within neighbouring boroughs);
  - g. they minimise amenity impacts on surrounding areas in terms of noise, odour, air quality and impacts on the transport network, according with Agent of Change principles;
  - h. there is co-location with other compatible uses (including existing waste facilities or fleet depots);
  - i. they propose technology which is appropriate for the location and nature of the site;
  - j. there is adequate road capacity to accommodate any vehicle movements generated and that vehicles can enter, wait, unload and leave the site without prejudicing the safety of pedestrians and other road users;
  - k. it provides effective on-site measures to ensure safety and security;
  - l. it is enclosed, unless it can be demonstrated that environmental and amenity impacts, including the emission of air pollutants, noise, vibration, dust, glare, vermin, odours can be mitigated, both during and after operations; and
  - m. it incorporates measures to minimise carbon emissions and maximise the use of lower-carbon energy sources.
2. Developments that propose waste management facilities should include an appropriately detailed plan for the site during construction, operation and decommissioning.

## Supporting text

20.35 This policy relates to the provision of new and enhanced waste management facilities (including those replacing, expanding, or intensifying existing sites as well as capacity on exempt sites) and seeks to direct them towards the most appropriate and sustainable locations which maximise the efficient use of the land and do not have any unacceptable impacts.

20.36 The policy seeks to incorporate flexibility into the assessment of new waste management uses, recognising the evolving nature of both waste management practices and national and regional policies that may result in a need for retrofit or the delivery of new waste management facilities in the borough.

20.37 New waste management facilities will be directed towards existing safeguarded sites and areas of search (as set out in Policy RW1). In other locations, such facilities will still be expected to meet the criteria set out in Policy RW2 as well as any other relevant policies within the plan. Windfall proposals for waste management facilities outwith existing sites, safeguarded sites or areas of search will be required to demonstrate why it is not feasible to do so within the areas identified in RW1.

20.38 Part 1 seeks to ensure that new developments are located close to the sources of waste they are intended to manage, operate to support the application of the waste hierarchy and the move towards a circular economy. Development proposals should be supported by documentation which sets out how the development will meet these requirements. Part 1 (a) seeks to ensure the protection existing and safeguarded sites and also those with exemptions.



20.39 Part 1 (b) and 1 (d) set out details regarding management of waste in line with the proximity principle, within Tower Hamlets and surrounding boroughs; seeking to promote more sustainable operations at waste management facilities and the circular economy; and waste being a resource which can support future development within Tower Hamlets and London.

20.40 It should also be demonstrated how the operation of the facility either new or enhanced will minimise impact on surrounding existing uses and amenity.





20.41 Parts 1(c) and (j) seek to ensure applicants demonstrate that opportunities to transport both construction and operational waste from the site via rail and water are explored (including shared facilities at existing railheads, wharves, and depots) as a means to reduce congestion and vehicular movements on the road network. Information on sustainable transportation of waste should be submitted as part of the planning application, alongside details of reuse and recycling of waste arising during the construction phase in line with Policy RW1 (see part 7).

20.42 Developments providing additional waste management capacity will be encouraged to co-locate with existing waste facilities and other

compatible uses without having any significant detrimental impacts on the amenity and the function of the immediate and surrounding area to optimise the potential of sites and address the intensification of land uses, as per part 1(h).

20.43 The types of waste technology that will be suitable will depend on the nature and scale of the proposed scheme and the characteristics of the site and its surroundings, as required under part 1(i). Broad types of facility suitable for each area of search are set out in the schedule of areas in Policy RW1. These are likely to be small-scale facilities due to the constrained nature of the borough.

20.44 Part 1(l) seeks to mitigate adverse impacts associated with waste management facilities. Waste management facilities should be enclosed and covered on all vertical sides with small access and egress points, fitted with fast-acting doors, and incorporate an air filtering system to reduce airborne particulate concentrations in and outside of the building in line with Environment Agency advice. This provides an effective way of controlling dust and particulate pollution within waste developments. In cases where enclosure is not possible, proposals must provide details of proposed measures demonstrating how the control measures can adequately mitigate these impacts. Operators will be expected to obtain the appropriate environmental permits from the Environment Agency or the Local Authority and comply with the conditions of those permits at all times.

20.45 To minimise the impact on climate change, waste management facilities should incorporate opportunities to be attached to the district heating network and/or incorporate opportunities for energy recovery and combined heat and power, see Part 1(m), such as anaerobic digestion. In instances where this is not feasible, an energy statement must be submitted with the planning application demonstrating that it is not technically feasible or economically viable.



20.46 Part 2 seeks to offer applicants guidance on the content of management plans which are to be designed to ensure the operation of waste management facilities does not detrimentally impact on the amenity, environmental and infrastructure of the surrounding area during construction, operation and decommissioning. Management plans should include:

- ★ vehicle movements within the site, demonstrating there is adequate road capacity to accommodate any vehicle movements generated and that vehicles can enter, wait, unload and leave the site without prejudicing the safety of pedestrians and other road users;
- ★ how dust, mud or debris build up will be minimised on hard surfaces outside designated waste storage or processing areas;
- ★ site surfacing, ensuring the integrity of surfaces facilitates the safe and smooth movement of heavy goods vehicles around the site;
- ★ where and how waste is stored, how material drop heights will be minimised and stockpile height limited;
- ★ any water or odour neutralising misting system to prevent the escape of dust or odour from the site, and its maintenance;
- ★ wheel washing facilities to ensure vehicles do not track mud or debris around the site or onto the highway;
- ★ how vehicles will be sheeted and securely covered where carrying materials likely to generate dust or odour onto the public highway to and from the site;
- ★ how any build-up of dust, mud or debris will be monitored and reduced where it would inhibit the safe and efficient operation of the site; and
- ★ site maintenance and record keeping.

## London Plan policies:

- D13 Agent of Change
- SI7 Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy
- SI8 Waste capacity and net waste self-sufficiency
- SI9 Safeguarded waste sites

## Local Plan policies:

- DV5 Developer contributions
- CG4 Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy
- CG6 Managing flood risk
- CG7 Sustainable drainage
- CG9 Air quality
- PS3 Securing design quality

## Evidence base:

- Waste Data Study, 2023
- Waste Data and Waste Capacity Study Update 2024
- Don't let our future go to waste, Waste Management Strategy, 2018-2030
- Reuse, Recycling and Waste Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), adopted 2020

## Policy RW3 Waste collection facilities in new development

1. All new development must include sufficient accessible space to separate and store dry recyclables, organics, residual and bulky waste for collection, both within individual units and for the building as a whole. Waste storage facilities within developments should be designed to avoid any adverse amenity impacts.
2. New major residential development proposals must incorporate high-quality on-site waste collection systems that do not include traditional methods of storage and collection and are compatible with waste collection methods set out in the Tower Hamlets Reuse, Recycling and Waste SPD. In instances where this is not practicable, supporting evidence must be submitted with the application to demonstrate this.
3. New residential, non-residential, and mixed-use development proposals should be accompanied by a Waste Management Plan that complies with the requirements of Tower Hamlet's Reuse, Recycling and Waste SPD.
4. Provision of waste storage and collection should be informed through early engagement with relevant London Borough of Tower Hamlet's service areas. Developments that propose provision of onsite waste management technologies should be discussed at an early stage of design with the London Borough of Tower Hamlet's waste management team.

## Supporting text

20.47 Part 1 of this policy will help to ensure that waste is collected and managed in a sustainable manner in line with the principles of the Tower Hamlets' waste management hierarchy as set out in Figure 22. It is also intended to increase the amount of waste recycled and composted from all developments, and to improve waste collection systems in developments with communal waste facilities in particular. Tower Hamlets is working towards meeting the London Plan target of recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2030 and zero biodegradable waste to landfill by 2026. The volume of household waste that was reused, recycled, or composted in Tower Hamlets needs to increase to meet these targets and ensuring the required facilities are provided in new developments will help move towards and meet these targets.

20.48 This part also seeks to ensure that dry recyclables, organics, and residual waste will be segregated, and for residential developments bulked, at source within new developments to:

- a. minimise transport movements from waste collection operations;
- b. minimise the financial and operational burden on existing waste collection system;
- c. maximise efficient use of collection resources;
- d. encourage recycling behaviour by residents and reduce contamination of recyclables collected; and
- e. make a positive impact on the quality of the street scene.

20.49 Incorporating sufficient waste storage capacity within new developments should be done from the outset to avoid capacity shortfalls or poor quality service. Applicants will need to forecast how much organic, recyclable, and residual waste will be generated when

the development is occupied and demonstrate that sufficient space has been allocated to the storage and/or bulking of this waste in both individual units and for the development as a whole.

20.50 Tower Hamlets is seeking to move away from the traditional waste storage methods, such as standard wheeled bins, bagged collections, and Euro bin containers, towards central bulking systems particularly for residential developments that require communal waste collection facilities. Central bulking system rather than standard bins and communal Euro bins, offer more waste storage which can be stored before needing collection and more waste can be collected in a single round. As a general rule, all of the systems using bulk containers allow waste to be stored in a smaller footprint than standard communal Euro bins. The location of storage containers should be chosen to maximise operational convenience and minimise environmental, amenity and transport impacts.

20.51 Under part 2 of the policy, new major residential developments will be expected to incorporate on-site waste collection systems that are compatible with waste collection services. Such systems could include compactors, underground storage containers, vacuum systems, and automated waste collection systems. These systems require land to be set aside to store bulked waste materials, with the size and footprint varying from system to system. Preference should be given to systems that can provide for a weekly collection service as a minimum and allow separate collection of organic wastes or facilitate onsite processing of organics. Applicants should discuss options with the waste management team prior to the submission of an application. Food waste, household waste and recyclables must be separated to allow independent collection and onward management.



20.52 The Tower Hamlets Reuse, Recycling and Waste SPD sets out information on how waste management should be addressed in proposals for new residential (including mixed use) development. The SPD has been produced to support developers in submitting a planning application that meets the policy requirements of the Council. The principles set out in the SPD may also be applied to wholly commercial development and when existing development is refurbished. The Tower Hamlets Reuse, Recycling and Waste SPD sets out how the five stages of waste management and ten steps to occupation are to be followed to guide the most appropriate waste management system for new developments, and how to provide sufficient information in support

of a complete planning application. This SPD can be used to inform formulation of a waste management plan as required under part 3 of Policy RW3 – Waste collection facilities in new development.

20.53 In instances where it is not practicable or we consider it inappropriate for non-traditional waste collection systems to be incorporated within the development, the developer or managing agent must provide adequate space as well as collection containers that are in accordance with the requirements set out in the Tower Hamlets Reuse, Recycling and Waste SPD.

20.54 Planning applications should clearly set out the access route of the occupiers and the servicing vehicles, including a clear swept path in accordance with the Council's waste collection specifications, and access arrangements to container stores. The identified waste storage area must be designed to ensure refuse collection vehicles are able to enter and exit the highway in a forward gear and perform all collection activities within the curtilage of the development site. Applicants are advised to contact the waste management team that manages the collection of waste prior to submitting a planning application and adopt a collaborative approach to ensure these arrangements are in line with our waste collection services. Further advice is available in Tower Hamlets Reuse, Recycling and Waste SPD.

**London plan policies:**

- D6 Housing quality and standards

**Local plan policies:**

- HFg Housing standards and quality

**Evidence base:**

- Reuse, Recycling and Waste SPD, 2020







# Site Allocations

## 21. Introduction

21.1 Delivering sustainable places is an important aspect of spatial planning to address the needs and priorities of Tower Hamlets, such as building a significant number of homes to reduce overcrowding, and delivering long term benefits to people and communities across the borough. Successful place-making is critical to creating cohesive, well-connected and more vibrant communities and ensuring that development responds positively to the distinct and unique characteristics which make Tower Hamlets a great place to live, work and visit.

21.2 Policy DV1 (Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets) sets out the overall strategy of how growth will be delivered across the borough. This section provides more detail on how different areas of the borough will accommodate this growth.

21.3 In order to realise the vision and objectives of the Local Plan, the following sub-areas have been identified to positively manage development opportunities, particularly housing delivery, and change in the borough at the strategic level:

- City Fringe
- Central
- Leaside
- Isle of Dogs and South Poplar.

21.4 This section sets out how each sub-area will grow and change over the period to 2038. In particular, it sets out the vision, objectives and overarching principles which will inform and guide development proposals within each sub-area.

21.5 Within each sub-area, a number of sites (known as allocations) have been identified to accommodate new homes and jobs alongside necessary infrastructure, such as open space, community, health and education facilities.

21.6 All of the sub-areas and site allocations are shown in Figure 24. This section also contains figures illustrating each sub-area and the site allocations within them. These figures are illustrative and show how the principles and requirements set out in this section could be implemented.

21.7 The site allocations have been selected following an assessment of their suitability for development (that they would not lead to inappropriate development that would have negative impacts on current or future residents of the borough), their availability and deliverability (that there is believed a realistic prospect of the sites being developed during the plan period), and that they can deliver a strategic amount of housing to help the borough meet its housing targets over the plan period (generally, this has been assumed to be at least 500 homes, although in some instances sites are delivering other strategic functions as well, such as employment space or student housing).



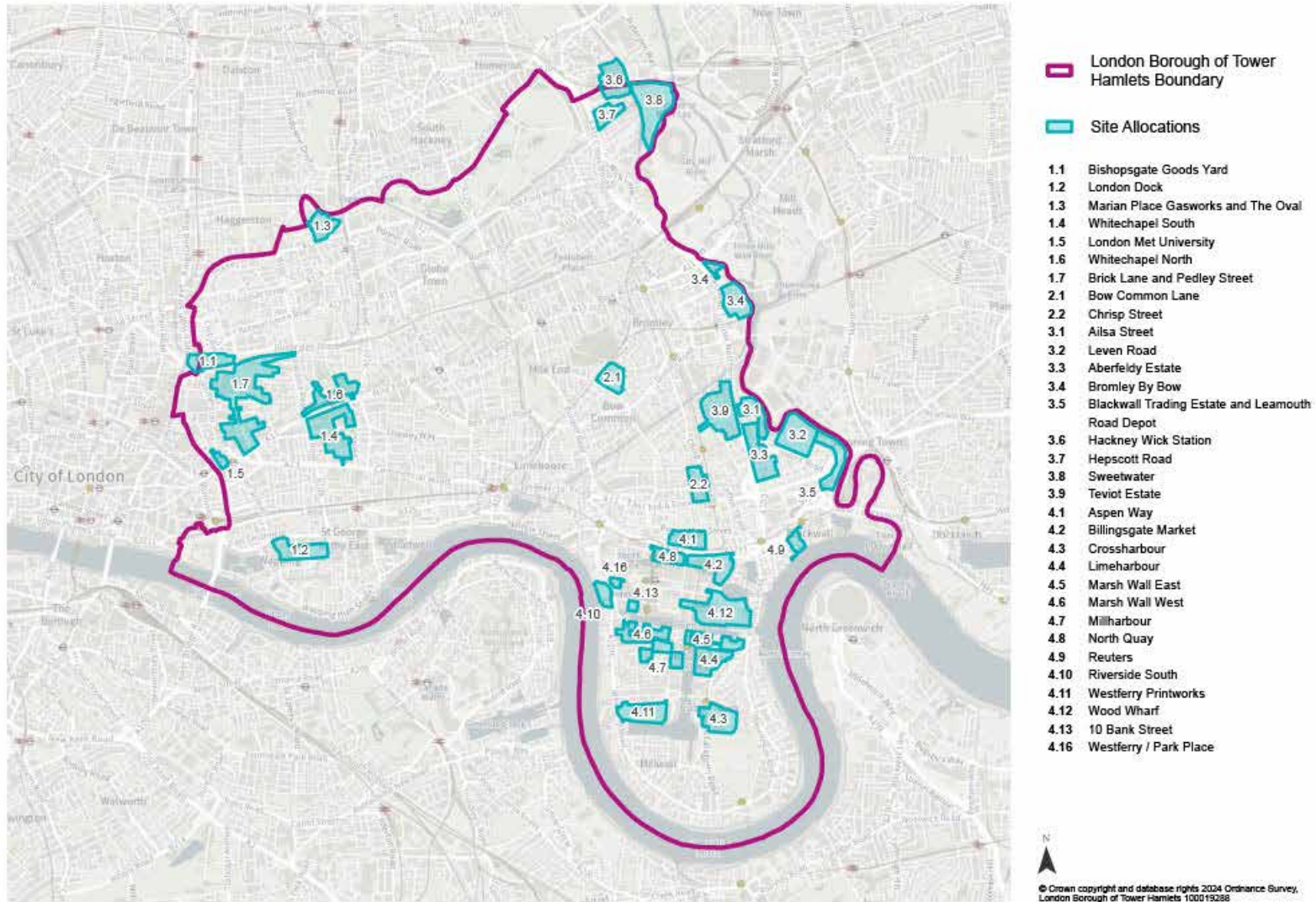
21.8 The site allocations have been further developed through a design-led site capacity assessment, as set out in the London Plan. This has involved looking at each site allocation in terms of what an appropriate layout, scale, mass, and height would be, and from there determining the capacity of housing and, where appropriate, other uses that could be included on site, taking into account the need to provide infrastructure on site allocations as well. These capacity assessments are intended to set out an appropriate form of development, but are not intended to be entirely prescriptive, and other forms of development may also prove to be acceptable where they meet the requirements of the site allocations, and do not exceed the appropriate heights set out in them.

21.9 Development within these sub-areas will also need to take account of other relevant guidance and supporting information such as London Plan Guidance (LPGs)/Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), masterplans and Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks (OAPFs).

21.10 When determining a planning application, flexibility may be applied to the policies relating to the site allocation requirements based on an up-to-date assessment of need and the agreed viability position of the scheme to ensure the site allocation is deliverable in the context of the principles of sustainable development.

21.11 Some of the site allocations are under multiple ownership and comprise a number of development plots. In such cases, effective engagement between residents, landowners, developers and leaseholders needs to take place in order to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.

Figure 24: Site allocations



## 22. City Fringe

### Location

22.1 The City Fringe sub-area is located in the western part of the borough, bounded by the City of London to the west, the London borough of Hackney to the north, the River Thames to the south, and the borough's inner city communities to the east. The sub-area also corresponds with the borough's portion of the London Plan's City Fringe opportunity area. The wider opportunity area also includes parts of the London boroughs of Hackney and Islington.

22.2 The City Fringe represents a collection of vibrant and distinctive town centres and employment hubs, which sit alongside residential areas. It comprises eight distinct character places. The Tower Hamlets Urban Structure and Characterisation Study provides more information on the key elements of the local character of each of these places.

### Vision for City Fringe

22.3 By 2038, the City Fringe will become a more attractive place to live, work and visit. New communities will be well integrated into the area, benefiting from the close proximity to existing and new employment, retail and leisure uses within the wider area.

22.4 The world-class economic hub of the City of London will expand and opportunities arising from the Tech City and Med City initiatives will be maximised. Whitechapel, Cambridge Heath, Shoreditch, Spitalfields and Aldgate will all have a more diverse mix of commercial, cultural, leisure, tourism and night-time activities. It will be a place for new affordable and flexible employment spaces benefiting from the

arrival of the Elizabeth line and improved accessibility to the local area. Whitechapel and the surrounding area will benefit from new state-of-the-art research and education facilities and will accommodate start-ups and other supporting businesses.

22.5 A new civic centre and a new green spine to the south of Whitechapel Road will provide focal points for leisure and community/social activities. The public realm in and around the Tower of London world heritage site will be enhanced, with improved legibility and movement for all users.

22.6 A masterplan will be developed for the Brick Lane area, which will set out a tailored vision, strategic priorities, and detailed design guidance for the development of sites within the Brick Lane area. This will be reflected in the site allocation for Brick Lane and Pedley Street.

### Objectives

- a. Create a new civic centre and world-class life science research hub at Whitechapel
- b. Protect and enhance the area's heritage assets and improve the historic character of the individual places
- c. Support a mix of uses to support the financial and business centres of the City of London, Tech City and the emerging research and life sciences cluster (Med City), whilst striking the appropriate balance between residential and commercial development
- d. Improve and enhance legibility, permeability and connectivity within, to and from the area, whilst enhancing and improving green grid links
- e. Strengthen the role and function of the area's distinctive and varied



town centres to provide a choice of cultural, leisure and retail activities, and

- f. Create new open spaces (including pocket parks and strategic open space) and improve links to existing publicly accessible open space.

## **Site Allocations in the City Fringe sub-area**

1.1 Bishopsgate Goods Yard

1.2 London Dock

1.3 Marian Place Gasworks and The Oval

1.4 Whitechapel South

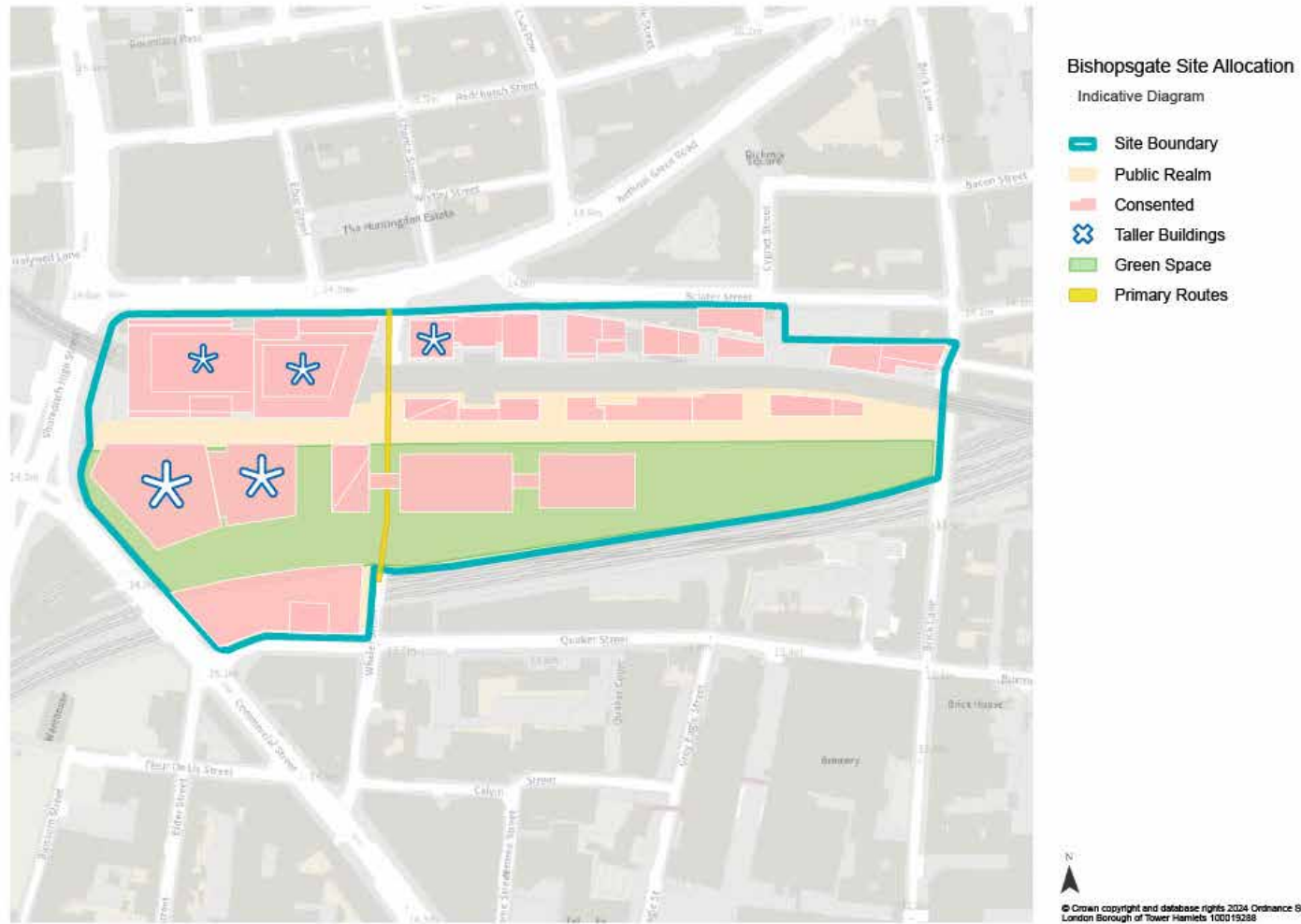
1.5 London Metropolitan University

1.6 Whitechapel North

1.7 Brick Lane and Pedley Street

## 1.1 Bishopsgate Goods Yard

Figure 25: 1.1 Bishopsgate Goods Yard (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Shoreditch High Street
Area [ha]	4.35
Ward	Weavers
PTAL [2031]	6a-6b
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● London View Management Framework (views 8A.1 – Westminster Pier to St Paul's Cathedral, and 9A.1 – King Henry VIII's Mound to St Paul's Cathedral)</li> <li>● Central Activities Zone</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Spitalfields and Brick Lane, tier 2)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Fournier Street, adjacent to site)</li> <li>● Statutory Listed Buildings (Braithwaite Viaduct, Grade II; Street Name Plaque Attached to Number 125 Brick Lane, Grade II, adjacent to the site; 2-38 Cheshire Street, Grade II, adjacent to the site)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	PA/14/02011 – outline permission for comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment including residential, business, commercial, and community uses. Included detailed permission for the tallest building and the retail arches.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	Within the Tower Hamlets portion of the site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 500 homes</li> <li>● 11,500sqm non-residential uses - maximum</li> </ul>
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development within the Tower Hamlets portion of the site should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses and the provision of a leisure facility and an Idea Store.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community and cultural uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Community facility
  - Strategic consolidated open space of minimum 1 hectare
- This is a cross-boundary site with the London Borough of Hackney. Development should coordinate consultation across planning authorities and address cross-boundary issues.
- The community facility should be delivered within or adjacent to the Brick Lane district centre.

## **Form, massing, and heritage**

- Height strategy: Appropriate height of 105m at the tallest point within Tower Hamlets, which should be located at the western end of the Tower Hamlets portion of the site, around Shoreditch High Street Overground station, on the boundary with the London Borough of Hackney. Heights should step down towards the eastern end of the site. This allocation does not set heights within the part of the site that is within the London Borough of Hackney.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. This includes the Fournier Street conservation area, the existing Grade II-listed Braithwaite viaduct, Oriel gate and the forecourt wall to the former goods station fronting Shoreditch High Street, and other identified heritage assets. Consideration must also be given to the impact on strategic and local views. Development should also protect or enhance heritage assets in the surrounding areas (including within the London Borough of Hackney). For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## **Routes and streets**

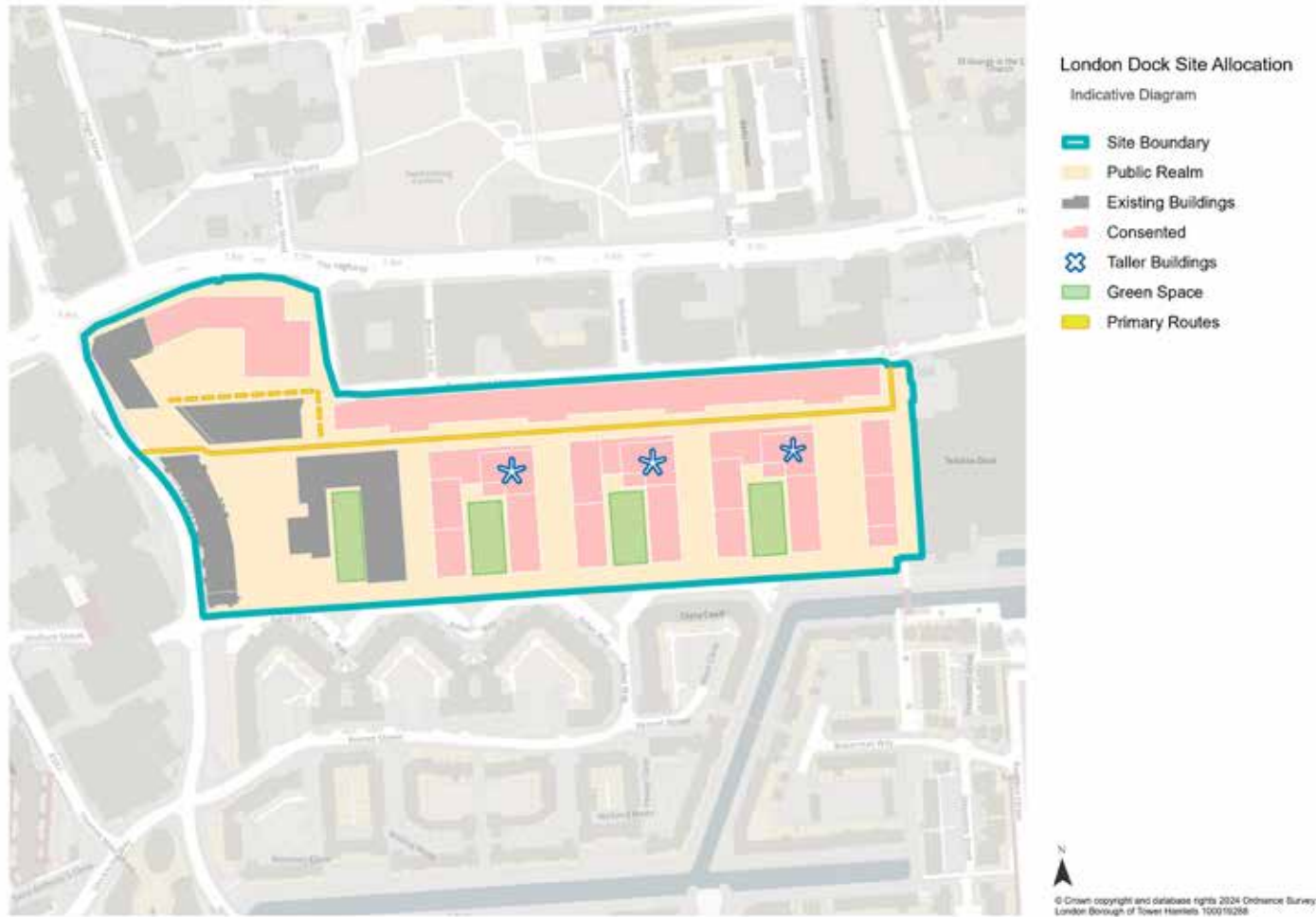
- Improve walking and cycling routes to, from and within the site to establish connections to Shoreditch High Street Overground station, Brick Lane District Centre, Shoreditch Triangle and the new open space. These should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and legibility. Connections should be made to the green grid at Brick Lane and Quaker Street.

## **Environment and public realm**

- Integrate development with the surrounding area and improve the street frontage and public realm on key routes, particularly along Wheler Street and ensure it is well integrated into the public squares to the east and south of the station.
- Provide a consolidated open space with a minimum size of one hectare, integrated with the green grid along Quaker Street and Brick Lane in the form of a multi-functional local park located above the Braithwaite Viaduct.

## 1.2 London Dock

Figure 26: 1.2 London Dock (indicative)





Site information	Details
Address	Pennington Street
Area [ha]	5.78
Ward	St Katharine's and Wapping
PTAL [2031]	2-5
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area (small part of the site)</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Shadwell Basin, Wapping Wood, and Wapping Canals, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Wapping, tier 2)</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Wapping)</li> <li>● Statutory Listed Buildings (Pennington Street Warehouses and Vaults, Grade II; Tobacco Dock Warehouse, Grade I, adjacent to site)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/13/01276 (and subsequent amendments) – outline permission for comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment including residential, business, commercial, and community uses (including a school). Included detailed permission for plots A, B, and C.</p> <p>PA/16/02851 – reserved matters for plot D.</p> <p>PA/19/00766 – reserved matters for Plot E, the secondary school.</p> <p>PA/19/01684 – reserved matters for plot F .</p> <p>PA/22/02666 – reserved matters for plot G.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	1,800 homes Up to 21,500sqm of non-residential floorspace
Phasing	2024-29

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses and the provision of a secondary school.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Secondary School

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: Appropriate height of 98m at the tallest point, which should be the extant plot C1 located to the west of the site. Heights should generally step down towards Tobacco Dock to the east of the site.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. This includes the listed warehouses on site and the nearby grade I listed Tobacco Dock. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

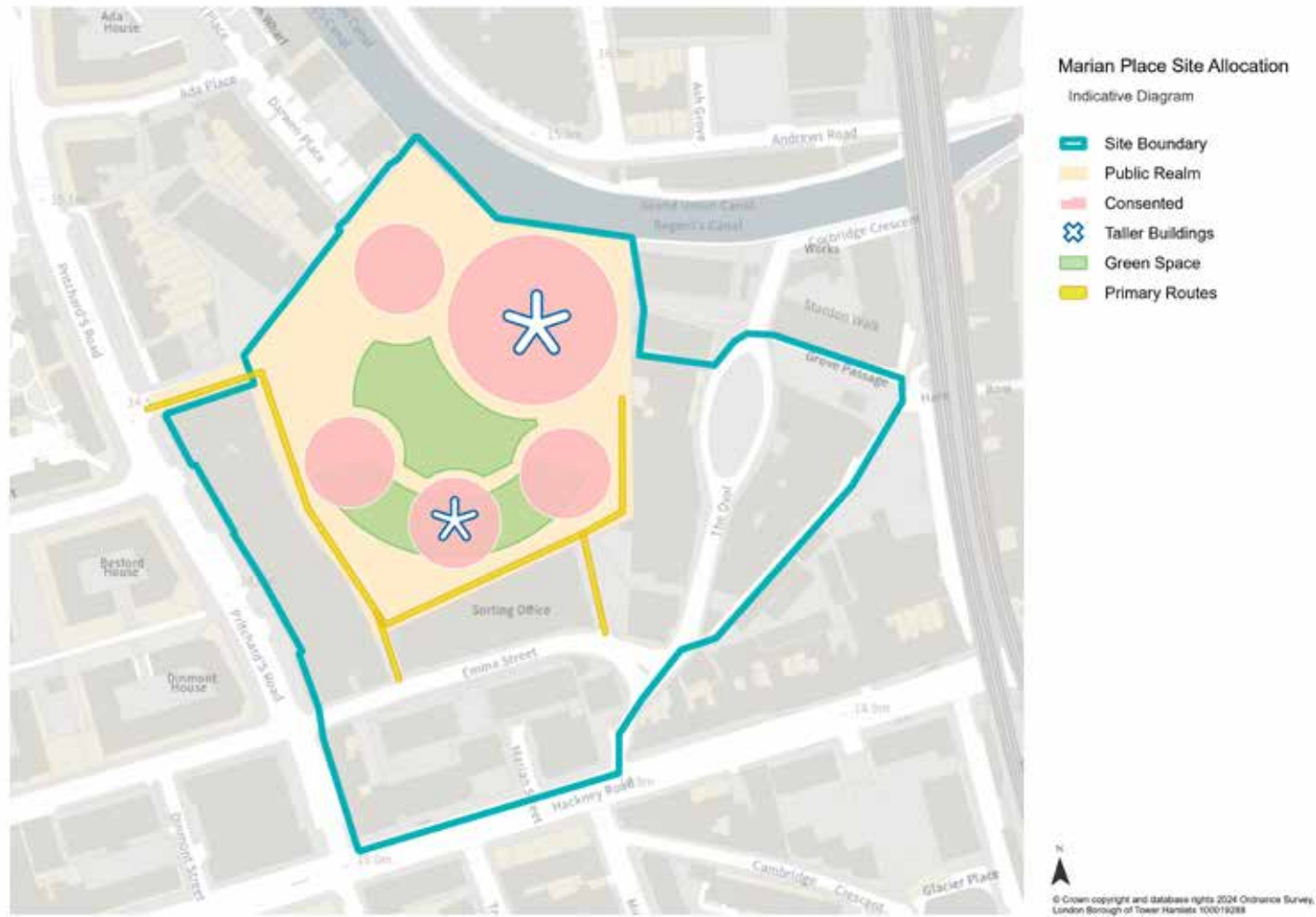
- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site. These should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and access to Thomas More Neighbourhood Centre, St Katharine Docks, Tobacco Dock and the Wapping Canal, and to improve walking and cycling connections across The Highway. Safe access routes to the secondary school are required, and development will need to deliver improved pedestrian and cycling routes. Green grid improvements should be made along Vaughn Way, Pennington Street, and across the eastern edge of the site near Tobacco Dock, and should provide good quality onward connections to the green grid routes at Ensign Street, Artichoke Hill, and the ornamental canal, and to Swedenborg Gardens.

## Environment and public realm

- Provide publicly accessible open space of at least 0.4 hectares in size, which should be easily accessible from across the site and connected to the green grid route.
- Improve the public realm at active site edges, particularly along The Highway and Vaughan Way where high levels of traffic can currently create an unwelcoming public realm.

**1.3 Marian Place Gasworks and The Oval**

Figure 27: 1.3 Marian Place Gasworks and The Oval (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Marian Place/The Oval/Emma Street
Area [ha]	4.38
Ward	Bethnal Green West
PTAL [2031]	4-6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (part of the site)</li> <li>● London View Management Framework (view 8A.1 – Westminster Pier to St Paul's Cathedral)</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (London's Canals, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Publicly Accessible Open Space (The Oval)</li> <li>● Local Employment Location</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Regents Canal, part of site; Hackney Road, part of site)</li> <li>● Statutory Listed Buildings (2 Pritchards Road, Grade II; 444 Hackney Road, Grade II, adjacent to site; 446-450 Hackney Road, Grade II, adjacent to site)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	PA/19/02717 - Demolition of existing buildings, decontamination/remediation of the site and retention (including dismantling, refurbishment and reinstatement) of the two existing gasholder frames to facilitate redevelopment for a mixed-use development comprising 5 buildings ranging between 6-13 storeys to contain 555 residential dwellings and 4,182sqm non-residential floorspace in flexible A1-A4, B1 and D Use Classes.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	700 homes (550 on the gasholder site) 4,000sqm of new non-residential floorspace (minimum)
Phasing	2024-29

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses..
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses, including employment space for start-ups, SMEs, and creative industries (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Development should acknowledge the associated costs of decommissioning the gasworks and the relocation of any significant equipment and address any environmental pollution and on-site decontamination requirements caused by the gas works. An assessment should be carried out to understand the potential contamination on site prior to any development taking place.
- The site is within the Cambridge Heath Local Employment Location, and should provide a range of office, light industrial, and studio workspaces suitable for start-ups, SMEs, and creative industry businesses.
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners,



developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.

- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation or accommodation for people with learning disabilities.

### **Form, massing, and heritage**

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 57m at the tallest point, which should be located within the former gasworks site. Heights should step down around the former gasworks.
- Development should respond positively to the special character of the Regents Canal Conservation Area and its setting, the scale, height, massing and fine urban grain of the surrounding built environment, and integrate heritage assets on site through retaining, reusing and enhancing the existing heritage assets, including gasholders no.2 and no.5, the Victorian buildings adjacent to the Regents Canal, and the Georgian cottages, including the associated setted street and railings. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

### **Routes and streets**

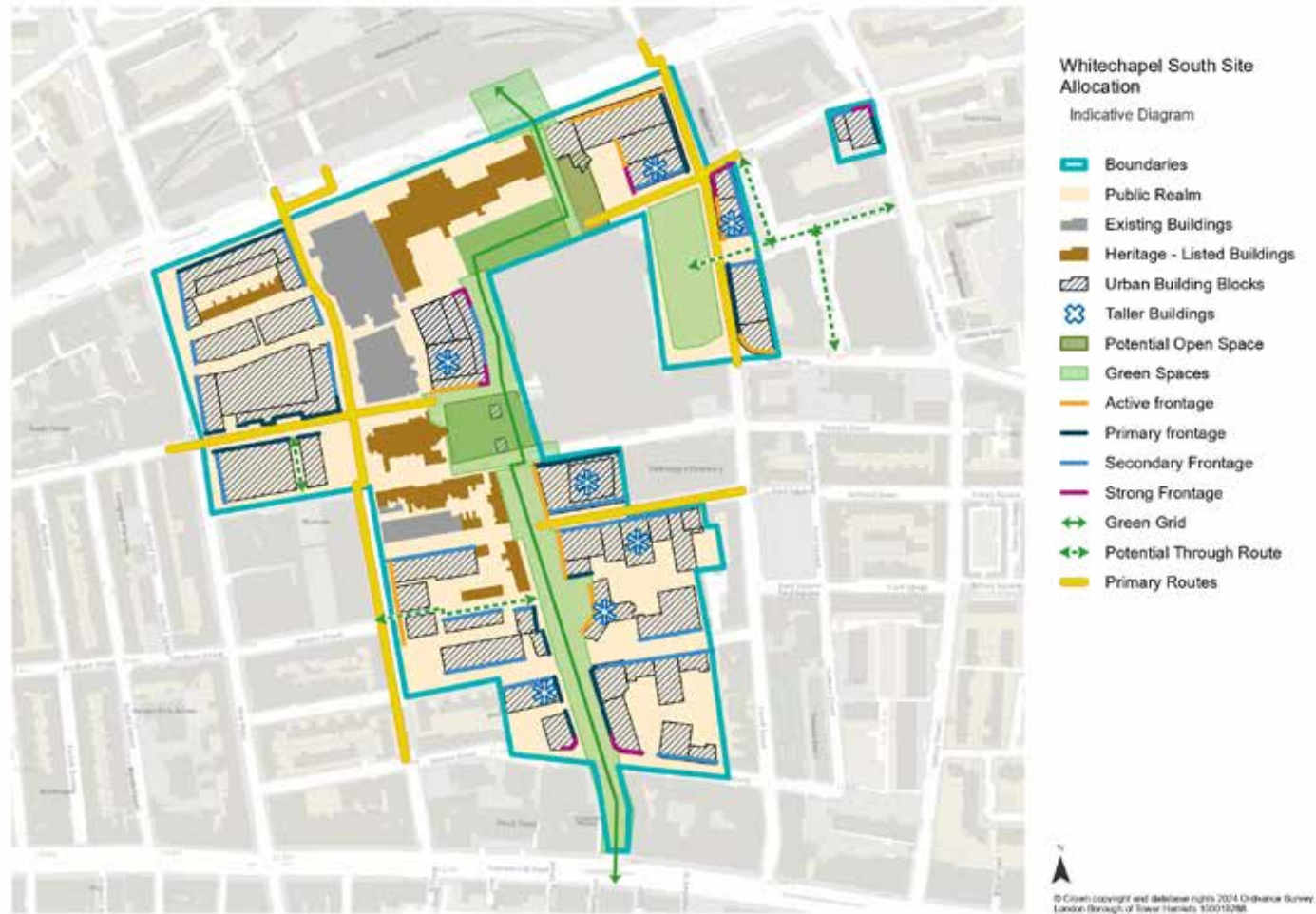
- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site. These should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and link with Cambridge Heath Neighbourhood Centre. Development must provide public access along the waterfront at the Regents Canal, and provide good quality walking and cycling routes to the waterfront. Green grid improvements should be made along Emma Street, Hackney Road, Pritchard's Road, The Oval, and along the Regent's Canal, and provide good quality connections onwards to the green grid at Temple Street.

### **Environment and public realm**

- Re-use The Oval as new public open space which positively contributes to the surrounding buildings and is well-connected to the new open space. The Oval should be fronted by a continuous building line following its footprint.
- All proposals for development within the site allocation should look to contribute to an overall provision of 1ha of new public open space across the allocation as a whole, delivered through a number of smaller open spaces and pocket parks.
- Provide active frontage at the waterside, set back from the canal; and positively frame the open space and The Oval to avoid excessive overshadowing.
- Improve the public realm with active site edges, particularly along Hackney Road, Pritchard's Road, Emma Street and The Oval. In addition, generous pavement and a linear landscaped square should be provided along Hackney Road, if this is made possible through redevelopment of the buildings that front it.

## 1.4 Whitechapel South

Figure 28: 1.4 Whitechapel South (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Whitechapel Road/Stepney Way/Varden Street
Area [ha]	9.99
Ward	Whitechapel
PTAL [2031]	6b
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Town Centre (Whitechapel District Centre)</li> <li>● Local Employment Location</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Mile End, tier 2)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (London Hospital, part of site; Myrdle Street, part of site; Ford Square, part of site; Whitechapel Market, adjacent to site)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Two K2 Telephone Kisoks, Grade II; The London Hospital, Grade II; 18-34 Mount Terrace, Grade II; Pillar Box in Rear Courtyard of London Hospital, Grade II; St Augustine with St Philip's Church, Grade II*; 26-42 Newark Street, Grade II; 43-69 Philpot Street, Grade II; 46-48 Ashfield Street, Grade II; 39-49 Walden Street, Grade II; 2-16 Walden Street, Grade II; 24-32 New Road and Attached Railings, Grade II; and numerous Grade II listed assets adjacent to the site)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/15/02959 – Redevelopment to provide 12 buildings ranging from ground plus 2 – 23 storeys, comprising 343 residential dwellings, 168 specialist accommodation units, office floorspace, flexible office and non-residential institution floorspace, retail floorspace.</p> <p>PA/17/02825 – Partial demolition, including removal of the remaining west wing and the grocer's wing (behind retained façade), alteration and refurbishment of the former Royal London Hospital and erection of a part four-storey and part seven-storey extension (including partial basement) to provide a new Tower Hamlets Council Civic Centre.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	<p>837 homes (65 on Royal Mail site, 772 on Whitechapel Estate site)</p> <p>425 student rooms (additional student housing on Floyer House site)</p> <p>93,000sqm non-residential floorspace (65,000sqm on NHS Life Sciences sites, 18,000 on Royal Mail site, 10,000sqm on Whitechapel Estate site)</p>
Phasing	2030-34, 2035-39

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace and community uses.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Student housing, only at Floyer House (sui generis)
  - Town centre uses, including employment space for life sciences only on the existing NHS sites in the west of site and a small amount on the Whitechapel Estate (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - NHS primary health care facility (including
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.
- The existing sexual health facility (including HIV services) will need to be re-provided on site in accordance with the prevailing sexual health facility building guidance (e.g. Health Building Note 12-01: Consulting, examination and treatment facilities. Supplement A: Sexual and reproductive health clinics) unless an alternative location can be found which meets the requirements of the relevant community facility policies. A continued service will need to be maintained to the satisfaction of the council's public health team.
- The site is within the Whitechapel Local Employment Location, and should provide a range of small office spaces to meet local needs. Life Sciences developments will only be acceptable on the NHS-

owned sites in the west of the site allocation, between New Road and Turner Street. A small amount of additional life sciences development may be acceptable on the Whitechapel Estate site, but only as part of developments that provide at least as much standard housing (use class C3) as the current permission on that site. Beyond this, development of workspace should focus on local needs.

- Student housing will only be acceptable on the existing student housing site at Floyer House – this will contribute towards the continuing functioning of the QMUL campus in this area.
- This site could potentially be suitable for accommodation for people with learning disabilities.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Taller elements should be focused around the existing tall building at the Royal London Hospital. Appropriate heights of 68m on the Post Office site, 61m on Floyer House, 88m on the northern part of the Whitechapel Estate, and 64m on the southern part of the Whitechapel Estate. Heights should step down towards the west of the site.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. This includes the setting of the London Hospital Conservation Area. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.



## **Routes and streets**

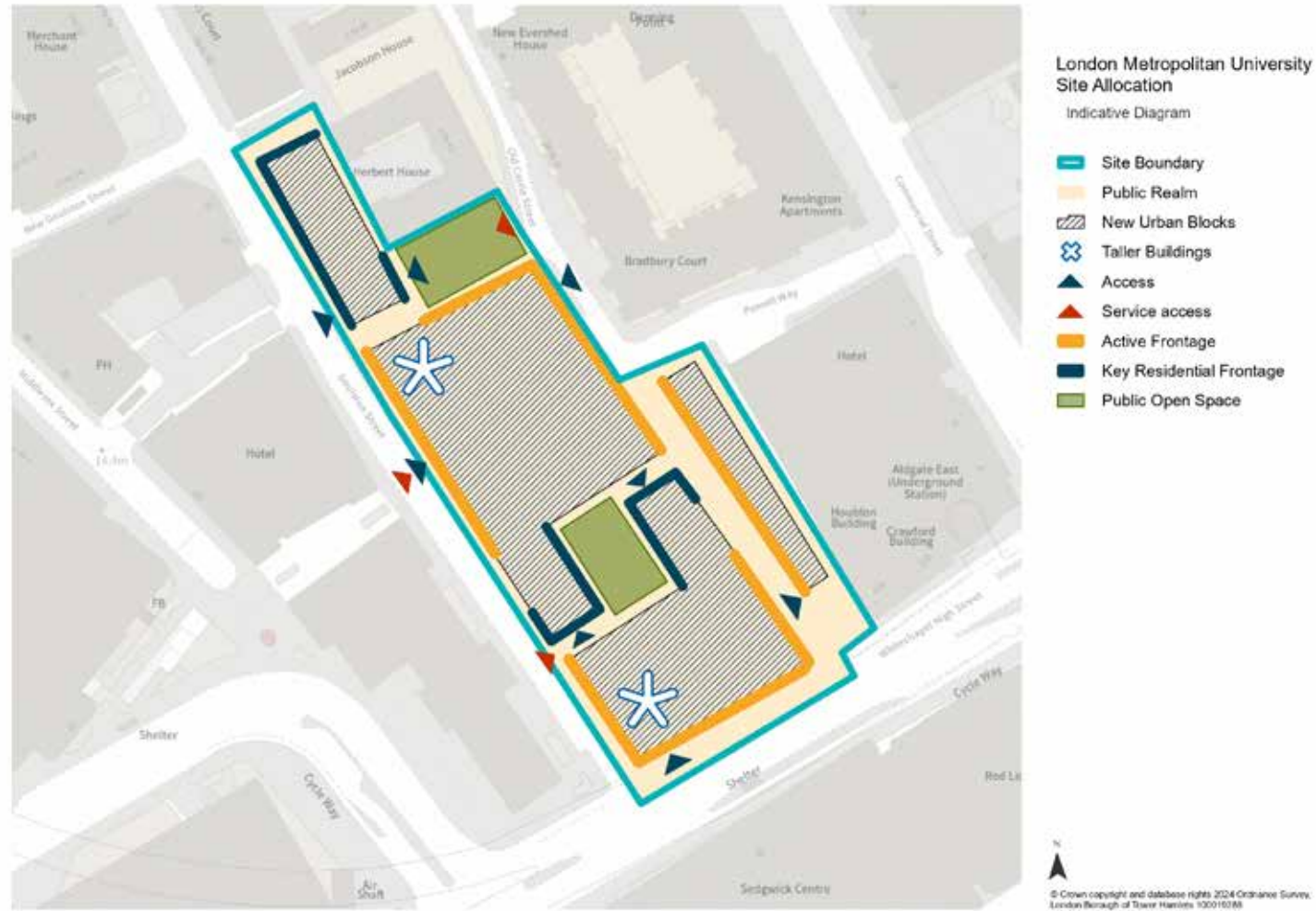
- Enhance connections to the Whitechapel North site allocation, and ensure the streetscape along Whitechapel High Street and adjoining streets is improved. Improvements to the green grid should be provided along Whitechapel High Street, Stepney Way, New Road, and Cavell Street, along with good quality connections to surrounding green grid routes. This is a large site, and connections need to be improved both north-south and east-west.

## **Environment and public realm**

- Development should contribute to the delivery of a new and improved green open space (the Green Spine) stretching from Philpot Street to the new civic centre. It should be linear in nature and provide a direct visual link and improved north-south legibility across its length.
- Existing consented open space which has yet to be implemented on site is an integral element to the provision of one hectare of strategic open space and should be re-provided. Where opportunities exist, development will be expected to consolidate and integrate the consented open space with the new Green Spine to maximise its multi-functional use.
- Create a sense of place set around a public square behind the former Royal London Hospital building and new public square immediately to the east of St Augustine with St Philip's Church to positively integrate the life sciences and research hub with the new civic centre and the green spine.

## 1.5 London Metropolitan University

Figure 29: 1.5 London Metropolitan University (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Goulston Street/Whitechapel High Street
Area [ha]	1.03
Ward	Spitalfields and Banglatown
PTAL [2031]	6b
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● London View Management Framework (view 25A.1 – The Queen’s Walk to Tower of London)</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Central Activities Zone</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Aldgate and Portsoken, tier 2)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Wentworth Street, adjacent to site)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	None

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	520 student rooms 33,500sqm of educational floorspace
Phasing	2030-34

### Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a redevelopment of the university buildings to provide additional teaching space and student accommodation.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Student housing (sui generis)
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Educational space (Class F1)
  - Town centre uses along the High Street (Class E)
- The site is within the CAZ, and active frontages and town centre uses should predominate at ground level.

### Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 63m at the tallest point, which should be located on the southwestern corner of the site, with an additional taller point of 56m further north. Heights should step down towards the existing residential buildings in the surrounding area.
- The impact of development on nearby conservation areas and on protected views should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. This includes ensuring no negative impact on the backdrop of the view of the Tower of London. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

- Some of the existing buildings contribute positively to the character of the area, and adaptive re-use of these existing buildings should be explored. This includes the brick-faced buildings along Whitechapel High Street, the original Calcutta House building, the Annex to Calcutta House, and the locally listed wash houses towards the north of the site.

## Routes and streets

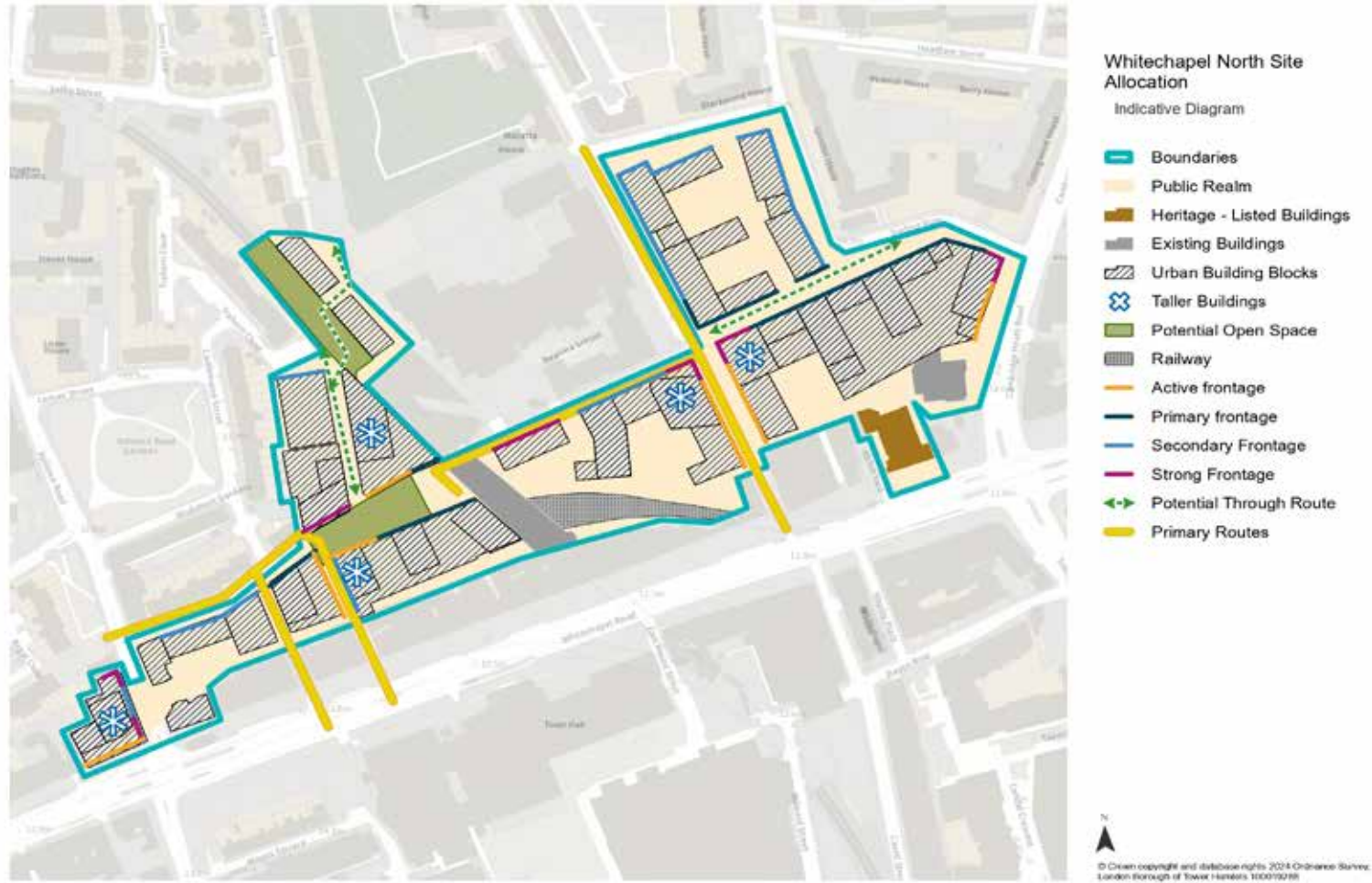
- Improve walking and cycling connections to and from the site, ensuring high quality connections to the underground stations at Aldgate and Aldgate East. Improvements to the green grid should be delivered along Whitechapel High Street, and good quality connections should be provided to the green grid route to the north of the site at Wentworth Street.

## Environment and public realm

- Improved public realm and active frontages should be provided at principal entrances to key buildings, including along the Whitechapel High Street frontage, Goulston Street, and Old Castle Street.
- Due to the small size of this site, it cannot fulfil the requirement of policy DV8(1)(e) to provide 0.4ha of publicly accessible open space. Development on the site should therefore aim instead to provide smaller 'pocket parks' of publicly accessible open space and an improved public realm.

## 1.6 Whitechapel North

Figure 30: 1.6 Whitechapel North (indicative)





Site information	Details
Address	Durward Street/Brady Street/Vallance Road
Area [ha]	5.37
Ward	Spitalfields and Banglatown
PTAL [2031]	6a-6b
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Town Centre (Whitechapel District Centre)</li> <li>● Local Employment Location</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Whitechapel, tier 2; and London to Colchester Roman Road, tier 2)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Whitechapel Market; London Hospital and Myrdle Street, both adjacent to site)</li> <li>● Statutory Listed Buildings (261-267 Whitechapel Road, Grade II; K2 Telephone Kiosk, Grade II; Kind Edward VII Jewish Memorial Drinking Fountain, Grade II; Parish Boundary Marker, Grade II; Albion Brewery Entrance Block, Grade II, adjacent to site; and numerous other Grade II listed assets adjacent to the site)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	None

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	<p>1,225 homes (575 on Sainsbury's site, 200 on Kempton Court site, 200 on Whitechapel Station site, 160 on Sports Centre site, 90 on Vallance Road site)</p> <p>At least 4,500sqm retail space (primarily on Sainsbury's site)</p>
Phasing	2030-34, 2035-39

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace and community uses.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Re provision and enhancement of NHS primary health care facility
  - Re provision of leisure centre
  - Community facility
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners,

developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.

- As part of the site allocation, the market facilities should be reprovided, with associated storage and waste facilities provided. The site could also potentially provide operational car parking for the market, to remove parking from Whitechapel Road.
- As part of the site allocation, the leisure centre should be reprovided with at least the same floorspace as the existing leisure centre, and with provision of a 3G artificial grass pitch.
- This site could potentially be suitable for accommodation for people with learning disabilities.

### **Form, massing, and heritage**

- Height Strategy: Appropriate heights at the tallest points of 56m at the Sainsbury's site and 52m at the corner of Vallance Road and Whitechapel Road, with heights stepping down around these points.
- Development on the Vallance Road site should repair and incorporate the locally listed building to the north of the street corner.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

### **Routes and streets**

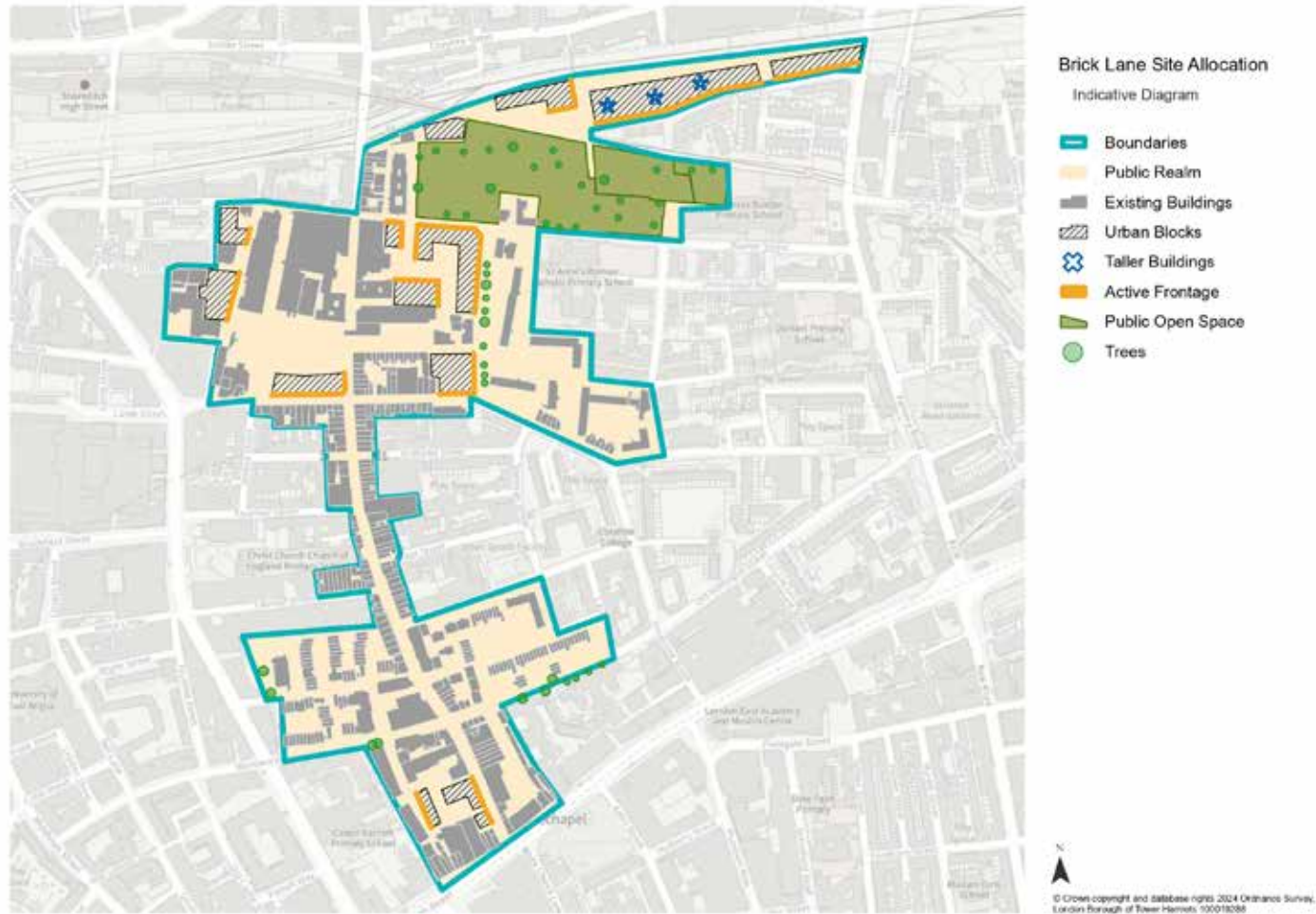
- Enhance connections to the Whitechapel South site allocation and ensure the streetscape along Whitechapel High Street and adjoining streets is improved. Improvements to the green grid should be delivered along Whitechapel High Street, Vallance Road, and Brady Street, along with good quality onward connections to surrounding green grid routes such as that along Old Montague Street. This is a large site, and connections need to be improved both north-south and east-west.
- Vehicle movements around the redeveloped supermarket should be carefully considered to minimise conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, and motorised vehicles.

### **Environment and public realm**

- Parking for the re-provided supermarket should be provided in a way which minimises the negative impact on the public realm and on primary routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Similarly, the provision of market storage areas should be carefully considered to avoid large areas of dead frontage.

## 1.7 Brick Lane and Pedley Street

Figure 31: 1.7 Brick Lane and Pedley Street (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Brick Lane/Pedley Street
Area [ha]	20.56
Ward	Spitalfields and Banglatown
PTAL [2031]	3-6b

Site information	Details
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (part of the site)</li> <li>● London View Management Framework (views 9A.1 – King Henry VIII's Mound to St Paul's Cathedral, and 25A.1 – The Queen's Walk to Tower of London)</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Spitalfields City Farm and Allen Gardens)</li> <li>● Publicly Accessible Open Space (Allen Gardens, Allen Gardens Play Area, and Spitalfields City Farm)</li> <li>● Town Centre (Brick Lane District Centre)</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Spitalfields)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Spitalfields and Brick Lane, tier 2)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Fournier Street)</li> <li>● Statutory Listed Buildings (Director's House, Truman Brewery, Grade II*; Brewmaster's House, Truman Brewery, Grade II; Former Stables at Truman Brewery, Grade II; Engineer's House, Truman Brewery, Grade II; Vat House, Truman Brewery, Grade II; Black Eagle Brewery, Grade II; 35 Buxton Street, Grade II; and numerous Grade II listed assets adjacent to the site)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
<b>Relevant Permissions</b>	PA/20/00415 - Redevelopment to include erection of a part five storey office building with ground floor and first floor commercial units and two storey basement for provision of plant, servicing, storage and a gym.

Site proposal	Details
<b>Indicative capacities</b>	<p>800 homes (410 on Fleet Street Hill and Pedley Street sites 250 on Truman Brewery East and Banglatown Cash &amp; Carry sites 95 on Grey Eagle Street sites 45 on Osborn Street site)</p> <p>Up to 33,000sqm of non-residential floorspace (17,500sqm on Fleet Street Hill and Pedley Street sites 5,000sqm on Truman Brewery East and Banglatown Cash &amp; Carry sites 1,500sqm on Grey Eagle Street sites 5,500sqm on Hanbury Street site 3,500sqm on Osborn Street site)</p>
<b>Phasing</b>	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace and community uses.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Community facility
  - Improved crossings of the railway lines in the north of the site
  - Enhancements to public realm and Allen Gardens
- The site is in multiple ownership and consists of a number of fragmented sites with opportunities for redevelopment, and landowners and developers should work together with the council to implement a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.
- New employment spaces delivered on this site must include a majority of spaces that are suitable for small-scale local businesses that will serve the local community.



## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 70m at the tallest point, which should be located on the Pedley Street site, with heights stepping down to an appropriate height of 39m on the Fleet Street Hill site. Heights on the rest of the site should respect the prevailing context of the conservation area, with appropriate heights of 40m on the Truman Brewery, Cash & Carry, and Grey Eagle Street sites, and 32m on the Osborn Street site.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. In particular, the character of the Fournier Street Conservation Area should be preserved and, where possible, enhanced. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site, particularly to connect up Allen Gardens, the Truman Brewery estate, and Shoreditch High Street station. These connections should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and provide easy access to the district centre. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along Brick Lane, Fournier Street, Buxton Street, Quaker Street, and Wentworth Street, with good quality onward connections to adjoining green grid routes towards Shoreditch High Street Station and the adjacent Bishopsgate Goods Yard site allocation, and along Whitechapel High Street.

- There are a number of large street blocks within the site that present barriers to permeability, such as the Grey Eagle Street car park and other parts of the Truman Brewery estate, and the railway lines in the north of the site, and development should look to improve north-south and east-west connections through these blocks where possible.
- Vehicle movement along narrow streets in this area should be carefully considered to minimise conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, and motorised vehicles.

## Environment and public realm

- Development should capitalise on opportunities to provide new small public open spaces, including pocket parks.
- Improvements to the public realm in this area should include additional street lighting, wayfinding, and street furniture, to create a place in which people can dwell, meet friends, and eat food, rather than just a place to pass through. Street furniture should be carefully considered and well-placed to ensure it creates sociable places and does not simply add to street clutter on busy routes.
- Applicants should consider how new development can contribute to explaining and emphasising the historic and cultural importance of Brick Lane.

## 23. Central

### Location

23.1 The Central sub-area sits in the heart of the borough, bounded by London Borough of Hackney to the north, the London Legacy Development Corporation and the Leaside sub-area to the east, the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar sub-area to the south, and the City Fringe sub-area to the west. The sub-area is not a designated opportunity area, but has the capacity to deliver new development.

23.2 The sub-area is a collection of vibrant and distinctive town centres, transport interchanges and residential areas. The sub-area comprises parts of nine distinct character places (see Figure 26). The Tower Hamlets Urban Structure and Characterisation Study provides further information on the key elements of the local character of each place.

### Vision

23.3 By 2038, the distinct character and identity of the Central sub-area will have been enhanced and strengthened. Growth will be focused around vibrant and revitalised town centres and neighbourhood parades, including Roman Road and Mile End town centres. New development will complement the well-established streetscape and character and the area's many heritage assets, and their settings will be preserved or enhanced through opportunities for new heritage-led development.

23.4 Access to and the quality of the area's green open spaces (including Victoria Park and Mile End Park) and network of waterspaces (including Regents Canal and Limehouse Cut) will be enhanced and

opportunities for new green links and open spaces will be maximised. New development will reduce the severance resulting from The Highway, Mile End Road and Commercial Road, the waterways and railway lines, and provide public realm improvements. Improved cycling and walking routes will increase local accessibility and access to strategic cycle routes and transport interchanges.

23.5 Employment in the area will remain primarily local and small-scale focused in town centres and transport hubs, including Bethnal Green, Mile End and Limehouse. Industrial locations along The Highway and Limehouse Cut will further complement existing employment opportunities and will accommodate an increasing number of flexible workspaces suited to new growth industries, including creative and digital industries.

23.6 Queen Mary University of London's role as a knowledge hub will be strengthened, with stronger connections to Mile End Neighbourhood Centre and its public transport interchange. The area will be home to a more diverse range of residential and student communities, with a particular focus on family housing which will benefit from access to varied open spaces.

### Objectives

- a. Ensure the strategic north-south spine of Victoria Park and Mile End Park is protected and enhanced with walking and cycling links, whilst maximising opportunities to access the waterways for recreational use

- b. Support a mix of uses in town centres to facilitate community cohesion and strengthen their role, including employment, retail, civic, cultural and leisure uses
- c. Overcome the physical barriers of the road, rail and waterway network to increase connectivity within the area, improve permeability between transport nodes and town centres to strengthen interconnected places
- d. Encourage the regeneration of key historic buildings to preserve the area's diverse heritage assets and character
- e. Deliver a range of housing choice from student accommodation, family housing, infill development and intensification where it contributes to delivering mixed and balanced communities, and
- f. Support the expansion of Queen Mary University of London and associated uses, while ensuring good integration with surrounding areas.

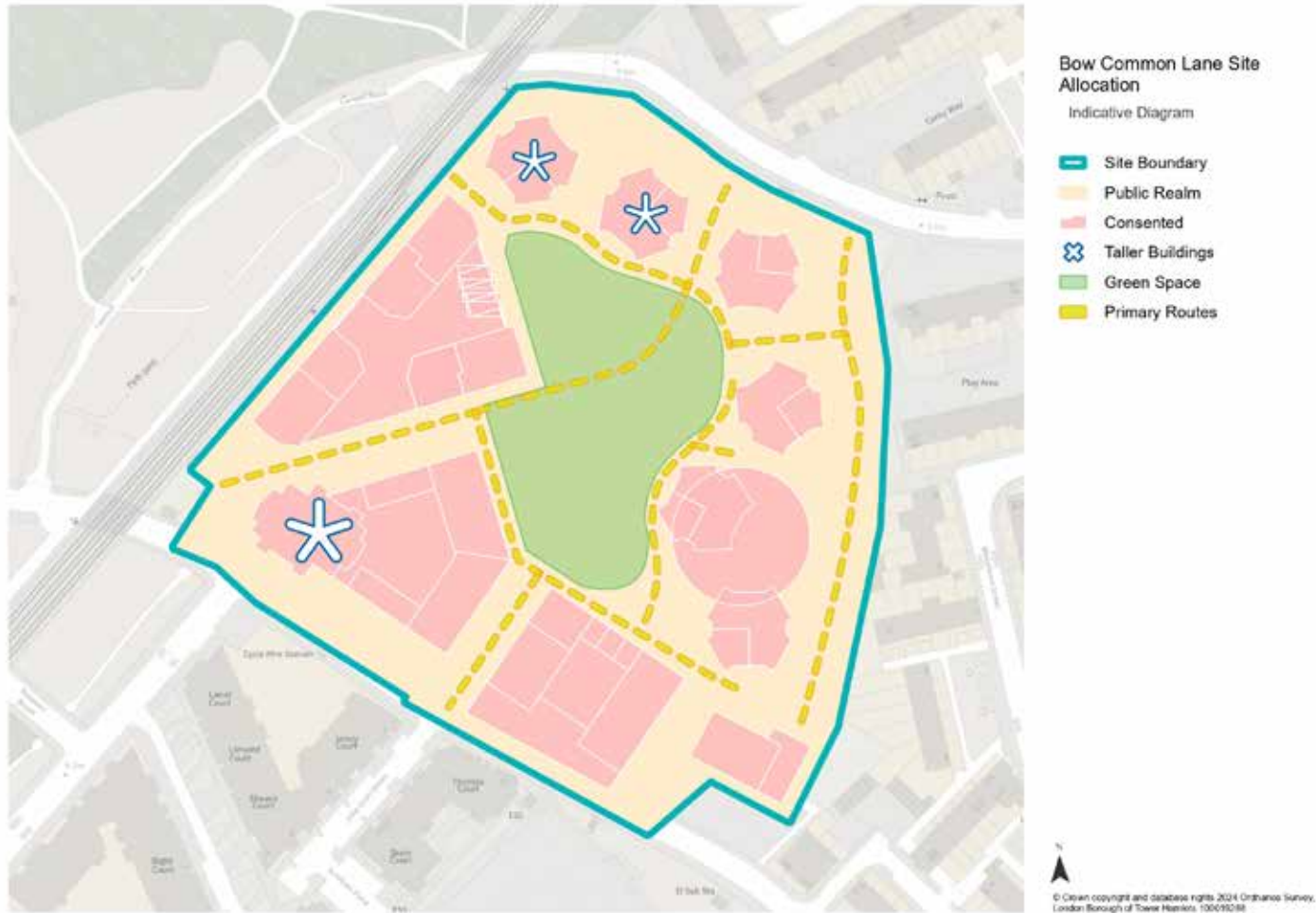
### **Site Allocations in the Central sub-area**

2.1 Bow Common Lane

2.2 Chrisp Street

## 2.1 Bow Common Lane

Figure 32: 2.1 Bow Common Lane (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Bow Common Lane
Area [ha]	3.94
Ward	Bromley South
PTAL [2031]	2-3
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Local Nature Reserve (Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and the Soane Centre, Old Railway at Fairfoot Road, part of Mile End Park SINC, all adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Metropolitan Open Land (Tower Hamlets Cemetery, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Publicly Accessible Open Space (Bow Common Lane Gas Works)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Tower Hamlets Cemetery, adjacent to site)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/19/02379 – outline permission for comprehensive mixed-use development for residential, business uses including office and flexible workspace, retail, financial and professional services, food and drink uses, community, education and cultural uses, a sixth form centre, assembly and leisure uses, public open space.</p> <p>PA/22/00905/S – approval of reserved matters for blocks A, B, and C, including the construction of residential units, flexible residential facilities, and commercial uses, together with new public open space.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	1000 homes 2,500sqm retail/workspace/community/cultural uses
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34



## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses and sixth form educational centre.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Sixth Form education facility
  - Strategic consolidated open space of minimum 1 hectare
- Development should acknowledge the associated costs of decommissioning the gasworks and the relocation of any significant equipment and address any environmental pollution and on site decontamination requirements caused by the gasworks. An assessment should be carried out to understand the potential contamination on site prior to any development taking place.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: Appropriate height of 89m at the tallest point, which should be located towards the western side of the site. Heights should step down towards the existing residential buildings to the south and east of the site.
- Respond positively to the scale, height, and massing of the surrounding built environment, and to the nearby conservation areas at Swaton Road and Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and nature reserve. The impact of development on the conservation areas should be considered, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting

place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and through the site, to address poor permeability created by the site. These should align with the existing urban grain to support legibility, particularly joining Knapp Road to Bow Common Lane, which should also see improvements to the green grid delivered. Good quality onward connections to the green grid routes along the railway arches and through the cemetery park should also be provided.
- Integrate the site with Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park through new or improved pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Ensure safe pedestrian and cycling access to the sixth form centre.

## Environment and public realm

- Improve public realm with active site edges, particularly along Bow Common Lane.
- Provide active frontages along the railway to enhance the use and setting of the railway arches as a non-designated heritage asset.
- Implement noise screening measures/or a green buffer in areas bordering the railway line.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, opportunities for greywater re-use and rainwater harvesting should be investigated.

## 2.2 Crisp Street

Figure 33: 2.2 Crisp Street (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Chrisp Street
Area [ha]	3.92
Ward	Lansbury
PTAL [2031]	3-6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (part of the site)</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Publicly Accessible Open Space (Chrisp Street Market)</li> <li>● Town Centre (Chrisp Street District Centre)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, tier 3 – small part of site)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Lansbury)</li> <li>● Statutory Listed Buildings (Chrisp Street Market Clock Tower, Grade II; Festival Inn, Grade II; Susan Lawrence and Elizabeth Lansbury School, Grade II, adjacent to site)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	PA/16/01612 - Comprehensive redevelopment of the site with 19 new buildings ranging from 3 to 25 storeys providing 643 residential units, market enhancement, refurbishment of retained Festival of Britain buildings, reconfiguration and replacement of existing and provision of new commercial uses including new cinema, alterations and additions to existing Idea Store, flexible affordable workspace/ community space, office space, retail, financial and professional services and café/restaurant floor space, public house, hot food takeaway; upgrade and provision of new public open space including child play space.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	650 homes 20,000sqm of town centre and community uses
Phasing	2024-29

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use scheme combining residential uses with an enhanced town centre combining retail, workspace, community and cultural uses.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Leisure uses, such as a cinema (Sui generis)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Idea Store re-provision
  - Youth centre re-provision
- Development should deliver a regenerated town centre for Poplar with a range of unit sizes, (including those suitable for independent and small local retailers), a market square and a re-provided Idea Store located on East India Dock Road.
- As part of the site allocation, the market facilities should be re-provided, with associated storage and waste facilities provided.
- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation or accommodation for people with learning disabilities.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 88m at the tallest point, which should be located at the southeast corner of the site. Additional taller point located in the section east of Chrisp Street at an appropriate height of 53m. Heights to step down towards the west and north of the site.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and

conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. This includes the Festival Inn, Clocktower and Poplar Baths and the Lansbury Conservation Area. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site – particularly to Langdon Park, Bartlett Park, Jollys Green, and All Saints DLR station. These should align with the existing urban form and grain to support east-west connectivity and wider permeability. An improved green grid connection should be provided through the centre of the site, with good quality onward connections to green grid routes at Cordelia Street and East India Dock Road.
- Development should ensure sufficient and well-integrated access arrangements for highways and servicing to the district centre and market, and should minimise conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, and motorised vehicles.

## Environment and public realm

- Improve the public realm with active site edges, particularly along East India Dock Road and within the district centre.
- The provision of market storage areas should be carefully considered to avoid large areas of dead frontage.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, opportunities for greywater re-use and rainwater harvesting should be investigated.

## 24. Leaside

### Location

24.1 The Leaside sub-area is located on the eastern side of the borough and forms part of the former London Plan's Lower Lea Valley opportunity area which stretches north comprising the boroughs of Newham and Hackney.

24.2 The London Legacy Development Corporation lies to the east of this area, and is the planning authority for the Fish Island and Bromley by-Bow character places within the borough, as well as Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and surrounding areas.

24.3 The sub-area is a collection of vibrant and distinctive town centres, transport interchanges and residential areas. The sub-area comprises six distinct character places. The Tower Hamlets Urban Structure and Characterisation Study provides further information on the key elements of the local character of each place.

### Vision

24.4 By 2038, the Leaside sub-area will experience comprehensive regeneration and redevelopment of former and underused industrial areas. Connectivity will be transformed with a series of new bridges and riverside walkways across the River Lea, crossings along the A12 and A13, and enhancements to the safety and connectivity of pedestrian and cycle routes through and around industrial areas including Bow Goods Yard, which will integrate existing and new communities in the area.

24.5 The development of the Lea River Park (including the Leaway) will provide a new strategic publicly accessible green space and a series

of new pedestrian and cycling routes, linking the River Lea to London's wider green grid network, including the Lee Valley Regional Park.

24.6 Development in the area will have sufficient transport and social infrastructure to facilitate the creation of thriving mixed communities alongside vibrant neighbourhood centres. Housing provision will be accelerated through the Poplar Riverside Housing Zone and delivered alongside new local employment, enterprise and business opportunities.

### Objectives

- a. Improve strategic connections to overcome the physical barriers to movement created by the A12, A13 and the waterways
- b. Deliver the Lea River Park (including the Leaway) to provide a network of interconnected water and open spaces, green walking and cycling routes and improve access to and along the River Lea
- c. Improve local connections by creating a street pattern that increases permeability for ease of pedestrian and cyclist movement
- d. Support existing and new neighbourhood centres by improving accessibility to them to ensure they act as the civic heart of surrounding communities
- e. Contribute towards the delivery of new affordable homes and community facilities through Poplar Riverside Housing Zone regeneration
- f. Optimise former industrial/employment land and protect designated industrial areas whilst sensitively integrating industrial activities into their site context and enhancing the public realm and pedestrian and cycle connectivity.



**Site allocations in the Leaside sub-area**

3.1 Ailsa Street

3.2 Leven Road

3.3 Aberfeldy Estate

3.4 Bromley by Bow

3.5 Blackwall Trading Estate and Leamouth Road Depot

3.6 Hackney Wick Station

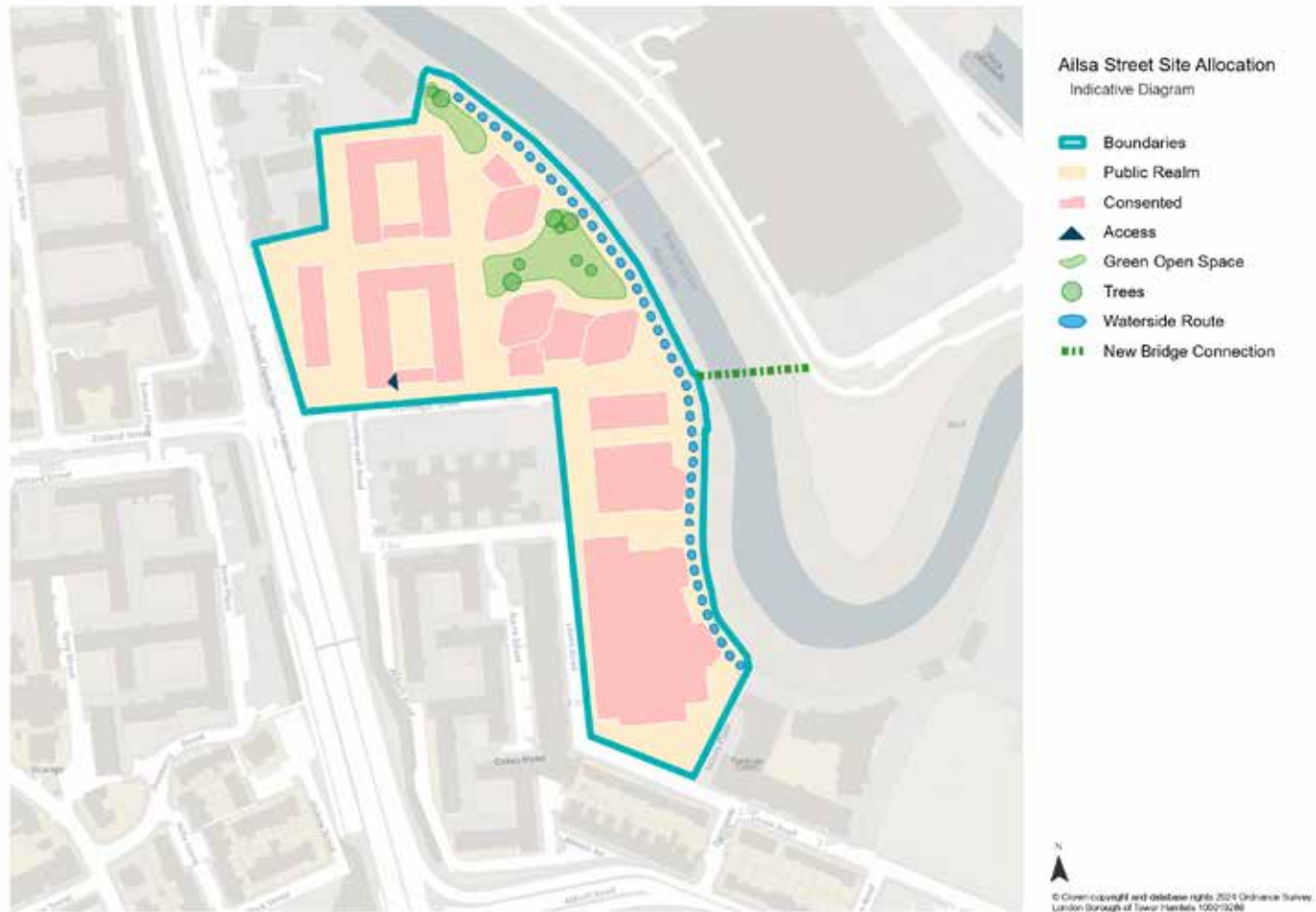
3.7 Hepscott Road

3.8 Sweetwater

3.9 Teviot Estate

## 3.1 Ailsa Street

Figure 34: 3.1 Ailsa Street (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Ailsa Street/Lochnagar Street
Area [ha]	3.90
Ward	Lansbury
PTAL [2031]	1a-3
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (River Thames and Tidal Tributaries, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3)</li> <li>● Safeguarded Waste Site</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Limehouse Cut, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Bromley Hall, Grade II*; Poplar Public Library, Grade II; Former Fire Station, grade II, adjacent to the site; Former Bromley Hall School, grade II, adjacent to the site)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/16/02692 – Ailsa Wharf, Ailsa Street - Demolition of existing structures/buildings and the redevelopment of the site for a mixed use scheme providing 785 residential units and 2,954 sqm GIA commercial floorspace within a series of thirteen building blocks varying between 3 and 17 storeys (Maximum height of 59.9m).</p> <p>PA/19/01760 – Islay Wharf, Lochnagar Street - Demolition of existing warehouse building and redevelopment of the site for mixed use development comprising two blocks ranging in height between 12 storeys and 21 storeys, accommodating 351sqm of flexible uses classes, and residential accommodation on the upper floors providing 133 residential units.</p> <p>PA/19/02148 – Former Poplar Bus Depot, Leven Road – Part retention and part demolition of the existing boundary walls and the former tram shed depot arches, and retention of the three storey office building. Demolition of the remainder of the existing warehouse and the redevelopment of the site to provide 530 residential units, 2644sqm of workspace, 508sqm of flexible retail; professional services; and restaurant/bar uses, within buildings ranging from 3 storeys (20.2m) to 20 storeys (72.7m).</p>

Site proposal	Details
Land uses	Small open space, bridge
Indicative capacities	1,450 homes (785 on Ailsa Wharf, 133 on Islay Wharf, 530 on former bus depot) 6,500sqm commercial floorspace
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Small scale retail/town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Safeguarded bridge landing space for new crossing of the River Lea
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.
- Development should facilitate a new or extended bus route through the site to enhance access to public transport.
- Access to public transport and delivery of a walking and cycling bridge across the River Lea will need to be improved in line with

the phasing of development and in coordination with the London Borough of Newham.

- Development proposals must include the raising of flood defences in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. Along the riverside, development should be set back from the water by a minimum of 16m to allow adequate access to flood defences for future maintenance and upgrading.
- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation or accommodation for people with learning disabilities – in such circumstances, planning use class C2 may also be acceptable on this site, but only for these uses.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: Appropriate height of 80m at the tallest point, which should be located to the south of Lochnagar Street. Heights should step down away from this point, and particularly towards to A12 in the west of the site.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## **Routes and streets**

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site - particularly to and along the River Lea to Bromley-by-Bow District Centre, Aberfeldy Neighbourhood Centre and to Langdon Park DLR station. These should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and legibility. Provide an active and well-defined street frontage along Lochnagar Street, and create a stronger east-west link between the River Lea and the Langdon Park DLR station.
- Development must provide public access along the waterfront at the River Lea. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along the River Lea waterfront and along Lochnagar Street, with good quality onward connections to the adjoining green grid route at Zetland Street and the Teviot Estate site allocation.
- Development should provide appropriate riparian lifesaving infrastructure along the riverside path.

## **Environment and public realm**

- Improve the quality of and create a positive sense of place in the form of an active square at the corner of the A12 and Lochnagar Street.
- Development should step back from the River Lea to avoid excessive overshadowing and provide active frontage on the riverside.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, opportunities for greywater recycling should be investigated.



## 3.2 Leven Road

Figure 35: 3.2 Leven Road (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Leven Road
Area [ha]	8.06
Ward	Lansbury
PTAL [2031]	1a-2
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (River Thames and Tidal Tributaries, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/18/02803 – Poplar Gas Holder Site - A hybrid planning application (part outline/part full) comprising:</p> <p>1.) In Outline, a comprehensive mixed-use development comprising a maximum of 195,000 sqm of floorspace for Residential; Business uses including office and flexible workspace; Retail, financial and professional services, food and drink uses; Community, education and cultural uses; A secondary school; Assembly and leisure uses; Public open space including riverside park and riverside walk.</p> <p>2.) In Full, for 66,600 sqm of residential arranged in four blocks, ranging from 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12 and 14 (57.6m) storeys in height, up to 2700 sqm of office and flexible workspaces, up to 500 sqm community and up to 2000 sqm leisure uses, up to 2500 sqm of retail and food and drink uses.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	<p>2,800 homes</p> <p>8,500sqm commercial floorspace</p>
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses, and provision of a secondary school.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Secondary school
  - Strategic consolidated open space of minimum 1 hectare
  - Safeguarded bridge landing space for new crossings of the River Lea
- Ensure the open space is designed and usable for sport and recreation and located adjacent to the River Lea, featuring the Leaway and water spaces. It should meet the minimum size of one hectare.
- Development should facilitate a new or extended bus route to serve the site to enhance access to public transport.
- Access to public transport and pedestrian and cycle connectivity across the River Lea will need to be improved in line with the phasing of development and in coordination with London Borough of Newham.
- Open space should be delivered in the earliest phase of development.
- Development should acknowledge the associated costs of decommissioning the gasworks and the relocation of any significant equipment and address any environmental pollution and on site decontamination requirements caused by the gas works. An

assessment should be carried out to understand the potential contamination on site prior to any development taking place.

- Prior to demolition, the gasholders on the site did not accommodate any employment floorspace and therefore this floorspace does not need to be re-provided as part of any new scheme.
- Development proposals must include the raising of flood defences in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. Along the riverside, development should be set back from the water by a minimum of 16m to allow adequate access to flood defences for future maintenance and upgrading.
- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation or accommodation for people with learning disabilities – in such circumstances, planning use class C2 may also be acceptable on this site, but only for these uses.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 76m at the tallest point, which should be located in the northern part of the site, near the river and the new park. Heights to step down from this point towards the existing lower-rise residential context to the south and east.
- Development should retain and reuse parts of the dismantled gas holder no. 1 within the future development, and reflect the industrial heritage of the site through measures such as, but not limited to, public art, landscaping and building design.

## **Routes and streets**

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from within the site - particularly to link with the River Lea Park walk, Aberfeldy Neighbourhood Centre to Langdon Park DLR station and East India DLR station. Provide safe pedestrian and cycling access to the secondary school. Development must provide public access along the waterfront at the River Lea. Improvements to green grid routes should be delivered through the site and along the River Lea waterfront, with good onward connections provided to green grid routes at Oban Street and Abbott Road, and to the Aberfeldy Estate and Blackwall Trading Estate site allocations.
- Development should provide appropriate riparian lifesaving infrastructure along the riverside path.

## **Environment and public realm**

- Development should step back from the River Lea to avoid excessive overshadowing and enable activation of the riverside.
- Improve the public realm with active site edges, particularly along Leven Road.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, opportunities for greywater recycling should be investigated.

## 3.3 Aberfeldy Estate

Figure 36: 3.3 Aberfeldy Estate (indicative)





Site information	Details
Address	Abbott Road/Dee Street
Area [ha]	7.24
Ward	Lansbury
PTAL [2031]	1b-3
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Publicly Accessible Open Space (Aberfeldy Playground; Aberfeldy Millennium Green, Leven Road Park, Braithewaite Park – all adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Town centre (Aberfeldy Street neighbourhood centre)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Balfron Tower, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Former Bromley Hall School, grade II; adjacent to the site)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	PA/11/02716 - Outline planning application for the mixed-use redevelopment of the existing Aberfeldy estate comprising: Creation of 1,176 residential units in 15 new blocks between 2 and 10 storeys in height plus 1,743sqm retail space, professional services, food and drink and 1,786 community and cultural uses.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	1,550 homes 3,500sqm commercial/town centre floorspace
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

### Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses, and provision of a primary school.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Primary school expansion (with re-provision of any playing fields, MUGAs, or sports facilities)
  - Community facility (re-provision)
  - Strategic consolidated open space of minimum 1 hectare
- Delivery should be phased so that a revitalised Aberfeldy neighbourhood centre is delivered within the first phase of the programme, to avoid uncertainty for retailers over the status of the centre and to ensure the new centre is embedded in the community as increasing numbers of new residents come to live in the surrounding area. Within the town centre, active frontages and town centre uses should predominate at ground level.
- The site may be appropriate for some small-scale employment uses on the A12 frontage to help manage the hostile roadside environment in terms of noise and air quality for new and existing residents.

- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation or accommodation for people with learning disabilities – in such circumstances, planning use class C2 may also be acceptable on this site, but only for these uses.
- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation or accommodation for people with learning disabilities.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 80m at the tallest point, which should be located at the northern end of Abbott Road. Heights should step down from this point towards the lower-rise residential context in the east and south of the site, and towards Bromley Hall School to the north of the site.
- A strong built frontage should address the A12 along the site's western boundary. The scale of development along the A12 edge should vary, to avoid a feeling that the estate is presenting a 'wall' to the road and turning inwards. Given the busy nature of this principal urban road, building frontages should step away from the route. This may permit some mitigation measures along the route to be introduced to help delivery better air quality and help manage noise pollution issues.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. This includes ensuring that development does not dominate the listed Bromley Hall School or undermine the setting of, and views towards, Balfron Tower. The prominence of Balfron Tower should be preserved from borough-designated viewpoints. Any tall buildings in these

views must be subservient to Balfron Tower and be located so that they do not disrupt the silhouette of the building on the skyline. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals, and the Tower Hamlets Views and Landmarks Study.

## Routes and streets

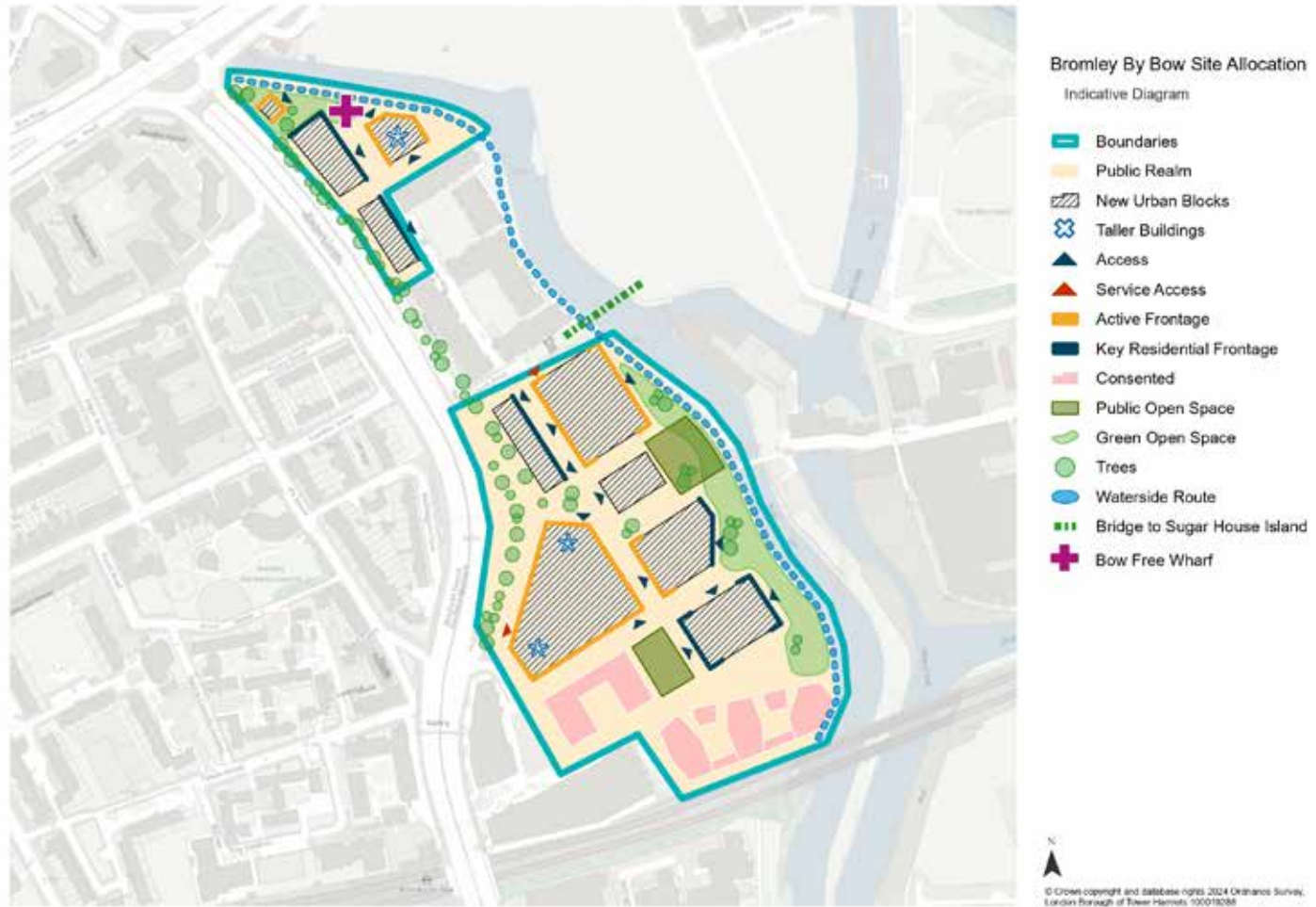
- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site. These should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and legibility. The existing complex network of streets and cul-de-sacs should be replaced by a permeable street grid network which fully integrates and makes direct connections with its context creating a stronger and more legible street network across the estate. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along Aberfeldy Street, Blair Street, and Abbott Road, with good onward connections provided to Jolly's Green and green grid routes across the A12 and A13 and towards the Leven Road and Teviot Estate site allocations.
- Aberfeldy Street will be a strong and more legible public route across the estate, which will better establish connections with new development to the south and provide direct connections to the riverside area at the north.

## Environment and public realm

- Existing open space at Millennium Green, Leven Road Park, and Braithewaite Park should be retained and improved. There should be a net increase in the overall provision of public open space through redevelopment of the site. Access to the public open space should be improved, alongside improvements to the facilities and quality of the space itself.

**3.4 Bromley by Bow**

Figure 37: 3.4 Bromley by Bow (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Hancock Road/Three Mill Lane
Area [ha]	6.26
Ward	Bromley North
PTAL [2031]	4-6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Lea Valley, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Three Mills)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Tide Mill, grade I; Clock Mill, grade II; Office Opposite Clock Mill, grade II; and Paved Roadway between House Mill and Clock Mill, grade II; all adjacent to the site)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	17/00344/FUL – Imperial Street - Development of a mixed-use scheme to include five buildings, ranging between 3 and 14 storeys in height, which would comprise 407 residential units, 339 sqm of employment space, 274 sqm of flexible retail space.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	1,300 homes (400 on Imperial Street site, 200 on North Bow River Village site, 700 on Tesco site) 20,000sqm commercial/community floorspace

Site proposal	Details
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34, 2035-39

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses, and provision of a primary school, community centre, and improved connections across the River Lea.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Primary school
  - Community centre
  - Safeguarded bridge landings for improved connections across the River Lea
  - Improved A12 junction
  - Strategic consolidated open space of minimum 1.2 hectares
- Proposals will need to include an appropriate mix and balance of uses that together have the potential to function as a District Centre.
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to implement a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.
- Landing for bridges from Sugar House Lane will need to be incorporated into development proposals. The opportunity to create

a new ped/cycle bridge link over the River Lee Navigation to the regeneration of the Hunts Lane area should be explored.

- This site could potentially be suitable for accommodation for people with learning disabilities – in such circumstances, planning use class C2 may also be acceptable on this site, but only for these uses.
- Development must ensure the full operational use of Bow Free Wharf can continue unimpeded, and that new development is designed in such a way that residents will not be exposed to excessive noise or other forms of pollution from the wharf. Vehicle access to the wharf should be designed in such a way as to minimise conflict between wharf uses and residential uses.

### **Form, massing, and heritage**

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 50m at the tallest point, which should be located to the south of the site, on the Imperial Street plot. Additional taller points with an appropriate height of 44m can be located towards the western side of the Tesco site and on the northern part of the site. Building heights should step down towards the east of the site.
- A hard urban edge should be formed along the urban A12 frontage, with builds typically rising to approximately 10 storeys. A softer, more informal and stepped down edge should be formed along the river front - taking proper account of the historic character of the Three Mills Island area.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant

Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

### **Routes and streets**

- To maximise the opportunities to deliver a successful new centre and community in this location, improved linkages across the A12 (including through measures to improve safety in the underpasses beneath the A12) and links to the east across the River Lea are essential to improve local and wider connectivity and integration of new and existing communities across the area.
- An improved junction which provides vehicular and pedestrian access from the site to and across the A12 is required, to improve access to the wider Bow area and to Bromley-by-Bow Station. This should include at-grade pedestrian and cycle crossings and the potential to facilitate the 'Bow Vision' bus route, connecting through Bromley-by-Bow to Sugar House Island via a potential new bridge.
- Development must provide public access along the waterfront at the River Lea, and improved access points onto the north canal towpath. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along Three Mills Lane, Imperial Street, and along the River Lea waterfront, with good quality onward connections across the A12 to join the rest of the green grid. Careful consideration should be given as to how to best route the riverside path around Bow Free Wharf to ensure its continued operation.
- Development should provide appropriate riparian lifesaving infrastructure along the riverside path.

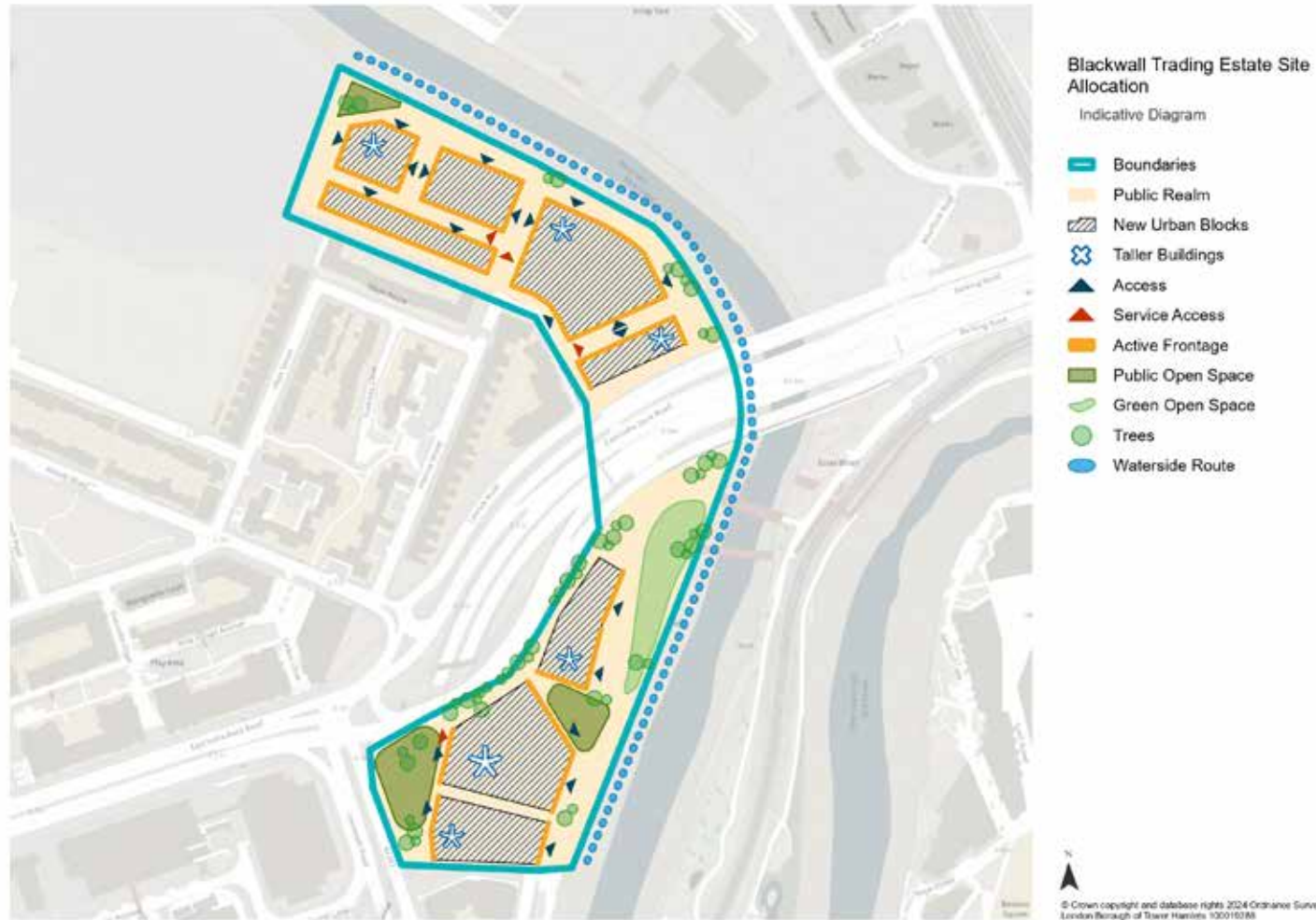
### **Environment and public realm**

- High quality new public open spaces should be created along the waterfront, particularly focused on the area where Three Mills Lane crosses the River Lea.



## 3.5 Blackwall Trading Estate and Leamouth Road Depot

Figure 38: 3.5 Blackwall Trading Estate and Leamouth Road Depot (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Leamouth Road/Lanrick Road
Area [ha]	5.10
Ward	Poplar/Blackwall and Cubitt Town
PTAL [2031]	1b-5
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (River Thames and Tidal Tributaries, and Bow Creek Ecology Park, both adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Local Industrial Location (Blackwall Trading Estate)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3; and Limmo, Tier 2)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Leamouth)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Entrance Gateway, grade II; and East India Dock Wall and Gateway, grade II; both adjacent to the site)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	None

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	775 homes (375 on depot site, 400 on trading estate site) 35,000sqm non-residential floorspace 6,500sqm replacement depot (if needed)

Site proposal	Details
Phasing	2035-39

### Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential- and light industrial-led scheme, with some potential for other commercial uses.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Light industrial uses (Class E) – must at least replace the current floorspace
  - Commercial and town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
  - Replacement council depot – if needed (Sui generis)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - NHS primary health care facility or community facility (as needed)
  - A13 connector bridge – passing underneath the A13
- The site is partly within a Local Industrial Location, and development must provide at least the same amount of light industrial floorspace as currently exists on the site, and this may be secured by condition or other legal agreement as light industrial space in perpetuity.
- The site currently contains a council vehicle depot. This should be reprovided as part of development, unless a separate site elsewhere can be secured for a suitable depot use, in which case the floorspace that is freed-up by the relocation of the depot should be used for additional housing and active ground floor uses.
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is

delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.

- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation or accommodation for people with learning disabilities – in such circumstances, planning use class C2 may also be acceptable on this site, but only for these uses.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: The tallest points should be located towards the southern end of the site. Heights should step down towards the centre of the site, and rise up again along the River Thames in the northern part of the site.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals, and the Tower Hamlets Views and Landmarks Study.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site, particularly along the river and towards the new park and bridge crossings at the Leven Road site allocation, and towards City Island neighbourhood centre and Canning Town town centre and underground station in the London Borough of Newham. These should align with the existing urban grain where possible to support

permeability and legibility, and should connect to the adjacent Leven Road site allocation.

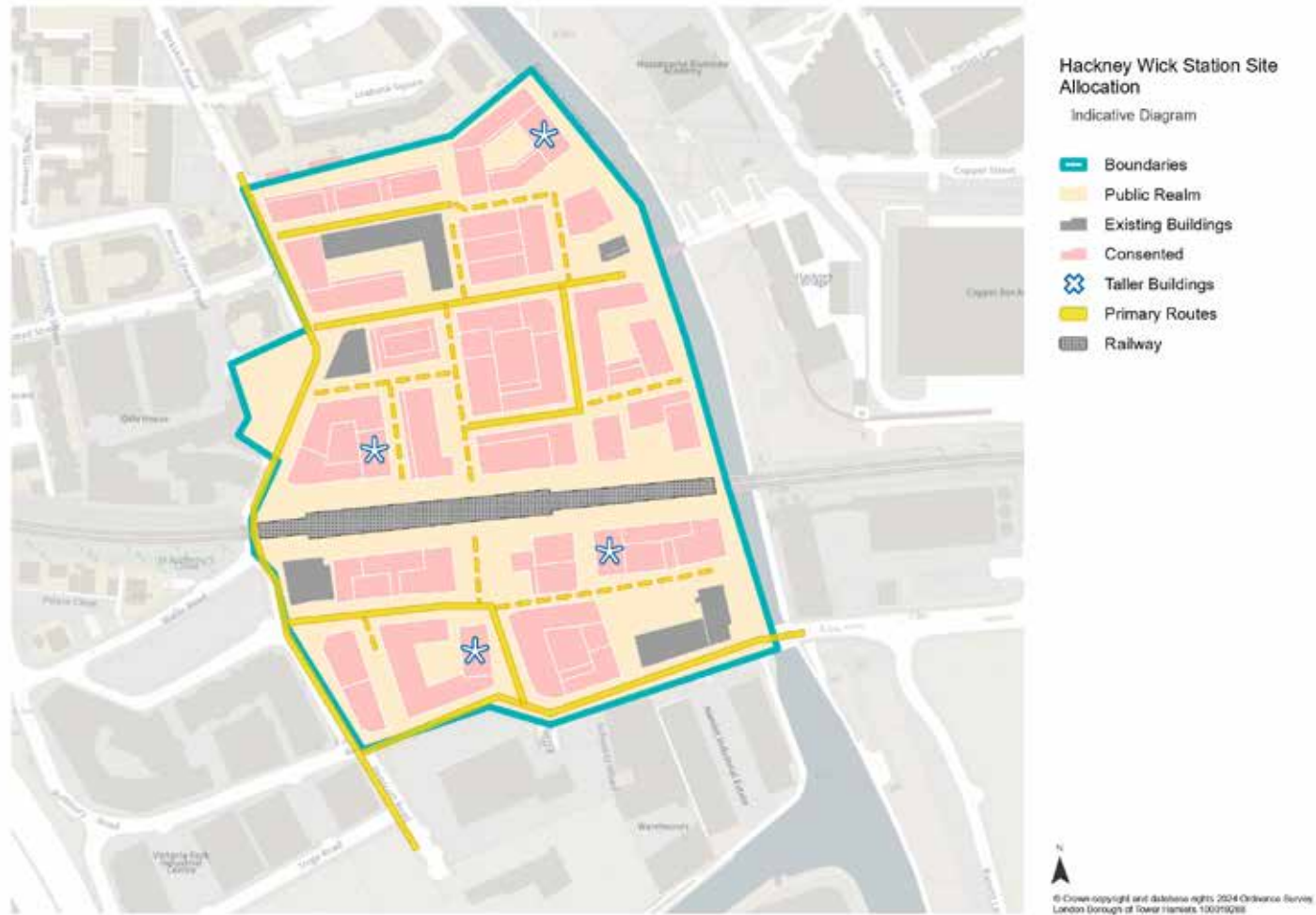
- Land should be secured to provide a connector bridge that runs underneath the A13 to connect both sides of the site, to complete the pathway up the River Lea, and to allow pedestrians and cyclists to travel north and south without needing to cross the busy A13, giving easier access to facilities at Aberfeldy neighbourhood centre and open space on the Leven Road site allocation.
- Development must provide public access along the waterfront at the River Lea. Improved green grid routes should be provided along Oban Street and along the River Lea waterfront, with good quality onward connections towards the green grid at Abbott Road and the Leven Road and Aberfeldy Estate site allocations.
- Vehicle movements around the redeveloped light industrial space and the redeveloped depot should be carefully considered to minimise conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, and motorised vehicles.
- Development should provide appropriate riparian lifesaving infrastructure along the riverside path.

## Environment and public realm

- Incorporate a significant amount of riverside public open space, with elements of biodiversity that complement the adjacent Bow Creek Ecology Park Site of Importance for Nature Conservation across the River Lea in the London Borough of Newham.

## 3.6 Hackney Wick Station

Figure 39: 3.6 Hackney Wick Station (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	White Post Lane
Area [ha]	6.39
Ward	Bow East
PTAL [2031]	3-4
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Lea Valley, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Metropolitan Open Land (Lee Valley Regional Park, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Town centre (Hackney Wick neighbourhood centre)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Fish Island)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	16/00166/OUT – Hackney Wick Masterplan - Outline planning application for the demolition of 28,281sqm of existing buildings on site and development of a phased comprehensive mixed use development of up to 119,242sqm floorspace. Residential of up to 78,931sqm to deliver approx. 874 units; Employment of a minimum of 29,908sqm; Retail of up to 4,493sqm; and Community Facilities for a minimum of 381sqm and up to 2,318sqm.

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>16/00271/OUT – Queen's Yard - Hybrid planning application comprising outline planning permission for a new theatre providing up to 1,500sqm of floorspace, and detailed planning permission for the demolition of all buildings on site and mixed use redevelopment to provide flexible commercial floorspace, residential, and enhanced public realm.</p> <p>17/00112/FUL – 55-69 Rothbury Road - Demolition of buildings/structures and redevelopment of the site, comprising the erection of a five-storey building, plus basement level, with a total gross internal floor area of 2630sqm of Class B1 (Business) floorspace with shared amenities and facilities.</p> <p>22/00095/RMA – Hackney Wick Masterplan - Application for the Approval of Reserved Matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping for Plot E/F, Plot J East and Plot K2 North of the Hackney Wick Masterplan to provide 190 residential units, 3,984sqm commercial space and 180sqm community/leisure space.</p>



Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	800 homes across the whole site (300 on Tower Hamlets portion of site) 6,500sqm commercial and community floorspace
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

### Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, employment-focused scheme with a mix of residential, retail, workspace, and creative and cultural uses.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Retail/town centre uses (Class E)
  - Employment uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
  - Theatre (sui generis)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Community facility
- This is a cross-boundary site with the London Borough of Hackney. Development should coordinate consultation across planning authorities and address cross-boundary issues.
- Proposals on this site should be in accordance with the principles of the Hackney Wick Masterplan.
- Development should deliver a mix of uses around the rebuilt Hackney Wick Station, integrate with established retail frontage at Felstead Street and Prince Edward Road, and utilise buildings of heritage value.

- The overall amount of existing employment floorspace (B Use Class) within the allocation boundary must be maintained, with a particular emphasis on retaining and providing for creative and cultural industries and any other businesses that are compatible with residential use.
- Queen's Yard will act as a high-quality public space defined by a mixture of cultural and public uses that complement existing uses such as The White Building and the Yard Theatre. In line with policy CI5, development should aim to protect the theatre use on this site.
- Workspace provision should be provided at both upper and ground-floor levels to acknowledge the variety of workspace typologies.
- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation.

### Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 43m at the tallest point, which should be located towards the centre of the site, between White Post Lane and Rothbury Road. An additional taller point with an appropriate height of 33m should be located on the Queen's yard site, with heights stepping down around these higher points.
- The impact of development on nearby conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

- A new direct and legible north-south connection which structures the heart of the area should be delivered between Wallis Road and Monier Road, integrated with Hackney Wick Station and an improved bridge over the Hertford Union Canal extending from Roach Road. A fine grain of streets, passageways and yards should be established that should create informal secondary connections to the canal edge.
- Development must provide public access along the waterfront at the Lee Navigation Canal. Improved green grid routes should be provided along the Lee Navigation Canal, with good quality onward connections to the green grid route along the Hertford Union Canal.

## Environment and public realm

- Existing streets should be reinforced with strong building edges and active ground floors, and new high quality public realm should be provided throughout the allocation. Queen's Yard should act as a high quality public space defined by a mixture of cultural and other public uses.

## 3.7 Hepscoth Road

Figure 40: 3.7 Hepscoth Road (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Hepscott Road/Trego Road
Area [ha]	3.08
Ward	Bow East
PTAL [2031]	3
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (London's Canals, and Disused Railway, Bow, both adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Metropolitan Open Land (Lee Valley Regional Park, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Fish Island and White Post Lane)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>16/00451/OUT - Hybrid' planning application for mixed-use redevelopment of 2.88ha site comprising: up to 39 new/refurbished buildings/blocks to provide for a mix of land uses comprising: Residential (475 units); Commercial and Community Uses (up to 11,018sqm).</p> <p>17/00225/FUL - Application for full planning permission for demolition of the existing building and erection of a new building ranging between one and six storeys in height to provide 1,915sqm of commercial floorspace at ground and lower-ground floor level and 52 residential units on the upper floors.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	525 homes 11,000sqm commercial and community floorspace
Phasing	2024-29

### **Land uses, activities, and delivery**

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, and creative and cultural uses, and delivery of a linear park and crossings of the canal.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Small scale retail/town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Improved crossing of the Hertford Union Canal
  - Strategic consolidated open space of at least 1.2ha
- Development should enable the delivery of improved or new north-south connections across the canal
- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation.

### **Form, massing, and heritage**

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 32m, with buildings varying in height across the site.
- The impact of development on nearby conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

### **Routes and streets**

- Development should provide new walking and cycling routes through the site providing connections to the Hertford Union Canal towpath, Roach Point Bridge, and Hackney Wick Station. Development must provide public access along the waterfront at the Hertford Union Canal. Improved green grid routes should be provided along the Hertford Union Canal waterfront, with good quality onward connections to the rest of the green grid network, including along the Lee Navigation Canal.

### **Environment and public realm**

- Development should respond positively to the waterside setting, enhance the character of the canal and enhance strategic views west towards central London.
- Proposals should provide a high-quality frontage and deliver public realm improvements to Wansbeck Road.



## 3.8 Sweetwater

Figure 41: 3.8 Sweetwater (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Carpenters Road/Bassett Lane
Area [ha]	11.16
Ward	Bow East
PTAL [2031]	1b-3
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Lea Valley, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Metropolitan Open Land (Lee Valley Regional Park, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Fish Island)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>11/90621/OUTODA – Sweetwater masterplan - Comprehensive, phased, mixed use development within the future Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.</p> <p>13/00508/REM - Application for the approval of reserved matters for hard and soft landscaping for Canal Park.</p> <p>16/00039/REM – Reserved Matters application for the provision of a two form entry primary school, as well as playing field and associated changing rooms.</p> <p>21/00069/REM – Sweetwater Phase 4 - Application for the approval of reserved matters for the development of 373 residential units, 452sqm retail floorspace, 733sqm employment floorspace, a 493sqm nursery and a 896sqm space for library use and community use.</p> <p>21/00042/REM – Sweetwater Phase 5 - Application for the approval of reserved matters for the development of 399 residential units, a 1,257sqm health centre or retail floorspace, 584sqm retail floorspace and 272sqm flexible retail/employment floorspace.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	775 homes 4,500sqm commercial and community floorspace
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, and community uses, and provision of a library, nursery, health care facility, and bridges across the canal.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Small scale retail/town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Library
  - HS primary health care facility
  - Nursery
  - Provision of bridges across the Lee Navigation Canal
  - Retention and improvement of existing open space
- New bridge links should be provided across the Lee Navigation that align with the street pattern of Hackney Wick and Fish Island, in order to provide improved access to amenities, movement routes, and transport infrastructure for new residents.
- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 43m at the tallest point, which should be located in the northeastern part of the site. Heights should step down gradually towards the south of the site.
- The impact of development on nearby conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

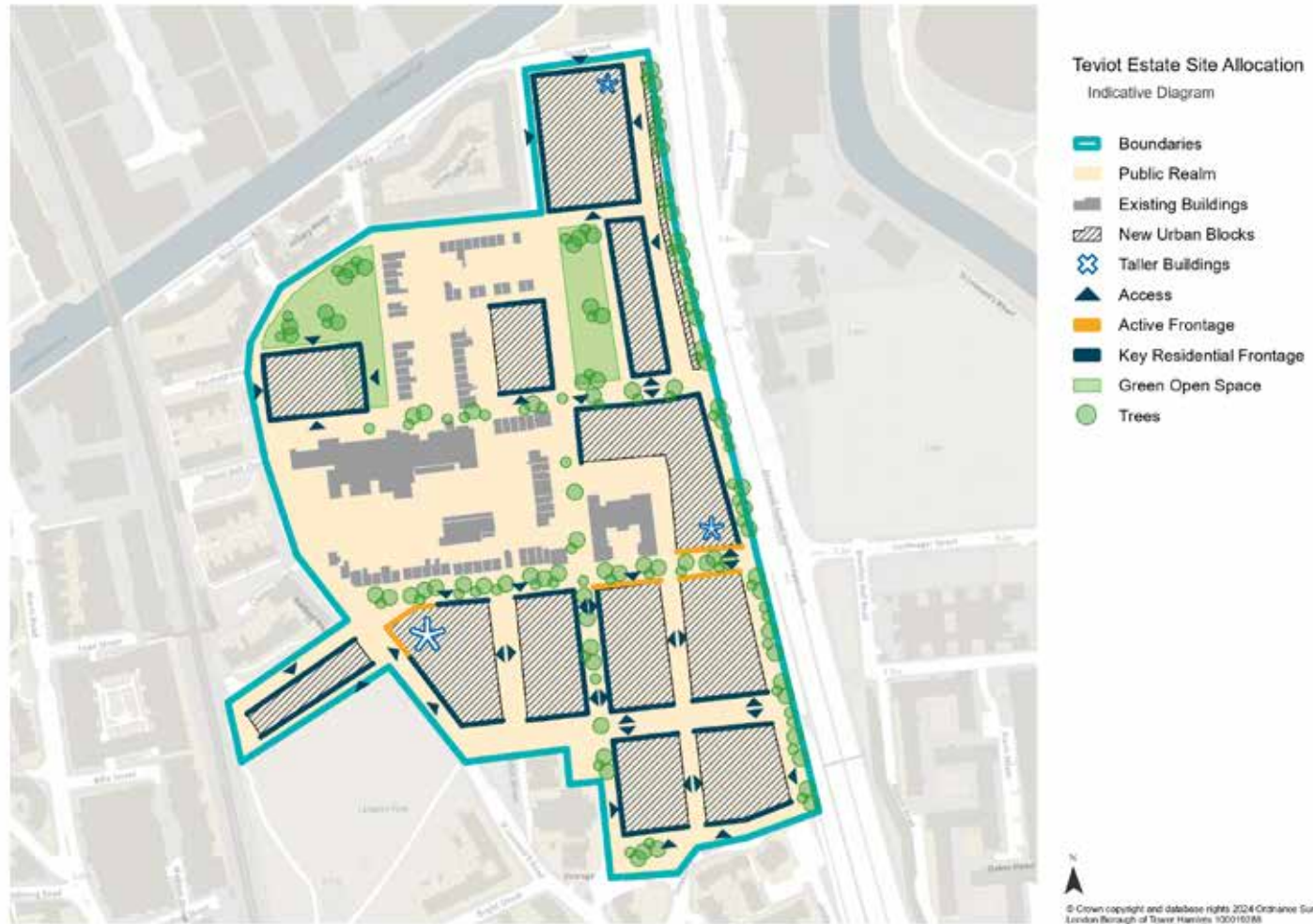
- Development should support the continuation of direct east-west connections from Hackney Wick and Fish Island to the primary school that has already been delivered in the southern part of this site and Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Development must provide public access along the waterfront to the east and west of the site.

## Environment and public realm

- Active ground floor frontages and high quality public realm should be provided along east-west routes that cross the allocation.

## 3.9 Teviot Estate

Figure 42: 3.9 Teviot Estate (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Teviot Street/Zetland Street
Area [ha]	10.08
Ward	Lansbury
PTAL [2031]	2-4
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (London's Canals, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Metropolitan Open Land (Lee Valley Regional Park, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Publicly Accessible Open Space (Wyvis Street Open Space; and Langdon Park – adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Lea Valley, Tier 3)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Langdon Park; and Limehouse Cut and Balfron Tower, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Church of St Michael and All Angels, grade II; and War Memorial, grade II)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	None

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	1,200 homes 5,000sqm commercial/community floorspace
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses, and provision of a primary school.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Small scale retail/town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Primary school expansion (with reprovision of any playing fields, MUGAs, or sports facilities)
  - Community facility
  - Improvements to existing open spaces at Langdon Park and Uamvar Street
  - Safeguarded landing space for bridge across Limehouse Cut Canal
- A cluster of local retail and community uses could be reprovided along Zetland Street from the current location on Teviot Street.
- This site could potentially be suitable for extra-care accommodation or accommodation for people with learning disabilities – in such circumstances, planning use class C2 may also be acceptable on this site, but only for these uses.



## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 50m at the tallest point, which should be located in the western end of the site near Langdon Park. Along the A12, buildings should reach an appropriate height of 36-39m. heights should step down away from these points.
- A strong built frontage should address the A12 along the site's eastern boundary. The scale of development along the A12 edge should vary, to avoid a feeling that the estate is presenting a 'wall' to the road and turning inwards. Given the busy nature of this principal urban road, building frontages should step away from the route. This may permit some mitigation measures along the route to be introduced to help delivery better air quality and help manage noise pollution issues.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. This includes ensuring that development does not undermine the setting of, and views towards, Balfron Tower. The prominence of Balfron Tower should be preserved from borough-designated viewpoints. Any tall buildings in these views must be subservient to Balfron Tower and be located so that they do not disrupt the silhouette of the building on the skyline. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals, and the Tower Hamlets Views and Landmarks Study.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site. These should support permeability and legibility. In particular, improving east-west permeability is a priority, with redevelopment of the estate enabling the establishment of smaller street blocks and a more open and connected set of streets. Development must provide improved public access to the waterfront at the Limehouse Cut Canal. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along Zetland Street and St Leonard's Road, with good quality onward connections to Langdon Park, and to adjoining green grid routes at Chrisp Street across the DLR tracks and at Lochnagar Street across the A12 in the Ailsa Street site allocation.

## Environment and public realm

- Opportunities should be sought to extend and improve Langdon Park in its current location by ensuring that all of the park's edges are addressed by good quality frontage. Improved public open space and public realm should also be provided towards the north of the estate, around the community centre.

## 25. Isle of Dogs and South Poplar

### Location

25.1 The Isle of Dogs and South Poplar sub-area is located to the south-east of the borough, bounded by the River Thames to the south, River Lea and the London Borough of Newham to the east, and East India Dock Road to the north.

25.2 The sub-area falls within the London Plan's Isle of Dogs and South Poplar opportunity area.

25.3 The sub-area is a collection of vibrant and distinctive town centres, employment hubs, transport interchanges and residential areas. The sub-area comprises eight distinct character places (see Figure 36). The Tower Hamlets Urban Structure and Characterisation Study provides further information on the key elements of the local character of each place.

### Vision

25.4 By 2038, the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar will have a cohesive mix of housing, employment and leisure uses within distinctive, inclusive and vibrant neighbourhoods, which have a strong sense of place.

25.5 South Poplar will be integrated with neighbouring areas in the Isle of Dogs, capitalising on the opportunities in Canary Wharf and Blackwall. New development at Canary Wharf will reinforce and strengthen its role as a global commercial and business centre. There will be additional local employment opportunities in South Poplar and Isle of Dogs to support a range of flexible start-ups and small-to-medium enterprises.

25.6 Development will be of exemplary quality and capable of accommodating densities to support sustainable places and reinforce local character, where appropriate. This will result in a greener and more attractive living and working environment, befitting the waterfront setting.

25.7 Canary Wharf's role as a Metropolitan Centre will expand and diversify to meet the needs of the wider area. Redevelopment of sites will also support revitalised town centres (including new neighbourhood centres at South Quay and London City Island) and a range of functions, such as community facilities and play spaces.

25.8 The opening of the Elizabeth line will facilitate the provision of new homes and jobs to serve both existing and future communities. New and enhanced connections across strategic roads, docks and the River Thames, together with public realm improvements, will enhance walking and cycling across the area. Further improvements to the sustainable transport network (including enhancements to the Docklands Light Railway and river-based services) will allow people to better access jobs, services and visitor attractions.

### Objectives

- a. Support the delivery of high quality interconnected places which respond to local heritage assets and the area's distinctive character
- b. Address severance across the area and to surrounding areas through connectivity enhancements as well as new linkages over the waterways and road network
- c. Manage development intensification and associated impacts on the environment and existing communities

- d. Support vibrant and mixed town centres through enhancing the commercial and office employment offer in Canary Wharf as well as a range of flexible small-to-medium enterprises in surrounding areas
- e. Deliver new and improved open and water spaces, which are accessible and well integrated into new development
- f. Improve the transport network and secure the necessary strategic and local infrastructure, such as schools, health and community facilities.

### **Site allocations in the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar sub-area**

- 4.1 Aspen Way
- 4.2 Billingsgate Market
- 4.3 Crossharbour
- 4.4 Limeharbour
- 4.5 Marsh Wall East
- 4.6 Marsh Wall West
- 4.7 Millharbour
- 4.8 North Quay
- 4.9 Reuters
- 4.10 Riverside South
- 4.11 Westferry Printworks
- 4.12 Wood Wharf
- 4.13 10 Bank Street
- 4.16 Westferry/Park Place

## 4.1 Aspen Way

Figure 43: 4.1 Aspen Way (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Aspen Way
Area [ha]	5.48
Ward	Poplar
PTAL [2031]	3-5
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Poplar)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3; and Poplar, tier 2)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (St Mathias Church)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (New City College, Grade II)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	None

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	780 homes 21,000sqm educational floorspace 2,000sqm other non-residential floorspace
Phasing	2030-34, 2035-39

### Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses and the reprovision of a college, community centre, football pitches, and transport depot.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
  - Transport facilities (Sui generis)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Reprovision of college
  - Reprovision of community centre and associated football pitches (of at least equivalent quality and size as the current football pitches on site)
  - Reprovision of DLR depot
  - Improved pedestrian crossing over Aspen Way
  - Strategic consolidated open space of minimum 1 hectare
- Development should enable the continued use of the existing depot.
- Proposals on this site should be in accordance with the principles of the South Poplar Masterplan SPD. This has been developed between landowners and the council in order to positively address the social, economic and environmental disparities between Poplar and Canary Wharf.
- Where landowners and developers can reach agreement on potential land swaps, different options for massing and layout of the site may be acceptable.



## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 91m at the tallest point, which should be in the southern-central portion of the site. Heights should step away from this point to the east and west, and should step away significantly towards the existing lower scale residential context to the north.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. The setting of adjacent housing should also be protected through appropriate screening and landscaping. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

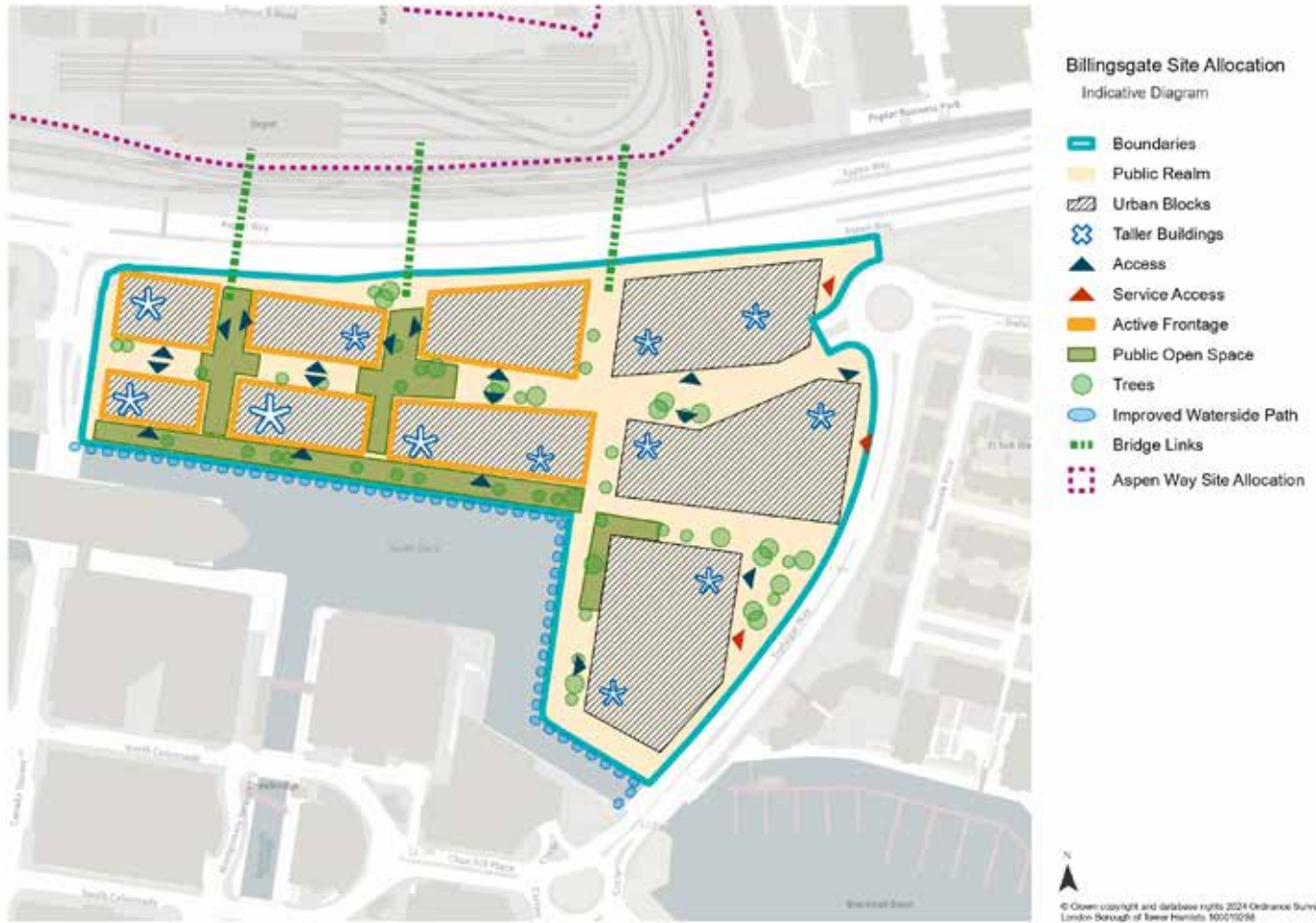
- Address the physical barriers and poor connectivity created by Aspen Way, with new and improved walking and cycling routes. This could be facilitated through the provision of improved connections, including new bridges or decking across Aspen Way connecting the site to the Billingsgate Market and North Quay sites.
- Strengthen walking and cycling connections to Poplar DLR station, Poplar High Street, East India Dock Road and Canary Wharf station. Green grid improvements should be delivered along Poplar High Street and through the site towards Poplar DLR station, with good quality onward connections to Poplar Recreation Ground and across Aspen Way.

## Environment and public realm

- Create a positive sense of place with a public square and public green open space that integrates north-south links and Poplar DLR station, and improve the quality of spaces around and between buildings and movement through the area.
- Across the South Poplar Masterplan area, development should coordinate to manage surface water to enable discharge into the docks to the south.

**4.2 Billingsgate Market**

Figure 44: 4.2 Billingsgate Market (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Trafalgar Way
Area [ha]	5.75
Ward	Canary Wharf
PTAL [2031]	4-6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Skyline of Strategic Importance</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Preferred Office Location (Canary Wharf Fringe)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Canary Wharf)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Quay Walls, Copings and Buttresses to Import Dock and Export Dock, Grade I; Accumulator Tower, Grade II)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	None

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	3,000 homes 66,000sqm commercial floorspace 23,000sqm retail floorspace
Phasing	2030-34, 2035-39

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3) – maximum 75% of floorspace
  - Town centre uses (Class E) – at least 25% of floorspace
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
  - Warehousing/freight facilities (Sui generis)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Community centre
  - Improved pedestrian crossing over Aspen Way
- The operations of Billingsgate Market should be appropriately re-provided at a suitable location within London.
- The site is within the Canary Wharf Fringe and is expected to provide at least 25% of the floorspace as commercial uses, with a focus on Central Activities Zone strategic uses as defined in the London Plan.
- Proposals on this site should be in accordance with the principles of the South Poplar Masterplan SPD. This has been developed between landowners and the council in order to positively address the social, economic and environmental disparities between Poplar and Canary Wharf.
- An assessment should be carried out to understand the potential contamination on site prior to any development taking place.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: The tallest point should be located in the western portion of the site, with additional taller points on either side.
- Heights and layout should ensure that One Canada Square retains its prominence, and ensure that the silhouette of One Canada Square, and particularly its distinctive pyramid, remain visible in views from north.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site, particularly with a new east to west cycle route through the site. Walking and cycling routes should integrate the site with Poplar to the north; North Quay and Canary Wharf Elizabeth line station; and to the wider area. These routes should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and legibility. Development must provide public access along the waterfront at North Dock. Green grid improvements should be delivered along the waterfront at North Dock, with good quality onward connections to green grid routes through the Wood Wharf and North Quay allocations.

- Address the physical barriers and poor connectivity created by Aspen Way, with new and improved walking and cycling routes. This could be facilitated through the provision of improved connections, including new bridges or decking across Aspen Way connecting the site to the Billingsgate Market and North Quay sites.
- New public routes should be established – with one central primary east-west connection through the centre of the site together with further east-west routes at the northern and southern site boundaries. In addition, as the site widens to the east, multiple new connections should be established with Trafalgar Way.

## Environment and public realm

- Provide publicly accessible open space of at least 0.4 hectares in size, which should be easily accessible from across the site and connected to the green grid route along the waterfront.
- Development should prevent excessive overshadowing and enable activation of the dockside by stepping back development from North Dock.
- Enhance legibility and have a clear distinction between public and private spaces, by way of improving public realm particularly along the dockside, providing a continuous walkway with supporting active ground floor uses and frontages, and address the severance caused by Trafalgar Way.
- Great care will need to be taken to ensure the quality of environment and public realm is appropriately high and fully accessible in view of the need to address level changes and the need to link to the northern prospect of a public connection across Aspen Way.
- Across the South Poplar Masterplan area, development should coordinate to manage surface water to enable discharge into the docks to the south.

## 4.3 Crossharbour

Figure 45: 4.3 Crossharbour (indicative)





Site information	Details
Address	East Ferry Road
Area [ha]	6.15
Ward	Blackwall and Cubitt Town
PTAL [2031]	1b-5
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (small part of the site)</li> <li>● Critical Drainage Area (part of the site)</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Local Nature Reserve (Mudchute Farm and Park, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Mudchute Farm and Park, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Metropolitan Open Land (Mudchute, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Town Centre (Crossharbour District Centre)</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Isle of Dogs)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Millwall Inner Dock)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	PA/19/02534/A1 – A hybrid planning application (part detailed, part outline) for the comprehensive, mixed-use, re-development of the site. Full details for 526 residential units, flexible commercial floorspace, including a new foodstore, a primary school, community uses.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	2,500 homes (2,000 on Asda site) 24,000sqm commercial floorspace (17,000sqm on Asda site)
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses and the provision of a health centre, primary school and community centre.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - NHS primary health care facility (reprovision and expansion)
  - Primary school
  - Community centre
  - Transport interchange
- Redevelop and improve the town centre with an anchor supermarket and a range of retail, leisure and community uses with sizes which can support independent providers. A new supermarket should be provided before the existing supermarket is redeveloped to ensure a continued service for local people. Within the town centre, active frontages and town centre uses should predominate at ground level.
- Delivery of new routes and the public square should be prioritised within the phasing timetable.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 115m at the tallest point, which should be located on the eastern side of East Ferry Road. On the western side of East Ferry Road, an appropriate height of 85m at the northern part of the site, with heights stepping down towards the south. Heights should step down toward the edges of the site in response to existing residential and the park.
- Protect and enhance the setting of the Maritime Greenwich world heritage site.

## Routes and streets

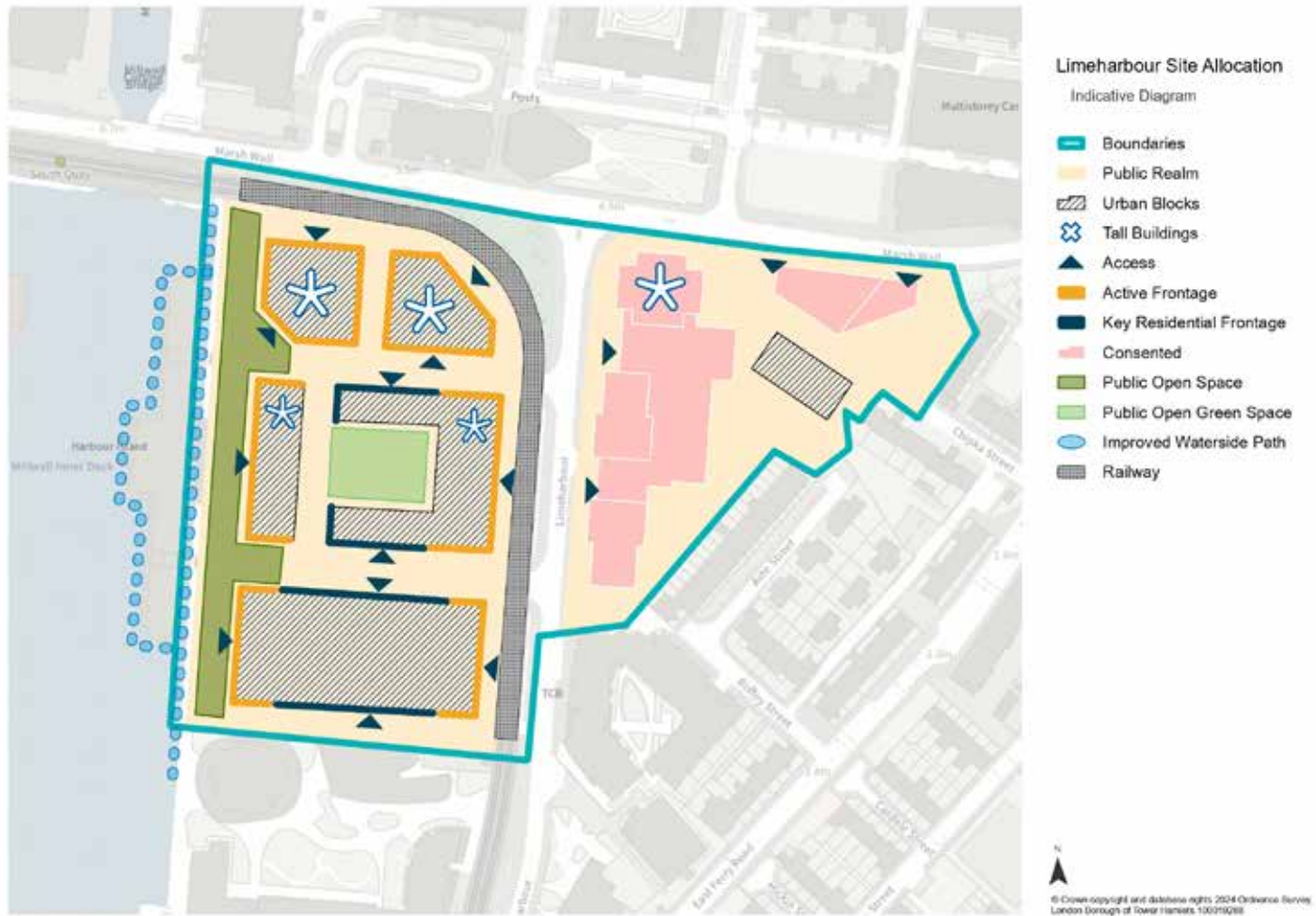
- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and across the site to establish connections to the new public square, Crossharbour DLR station and Mudchute Park. These routes should acknowledge the existing urban grain to support permeability and legibility. On the eastern side, pedestrian connections established with Glengall Grove would help local permeability. On the western side, the alignment of the DLR line means that additional connections and linkages cannot be made although the alignment of Selsdon Way should be retained. Improved green grid connections should be delivered through the site, with good quality onward connections to green grid routes along Glengall Grove and Pepper Street.

## Environment and public realm

- Improve public realm with active site edges, particularly along East Ferry Road and adjacent to Mudchute Park, and reinforce and complement local distinctiveness and create a positive sense of place with the provision of a new public square in the centre that is framed by the development.

**4.4 Limeharbour**

Figure 46: 4.4 Limeharbour (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Limeharbour
Area [ha]	5.25
Ward	Blackwall and Cubitt Town
PTAL [2031]	3-4
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (small part of the site)</li> <li>● Critical Drainage Area (part of the site)</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Isle of Dogs)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Millwall Inner Dock)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	PA/17/01597 – Construction of a new mixed use development consisting of five buildings ranging from ground plus 3 to ground plus 48 storeys in height comprising 579 residential units; a two-form entry primary school with nursery facilities; a 10,272 sq. m SME Business Centre; 2,228 sq. m of flexible commercial floorspace (Resolution to grant permission).

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	1,900 homes (approximately 1,250 across whole Harbour Exchange site, remainder on Skylines site) 39,000sqm commercial floorspace
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34, 2035-39

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with some employment spaces.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Community centre
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: The tallest point should be located in the north of the site, along Marsh Wall, east of Limeharbour. Additional taller points to the west of Limeharbour along Marsh Wall. Height should step down towards the southern end of the site.
- Create a series of buildings scales with a well-articulated built form and skyline, avoiding significant adverse environmental impacts, including overshadowing of adjacent sites either within the area or outside, particularly along the main routes of Marsh Wall and Limeharbour. Massing should be varied so as to avoid creating a canyon-like environment along Marsh Wall.
- Protect and enhance the setting of the Maritime Greenwich world heritage site and the historic dockside promenade.

## Routes and streets

- Create a legible, permeable and well-defined movement network through the site, centred on Limeharbour, Marsh Wall, and the path along Millwall Inner Dock, and connected to the surrounding existing street network and docksides, and to the proposed new bridge crossing to the north. Maintain the existing route alignments across Harbour Exchange Square, to ensure permeability of the site.
- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site – particularly between Oakland Quay and Limeharbour; Limeharbour and East Ferry Road; and between the dock sides, Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre and Mudchute Park. These routes should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and legibility. Development must provide access along the waterfront at Millwall Inner Dock. Improved green grid routes should be provide through

the site and between the different parts of the site, with good quality onward connections to adjoining green grid routes such as those on the Marsh Wall East and Marsh Wall West site allocations.

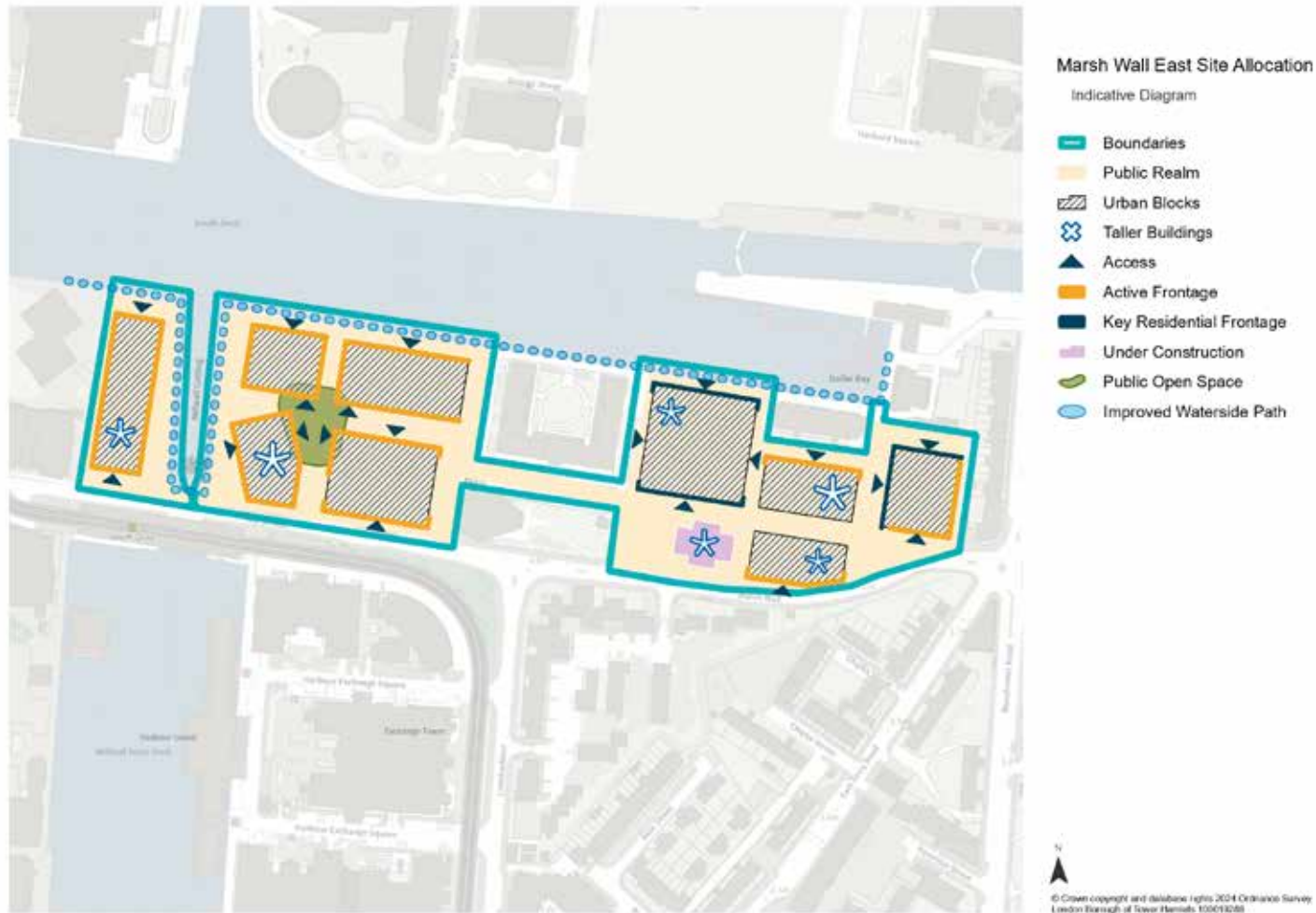
## Environment and public realm:

- Integrate buildings with improved public realm and ensure development is stepped back from the docksides with fully accessible active frontages. The priority for improved public realm is the waterfront edge along Millwall Inner Dock, which should provide space for a range of uses and be well-connected to South Quay DLR station.
- Improve the quality of public realm and create a positive sense of place with an arrival point in the form of an active square at the corner of Marsh Wall and Limeharbour.
- Provide well defined public green open space or public squares with active building frontages around the DLR viaduct. The open space should be well integrated into the development.



## 4.5 Marsh Wall East

Figure 47: 4.5 Marsh Wall East (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Marsh Wall
Area [ha]	4.14
Ward	Blackwall and Cubitt Town
PTAL [2031]	3-4
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (small part of the site)</li> <li>● Skyline of Strategic Importance</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Isle of Dogs)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Millwall Outer Dock)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Coldharbour, adjacent to site)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	PA/16/02808 – Redevelopment of the site to provide a building of ground plus 48 storey (maximum height 163.08m) comprising 332 residential units; 810 square metres of community floorspace; 79 square metres of flexible retail/restaurant/community.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	2,400 homes (approximately 1,475 on western half of site, 332 on 225 Marsh Wall site, 585 on rest of eastern half of site) 10,000sqm hotel floorspace 3,300sqm educational floorspace 45,000sqm commercial floorspace 10,500sqm retail floorspace
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

### Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with some employment spaces, and provision of a primary school and a health facility.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Hotel (Class C1)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Primary school
  - NHS primary health care facility
  - Community centre

- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.
- The site contains a number of existing buildings, some constructed fairly recently. When demolition and redevelopment is proposed, applications must robustly justify how they meet circular economy and sustainability principles set out in the rest of the development plan.
- Development of residential uses on the eastern half of the site must demonstrate that they have considered and suitably mitigated against potential noise from the data centre uses within this area, in line with the Agent of Change principle.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: The tallest point should be located towards the west of the site, but to the east of the Millwall Cutting. Heights should step down towards the eastern end of the site, and to the west of the tallest point in order to preserve the townscape of the Skyline of Strategic Importance.
- Development should maintain the existing block structure whilst respecting its dockside location and surrounding built environment – in particular providing a transition in scale in relation to the lower rise buildings to the south-east and ensure appropriate spacing between buildings to enable visual permeability between Marsh Wall and

South Dock, and variation in heights to avoid the creation of a canyon-like effect along Marsh Wall.

- Create a series of building scales with a well-articulated built form and skyline, avoiding significant adverse environmental impacts, including overshadowing of adjacent sites either within the area or outside, particularly along the main routes of Marsh Wall and Limeharbour.
- The impact of development on nearby conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.
- Protect and enhance the setting of the Maritime Greenwich world heritage site and the historic dockside promenade.

## **Routes and streets**

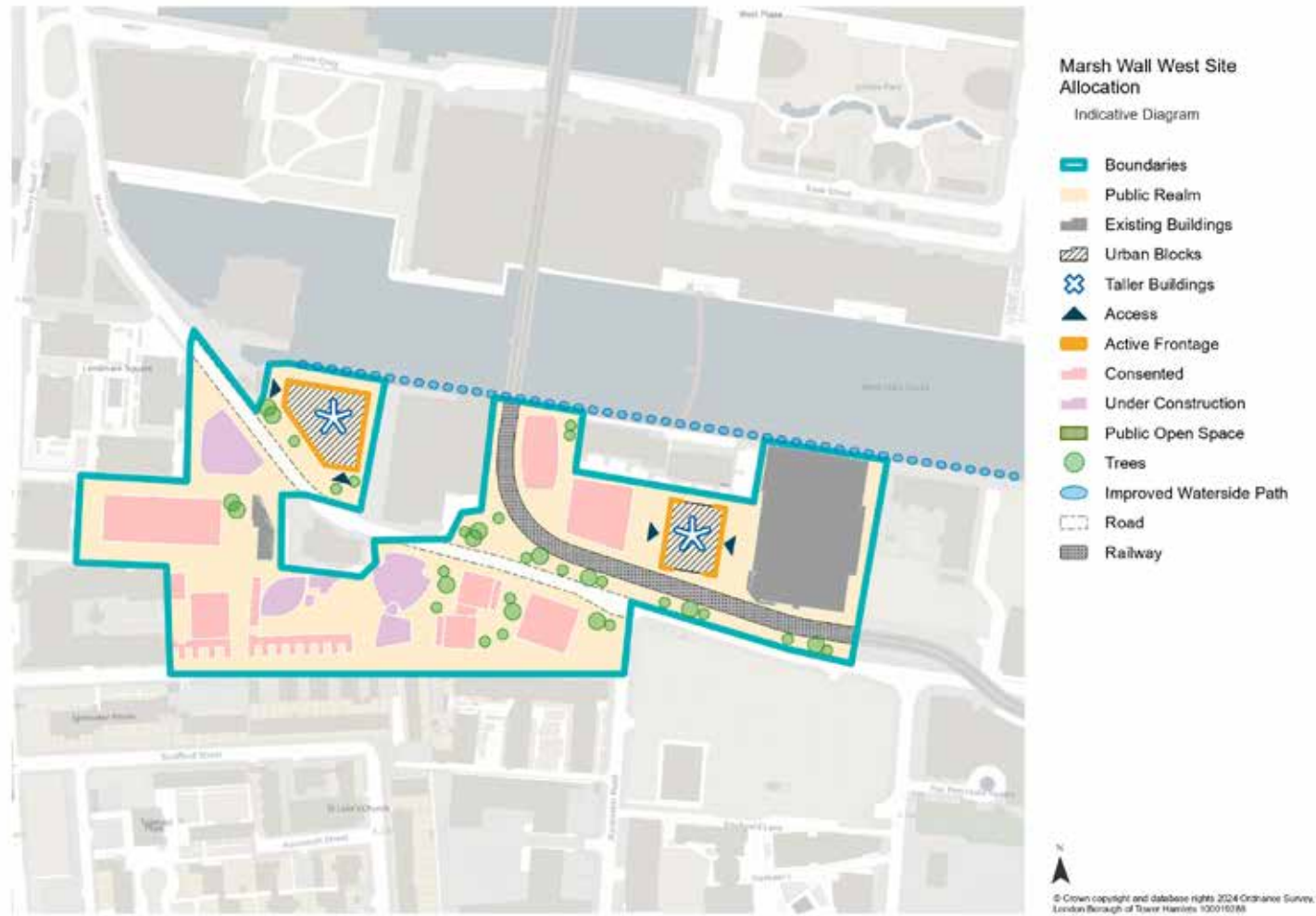
- Create a legible, permeable and well-defined movement network through the site, centred on Limeharbour, Marsh Wall, and the waterfront at South Dock, and connecting to the surrounding existing street network and docksides.
- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site, particularly to the dockside, Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre and towards Mudchute Park to the south. These routes should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and legibility. Development must provide public access along the waterfront at South Dock. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along the waterfront at South Dock, with good quality onward connections provided to green grid routes at Manchester Road, and through the Limeharbour and Marsh Wall Werst site allocations.

## **Environment and public realm**

- Integrate tall buildings with an improved public realm and ensure development steps back from the docksides with fully accessible active frontages, and consider the operational needs of boat operators.
- Provide well-defined public green open space, particularly along the South Dock waterfront and public squares with active building frontages. Good quality public realm and public open space at the base of the tall buildings proposed here will be key for their successful integration into the wider area.

## 4.6 Marsh Wall West

Figure 48: 4.6 Marsh Wall West (indicative)





Site information	Details
Address	Marsh Wall
Area [ha]	4.94
Ward	Canary Wharf
PTAL [2031]	2-5
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skyline of Strategic Importance (part of the site)</li> <li>● Critical Drainage Area (part of the site)</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Publicly Accessible Open Space (Lenanton Steps)</li> <li>● Town Centre (South Quay Neighbourhood Centre)</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Isle of Dogs)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Millwall Inner Dock)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/15/02671 – 50 Marsh Wall, 63-69 and 68-70 Manilla Street - redevelopment to provide three buildings of 65 (217.5m), 20 (79.63m) and 34 (124.15m) storeys above ground comprising 634 residential units, 231 hotel rooms, provision of ancillary amenity space, a new health centre, a new school, ground floor retail uses.</p> <p>PA/16/01637 – 54 Marsh Wall – construction of two new linked buildings of 41 and 16 storeys comprising 216 residential units; two ground floor commercial units totalling 174 sqm GIA fronting on to Marsh Wall.</p> <p>PA/17/03182 – Jemstock 2 – Minor Material amendment to the planning permission PA/15/02104 which gave consent for the: Erection of building facades to existing structure on site to create a mixed use development comprising 206 serviced apartments, 1,844 sqm of office floorspace and 218sqm of cafe floorspace. Amendments include: increase in the number of serviced apartments from 206 to 250 units.</p>

Site information	Details
	<p>PA/20/02128 – Cuba Street - Erection of single tower block accommodating a high density residential led development with ancillary amenity and play space, along with the provision of a flexible retail space at ground floor, the provision of a new publicly accessible park and alterations to the public highway.</p> <p>PA/20/02588 – 30 Marsh Wall - Demolition of existing building and erection of a single building to provide student accommodation along with flexible retail / commercial floorspace.</p> <p>PA/20/02649 – Quay House – Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment to provide a mixed use development comprising a hotel and serviced apartments.</p> <p>PA/22/00591 – 56-58 Marsh Wall – Demolition of existing buildings and construction of building up to 46 storeys (151.9m) comprising up to 795 co-living units in sui generis use together with communal facilities, non-residential floor space and public realm improvements.</p>

Site proposal	Details
<b>Indicative capacities</b>	<p>2,625 homes (450 on Cuba Street site, 150 on Byng Street/Bellamy Close site, 250 on Britannica hotel site, 650 on Marsh Wall/Manilla Street site, 225 on 54 Marsh Wall site, 500 on Ensign House site, 400 on Beaufort Court site)</p> <p>1,000 student units (30 Marsh Wall site)</p> <p>800 co-living units (56-58 Marsh Wall site)</p> <p>1175 hotel rooms and serviced apartments (225 on Marsh Wall/Manilla Street site, 700 on Quay House site, 250 on Jemstock site)</p>
<b>Phasing</b>	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with some employment spaces.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Community centre
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: Appropriate height of 230m at the tallest point, which should be on the Ensign House site. There should be a variation in heights across the site, with heights generally stepping down towards the west and south of the site.
- Development should maintain the existing block structure whilst respecting its dockside location and surrounding built environment
  - in particular provide a transition in scale in relation to the lower rise buildings to the south-east and ensure appropriate spacing between buildings to enable visual permeability between Marsh Wall and South Dock, and variation in heights to avoid the creation of a canyon-like effect along Marsh Wall.

- Create a series of building scales with a well-articulated built form and skyline, avoiding significant adverse environmental impacts, including overshadowing of adjacent sites either within the area or outside, particularly along the main routes of Marsh Wall.
- Protect and enhance the setting of the Maritime Greenwich world heritage site and the historic dockside promenade.

## Routes and streets

- Create a legible, permeable and well-defined movement network, centred on Millharbour and Marsh Wall. Frequent and public routes connecting South Dock with Marsh Wall should be created and maintained in any redevelopment proposals.
- Improve and enhance walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site, and provide legible and pedestrian friendly connections between and along Marsh Wall and South Quay Walk, particularly from Mastmaker Road to the South Quay footbridge and from Millharbour through a newly proposed footbridge to Upper Bank Street.
- Development must provide public access along the waterfront at South Dock. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along the waterfront at South Dock, and along Byng Street, Manilla Street, and Cuba Street, with good quality onward connections provided to green grid routes towards the Thames Path, Stafford Street, and the site allocations at Millharbour and Marsh Wall West.

## Environment and public realm

- Prevent excessive overshadowing of the dockside and enable activation of the waterfront by ensuring development is stepped back from the water, and consider the operational needs of boat operators.
- The pedestrian environment along Marsh Wall axis is currently restrictive. This key street route should be a pedestrian friendly environment. Existing and new routes between the Marsh Wall axis and South Dock should be designed primarily for pedestrians and incorporate landscape and SUDs feature.
- Create open spaces around the DLR that should be well defined by public green space or public squares and active building frontages. Open space is in short supply in this location – with views across the dock basin provide the sense of openness. The public routes and spaces alongside the edges of South Dock should be generous.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, opportunities for greywater re-use should be investigated.

**4.7 Millharbour**

Figure 49: 4.7 Millharbour (indicative)





Site information	Details
Address	Marsh Wall/Millharbour
Area [ha]	3.95
Ward	Canary Wharf
PTAL [2031]	2-4
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Critical Drainage Area (part of the site)</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Town Centre (South Quay Neighbourhood Centre)</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Isle of Dogs)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Millwall Inner Dock)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	PA/14/03195 - Building G1, a podium with two towers of 10 - 38 storeys and of 12 - 44 storeys; Building G2, a four floor podium with two towers of 34 and 38 storeys inclusive of podium; Building G3, a tower rising to 44 storeys; and Building G4, a four floor podium with a tower of 31 storeys inclusive of podium. The development provides 1,513 new homes in a mix of units and tenures; a new primary school with nursery facilities; further education uses; 5,820 sqm of flexible commercial floorspace; two new public parks including play facilities.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	1,700 homes 6,000sqm non-residential floorspace 3,500sqm educational floorspace
Phasing	2024-29

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of workspace and community uses, including provision of a primary and secondary school.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Small scale retail/town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Primary school
  - Reprovision and expansion of existing alternative secondary school
- The site is in multiple ownership, and landowners and developers should work together to develop a comprehensive design-led masterplan for redevelopment of this site, to ensure development is delivered sustainably. Effective engagement between landowners, developers and leaseholders will be needed to facilitate potential land assembly and comprehensive redevelopment.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height Strategy: Appropriate height of 146m at tallest points, which should be at the northern and eastern edges of the site. Other taller buildings of 131m and 117m in the north, and 125m in the east.
- Development should respond positively to the local character of the surrounding built environment and its dockside location, and should step down from Marsh Wall to the smaller-scale residential areas south of Millwall Dock.
- Protect and enhance the setting of the Maritime Greenwich world heritage site and the historic dockside promenade.

## Routes and streets

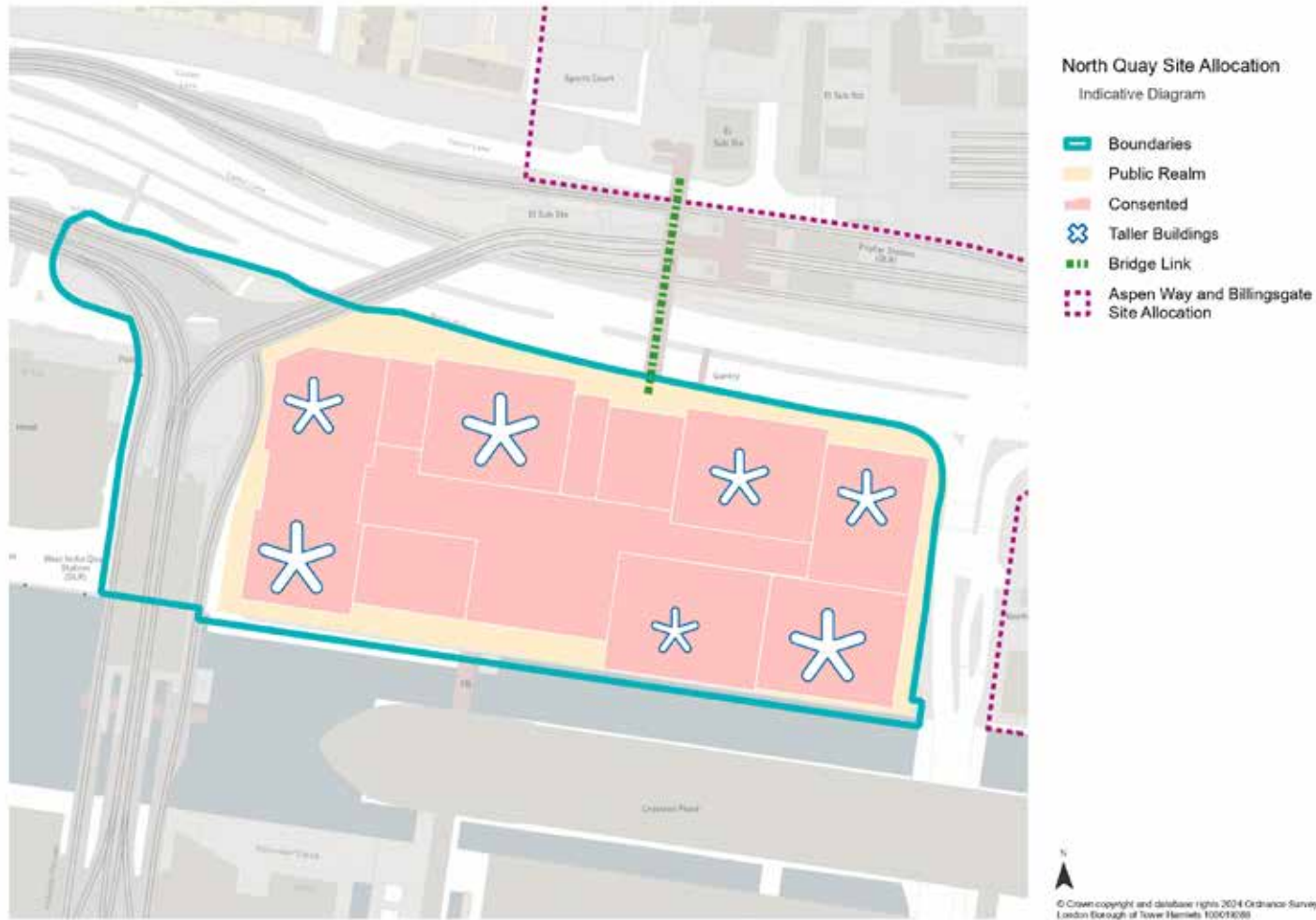
- Create a legible, permeable and well-defined movement network, centred on Millwall Inner Dock, Millharbour and Marsh Wall.
- Improve and enhance walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site, and provide legible and pedestrian friendly connections between Marsh Wall and South Quay Walk, particularly from Mastmaker Road to the South Quay footbridge and from Millharbour through the proposed footbridge to Upper Bank Street. Development must provide public access along the waterfront at Millwall Inner Dock. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along Marsh Wall, Millharbour, and along the waterfront at Millwall Inner Dock, with good quality onward connections to green grid routes through the Marsh Wall West site allocation.

## Environment and public realm

- Incorporate active frontages to surrounding streets and spaces (including the waterside) and accessible, high quality public space along the entire dockside.
- Create a positive sense of place with an arrival point in the form of an active square at the corner of South Quay footbridge and Marsh Wall/ Mastmaker Road.
- Prevent excessive overshadowing and enable activation of the dockside by ensuring development is stepped back from the waterside.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, opportunities for greywater re-use should be investigated.

## 4.8 North Quay

Figure 50: 4.8 North Quay (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Upper Bank Street
Area [ha]	2.87
Ward	Canary Wharf
PTAL [2031]	5-6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Skyline of Strategic Importance</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Town Centre (Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre)</li> <li>● Preferred Office Location (Canary Wharf Fringe)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Canary Wharf)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Quay Walls, Copings and Buttresses to Import Dock and Export Dock, Grade I)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	PA/20/01421 – Application for outline planning permission (all matters reserved) for the redevelopment of the North Quay site for mixed use comprising: Demolition of existing buildings and structures; Erection of buildings and construction of basements; The following uses: - Business floorspace – Hotel/ Serviced Apartments – Residential – Co-Living.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	Up to 1,250 homes At least 160,000sqm non-residential uses
Phasing	2024-29

### Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use scheme with elements of residential and employment floorspace.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3) – maximum of 75% of floorspace
  - Town centre uses (Class E) – at least 25% of floorspace
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Improved pedestrian crossing over Aspen Way
- The site is within the Canary Wharf Fringe and is expected to provide at least 25% of the floorspace as commercial uses, with a focus on Central Activities Zone strategic uses as defined in the London Plan.

- Proposals on this site should be in accordance with the principles of the South Poplar Masterplan SPD. This has been developed between landowners and the council in order to positively address the social, economic and environmental disparities between Poplar and Canary Wharf.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: The tallest point should be at the southwest corner of the site.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

- Address the barrier of Aspen Way and integrate the site with Poplar High Street to the north, and the Canary Wharf Elizabeth line station and the Canary Wharf estate to the south. These routes should align with the existing urban grain to support permeability and legibility.
- Improve walking and cycling connections to and from the site, accommodating a new east-to-west pedestrian route through the site which facilitates connections to the wider movement network and the DLR and underground stations adjoining the site. Improve strategic links from Canary Wharf to Poplar High Street through the provision of enhanced north-south links.

- Development must provide public access along the waterfront at North Quay. Improved green grid connections should be delivered through the site and along the waterfront at North Dock, with good quality onward connections to green grid routes at the West India Docks and Hertsmere Road, and connecting to the Aspen Way and Billingsgate Market site allocations.

## Environment and public realm

- Create a positive sense of place through the delivery of an active public square connecting the Canary Wharf Elizabeth line station and the dockside promenade to Poplar DLR station and Poplar High Street.
- Across the South Poplar Masterplan area, development should coordinate to manage surface water to enable discharge into the docks to the south.



### 4.9 Reuters

Figure 51: 4.9 Reuters (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Paul Julius Close
Area [ha]	1.72
Ward	Blackwall and Cubitt Town
PTAL [2031]	2-5
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Thames Policy Area</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (River Thames and Tidal Tributaries, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Blackwall)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Blackwall, tier 2)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Dry Dock at Blackwall Engineering, Grade II)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/20/02509 – Phased redevelopment of the site and construction of 5 buildings (with maximum heights of between 9 and 39 storeys) comprising residential dwellings of mixed tenure, primary school &amp; nursery, commercial, business &amp; service floorspace.</p> <p>PA/21/00288 – Full planning permission for a riverboat station, jetty and associated works at Blackwall Yard.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	900 homes 2,250sqm commercial uses and public house
Phasing	2024-29

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a residential-led scheme with provision of a primary school.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Primary school
- Development proposals must include the raising of flood defences in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. Along the riverside, development should be set back from the water by a minimum of 16m to allow adequate access to flood defences for future maintenance and upgrading.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: The tallest buildings should be located at the northern side of the site. Heights should step down towards the river.
- Buildings should enable visual permeability between Blackwall Way and the River Thames.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets should be

considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

### **Routes and streets**

- Height strategy: Appropriate heights of 139m and 117m on the two tallest buildings, which should be located at the northern side of the site. Heights should step down towards the river.
- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site, to address the connections to adjacent sites and create a legible, permeable and well-defined movement network. A continuous pedestrian and cycle link along the Thames Path should be provided.
- Development must provide public access along the waterfront at the River Thames. Improved green grid connections should be delivered along Blackwall Way and the River Thames waterfront, with good quality onward connections to adjoining green grid routes, such as the route over Aspen Way towards Naval Row.
- Development on this site will be accompanied by delivery of a new riverbus station, to improve access to the area.

### **Environment and public realm**

- Development should create a positive sense of place with an arrival point in the form of an active public square at the corner of Blackwall Way, through Blackwall Yard to the Thames waterfront.
- Reinforce and complement local distinctiveness with the re-provision of the existing waterspace on site and integrate its function with the open space to maximise amenity provision.
- Respect the waterside setting, ensuring public accessibility to the waterfront by stepping buildings back from the water and ensuring active frontages along the water's edge.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, development on this site should provide an outfall for surface water drainage into the River Thames.

## 4.10 Riverside South

Figure 52: 4.10 Riverside South (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Westferry Circus
Area [ha]	2.17
Ward	Canary Wharf
PTAL [2031]	5-6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (part of the site)</li> <li>● Skyline of Strategic Importance</li> <li>● Thames Policy Area</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Town Centre (Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre)</li> <li>● Preferred Office Location (Canary Wharf Fringe)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Canary Wharf)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Former West Entrance Lock to South Dock, Grade II)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	PA/08/02249 - Erection of office buildings (341,924sqm) comprising two towers (max 241.1m and 191.34m) with a lower central link building (80.05m) together with ancillary parking service and access roads, public open space and riverside walkway, landscaping including public art and other ancillary works. Stalled permission.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	1,650 homes 56,000sqm commercial floorspace
Phasing	2030-34

### Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use scheme with elements of residential and employment floorspace.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3) – maximum of 75% of floorspace
  - Town centre uses (Class E) – at least 25% of floorspace
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Community centre
- The site is within the Canary Wharf Fringe and is expected to provide at least 25% of the floorspace as commercial uses, with a focus on Central Activities Zone strategic uses as defined in the London Plan.
- Development proposals must include the raising of flood defences in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. Along the riverside, development should be set back from the water by a minimum of 16m to allow adequate access to flood defences for future maintenance and upgrading.
- Development should not prejudice the potential delivery of a river crossing across the Thames.
- The site has lain dormant for some time, and temporary meanwhile



uses will be encouraged on this site while plans for a more permanent development are prepared. This could include using the site for open space, employment and commercial uses, or temporary residential accommodation.

- Delivery on this site will need to consider the operational requirements of the West India Dock entrance and impounding station, particularly with regards to the delivery of the improved riverside path.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: The tallest point should be to the south of the site, adjacent to Westferry Road. Secondary point of significant height opposite this in the north of the site. Heights should step down significantly from these tall points.
- The site should be subdivided to create at least three urban blocks with public routes between them, and should deliver variety and distinction in the heights of new buildings across the site to ensure visual permeability between Westferry Road and the River Thames.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. Development should enhance the listed lock wall and lock entrance that forms the southern boundary of the site. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site - particularly to address connections to Westferry Circus, Westferry Road and the River Thames, to create a legible, permeable and well-defined movement network. East-west connections should be created across the site, extending the axis of Bank Street, and providing at least one other east-west route. Reinstatement of the active street frontage and pedestrian route along Westferry Circus and Westferry Road, with strong visual and activity links to the riverside amenity. Improved green grid routes should be delivered along the River Thames waterfront, with good quality onward connections to the rest of the Thames Path.
- A continuous waterside route for pedestrians and cyclists should be maintained on the western perimeter of the site along the River Thames, ensuring easy public access along the entire waterfront with active retail and commercial uses.
- Development should provide appropriate riparian lifesaving infrastructure along the riverside path.

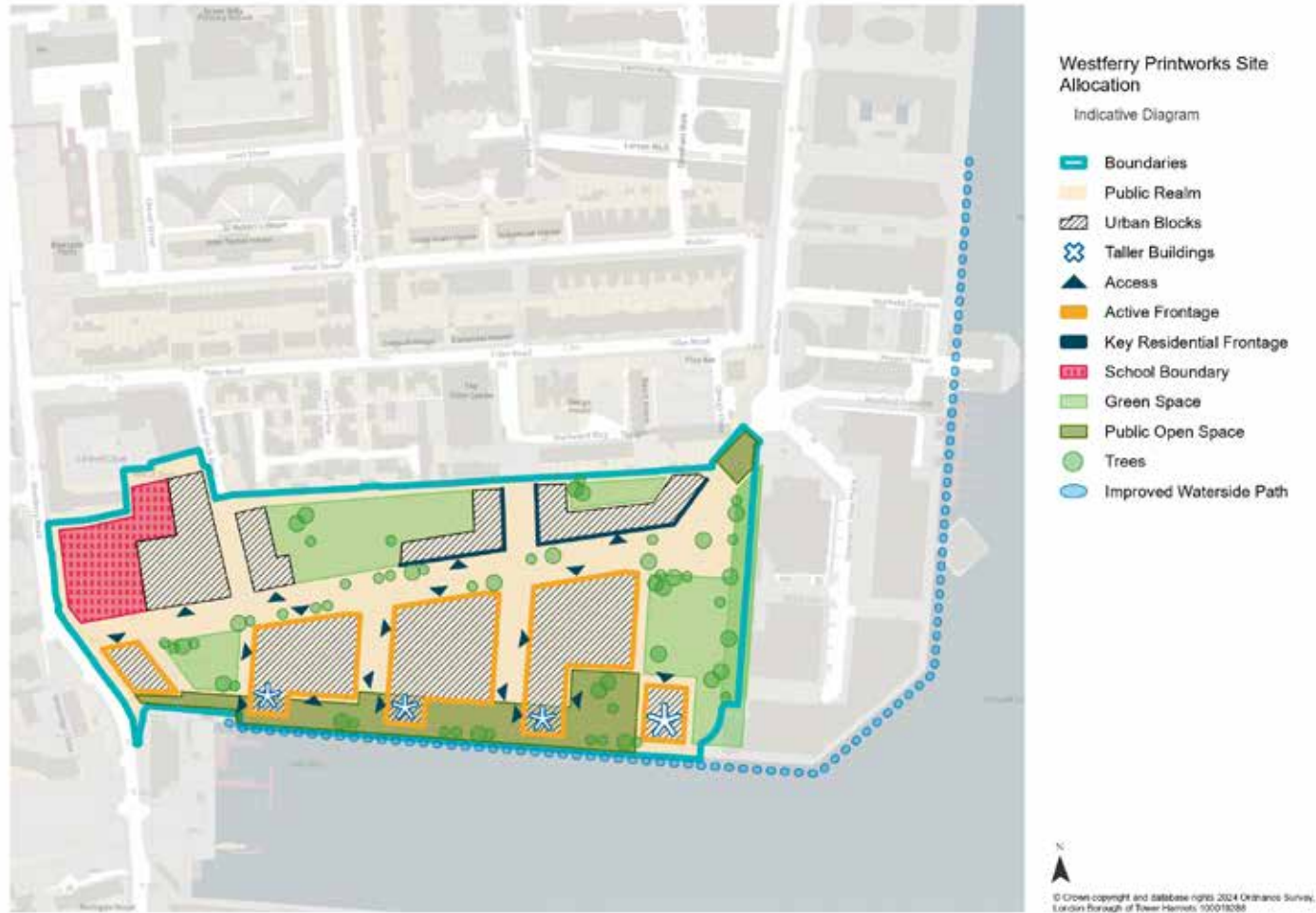
## Environment and public realm

- A major riverside public space should be created at the centre of the site. This space should join all routes and urban blocks together and provide a direct connection to the River Thames. Provide green open space along the River Thames which is activated with commercial uses and expands on the leisure activity hub at Westferry Circus.

- Respect the waterside setting, ensuring public accessibility to the waterfront by stepping buildings back from the water and ensuring active frontages along the water's edge.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, development on this site should provide an outfall for surface water drainage into the River Thames.

## 4.11 Westferry Printworks

Figure 53: 4.11 Westferry Printworks (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Westferry Road
Area [ha]	6.21
Ward	Canary Wharf
PTAL [2031]	1b-2
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (small part of the site)</li> <li>● Critical Drainage Area (part of the site)</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Neighbourhood Planning Area (Isle of Dogs)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Millwall Inner Dock)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> </ul>
Relevant Permissions	PA/15/02216 – Comprehensive mixed use redevelopment including buildings ranging from 4- 30 storeys in height (tallest being 110m) comprising: a secondary school, 722 residential units, retail use, flexible restaurant and café and drinking establishment uses, flexible office and financial and professional services uses, Community uses.

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	950 homes 14,500sqm educational floorspace 2,000sqm commercial floorspace 4,000sqm community floorspace 1,500sqm retail floorspace
Phasing	2024-29

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a residential-led scheme with provision of a secondary school.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3)
  - Small scale retail/town centre uses (Class E)
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Secondary School
  - Community centre
  - Strategic consolidated open space of minimum 1 hectare
- Public open space should be located adjacent to the Millwall Outer Dock and designed to facilitate sport and recreation activities.
- An assessment should be carried out to understand the potential contamination on site prior to any development taking place.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: Appropriate height of 110m at the tallest point, which should be at the eastern end of the site. Heights should step down towards the existing lower-rise context in the west.
- Development should enable clear lines of sight between Millharbour and Millwall Outer Dock and ensure multiple visual and pedestrian permeability between Tiller Road and Millwall Outer Dock.
- Protect or enhance the setting of the Maritime Greenwich world heritage site.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to, from and within the site - particularly to improve connections to Millwall Outer Dock and to Barkantine Estate centre, Westferry Road centre and Crossharbour centre. These routes should align with the existing urban grain to create a legible, permeable and well-defined movement network. Development must provide access along the waterfront at Millwall Outer Dock. Improved green grid routes should be provided along the waterfront at Millwall Outer Dock, with good quality onward connections to green grid routes at Tiller Road and towards the Thames Path.
- New development should be well connected to the existing leisure centre at Tiller Road.

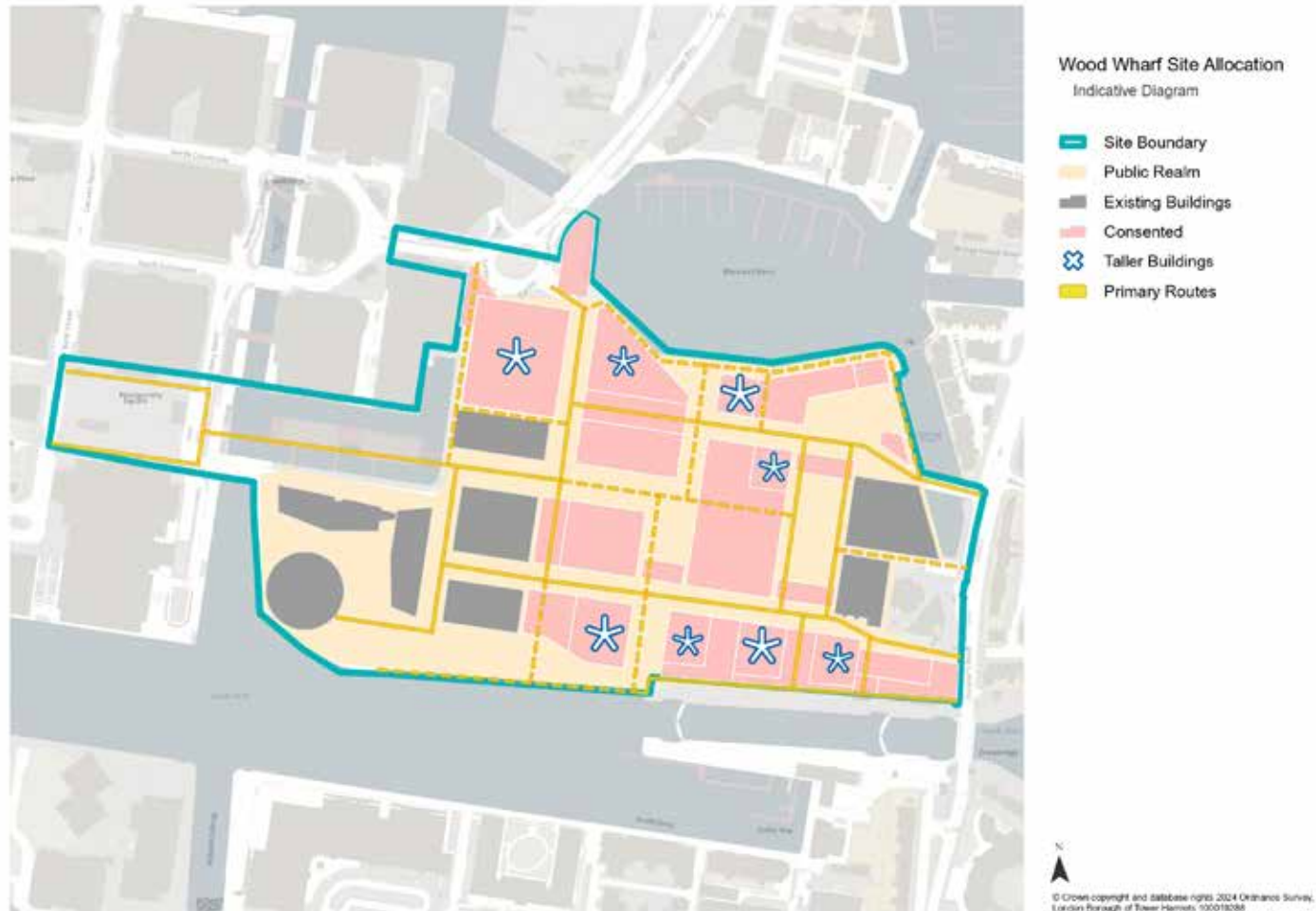
## Environment and public realm

- Improve public realm with active site edges, particularly along Westferry Road and Millharbour.
- Respect the waterside setting, ensuring public accessibility to the waterfront by stepping buildings back from the water.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, development on this site should provide an outfall for surface water drainage into the docks.



## 4.12 Wood Wharf

Figure 54: 4.12 Wood Wharf (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Preston's Road
Area [ha]	11.03
Ward	Blackwall and Cubitt Town
PTAL [2031]	3-6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality (small part of the site)</li> <li>● Skyline of Strategic Importance</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, and Blackwall Basin, both adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Town Centre (Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre)</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area (part of the site)</li> <li>● Preferred Office Location (Canary Wharf Fringe)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Canary Wharf)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> <li>● Conservation Area (Coldharbour, part of site, most of the Conservation Area is adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Quay Walls, Copings and Buttresses to Import Dock and Export Dock, Grade I; Blackwall Basin, Grade I)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/13/02966 - Outline application (all matters reserved) for mixed-use redevelopment of the site, comprising the erection of buildings, including tall buildings and basements, comprising residential units, hotel, business floorspace, retail, community and leisure, and sui generis uses.</p> <p>The permission also includes a night club/ jazz club in the basement levels of plot C1. As amended.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	<p>3,600 homes</p> <p>165-265,000sqm of commercial floorspace</p>
Phasing	2024-29, 2030-34

## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential-led scheme with a mix of retail, workspace, community and cultural uses and the provision of a primary school and health facility and an expansion of the Idea Store.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3) – maximum 75% of floorspace
  - Hotel (Class C1)
  - Town centre uses (Class E) – at least 25% of floorspace
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- Required on-site infrastructure includes:
  - Primary school

- NHS primary health care facility (already delivered and operational)
- Idea Store (or expansion or relocation of existing Canary Wharf Idea Store)
- Strategic consolidated open space of minimum 1 hectare
- The site is within the Canary Wharf Fringe and is expected to provide at least 25% of the floorspace as commercial uses, with a focus on Central Activities Zone strategic uses as defined in the London Plan.

### **Form, massing, and heritage**

- Height strategy: The tallest point should be located in the southwest corner of the site. Heights should step down towards the existing residential towards the east of the site.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets and conservation areas should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. This includes protecting or enhancing the Blackwall Basin and former West India Dock walls. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

### **Routes and streets**

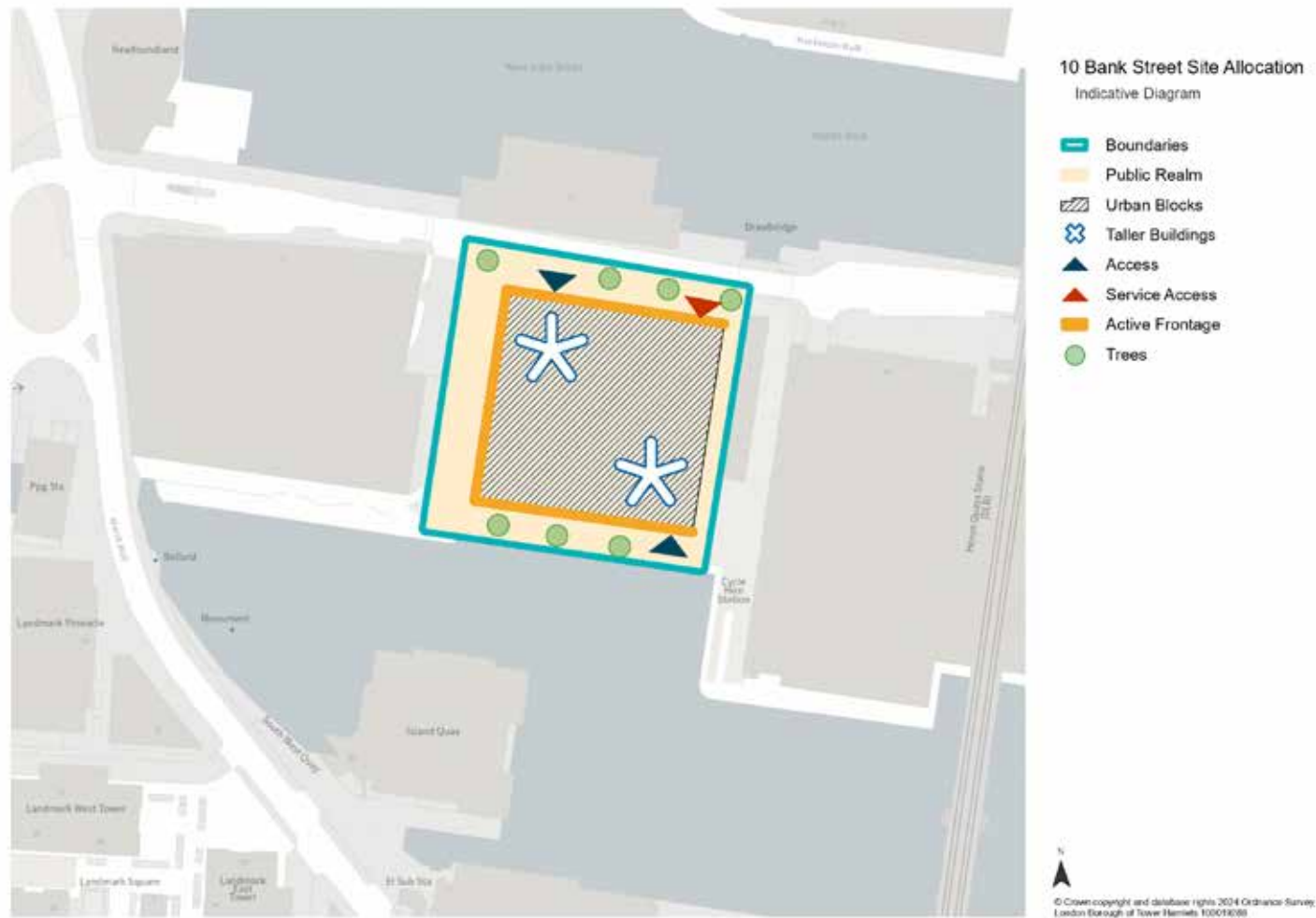
- Create new east-west and north-south walking and cycling routes. These should align with the existing grid geometry of Canary Wharf to create a legible, permeable and well-defined movement network, particularly connecting to Canary Wharf and Marsh Wall East. Development must provide access along the waterfront at Blackwall Basin and South Dock, and provide comfortable access to these spaces. Improved green grid connections should be delivered through the site, with good quality onward connections to green grid routes at Preston's Road and towards Jubilee Park and the Billingsgate Market site allocation.

### **Environment and public realm**

- Prevent excessive overshadowing and enable activation of the riverside by ensuring buildings are stepped back from the water edge.
- Provide a range of new publicly accessible open spaces, including a consolidated open space of at least 1 hectare in size.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, opportunities for greywater recycling should be investigated.

## 4.13 10 Bank Street

Figure 55: 4.13 10 Bank Street (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	Bank Street
Area [ha]	0.66
Ward	Canary Wharf
PTAL [2031]	6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skyline of Strategic Importance</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Town Centre (Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre)</li> <li>● Tower Hamlets Activity Area</li> <li>● Preferred Office Location (Canary Wharf Fringe)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Canary Wharf)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/13/01150 - Outline application (all matters reserved) for the demolition of existing buildings and structures and erection of a new building with a maximum height of 191.5m AOD comprising a maximum of 129,857sqm GIA of office floorspace and a maximum of 785 sqm GIA of flexible floorspace (A classes) along with a decked promenade to the South Dock, access and highways works, landscaping and other associated works. (Development not completed)</p> <p>PA/16/02956 - Construction of a building 166m AOD comprising 124,734sqm GIA of office (Use Class B1) and 293sqm GIA of retail (Use Classes A1-A5) along with a decked promenade to the West India Dock South.</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	575 homes 41,000sqm commercial/town centres floorspace
Phasing	2025-29, 2030-34



## Land uses, activities, and delivery

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential- and commercial-led scheme.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3) – maximum 75% of floorspace
  - Commercial and town centre uses (Class E) – at least 25% of floorspace
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- The site is within the Canary Wharf Fringe and is expected to provide at least 25% of the floorspace as commercial uses, with a focus on Central Activities Zone strategic uses as defined in the London Plan.

## Form, massing, and heritage

- Height strategy: The tallest point should be located in the southeastern corner of the site.
- The towers should be carefully designed with respect to overlooking, given the close proximity of this plot to adjacent developments.

## Routes and streets

- Improve walking and cycling connections to and from the site, and provide public access to the waterfront at South Dock. Public routes on the east and west sides of the block should also be created, to establish public and accessible routes between Middle and South Docks.

## Environment and public realm

- Prevent excessive overshadowing and enable activation of the riverside by ensuring buildings are stepped back from the water edge.
- In line with the Integrated Water Management Plan for the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar, development on this site should provide an outfall for surface water drainage into the docks.
- Due to the small size of this site, it cannot fulfil the requirement of policy DV8(1)(e) to provide 0.4ha of publicly accessible open space. Development on the site should therefore aim instead to provide smaller 'pocket parks' of publicly accessible open space and an improved public realm.

**4.16 Westferry / Park Place**

Figure 56: 4.16 Westferry / Park Place (indicative)



Site information	Details
Address	West Ferry Road/West India Avenue
Area [ha]	0.68
Ward	Canary Wharf
PTAL [2031]	6a
Planning designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Area of substandard air quality</li> <li>● Skyline of Strategic Importance</li> <li>● Flood risk area</li> <li>● Area of deficiency of access to nature</li> <li>● Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Millwall and West India Docks, adjacent to the site)</li> <li>● Town Centre (Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre)</li> <li>● Preferred Office Location (Canary Wharf Fringe)</li> <li>● Tall Building Zone (Canary Wharf)</li> <li>● Archaeological Priority Area (Isle of Dogs, tier 3)</li> <li>● Statutory listed buildings (Quay Walls, Copings and Buttresses to Import Dock and Export Dock, Grade I)</li> </ul>

Site information	Details
Relevant Permissions	<p>PA/13/02344: Outline application for the demolition of any existing structures, and construction of a building of up to 102,102sqm GIA comprising office use (use class B1) along with a decked terrace to the Middle Dock.</p> <p>PA/13/02341/A2: Reserved matters application for the erection of an office building (Use Class B1) comprising two basement levels, lower and ground level and 31 upper levels, construction of a new pedestrian link and other works incidental to the development.</p> <p>PA/16/02363/S: Minor-material amendment to outline planning permission PA/13/02344.</p> <p>PA/20/00125/NC: Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use or Development in relation to the implementation of outline planning permission (ref. PA/16/02363/S) and reserved matters application (ref. PA/13/02341/A2).</p>

Site proposal	Details
Indicative capacities	550 homes 19,000sqm commercial/town centre floorspace
Phasing	2030-34

### **Land uses, activities, and delivery**

- Development should consist of a mixed-use, residential- and commercial-led scheme.
- Acceptable land uses include:
  - Residential (Class C3) – maximum 75% of floorspace
  - Commercial and town centre uses (Class E) – at least 25% of floorspace
  - Community uses (Class F1/F2)
- The site is within the Canary Wharf Fringe and is expected to provide at least 25% of the floorspace as commercial uses, with a focus on Central Activities Zone strategic uses as defined in the London Plan.

### **Form, massing, and heritage**

- Height Strategy: The tallest point should be located in the west of the site, fronting Westferry Circus. Heights to step down to the east and south.
- The impact of development on nearby heritage assets should be considered – heritage assets should be protected or enhanced, and any negative impacts mitigated, because heritage and historic conservation plays a vital role in benefitting place shaping, social cohesion and the economy. For further details, refer to the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy and relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

### **Routes and streets**

- Improve walking and cycling connections to and from the site, and provide public access to the waterfront at Middle Dock.

### **Environment and public realm**

- High quality public realm and open spaces should be created between the buildings in the new development, and at the frontage with Middle Dock.
- The street frontage will need to carefully manage level changes on the Westferry Road frontage, where the road passes beneath Westferry Circus and the pedestrian routes rise to meet West India Avenue, and should create an improved pedestrian experience, with wide pavements to create space for pedestrians.
- Due to the small size of this site, it cannot fulfil the requirement of policy DV8(1)(e) to provide 0.4ha of publicly accessible open space. Development on the site should therefore aim instead to provide smaller 'pocket parks' of publicly accessible open space and an improved public realm.







# Appendices



## Appendix 1: Glossary

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Active cooling</b>		A heat-reducing mechanism that ensures heat transfer to cool a building. Active cooling is dependent on energy consumption to operate. Examples of active cooling include air conditioning systems.
<b>Active frontages</b>		A building front that promotes activity and natural surveillance, and encourages movement between the building at ground level and the adjacent public realm by the way the building is designed or orientated. A building provides active frontage if the ground floor avoids blank walls or obscured frontages, includes windows and openings, and provides a variety of uses, all of which contribute to natural surveillance and support the visual and physical relationship between the building and ground level.
<b>Affordable housing</b>		Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and our (the council) housing allocation policy. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
<b>Affordable workspace</b>		Workspace that is provided at rents below the market rate for that space for a specific social, cultural or economic development purpose. The space may be rented directly to the council or to an approved affordable workspace provider.
<b>Agent of Change Principle</b>		The principle places the responsibility of any new development (i.e. the agent of change) to mitigate the impact of nuisances (including noise) from existing nuisance-generating uses. This is to ensure that occupants in the new development are protected from adverse impacts and existing uses are protected from complaints. Similarly, any new nuisance-generating development, for example a music venue, will need to put in place measures to mitigate noise impacts on existing development close by.
<b>Air Quality Assessment</b>	AQA	An assessment of the impact of a development on levels of certain pollutants in the local area

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Air Quality Neutral</b>		An Air Quality Neutral development is one that meets, or improves upon, the benchmarks set out in the Air Quality Neutral LPG. These benchmarks set out the maximum allowable emissions of NOx and particulate matter based on the size and use class of the proposed development, and are designed to prevent the degradation of air quality from the combined emissions of individual developments. Air Quality Neutral applies only to the completed development and does not include impacts arising from construction, which should be separately assessed in the Air Quality Assessment.
<b>Air Quality Objectives</b>		Objectives are expressed as pollution concentrations over certain exposure periods, which should be achieved by a specific target date. Some objectives are based on long term exposure (e.g. annual averages), with some based on short term objectives. Objectives only apply where a member of the public may be exposed to pollution over the relevant averaging time.
<b>Air Quality Positive approach</b>		A process of identifying and implementing ways to push a development beyond compliance with both the Air Quality Neutral benchmarks and the minimum requirements of an air quality assessment. To achieve this, an AQP Statement should be submitted that demonstrates how benefits to local air quality have been maximised, and how measures to minimise pollution exposure will be implemented.
<b>Amenity</b>		A quality of a location or neighbourhood that helps to make it attractive or enjoyable for residents and visitors.
<b>Amenity space</b>		An area within the curtilage of a residential development that is used for recreation and provides visual amenity, e.g. gardens or landscaped space. This includes both 'private' and 'communal' amenity space.
<b>Annual monitoring report</b>	AMR	Assesses the effectiveness of our policies and proposals.
<b>Areas of deficiency in access to nature</b>		Areas where people have to walk more than one kilometre to reach a publicly accessible metropolitan or borough Site of Importance for Nature (SINC).
<b>Areas of deficiency in access to public open space</b>		Areas lacking in sufficient publicly accessible open space, as defined by the distances set out in London Plan policy G4 Open space.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Archaeological Priority Area</b>		A defined area where there is significant known archaeological interest which might be affected by development. These areas have been categorised into three tiers according to their relative archaeological significance and potential - Tier 1: Area which is known or strongly suspected to contain a heritage asset of national importance (e.g. scheduled monument). Tier 2: Area where there is known presence or likely presence of heritage assets of archaeological interest. Tier 3: Area with archaeological potential.
<b>Biodiversity Net Gain</b>	BNG	Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a strategy to develop land in a manner that contributes to the recovery of nature and leaves the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. Biodiversity net gain delivers quantifiable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Biodiversity refers to all living organisms, including animals, insects, plants, bacteria, and fungi. A habitat is the area and resources used by a living organism or assemblage of animals and plants. Biodiversity net gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures.
<b>Blue Badge parking</b>		Parking available to holders of Blue Badges (permits issued by the local authority entitling holders to park on the public highway in marked bays or on yellow lines.
<b>Business Improvement District</b>	BID	A business-led mechanism for increasing investment within defined areas of a city such as a town centre, based on a supplementary rate levied on businesses within the defined area.
<b>Build to Rent</b>	BTR	Schemes which meet the definition set out in Policy H11 Build to Rent of the London Plan
<b>Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method</b>	BREEAM	A widely used method to assess the sustainability of non-residential developments.
<b>Canary Wharf Fringe</b>		An area of transition between the Canary Wharf Preferred Office Location and the surrounding residential communities. This area has a mix of office uses and residential.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Car-free development</b>		Car-free developments do not provide parking for cars on-site and there is no entitlement to on-street parking permits for residents, with the exception of providing accessible parking spaces for Blue Badge holders.
<b>Central Activities Zone</b>	CAZ	A large area covering Central London and including parts of the boroughs of Camden, Hackney, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Southwark, Wandsworth and Westminster, in addition to Tower Hamlets. This area is the traditional commercial and cultural centre of London, with a high concentration of office, shopping, leisure and cultural facilities. Within Tower Hamlets, the CAZ includes the City Fringe and the North Isle of Dogs.
<b>CAZ Centres</b>		Clusters within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) that are predominantly retail or leisure focused and act as town centres.
<b>Circular economy</b>		An economic model in which resources are kept in use at the highest level possible for as long as possible in order to maximise value and reduce waste, moving away from the traditional linear economic model of 'make, use, dispose'.
<b>Code of Construction Practice</b>	CoCP	A guidance document setting out relevant legislation, linkages to the Local Plan, key actions to be undertaken by developers (regarding planning submissions and license applications) and encouraging the use of best practice environmental and safety related mitigations while planning and managing demolition and construction works within the borough.
<b>Community facilities</b>		For the purposes of this Local Plan, community facilities can include: public houses, libraries, youth facilities, meeting places, places of worship, public conveniences and other uses in use classes E(d-f), F1, F2(b and d) and Sui Generis that provide a service to the local community.
<b>Community infrastructure levy</b>	CIL	A tariff on development which creates net additional floor space, where the gross internal area of new build exceeds 100 square metres, to help fund new infrastructure required to support the development.



Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Community-led housing</b>		Schemes that are genuinely community-led all share three common principles: meaningful community engagement and consent occurs throughout the development process (communities do not necessarily have to initiate the conversation, or build homes themselves); there is a presumption that the community group or organisation will take a long-term formal role in the ownership, stewardship or management of the homes; and the benefits of the scheme to the local area and/or specified community group are clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.
<b>Communal heating systems</b>		A system that supplies heat to multiple properties from a common heat source. It may range from a district system heating many buildings to a system serving an individual block of flats.
<b>Comparison shopping</b>		Retail goods not bought on a frequent basis, and that may involve comparison shopping or visits to more specialised shopping locations, such as clothes, televisions, fridges and dishwashers etc.
<b>Connectivity</b>		This refers to the number of connections within a street network and their integration, layout and relationship to one another and the impact this has on getting from A to B, by foot, bicycle and vehicle.
<b>Conservation area</b>		An area of special architectural or historical interest, the character and appearance of which the council has a duty to preserve or enhance. The land, buildings and trees in these areas have special protection in the planning system.
<b>Construction, demolition and excavation waste</b>		This is waste arising from the excavation, construction, repair, maintenance and demolition of buildings and structures, including roads. It consists mostly of brick, concrete, hardcore, subsoil and topsoil, but it can contain quantities of timber, metal, plastics and occasionally special (hazardous) waste materials.
<b>Construction logistics and community safety standard</b>	CLOCS	The CLOGS standard is a common standard for use by the construction logistics industry to ensure that construction companies follow effective practice in the management of their operations, vehicles, drivers and construction sites. Each requirement has been developed to reduce the risk of a collision between heavy goods vehicles in the construction sector and vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians.
<b>Construction management plan</b>	CMP	The CMP provides a site-specific summary of planned management, monitoring and auditing procedures to ensure compliance with the CoCP.
<b>Convenience shopping</b>		The provision of everyday, essential items, such as food, drink and newspapers. In this type of shopping convenience of location usually takes priority.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Creative Enterprise Zone</b>	CEZ	A Mayor of London initiative to establish clusters of creative production, which provide affordable premises and enterprise-related incentives for artists and creative businesses, pro-culture planning and housing policies and offer career pathways and creative jobs for local communities and young people. Tower Hamlets contains one CEZ: The Hackney Wick and Fish Island CEZ in the east of the borough.
<b>Data Centre</b>		A data centre is a physical facility composed of networked computers and storage that businesses and other organisations use to organise, process, store and disseminate large amounts of data.
<b>Design code</b>		A set of simple, concise, illustrated design requirements that are visual and numerical wherever possible to provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.
<b>Development management</b>		Development management is the term used to include the range of activities and interactions that together transform the 'control of development and the use of land' into a more positive and proactive process in keeping with the ethos of spatial planning and supports local authorities in their role as place shapers.
<b>Development management policies</b>		These policies set out detailed criteria to carefully manage and control development through the planning application process.
<b>Development plan</b>		The borough's development plan is comprised of, the London Plan (produced on behalf of the Mayor of London), the Local Plan (this document), and any Neighbourhood Plans which may come forward. The development plan sets out specific policies to guide the use of land and buildings. These policies will be the starting point for assessing planning applications.
<b>District centre</b>		These designations form part of the borough's network of town centres, providing commercial and retail services to predominately serve local communities. They typically have at least one supermarket and a variety of non-retail functions (including community facilities) and are close to the strategic transport network.
<b>District heating network</b>	DHN	A network of pipes carrying hot water or steam, usually underground, that connects heat production equipment with heat customers.
<b>Docklands Light Railway</b>	DLR	An automated, driverless light metro system serving the redeveloped docklands area, including large parts of the borough and adjoining authorities.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Dual aspect</b>		A dual aspect dwelling is defined as one with openable windows on two external walls, which may be either on opposite sides of a dwelling or on adjacent sides of a dwelling where the external walls of a dwelling wrap around the corner of a building. The provision of a bay window does not constitute dual aspect.
<b>Dwelling</b>		A self-contained unit of residential accommodation; also referred to as a 'residential unit'.
<b>Early years</b>		Facilities and services for children of pre-school age (0-4), which include childcare providers, children centres and nurseries.
<b>Easily adaptable</b>		Easily adaptable requires adjustable level kitchen units to be installed to replace the standard units provided; that a level access shower is provided in one bathroom with "wet-room" drainage and that all parts of the dwelling must be suitably sized and that walls are strengthened for the installation of additional mobility aids, as required in the GLA's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance.
<b>Electric Vehicle Charging Point</b>	EVCP	Also known as a charging station, it is a power supply device that is used to recharge plug-in electric vehicles.
<b>Elizabeth line</b>		A new east-west spinal rail route through central London and beyond
<b>Embodied carbon</b>		In the built environment, 'embodied carbon' emissions refer to the total carbon emissions associated with the construction process, throughout the whole lifecycle of a building. This includes extraction (of raw materials), manufacture, transportation, assembly, replacement, and deconstruction.
<b>Energy Use Intensity</b>	EUI	Energy Use Intensity is a measure of the total energy consumption of a building over a year, per square meter (kWh/m <sup>2</sup> /yr). The EUI of a building covers regulated and unregulated energy uses, including space heating, domestic hot water, ventilation, lighting, cooking, and appliances. It does not include charging of electric vehicles.
<b>Employment uses</b>		Offices, industrial and storage and distribution facilities which fall under use classes B2, B8 and E(g), as well as sui generis uses with industrial functions.
<b>Enclosure</b>		Enclosure refers to using the design and scale of buildings to create a sense of defined space. Development should create streets and spaces with a degree of enclosure by assisting in defining the edges of the public realm.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Evening and night-time activities</b>		All uses and activities that take place after 6pm and before 6am. This includes leisure activities such as bars, pubs, restaurants and nightclubs; shops and services that stay open late; and social and physical infrastructure that requires operation and maintenance in the evening and at night, such as hospitals, wholesale markets and public transport.
<b>Family housing</b>		A dwelling that by virtue of its size, layout and design is suitable for a family to live in and generally has three, four, five, or more bedrooms.
<b>Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme Silver accreditation</b>	FORS	The FORS scheme is a voluntary accreditation scheme encompassing all aspects of safety, fuel efficiency, vehicle emissions and improved operations. The FORS silver accreditation is awarded to operators who maintain their bronze accreditation and are able to demonstrate they meet the FORS silver accreditation requirements.
<b>Flood risk zone</b>		Areas within the borough which are at risk from flooding. The flood risk zones consist of zones 1, 2 and 3a and 3b (the higher the number the greater the risk of flooding) and are based on the Environment Agency's flood map for England and Wales.
<b>Gated communities</b>		Walled or fenced housing developments to which public access is restricted, often guarded using CCTV and/or security personnel.
<b>Greater London Authority</b>	GLA	A top-tier administrative body covering the Greater London area. It is comprised of two parts: the London Assembly and the Mayor of London as defined under legislation. The London Assembly scrutinises the activities of the Mayor of London in the public interest.
<b>Green grid</b>		A network of inter-linked high quality and multi-functional open spaces, waterways and other corridors.
<b>Green infrastructure</b>		Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space and other green features. Green infrastructure assets include open spaces such as parks and gardens, allotments, woodlands, fields, hedges, playing fields, footpaths, and cycleways. Assets involving water can also be called 'blue infrastructure', such as rivers, canals, and other water bodies, but these are all included in the overarching term of 'green infrastructure'.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Growth areas</b>		Three different types of character area, as identified in the Characterisation and Growth Study. This defines all areas in the borough as either conserve areas, enhance areas, or transform areas, setting out how new development should respond to the existing character in the area.
<b>Hamlets</b>		This refers to the 24 places (see Figure 5) consisting of historic as well as more recently established places within Tower Hamlets
<b>Habitable room</b>		A habitable room is any room used or intended to be used for sleeping, cooking, living or eating purposes. Enclosed spaces to be used solely as a kitchen and space such as bath or toilet facilities, corridors, hallways, cellars, utility rooms or similar should not be considered habitable rooms.
<b>Health impact assessment</b>	HIA	Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is used as a systematic framework to identify the potential impacts of a development proposal, policy or plan on the health and wellbeing of the population and highlight any health inequalities that may arise. HIA should be undertaken as early as possible in the plan making or design process to identify opportunities for maximising potential health gains, minimising harm, and addressing health inequalities.
<b>Health facilities</b>		For the purposes of the Local Plan, health facilities can include hospitals, walk-in-centres, doctors surgeries, health and wellbeing centres and community health services.
<b>Healthy Streets</b>		The Healthy Streets Approach is the system of policies and strategies to help Londoners use cars less and walk, cycle and use public transport more. The Healthy Streets Approach uses 10 evidence-based indicators of what makes streets attractive places.
<b>Heritage asset</b>		A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
<b>Heritage at Risk Register</b>		An annual survey prepared by Historic England which identifies heritage assets that are considered to be at risk as a result of neglect, decay, or inappropriate development, or are vulnerable to becoming so.
<b>High fat, salt, or sugar products</b>	HFSS	A collection of foods and drinks that are considered to be high in fat, salt or sugar content or to be 'less healthy', as defined under The Food (Promotion and Placement) (England) Regulations 2021.



Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Historic Environment Record</b>		Information services which provide access to details on historic assets and landscapes covering a defined geographic area, held in an on-line database.
<b>Historic parks and gardens</b>		A collection of designated heritage assets celebrated for their designed landscapes.
<b>Human scale</b>		The size and scale of buildings and structures which relate well in size to an individual human being and are arranged in a way which makes people feel comfortable rather than overwhelmed.
<b>Idea stores</b>		These provide traditional library services as well as additional services including IT facilities and places for socialising as well as access to lifelong learning courses.
<b>Infill development</b>		Development that takes place on vacant or undeveloped sites between other developments and/or built form.
<b>Infrastructure Delivery Plan</b>	IDP	An assessment of the existing and future infrastructure needs and requirements to support new development and the borough's growing population.
<b>Infrastructure Impact Assessment</b>		A short document setting out the expected impact of new development on the infrastructure capacity of the borough, and identifying measures for mitigating this impact.
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	IIA	As part of developing Tower Hamlet's Local Plan all policies have been subject to an IIA. The IIA comprises: Sustainability Appraisal, Health Impact Assessment, Equalities Impact Assessment and Habitat Regulation Assessment.
<b>Intrusive elements</b>		Elements that are harmful for a designated view, for example through obscuring a landmark or protected skyline, or adversely affecting the prominence of a landmark by scale and/or proximity, including through coalescence and visual dominance.
<b>Intermediate housing</b>		Homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the affordable housing definition. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Landmarks</b>		A built structure, or group of built structures, that is distinctive because of its appearance or location. It stands out from its surroundings, serving as a reference point for orientation and navigation while having historic or cultural significance.
<b>Legibility</b>		The degree to which a place and the movement routes within and around it can be easily understood by those who inhabit the space.
<b>Leisure facilities</b>		For the purposes of the Local Plan, leisure facilities can include leisure centres, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and swimming pools.
<b>Life sciences</b>		The sciences concerned with the study of living organisms, including biology, botany, zoology, microbiology, physiology, biochemistry, and related subjects. Life sciences facilities typically include wet lab and/or dry lab space in addition to supporting offices and other spaces.
<b>Listed building</b>		A building designated for protection due to its heritage value. Listed buildings are categorised into three tiers - Grade I (highest), Grade II*, and Grade II.
<b>Living building' elements</b>		Living building' elements contribute to local biodiversity through providing habitats, and/or features for priority species. They include living roofs, walls, terraces, and other building greening techniques, and swift bricks or nest boxes. 'Living building' elements can also extend to construction materials that are made of organic materials, which often support thermal control, rainwater flow, can in some cases adapt and self-repair, and are typically more sustainable, resilient, and long-lasting than traditional building materials.
<b>Local Development Scheme</b>	LDS	A project plan setting out how the Local Plan and other relevant documents (e.g. supplementary planning documents) will be prepared and when.
<b>Local Mixed-use Employment Location</b>	LMEL	LELs have unique individual characteristics. They are areas of high accessibility that provide or could provide significant capacity for employment accommodation meeting secondary, more local or specialist employment needs, and to support the needs of start-ups, small-and-medium enterprises and creative and digital industries.
<b>Local Industrial Location</b>	LIL	An area or site identified as being important to local employment and required for the reservoir of industrial employment land, to be safeguarded for industrial employment uses.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Local presence facility</b>		An accessible and integrated facility merging services currently provided within one-stop-shops and idea stores providing customers with the ability to access and interact with council services in different ways alongside a range of complementary activities, such as arts, leisure and learning/information services.
<b>Local shop</b>		Shops, typically convenience retailers, located outside of town centres and serving a local residential or working community.
<b>Local views</b>		A local line of sight from a particular point to an important local landmark, view or skyline.
<b>Locally listed buildings</b>		These are buildings of historic or architectural interest at the local level. Although they are not legally protected, close scrutiny will be given to any development affecting them.
<b>London Legacy Development Corporation</b>	LLDC	The LLDC became the planning authority for the Olympic Legacy area following the Olympic Games in 2012. The north-east area of Tower Hamlets (Hackney Wick/Fish Island and Bromley-by-Bow) was transferred to LLDC in terms of planning responsibilities. The planning powers of this area will be handed back to the relevant boroughs, including Tower Hamlets, by December 2024 as agreed by the Mayor of London.
<b>London Plan</b>		The London Plan is the spatial development strategy for all of London. It is prepared by the Greater London Authority. In London, Local Plans must be in general conformity with the London Plan.
<b>London squares</b>		Protected areas that may not be used for any purpose other than as an ornamental garden, pleasure ground, or ground for play, rest or recreation. No building or structure should be created or placed on or over any London square, unless necessary or convenient for the use or maintenance of the square.
<b>London View Management Framework</b>		A document which sets out a number of important views across London that are required to be protected.
<b>Major centre</b>		A major centre has over 50,000 square metres of retail space, serves a borough-wide catchment, has a combined residential and employment density (in its catchment) in excess of other centres in the borough and contains a variety of functions and services, including a growing leisure economy.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Major developments</b>		In the context of the Local Plan, major developments are defined as, 10 to 100 residential units, 1,000 to 10,000 square metres floorspace, and development on a site of more than 0.5 hectare. Please note: any policy requirement referring to major development applies to all development above these thresholds, unless otherwise stated.
<b>Meanwhile sites</b>		Locations that are used for temporary developments or activities while waiting for a more permanent use.
<b>Metropolitan Centre</b>		Metropolitan Centres are designated through the London Plan. Canary Wharf has been designated a Metropolitan Centre because it serves a wide catchment which extends over several boroughs and into parts of the wider south-east region. It contains at least 100,000 square metres of retail, leisure and service floorspace with a significant proportion of higher-order comparison goods relative to convenience goods. Canary Wharf has very good accessibility and significant employment, service and leisure functions.
<b>Metropolitan Open Land</b>		Strategic open land within the urban area that contributes to the structure of London and has the same protection as the Green Belt.
<b>Mixed-use development</b>		Development for a variety of activities on single sites or across wider areas such as town centres.
<b>Movement hierarchy</b>		The hierarchy of roads, streets and other movement routes that shape how people move around.
<b>National Planning Policy Framework</b>	NPPF	The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the government's planning policies for England.
<b>National Planning Practice Guidance</b>	NPPG	An online resource giving up-to-date government planning guidance and requirements.
<b>Natural/Passive surveillance</b>		The discouragement of crime by the presence of passers-by or the ability of people to be seen from surrounding windows.
<b>Neighbourhood Centre</b>		Neighbourhood centres contain a number of shops including a range of essential uses such as a pharmacy, post office or 'corner shop'. They serve a very local catchment (in the region of a ten-minute walking radius) and are located within walking distance to public transport facilities and a strategic road network.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Neighbourhood Parade</b>		Neighbourhood parades are small clusters of shops, other businesses and community facilities. They are smaller than Neighbourhood Centres and typically serve an extremely local catchment (in the region of a five-minute walking radius, or in some cases a single large housing estate).
<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>		Neighbourhood plans give communities the power to plan for the areas in which they live. These must be in general conformity with the strategic priorities of the development plan, and have regard to national policy and guidance and should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan. An adopted plan will form a part of the statutory development plan and will be used to inform planning applications within this area.
<b>Neighbourhood planning</b>		Neighbourhood planning gives communities the ability to create planning documents and development orders: Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders.
<b>Net zero carbon</b>		A net zero carbon building is where the sum total of all carbon emissions, both operational and embodied, over full lifecycle of the building, are minimised; meeting local carbon and energy targets, with residual 'offsets' equating to no additional carbon emissions being produced.
<b>Open space (consolidated)</b>		A process of combining open space into a single more effective or coherent whole. The way in which these spaces will function will be assessed on a site-by-site basis and agreed through the development management process. At sites with multiple-ownership, this will mean that each site has to deliver their proportion of open space adjoining the open space which the adjoining landowner will deliver, or deliver it in such a way that the open space would still form a coherent whole over the entire site allocation. We strongly encourage landowners to work jointly to develop masterplans covering the entire site allocation to ensure consolidation can be achieved whilst balancing the impact on the landowners. Consolidation should also avoid fragmentation of open space and ensure that it fulfils the qualities and function of open space set out in the Open Space Strategy.
<b>Open space (wider definition of open space)</b>		All land that offers opportunity for play, recreation and sport or is of amenity value, whether in public or private ownership, where public access is unrestricted, partially-restricted or restricted. This includes all open areas consisting of: major parks (e.g. Victoria Park and Mile End Park), local parks, gardens, local parks, squares, playgrounds, ecological spaces, housing amenity land, playing fields (including playing pitches), allotments and burial grounds, whether or not they are accessible to the public. This definition does not include water bodies.



Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Open space (publicly accessible)</b>		Open space will be considered to be publicly accessible, where access for the public is secured by virtue of legal agreements and formal arrangement; whether it is in public or private ownership. Publicly accessible open space will not include areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes, docks or incidental spaces.
<b>Operational Carbon</b>		All carbon emissions associated with the energy use of a building during its lifetime.
<b>Opportunity areas</b>		The London Plan identifies a number of opportunity areas; this includes the City Fringe/Tech City, Isle of Dogs and South Poplar and Poplar Riverside in Tower Hamlets. These areas have the ability to accommodate high levels of growth, focusing on housing.
<b>Optimised site-capacity</b>		Responding to the existing qualities of the surrounding context, and balancing the capacity for growth and increased housing supply and affordability alongside an improved quality of life.
<b>Parking stress</b>		The availability of parking spaces in an area.
<b>Permeability</b>		The degree to which an area has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it and the capacity to which those routes can enable the movement of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
<b>Permit-free</b>		Permit-free development may contain some parking on-site, in accordance with the parking standards set out in Appendix 3. However, residents are not entitled to on-street parking permits; permit-free developments will need to provide some spaces for disabled residents and for servicing in line with the parking standards.
<b>Place-making</b>		A process which aims to bring all those involved in shaping the quality of a place together in an inclusive and multi-dimensional manner, in order to create sustainable communities and high quality places. Place-making capitalises on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating places that people feel proud of and have a stake in.
<b>Planning obligation/S106 agreement</b>		A legal agreement between the developer, local authority and other interested parties primarily intended to make acceptable those developments that would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.
<b>Planning Policy for Traveller Sites</b>		This document sets out the government's planning policy for traveller sites.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Policies Map</b>		A part of the Local Plan illustrating the policies and showing the location of proposals on an Ordnance Survey base map.
<b>Polluting development</b>		A part of the Local Plan illustrating the policies and showing the location of proposals on an Ordnance Survey base map.
<b>Preferred Office Location</b>	POL	Area with major office development as the focus, with supporting uses such as gyms, hotels, restaurants and retail uses helping to achieve a sustainable office environment.
<b>Primary and Secondary Frontages</b>		Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.
<b>Private rented sector</b>		All non-owner occupied self-contained dwellings that are being rented out as housing (not including forms of affordable housing).
<b>Public art</b>		Artworks which members of the public are able to access and appreciate. Works may be sited in the public, civic, communal or commercial domain, in semi-public or privately owned public space, or within public, civic or institutional buildings. Artworks can form part of the structure or decoration of buildings, landscapes and streetscapes.
<b>Public sector land</b>		land that is owned or in use by a public sector organisation, or company or organisation in public ownership, or land that has been released from public ownership and on which housing development is proposed
<b>Public realm</b>		A collective term for all outside elements of the built environment that are accessible to the public, including but not limited to streets, squares, river frontages, and parks. Spaces that are privately owned can still form part of the public realm, if they are accessible to the public.
<b>Public square</b>		A consolidated area of open space primarily used by pedestrians, which should include well-defined edges and active frontages. It should be multifunctional and suitable for gatherings and should be well integrated with the wider movement network. The precise shape/form of the public square will be determined through the development management process.
<b>Public Transport Accessibility Level</b>	PTAL	A measure which rates locations by distance from frequent public transport services (from 0 to 6a, where a score of 0 is very poor and 6a is excellent).

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Railway Arches</b>		Spaces underneath railway infrastructure that plays host to a variety of businesses and other uses. Includes both traditional brick arches and the larger spaces underneath the DLR.
<b>Referable development</b>		Planning applications of strategic importance to London are referred to the Mayor of London. In Tower Hamlets, this applies to developments of 150 residential units or more, developments over 30 metres in height, and development on Metropolitan Open Land.
<b>Renewable energy</b>		Energy derived from a source that is continually replenished, such as wind, wave, solar, hydroelectric and energy from plant material, but not fossil fuels or nuclear energy.
<b>Safeguarded wharves</b>		A network of sites that have been safeguarded for cargo handling uses such as intraport or transshipment movements and freight-related purposes by Safeguarding Directions. A site remains safeguarded unless and until the relevant Safeguarding Direction is formally removed or amended.
<b>Scheduled monument</b>		A collection of heritage assets designated for their historic, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest.
<b>Secured by Design</b>	SBD	A police security initiative that works to improve the security of buildings and their immediate surroundings through design guidance.
<b>Sensitive development</b>		A development which would allow users of the site to potentially be exposed to pollutants above the objective for the relevant period. For example, the introduction of a new residential development into an area where an air quality objective is already exceeded, would create the potential for the exposure of residents to poor air quality above the objective. This type of development may also generate significant additional traffic flow and also be a polluting development.
<b>Setting (of a heritage asset)</b>		The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral
<b>Short stay accommodation</b>		Short stay accommodation is defined as hotels, apart-hotels, serviced apartments and hostels.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Site allocation</b>		A parcel of land which has been set aside in the plan to accommodate strategic housing developments (i.e. sites that can provide over 500 new net-additional homes) and other uses such as employment and retail space. These sites are also expected to deliver significant infrastructure with capacity to accommodate future growth and development.
<b>Site Environmental Management Plan</b>	SEMP	Submission of an SEMP is required to ensure compliance with the CoCP for strategic and major development proposals. The contents of an SEMP will include a noise and vibration management plan that sets out the location of noise and vibration sensitive receptors and detail how noise and vibration arising from demolition and/or construction will be controlled and limited as far as is reasonably practicable, so that all receptors are protected from excessive noise and vibration levels.
<b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation</b>	SINC	Locally defined non-statutory sites of wildlife and geological importance.
<b>Skyline of strategic importance</b>		A significant element of the townscape of Tower Hamlets, formed by the cluster of buildings around Canary Wharf. This cluster is visible across London and has become a globally recognised silhouette.
<b>Social value</b>		Social value refers to a broader concept of value beyond just monetary contribution. It focuses on people and contribution to the community, assessing the positive value created for the local economy, improvements in social wellbeing, and enhancements to protect the local environment.
<b>Space Heating Demand</b>	SHD	The amount of heat energy needed to heat a building over a year, expressed in kWh/m <sup>2</sup> /yr, used as an indicator of thermal and energy efficiency.
<b>Spatial Development Strategy</b>	SDS	The London Plan is the statutory spatial development strategy for the Greater London area that is prepared by the Mayor.
<b>Spatial policies</b>		High-level, overarching policies to help guide development and the use of land throughout the borough.
<b>Specialist housing</b>		Specialist housing refers to supported housing such as sheltered housing, residential care homes, nursing homes and dual-registered care homes.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Specialist Centres</b>		Centres within the town centre hierarchy that have a specific economic or cultural function. Includes Columbia Road, Redchurch Street and Hackney Wick.
<b>Statement of Community Involvement</b>	SCI	This sets out how and when we will consult with local and statutory stakeholders in preparing, altering and updating development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.
<b>Strategic development</b>		Proposals involving over 100 homes or 10,000 square metres of floorspace.
<b>Strategic Industrial Location</b>	SIL	Designated by the London Plan. This designation seeks to ensure that there are sufficient sites, in appropriate locations, to meet the needs of the general business, industrial, warehousing, waste management and some utilities and transport sectors.
<b>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment</b>	SHLAA	An assessment produced by the Greater London Authority which identifies a future supply of land that is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over the plan period.
<b>Local Housing Need Assessment</b>	LHNA	This sets out estimates of the borough's current and future housing need.
<b>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</b>	SFRA	A study which assesses the risk to an area from flooding from all sources, now and in the future, taking into consideration the impacts of climate change, to assess the cumulative impact that land use changes and developments in the area will have on flood risk.
<b>Street furniture</b>		A collective term for objects and pieces of equipment installed along streets and roads for various purposes, including benches, road signs, postboxes, telephone kiosks, and street lighting.
<b>Streetscape</b>		The appearance of the street as a whole incorporating the road, kerb and gutter, verges, fences, trees and building frontages.
<b>Supplementary Planning Document</b>	SPD	A document which helps explain how policies and proposals in the plan will be applied and implemented.



Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Supplementary Planning Guidance/ London Plan Guidance</b>	SPG/LPG	London Plan Guidance (LPG) provides further information about how the current London Plan should be implemented. Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents have been prepared to support earlier London Plans.
<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b>	SA	A legal assessment of the social, economic and environmental effects of relevant plans and programmes. This tool is used alongside the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment to appraise impacts on specific groups or characteristics.
<b>Sustainable community</b>		A place or neighbourhood where people have a decent and affordable home to live in and have good access to jobs and services, such as schools, open space and shops, in a safe, inclusive and attractive environment, with opportunities to engage in social and community-based activities, preferably without the need to use a car.
<b>Sustainable Drainage Systems</b>	SuDS	Sequence of water management systems which are designed to manage flood and pollution risks resulting from urban runoff by draining surface water in a sustainable manner. This is achieved by mimicking natural drainage, encouraging infiltration, attenuation, and passive treatment. SuDS can also contribute towards urban greening, biodiversity, and placemaking.
<b>Tall buildings</b>		Within Tower Hamlets, tall buildings are defined as those which are above 30m in height, from ground level to the uppermost element of the building, including any architectural features such as spires, or any other protruding elements such as telecommunications infrastructure or plant.
<b>Tall building cluster</b>		A primarily visual definition based on existing and emerging concentrations of tall buildings, particularly where they form a cohesive group. Tall building clusters generally have a distinctive shape or are visually prominent.
<b>Tall Building Zone</b>	TBZ	A spatial designation that indicates where development proposals for tall buildings may be acceptable within the parameters listed in the policy. These designations are based on the existing distribution of tall buildings, the potential impact of tall buildings on the character of an area, and their capacity for growth and change.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Tenure-blind developments</b>		Schemes that are designed to maximise tenure integration, and affordable housing units designed with the same external appearance as private housing.
<b>Tower Hamlets Activity Areas</b>		Areas of the borough that act as a transition from the predominantly commercial character of the City Fringe and Canary Wharf to the residential character of surrounding communities. These areas tend to have a denser mix of uses than adjacent residential communities and can support the spillover of employment uses from designated employment locations.
<b>Town centre hierarchy</b>		This sets out what role and function different centres in the borough perform in relation to each other and across London. In Tower Hamlets it includes: the Central Activities Zone, Tower Hamlets Activity Areas, Canary Wharf Metropolitan Centre and a series of District Centres, Neighbourhood Centres and Neighbourhood Parades.
<b>Townscape</b>		The term 'townscape' refers very broadly to the overall character and composition of a town (or other aspects of the built environment). It can include the range and quality of buildings in an area, the relationships between those buildings and the different types of space between and around them, and reflects the relationship between people and place.
<b>Transport Assessment</b>		This is prepared and submitted alongside planning applications for developments likely to have significant transport implications. For major proposals, assessments should illustrate the following: accessibility to the site by all modes; the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site; and proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling.
<b>Transport interchange</b>		A place where passengers are exchanged between vehicles or different transport modes.
<b>Travel Plan</b>		Travel plans are long term management strategies which should support sustainable and active travel at both new and existing developments.
<b>Urban grain</b>		The complexity and coarseness of an urban area. Fine grained areas have a large number of different buildings and closely spaces streets. Course grained areas have large blocks and building and little architectural variety.

Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
<b>Urban Greening Factor</b>	UGF	Urban greening is a process of introducing vegetation and green spaces into urban areas. It is an initiative to create more sustainable cities with a better quality of life for its residents, by reducing heat, absorbing pollutants from the air, and promoting biodiversity. The Urban Greening Factor (UGF) is a tool that evaluates and quantifies the amount and quality of urban greening that a development scheme provides to inform decisions about appropriate levels of greening in new developments.
<b>Urban Heat Island effect</b>	UHI	An Urban Heat Island (UHI) is an urban area that is significantly warmer than its surrounding rural areas. This happens because the sun's rays are absorbed by hard surfaces rather than by vegetation such as trees, plants, and grass. Radiation from hard surfaces is released into the air as heat. This process exacerbates the city's already hotter and drier summers through urban heat island effect. The UHI reduces the ability for the city to cool and impacts our capacity to regulate temperature.
<b>Waste apportionment</b>		The amount of London's waste that each borough is required to manage to ensure London is self-sufficient in managing its municipal, commercial and industrial waste that it produces. This requires an amount of land to be safeguarded within the borough.
<b>Water neutrality</b>		When total demand for water in a building is the same before and after a development is built. This is achieved by retrofitting older homes and businesses with water efficiency devices, and ensuring that new building and development are highly water efficient.
<b>Water space</b>		An area of water (that exists permanently or intermittently), and includes rivers, canals, docks, basins, ponds, marshland and other water bodies.
<b>Whole Lifecycle Carbon</b>	WLC	The entire amount of carbon resulting from a building or development over its lifetime, from the emissions associated with raw material extraction, the manufacture and transport of building materials, to installation/ construction, operation, maintenance and eventual material disposal.
<b>Windfall site</b>		Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available. In Tower Hamlets, we define small sites as sites that contain fewer than 10 housing units.
<b>World Heritage Sites</b>	WHS	A natural or man-made site, area, or structure recognized as being of outstanding international importance and therefore as deserving special protection. Sites are nominated to and designated by the World Heritage Convention (an organization of UNESCO).

## Appendix 2: Financial contribution calculation methodologies

Policy DV5 (Developer contributions) of the Local Plan sets out the council's approach to seeking contributions from developers towards funding improvements to infrastructure, the environment and the community. This includes Section 106 planning obligations which may be financial or non-financial.

The following sets out the methodologies to calculate certain financial contributions. Further information is provided in the relevant policies and the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) about how and when these financial contributions will be required. Where appropriate, costings will be adjusted for inflation by index-linking from the date of the Planning Obligations SPD through to payment. The Planning Obligations SPD may be subject to periodic review.

The methodologies included in this appendix are intended to provide detail on how these contributions will typically be calculated in instances when they are required. The methodologies included are not an exhaustive list and the council may wish to negotiate other forms of planning obligations which meet the CIL Regulation 122 tests depending on the individual circumstances of a site and scheme.

### Financial Contribution toward development co-ordination and integration (Policy DV5)

Contributions towards development co-ordination and integration projects and interventions by the council will be calculated using the following formula:

£200 x number of residential units
+
£2 x sqm of non-residential floorspace
= financial contribution

### Financial Contribution towards affordable housing (Policy HF2, Policy HF4 and Policy HF7)

#### Major applications

In exceptional circumstances only, the council will accept a payment-in-lieu for affordable housing where the contribution will secure more than 50% affordable housing provision.

#### Minor applications

Financial contributions for sites delivering 2-9 new residential units will be calculated by a Tariff per unit commencing at 2 units subject to the development sites CIL area:

CIL Zone	Contribution per Unit
3	£75,000
2	£130,000
1	£170,000

### Financial Contribution towards wheelchair accessible housing (Policy HF9)

In instances where a payment in lieu is accepted, the contribution will be based on the following formula, subject to an updated retrofitting cost:

Number of wheelchair units not to be delivered on-site
X
Installation costs of retrofitting an existing home
= financial contribution

### Financial Contributions to help provide off-site Children's Play Space (Policy HF9)

Contributions to help fund the cost of off-site provision of children's play space for developments where this play space is not provided on-site will be calculated according to the following formula:

Number of children (using child yield calculator)
X
10m2 of play space = play space requirement
Average cost per square metre
X
Shortfall in play space requirement provided onsite = play space contribution
Play space contribution + maintenance fee
= financial contribution

### Financial Contribution towards energy offsetting (Policy CG3)

In circumstances where energy offsetting is accepted, the contribution will be calculated according to the following formula:

EUI (kWh/m2/yr)
-
Renewable energy generation (kWh/m2/yr)
= Energy gap
Energy Gap (kWh)
X
£1.32/kWh*
= The energy offset contribution

\*The offset price will be set on the basis of cost to install PVs elsewhere in the borough. Using a reasonable cost rate for a high output PV system with micro-inverters (i.e. £1,016/kWp) and applying a 10% additional rate for administering and managing the PV funding process, would give an energy offset price of £1.32/kWh/yr. The offset costs may be updated as required.



## Financial Contribution towards surface water drainage offset (Policy CG7)

In exceptional circumstances where the required flow and volume restrictions cannot be achieved on site and at the council's discretion, a financial contribution will be calculated in accordance with the following formula:

Exceedance of surface water drainage standard
(Proposed water run-off at peak times – Policy CG7 runoff rate)
X
£765 per m <sup>3</sup> (offset unit cost)*
= financial contribution

\*the most up to up to date offset unit cost at the time of approval will be used.

## Financial Contribution towards water efficient design offset (Policy CG8)

In exceptional circumstances where the required maximum mains water use cannot be achieved on site and at the council's discretion, a financial contribution will be calculated in accordance with the following formula:

(Proposed mains water use per person per day – maximum mains water use allowance in Policy CG8)
X
£123.90 per litre (offset unit cost)*
= financial contribution

\*the most up to up to date offset unit cost at the time of approval will be used.

## Financial Contribution towards air quality offset (Policy CG9)

The method for calculating the air quality offset payment is set out in Section 5 of the Air Quality Neutral London Plan Guidance.

## Financial Contribution towards employment, skills, and training (Policy EG1)

The following methodologies will be used to calculate the level of financial contributions towards employment, skills, and training activities:

### Construction phase

£4
X
Sqm of the total new development floorspace (GIA)
= financial contribution

### End user phase

Employee yield of the development
X
20% (aspirational labour target)
X
Current cost of training and support
= financial contribution

### Apprenticeships

A payment in lieu towards apprenticeships where there is shortfall against the target number of apprenticeships:

Number of apprenticeships not provided
X
Cost for providing apprenticeship (calculated as cost of training per person + 35 hours p/w at London Living Wage for 52 weeks)

### Financial Contributions towards affordable workspace (Policy EG3)

In instances where a payment in lieu is accepted, it will be calculated in accordance with the formula below. The commuted sum will be used by the council to provide affordable workspace in the Borough. As such, the calculation accounts for the costs the council will incur when delivering these spaces.

#### Step 1:

15% of GIA (sqm)
X
rental value per sqm (based on projected rental values from subject property or a comparable property)
= rent per annum

#### Step 2:

Rent per annum
X
$( (((1 + i) n) - 1) / (i (1 + i) n) )$
= Contribution

n = discount period

i = All risks yield (calculated as subject property commercial yields / 100)

### Monitoring fees (Policy DV5)

All developments requiring a legal agreement will include a monitoring fee to cover the costs of monitoring the agreements for the lifetime of the obligations. Monitoring fees for specific types of obligations may also be sought where on-going monitoring is required, this includes:

- Health Impact Assessment monitoring
- Social Value Strategy monitoring
- Affordable Housing delivery and compliance monitoring
- Low carbon energy and heating
- Water efficient design
- Employment, skills, enterprise monitoring
- Travel Plan monitoring.

## Appendix 3: Links to the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (Managing growth and sharing the benefits)

The table below explains how the policies from the adopted Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (Managing growth and sharing the benefits) have been replaced in this Local Plan.

New Local Plan policy reference	Local Plan (2031): Managing growth and sharing the benefits - policy reference
<b>Delivering the Local Plan</b>	<b>Achieving sustainable growth</b>
Policy DV1 Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets	Policy S.SG1: Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets
Policy DV2 Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets	Policy S.SG2: Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
Policy DV3 Healthy communities	Policy D.SG3: Health impact assessments
Policy DV4 Planning and construction of new development	Policy D.SG4: Planning and construction of new development
Policy DV5 Developer contributions	Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
Policy DV6 Social value	
Policy DV7 Utilities and digital connectivity	
Policy DV8 Site Allocations	
<b>Homes for the community</b>	<b>Meeting housing needs</b>
Policy HF1 Meeting housing needs	Policy S.H1: Meeting housing needs
Policy HF2 Affordable housing and housing mix	Policy D.H2: Affordable housing and housing mix
Policy HF3 Protection of existing housing	

New Local Plan policy reference	Local Plan (2031): Managing growth and sharing the benefits - policy reference
Policy HF4 Supported and specialist housing and housing for older people	Policy D.H4: Specialist housing
Policy HF5 Gypsy and traveller accommodation	Policy D.H5: Gypsies and travellers accommodation
Policy HF6 Purpose-built student accommodation	Policy D.H6: Student housing
Policy HF7 Large-scale purpose-built shared-living	
Policy HF8 Housing with shared facilities (houses in multiple occupation)	Policy D.H7: Housing with shared facilities (houses in multiple occupation)
Policy HF9 Housing Standards and Quality	Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
<b>Clean and green future</b>	<b>Protecting and managing our environment</b>
Policy CG1 Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate	Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
Policy CG2 Low energy buildings	Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough
Policy CG3 Low carbon energy and heating	Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough
Policy CG4 Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy	Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough
Policy CG5 Overheating	Policy D.ES10: Overheating
Policy CG6 Managing flood risk	Policy D.ES4: Flood risk
Policy CG7 Sustainable Drainage	Policy D.ES5: Sustainable drainage
Policy CG8 Water efficient design	Policy D.ES6: Sustainable water and wastewater management
Policy CG9 Air quality	Policy D.ES2: Air quality

New Local Plan policy reference	Local Plan (2031): Managing growth and sharing the benefits - policy reference
Policy CG10 Noise and vibration	Policy D.ESg: Noise and vibration
Policy CG11 Contaminated land and storage of hazardous substances	Policy D.ES8: Contaminated land and storage of hazardous substances
<b>People, places and spaces</b>	<b>Creating attractive and distinctive places</b>
Policy PS1 Design- and infrastructure-led approach to development	Policy D.DH7: Density
Policy PS2 Tall buildings Mayor's office to read accompanying note which explains the changes.	Policy D.DH6: Tall buildings
Policy PS3 Securing design quality	Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design; and policy D.DH8: Amenity
Policy PS4 Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm	Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
Policy PS5 Creating inclusive spaces	
Policy PS6 Heritage and the historic environment	Policy S.DH3: Heritage and the historic environment
Policy PS7 World heritage sites	Policy S.DH5: World heritage sites
Policy PS8 Shaping and managing views	Policy D.DH4: Shaping and managing views
Policy PS9 Shopfronts	Policy D.DH9: Shopfronts
Policy PS10 Advertisements, hoardings and signage	Policy D.DH10: Advertisements, hoardings and signage
Policy PS11 Siting and design of telecommunications infrastructure	Policy D.DH11: Telecommunications




New Local Plan policy reference	Local Plan (2031): Managing growth and sharing the benefits - policy reference
<b>Inclusive economy and good growth</b>	<b>Delivering economic growth</b>
Policy EG1 Creating investment and jobs	Policy S.EMP1: Creating investment and jobs
Policy EG2 New employment space	Policy D.EMP2: New employment space
Policy EG3 Affordable workspace	Policy S.EMP1: Creating investment and jobs
Policy EG4 Loss and Redevelopment of employment space	Policy D.EMP3: Loss of employment space; Policy D.EMP4: Redevelopment within the borough's employment areas
Policy EG5 Railway Arches	
Policy EG6: Data centres	
<b>Town centres</b>	<b>Revitalising our town centres</b>
Policy TC1 Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres	Policy S.TC1: Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
Policy TC2 Protecting the diversity, vitality and viability of our town centres	Policy D.TC2: Retail in our town centres
Policy TC3 Town centre uses outside our town centres	Policy D.TC3: Retail outside our town centres
Policy TC4 Markets	Policy D.TC7: Markets
Policy TC5 Food and drink	Policy D.TC5: Food, drink, entertainment and the night-time economy
Policy TC6 Entertainment Uses	Policy D.TC5: Food, drink, entertainment and the night-time economy
Policy TC7 Evening and Night-time Economy	Policy D.TC5: Food, drink, entertainment and the night-time economy
Policy TC8 Short-stay accommodation	Policy D.TC6: Short-stay accommodation



New Local Plan policy reference	Local Plan (2031): Managing growth and sharing the benefits - policy reference
<b>Community infrastructure</b>	<b>Supporting community facilities</b>
Policy CI1 Supporting community facilities	Policy S.CF1: Supporting community facilities
Policy CI2 Existing community facilities	Policy D.CF2: Existing community facilities
Policy CI3 New and enhanced community facilities	Policy D.CF3: New and enhanced community facilities
Policy CI4 Public houses	Policy D.CF4: Public houses
Policy CI5 Arts and culture facilities	
<b>Biodiversity and open space</b>	<b>Enhancing open spaces and water spaces</b>
Policy BO1 Green and blue infrastructure	Policy S.OWS1: Creating a network of open spaces
Policy BO2 Open spaces and the Green Grid network	Policy D.OWS3: Open space and green grid networks
Policy BO3 Water spaces	Policy D.OWS4: Water spaces
Policy BO4 Biodiversity and access to nature	Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity
Policy BO5 Urban greening	Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity
Policy BO6 Play and recreation spaces	
Policy BO7 Food growing	
<b>Movement and connectivity</b>	<b>Improving connectivity and travel choice</b>
Policy MC1 Sustainable Travel	Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel
Policy MC2 Active Travel and healthy streets	

New Local Plan policy reference	Local Plan (2031): Managing growth and sharing the benefits - policy reference
Policy MC3 Impacts on the transport network	Policy D.TR2: Impacts on the transport network
Policy MC4 Parking and permit-free	Policy D.TR3: Parking and permit-free
Policy MC5 Sustainable delivery, servicing, and construction	Policy D.TR4: Sustainable delivery and servicing
Reuse, recycling and waste	Managing our waste
Policy RW1 Managing our waste	Policy S.MW1: Managing our waste
Policy RW2 New and enhanced waste facilities	Policy D.MW2: New and enhanced waste facilities
Policy RW3 Waste collection facilities in new development	Policy D.MW3: Waste collection facilities in new development



## Appendix 4: Key monitoring indicators



The table below sets out the framework for monitoring the performance and effectiveness of the draft new Local Plan for Tower Hamlets and includes targets where these apply. Progress against these indicators will be reported in the borough’s future Annual Monitoring Reports (AMR).




Topic area	Policies	Key monitoring indicator
<p><b>Delivering the local plan</b></p> 	<p><b>DV1</b> - Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets</p>	<p>Approvals and completions of new homes, employment and retail and leisure floorspaces within the following sub-areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City Fringe</li> <li>● Central</li> <li>● Isle of Dogs and South Poplar</li> <li>● Leaside</li> </ul>
	<p><b>DV1</b> - Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets <b>DV8</b> - Site allocations</p>	<p>Delivery of housing and key infrastructure requirements through site allocations (not including school sites)</p>
	<p><b>DV3</b> - Healthy communities</p>	<p>Monitoring the quantity of Rapid and detailed Health Impact Assessments submitted</p>
	<p><b>DV5</b> - Developer contributions</p>	<p>Breakdown of community infrastructure levy and S106 monies received and/or negotiated across all topic areas</p>
	<p><b>DV6</b> - Social value</p>	<p>Number of additional planning obligations secured within a monitoring year as a result of a social value strategy submission</p>

Topic area	Policies	Key monitoring indicator
<b>Homes for the community</b> 	<b>HF1</b> - Meeting housing needs	Net additional homes in the monitoring year and previous years by housing type and tenure
	<b>HF2</b> - Affordable housing and housing mix	Percentage of new homes that are affordable, measured by unit and habitable room
		Percentage of new homes that are affordable, measured by unit and habitable room
	<b>HF5</b> - Gypsy and Traveller accommodation	Number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches
<b>HF9</b> - Housing standards and quality	Delivery of wheelchair accessible/ adaptable homes across all housing types	
<b>Clean and green future</b> 	<b>CG2</b> - Low energy buildings	Number of developments meeting assured performance targets
	<b>CG3</b> - Low carbon energy and heating	Quantity of PV panels installed
		Number of developments contributing total energy use and renewable energy generation figures
	<b>CG4</b> - Embodied carbon, retrofit and the circular economy	Developments meeting upfront embodied carbon target
		Number of retrofit plans submitted
	<b>CG5</b> - Overheating	Number of developments needing to provide detailed overheating assessments
	<b>CG6</b> - Managing flood risk	Number of developments approved against Environment Agency advice in relation to flood risk and water quality grounds
	<b>CG7</b> - Sustainable Drainage	Quantity of major developments achieving greenfield run-off
	<b>CG8</b> - Water efficient design	Water consumption per capita, at a Thames Water regional level
<b>CG9</b> - Air quality	Concentration of each pollutant at each monitoring station	
	The number of developments that meet or exceed the air quality neutral standards	
	Number of Air Quality Positive Statements submitted.	



Topic area	Policies	Key monitoring indicator
<b>People, places and spaces</b>  	<b>PS1</b> - Design and infrastructure-led approach to development	Number of applications required to submit infrastructure impact assessment documents
	<b>PS2</b> - Tall buildings	Number of tall buildings permitted (for the purposes of this indicator, developments referable to the Mayor of London for being over 30m in height will be looked at)
	<b>PS6</b> - Heritage and the historic environment	Number of designated heritage assets (scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, London squares, and conservation areas)
		Removal of heritage assets at risk from the risk register
<b>Inclusive economy and good growth</b>  	<b>EG1</b> - Creating investment and jobs	Net additional employment floorspace delivered by type
		Net additional jobs by type
	<b>EG2</b> - New employment space	Number of new enterprises created in the borough
	<b>EG3</b> - Affordable workspace	Net additional affordable workspace
	<b>EG4</b> - Loss and redevelopment of employment space	Gain/loss of employment floorspace in designated employment locations
		Gain/loss of industrial floorspace in designated industrial locations
	<b>EG5</b> - Railway arches	Gain/loss of employment floorspace within railway arches
<b>EG6</b> - Data centres	Net increase in data centre (class B8 or SG) floorspace across the borough and within designated employment locations	

Topic area	Policies	Key monitoring indicator
<b>Town centres</b> 	<b>TC1</b> - Supporting the network and hierarchy of town centres	Proportion and number of town centre uses (class E) within town centres
	<b>TC2</b> - Supporting the diversity, vitality and viability of town centres	Town centre vacancy rates
	<b>TC3</b> - Town centre uses outside centres	Number and floorspace of new town centre uses approved outside of town centres
	<b>TC4</b> - Markets	Number of pitches and vacancy level in council-operated street markets
	<b>TC5</b> - Food and drink	Number and proportion of hot food takeaways in town centres; number of new hot food takeaways permitted across the borough; number of new hot food takeaways permitted within 400m of an existing or proposed school or local authority leisure centre
	<b>TC6</b> - Entertainment uses	Number and proportion of betting shops, casinos and other gambling establishments in town centres; number of new gambling establishments approved within 400m of an existing gambling establishment
	<b>TC7</b> - Evening and night-time economy	Proportion of businesses in town centres with late opening licenses; proportions of different use classes operating at night
	<b>TC8</b> - Short-stay accommodation	Approvals and completions of additional short-stay (class C1) accommodation
<b>Community infrastructure</b> 	<b>CI1</b> - Supporting community facilities	Applications and approvals for new/loss of class E(d-f), F1, F2(b and d) and sui generis uses that provide a service to the local community
	<b>CI2</b> - Existing community facilities	
	<b>CI4</b> - Public houses	Loss/gain of public house (class SG) floorspace
	<b>CI5</b> - Arts and culture	Applications and approvals for new/loss of class F1(b-d) and sui generis uses that provide an arts and culture use

Topic area	Policies	Key monitoring indicator
<b>Biodiversity and open space</b>  	<b>BO1</b> - Green and Blue Infrastructure	0.84ha of publicly accessible open space per 1,000 residents
		Publicly accessible open space losses and gains (approved applications)
		Publicly accessible open space losses and gains (delivered)
	<b>BO3</b> - Water spaces	Improvement of access to water spaces
		Losses and gains of water spaces
		Ecological quality of the Lower Lea River
	<b>BO4</b> - Biodiversity and access to nature	Area(s) of open space designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest
		Number of developments delivering 30% Biodiversity Net Gain
	<b>BO6</b> - Play and recreation spaces	Number of new high quality play spaces provided by age group
		Provision of temporary play space and renewed existing play space of a higher quality
<b>BO7</b> - Food growing	Number of allotments and community gardens	
<b>Movement and connectivity</b>  	<b>MC1</b> - Sustainable travel	Transport modal share among residents
	<b>MC4</b> - Parking and permit free	Number of Transport for London cycle docking stations in the borough
		Number of bike parking spaces approved in applications
		Number of electric vehicle charging points approved in applications
<b>Reuse, recycling and waste</b>  	<b>RW1</b> - Managing our waste	Safeguarding of waste sites or maintaining waste management capacity for apportionment targets if sites are lost
		Monitoring of operating waste management facilities within the borough
		Recycling rates across the borough

## Appendix 5: Noise

### Noise thresholds

Noise can have a significant effect on the environment and on the quality of life enjoyed by individuals and communities. Noise can interfere with residential and community amenity and the utility of noise-sensitive land uses.

The significance of noise impact varies dependent on the different noise sources, receptors and times of operation presented for consideration within a planning application. Therefore, thresholds for noise and vibration evaluate noise impact in terms of various 'effect levels' as described in the National Planning Policy Framework.

### Aims

Policy CG10 of the Local Plan is seeking to effectively control and manage environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of government policy on sustainable development. It aims to:

1. avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life;
2. mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life; and
3. where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.

### Approaches to managing noise

1. Good design – Ensuring developments incorporate the concept of "good acoustic design"<sup>1</sup>, including through minimising the number of sensitive receptors exposed to noise; ensuring adequate distances between the noise source and sensitive receptors or areas, limiting conflict of use in the development both internally and externally; utilising where possible barriers, natural or otherwise, other buildings, or non-critical rooms in a building.
2. Engineering – reducing noise at source; improving the sound insulation internally and externally of exposed receptors; screening by purpose-built barriers.
3. Administrative – limiting operation time of source, restricting activities allowed on the site, specifying an acceptable noise limit. Several of these measures may be incorporated into the design of a development proposal. Where development is likely to be affected by, or give rise to, high noise levels, applicants are advised to seek the advice of environmental health officers or those with similar expertise.

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<sup>1</sup> For more detail see ProPG: Planning and Noise – New Residential Development (Institute of Acoustics and Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Association of Noise Consultants, 2017).

## General principles

When considering applications for development that will be exposed to an existing noise source, we will take into account the ambient noise level existing at the proposed location at the time of the application and any future likely increase in noise impact that may reasonably be anticipated to occur due to development in the foreseeable future.

Much of the borough is subject to ambient noise levels during the day and at night from transportation, commercial, industrial and leisure sources that are higher than those at which the lowest adverse effects, as defined in policy and guidance, can occur. Development therefore should not make the noise circumstances worse and where possible should improve the situation by lowering noise levels and/or modifying the soundscape in a positive fashion.

In the case of applications involving noise sensitive developments, we will require an applicant to include information about the noise impact of development, or the assessed effect of an existing noise source and transport, industrial or commercial operation upon the development proposed.

A noise impact assessment will be required to support applications where noise sensitive uses are likely to be exposed to significant or unacceptable noise exposure as set out in Policy CG10. Developers will be required to assess the impact of the proposal as a noise generator or receptor, as appropriate. It will also be required to demonstrate in full how the development will be designed, located, and controlled to mitigate (as appropriate) the impact of noise on health and quality of life, neighbouring properties, and the surrounding area.

We recommend that you seek advice from the council's environmental health department in advance of any noise surveys on the methodology,

duration, and timing etc. of any surveys and advice regarding the nearest noise sensitive receptor.

In all cases, the best practical means of mitigation will be required to mitigate noise impact to an appropriate level, and in liaison with the council's environmental health service.

Where necessary, we will use planning conditions and enter into planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as modified by Section 12 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991) to control noise levels.

## Further information and guidance

- Noise Policy Statement for England (Department for Environment, Food and Agriculture, 2010)
- Heating and Ventilation Contractor Association – DW/172 Specification for Kitchen Ventilation Systems (2005)
- British Standard 8233: Guidance on Sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings (2014)
- British Standard 4142: Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound (2014)
- British Standard 6472: Guide to evaluation of human exposure to vibration in buildings (2008)
- BB93: Acoustic design of schools: performance standards (2015)
- British Standard 5228:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration on construction and open sites (2014)
- ProPG: Planning and Noise – New Residential Development (Institute of Acoustics and Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Association of Noise Consultants, 2017).



## Design criteria

The design criteria given below are targets the borough wants to see achieved within the context of government policy on sustainable development. Where a variation from these standards is sought, a detailed submission of the reasons and noise effects must be provided as early as possible, preferably through the pre-application process. Any variation will be considered with respect to the context of the scheme (including its use, design, and location) and any wider benefits, as directed by national policy and guidance. Three basic criteria have been developed to inform the design and layout of proposed developments; these being aimed at guiding applicants as to the degree of detailed consideration needed to be given to noise in any planning application.

The design criteria outlined below are defined in the corresponding noise tables.

- NOEL – No observed effect level
- LOAEL – Lowest observed adverse effect level
- SOAEL – Significant observed adverse effect level.

The values will vary depending on the context, type of noise and sensitivity of the receptor.

- **Green** – where noise is considered to be at an acceptable level. In this category development is likely to be granted.
- **Amber** – where noise is observed to have an adverse effect level, but which may be considered acceptable when assessed in the context of other merits of the development. In this category permission is likely to be refused unless a good acoustic design process is followed.

- **Red** – where noise is observed to have a significant adverse effect. In this category development is likely to be refused. Applicants should seek expert advice on possible noise mitigation measures.

## Proposed developments - sensitive to noise

Special consideration will need to be given to noise-sensitive developments that are proposed in areas which are, or expected to become, subject to levels of noise which are likely to have an adverse effect. The threshold of acceptability of the noise will primarily depend on two factors: the intended use of the noise sensitive development and the source of the noise experienced, or likely to be experienced.

Applications for residential development should demonstrate a consideration of 'good acoustic design'<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> For more detail see ProPG: Planning and Noise – New Residential Development (Institute of Acoustics and Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Association of Noise Consultants, 2017).

**Table 19: Noise levels applicable to noise sensitive residential development proposed in areas of existing noise**

Dominant noise source	Assessment location	Design period	LOAEL (Green)	LOAEL to SOAEL (Amber)	SOAEL (Red)
Anonymous noise such as general environmental noise, road traffic and rail traffic	Noise at 1 metre from noise sensitive façade (free field)	Day	<50dBLAeq, 16hr*	50dB to 69dBLAeq, 16hr*	>69dBLAeq, 16hr*
		Night	<45dBLAeq,8hr	Between 45dB and 60dB LAeq, 8hr.	>60dB LAeq,8hr
	Inside a bedroom	Day	<40dBLAeq,16hr	40dBLAeq, 16hr	>40dBLAeq,16hr
		Night	<30 dBLAeq,8hr <45dBLAmax,fast	30 to 35dB LAeq,8hr >45 to 60 dBLAmax, fast	>35 dBLAeq, 8hr >60dBLAmax fast
	Outdoor living space (free field)	Day	<50dBLAeq,16hr	50dB to 55dBLAeq,16hr	>55dBLAeq,16hr
	Non-anonymous noise	See guidance note on non-anonymous noise			

\*LAeq, T values specified for outside a bedroom window are free field levels

The levels given above are for dwellings; however, levels are use specific and different levels will apply dependent on the noise sensitivity of the use of the premises. We will also take into account the likely times of occupation for types of development and will amend according to the times of operation of the establishment under consideration.

## Industrial and commercial noise sources

Relevant standard or guidance document should be referenced when determining values for LOAEL and SOAEL for noise. The standard or guidance should only be used within its intended scope.

Where appropriate, it is expected that the most-up-to-date version of British Standard 4142 'Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound' will be used. For such cases, a 'rating level' of 10dB below background at 1 metre from the boundary of the nearest noise sensitive receiver should be considered as the design criterion.

## Noise insulation

Where the development falls within an area of high noise (amber and red), the most up-to-date version of British Standard 8233 should be met.

**Table 20: Noise levels applicable to proposed industrial and commercial developments (including plant and machinery)**

Existing noise sensitive receptor	Assessment location	Design period	LOAEL (Green)	LOAEL to SOAEL (Amber)	SOAEL (Red)
Dwellings**	Garden used for main amenity (free field)	Day	< 50 dB LAeq, 16 hr	>50<55 dB LAeq,16 hr	>55 dB LAeq,16 hr
Dwellings**	Outside living or dining or bedroom window (façade)	Day	'Rating level' 10dB* below background	'Rating level' between 9dB below and 5dB above background	'Rating level' greater than 5dB above background
Dwellings**	Outside bedroom Window (façade)	Night	'Rating level' 10dB* below background	'Rating level' between 9dB below and 5dB above background	'Rating level' greater than 5dB above background

\* Rating level as per BS 4142:2014\*\* Levels given are for dwellings; however, levels are use specific and different levels will apply dependent on the noise sensitivity of the use of the premises.

## Entertainment noise

Assessments for noise from proposed entertainment and leisure premises or from proposed sensitive uses in close proximity to existing entertainment and leisure premises must include consideration to amplified and unamplified music, human voices, footfall and vehicle movements and other general activity. Appropriate metrics must be used to measure and assess the noise impact including LAeq, and LAm<sub>ax</sub>, LA10 and NR metrics and as appropriate along with consideration of the source frequency spectrum. The borough will resist development where it is not possible to achieve the levels for noise from proposed entertainment venues within existing noise sensitive receptors, or from existing entertainment venues within proposed noise sensitive receptors, given below.

**Table 21: Noise levels applicable to proposed entertainment premises and proposed sensitive uses in close proximity to existing entertainment and leisure premises**

Noise sensitive receptor	Assessment location	Design period	LOAEL (Green)	LOAEL to SOAEL (Amber)	SOAEL (Red)
Dwellings	Garden used for amenity (free field)	Day	The lower of 55dB LAeq,5min or 10dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise	56dB to 60dB LAeq,5min or 9dB to 3dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise	The lower of 61dB LAeq,5min or 2dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise
Dwellings	Garden used for amenity (free field)	Evening	The lower of 50dB LAeq,5min or 10dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise	51dB to 55dB LAeq,5min Or 9dB to 3dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise	The lower of 56dB LAeq,5min Or 2dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise
Dwellings	Garden used for amenity (free field)	Night	The lower of 45dB Aeq,5min Or 10dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise	46dB to 50dB LAeq,5min Or 9dB to 3dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise	The lower of 51dB LAeq,5min Or 2dB below existing LAeq,5min Without entertainment noise

Noise levels applicable to proposed entertainment premises and for proposed residential premises near existing entertainment premises (entertainment noise)

## Objectives

For premises where entertainment takes place more than once per week music and associated sources should not be audible inside noise-sensitive property at any time.

For premises where entertainment takes place less frequently than once per week, music and associated sources should not be audible inside noise-sensitive property between 23:00 and 07:00 hours.

For the purposes of this document, airborne noise may be considered not audible when it is at a low enough level such that it is not recognisable as emanating from the source in question and it does not alter the perception of the ambient noise environment that would prevail in the absence of the source in question.

## Design criteria

For the airborne transmission of entertainment noise, the following noise rating curves (NR) measured as a 5 minute linear Leq are regarded as meeting the above objectives:

Room	Noise rating curve	Design period
Bedrooms	NR 10 Leq 5 mins	23:00-07:00hrs
All habitable rooms	NR 20 Leq 5 mins	07:00-23:00hrs

The above design criteria apply to the airborne transmission of entertainment noise. The structure borne transmission of noise is regarded as more problematic as the noise tends to take on much more low frequency bias as it propagates through the structure and the noise is often radiated simultaneously from multiple elements of the structure e.g. floors, walls and ceilings, leading to an all-encompassing surrounding sense of perception; in addition structure borne noise can often be perceived as vibration as well as sound, adding to the adverse effect. Consequently, where there is a risk of structure borne transmission of entertainment noise to sensitive premises we may seek more stringent criteria than for airborne entertainment noise. Developers are therefore encouraged to consult with the council's environmental health department at an early stage in the consideration of the scheme to address this issue and to submit proposals to mitigate the risk for review.

**Vibration levels from uses such as railways, roads, leisure and entertainment premises and/or plant or machinery at which planning permission will not normally be granted or in line with the most up-to-date version of British Standard 6472**



## Appendix 6: Air Quality

This appendix provides additional information on air quality matters and aims to ensure the Local Plan is consistent with London Local Air Quality Management (LLAQM) and wider approaches in London. It provides further details and guidance to support the policies contained

in this Local Plan and sets out the basis for which air quality is a material planning consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications. This appendix should be read in conjunction with Policy CG9 – Air quality.

### 1.1 Air Quality and Planning

All major developments must submit the following documents in preparation of a planning application:

- Air Quality Assessment (AQA)
- Air Quality Neutral Assessment (AQN)
- Air Quality Positive Statement
- Dust Management Plan (DMP)

Depending on the size, minor developments may also require an Air Quality Neutral Assessment.

### 1.2 Reducing exposure through design

Considerate design can avoid potential impacts on air quality from the earliest stages. The design and layout of buildings influences exposure to poor air quality.

Wider sustainable design principles that reduce energy use and

demand also reduce the potential emissions from buildings, and involve energy efficiency measures, retrofitting where appropriate, pollution control and urban greening. The remaining energy demand is therefore more likely to be met using zero- or low-emission sources.

#### 1.2.1 Form, layout, and orientation

Increased dispersion of pollution can be achieved through suitable form, layout and orientation of buildings and developments. Exposure to poor air quality is minimised through increasing distances between the source (such as roads, railways, and large combustion facilities) and the receptor (i.e. places where human exposure is most likely to occur). This is especially important for sensitive land uses (hospitals, schools, children's playgrounds etc.).

#### 1.2.2 Ventilation

Ventilation systems should account for the impact of ambient air pollution on indoor air quality, such as through the location of air intakes away from sources of poor air quality (such as at roof level and away from exhaust flues). It may be more appropriate to locate less sensitive land uses (such as commercial units) at ground level, where exposure to roadside air pollution is more likely to be transient.

Where filtration systems are incorporated into mechanical ventilation to ensure good air quality, it is important that their efficacy is supported by suitable evidence and that they do not result in significant increased energy demand, in line with Policy CG2 – Low energy buildings.

Sealed windows and façades should only be employed to mitigate poor air quality as a last resort and must ensure compliance with Policy CG5 – Overheating.

### **1.2.3 Outdoor and recreation space**

The location of outside space is an important consideration, due to exposure arising from gardens, balconies, playgrounds, and roof terraces. Exposure in outdoor spaces may be screened through the use of green infrastructure.

Similarly, the location of flues and exhaust vents in relation to recreational areas, such as roof terraces or gardens, is an important consideration.

### **1.2.4 Public realm**

Public realm proposals have the opportunity to reduce exposure to poor air quality and encourage people to spend time away from polluted areas. It is therefore advantageous for development proposals that incorporate public realm improvements to use design, where possible, to improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, encourage routes away from busy roads and reduce severance.

Public realm areas for recreation, seating and exercise may be screened from sources of pollution, either by distance or by the appropriate use of green infrastructure. The Mayor of London and Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) have produced guidance on incorporating green infrastructure to improve air quality.

## **1.3 Heating and energy supply**

The adoption of technologies to generate heat and energy from efficient and/or renewable sources can minimise air pollution emissions. This is due to the technologies either not requiring combustion or, in the case of district heating, being more efficient at heating than individual boilers. Such technologies can include solar water heating, connection to heat

networks, heat pumps (air-source or ground-source) and/or photovoltaic panels. These technologies therefore give rise to lower emissions of local pollutants and hence improve air quality locally.

### **1.3.1 Generators**

Diesel generators produce high emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter and can lead to adverse impacts on both long- and short- term concentrations of air pollutants. Generators are often installed for emergency or life safety purposes, but may also be proposed for

business continuity (such as for large offices and data centres) or short-term operating reserve (STOR) power for the National Grid.

Where a secondary electric power supply cannot be assured, alternative technology to diesel generators (such as battery, fuel cell or gas-fired alternatives) are preferable in terms of air quality. Where permanent diesel generators are installed, these will be required to meet relevant emissions standards and are typically only used for emergency and life safety purpose, and associated maintenance and testing.

Where generators are proposed for any other purpose, it would be important to carry out a full assessment of their impact on local air quality, and to determine whether secondary abatement of emissions is required. Diesel generators proposed for any purpose other than

emergency or life safety use will not meet air quality neutral benchmarks due to their emissions of particulate matter. Proposals for generators to provide short-term supply to the National Grid are very location dependent.

It is preferable for construction sites to seek a temporary electricity supply connection to reduce the need for diesel generators. Any on-site diesel plant will need to meet the NRMM Low Emission Zone standards.

### 1.3.2 Combustion flues

Should combustion plant be installed, consideration of the flue location and discharge velocity is required at the planning stage to ensure appropriate provision has been made.

Flues should be designed to ensure adequate dispersion of pollutants, and where an Air Quality Assessment is undertaken flues should be included. For smaller or simpler developments it may be sufficient

to demonstrate that the flue terminates at least 1m above the tallest building, and is free of surrounding structures, cowls or caps which may reduce dispersion. Consideration must also be given to the neighbouring and proposed buildings, including outdoor amenity space.

Clean Air Act Chimney height approval needs to be sought where a furnace is burning liquid or gaseous matter at a rate of 366.4 kW or greater or burning pulverised fuel or any solid matter at a rate of more than 45.4 kg per hour. Where an Air Quality Assessment is required the chimney height approval should normally be incorporated in the assessment for the development.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.4 Traffic reduction

Emissions from road traffic are the dominant source of elevated pollutant concentrations in London. Infrastructure to make active travel and public transport the most desirable modes is supported by the Mayor's Transport Strategy, the London Plan, Local Implementation Plans and Local Plans.

<sup>1</sup> The Clean Air Act Memorandum on Chimney Heights (1981) and Technical Guidance Note (Dispersion) D1 1993 are applicable primarily to short term impacts and not for considering annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations.

Measures to reduce private vehicle use may be implemented at a borough level, and may include the following:

- Car-free developments and maximum parking standards
- Workplace parking policies
- Requirement for parking space leasing
- Secure, covered, accessible cycle parking standards
- Green travel plans
- Provision of car club bays.

### 1.5 Construction phase

Construction and development can have a negative impact on people and the environment. This impact can be minimised if the development is properly managed.

All construction works should be carried out in line with The Control of Dust and Emissions During Construction and Demolition SPG July 2014 (GLA) and the Tower Hamlets Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) to avoid air pollution and dust nuisance.

The Control of Dust and Emission during Construction and Demolition SPG sets out measures to control emissions associated with construction and demolition, and other up-to-date guidance is produced by relevant bodies such as the IAQM.

All four construction sub-phases (demolition, earthworks, construction, and trackout) of major developments will have to be assessed from a

dust magnitude perspective, by submitting the Dust Risk Assessment of the site. Based on the sub-phase classification, dust monitoring will consist of:

- Visual assessments for a small construction sub-phase category
- The installation of PM<sub>10</sub> real time automatic monitors for a medium or large construction sub-phase category. Parameters to be monitored, duration, locations and monitoring techniques must be approved in writing by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets prior to commencement of monitoring.

Furthermore, for medium or large construction sub-phase categories the following details shall be submitted:

- Total number and location of PM<sub>10</sub> continuous monitoring stations, model/brand, air quality consultant responsible for downloading the data and preparing the air quality reports.
- PM<sub>10</sub> monitoring must be undertaken for three months before construction works shall start. Monitoring shall continue during and after the construction movements.
- The worksite shall have the following Air Quality Trigger levels:
  - a 'red' alert of 190µg/m<sup>3</sup> set as a 1-hour mean for concentrations of PM<sub>10</sub>
- The worksite shall have automatic alerts direct to the site manager so that when dust levels breach the acceptable limits, action can be taken swiftly and effectively. When a trigger alert is received, the project manager or the appropriate person(s) shall review the activities to identify any potential dust or particulate sources. If the cause of the trigger alert relates to site activity, mitigation shall be put in place immediately. When the trigger alert is exceeded, PM<sub>10</sub>

monitoring units shall send alerts (emails and/or text messages) to the project manager or the appropriate person(s). Tower Hamlets Pollution Team shall also be notified.

- Notification to Tower Hamlets Pollution Team following a trigger alert:
  - The project manager shall, as quickly as practicable, investigate activities on the site to ascertain any visible dust is emanating from the site and identify activities occurring without adequate dust control measures implemented.
  - If it is identified that the cause of the alert relates to the worksite activity, mitigation shall be put in place immediately to reduce impacts.
  - Details of the alert, investigation and actions taken shall be recorded in the site logbook and the Tower Hamlets Pollution Team shall be notified of the event. Within 24 hours of a 190µg/m<sup>3</sup> exceedance, an email to [Environmental.Protection@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Environmental.Protection@towerhamlets.gov.uk) shall be sent by completing the appropriate form 'Daily Air Quality Exceedances form – Tower Hamlets Council'. The site logbook shall be available to Tower Hamlets Council too.
  - If no source of the dust event is identified on site, and/or if the cause of the alert is not related to site operations, the outcome of any investigation shall be recorded in the site logbook and reported to Tower Hamlets Pollution Team through the form available on the council website.
  - For the entire construction/demolition works monitoring duration, monthly air quality monitoring report shall be sent to [Environmental.Protection@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Environmental.Protection@towerhamlets.gov.uk) within the first week of the following month. The monthly report shall include Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC) information regarding the monitoring units.

## 2 Air Quality Assessments

An air quality assessment (AQA) is designed to ensure that development proposals do not result in unacceptable impacts on local air quality or introduce new exposure into areas of poor air quality. They will also outline how development proposals accord with relevant planning policy and any mitigation measures required to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms.

### 2.1 Scoping the need for an assessment

An AQA is required to accompany any major planning application, to show how a development meets the requirements of London Plan Policy SI 1 and Local Plan Policy CG9. An air quality assessment is also required for minor developments if future residents, users, or occupants may be exposed to poor air quality.

AQAs consider all stages of the development process, including impacts during the demolition and construction phases. Guidance for the assessment of construction and demolition impacts is set out in the Mayor of London's Control of Dust and Emissions during Construction and Demolition SPG.

The Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) has produced several guidance documents on carrying out air quality assessments, including for more specific air quality considerations, which should also be referred to when carrying out air quality assessments:

- Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality
- Impacts on designated nature conservation sites
- Assessing odour for planning
- Assessing mineral dust impact for planning

### 2.2 Contents of an air quality assessment

The scope of an air quality assessment usually includes:

- An assessment of the existing baseline air quality in the vicinity of the proposed development.
- Identification of the opportunities and constraints on the site, and what measures can be taken at the design stage to avoid the need for mitigation later.
- Predictions of the future impact of the development, comparing the future scenario with and without the proposed development, but including all cumulative (consented) development.

An AQA should include the following:

- Site location and brief description of the proposed development, and how it relates to existing air quality.
- Outline of the relevant planning and air quality policy (including odour and dust when appropriate).
- Description of the assessment methodology with appropriate data presented, to allow decision makers to assess the technical quality of the work and the assumptions underlying any model adjustments or verification factors.
- Location and description of all receptors used in the assessment, including any particularly sensitive receptors (residential properties, schools, hospitals etc.) and may include ecological receptors.
- Assessment of the baseline air quality/dust conditions in the vicinity of the proposed development, and a description of all nearby sources of pollution likely to impact on the development, including emissions from nearby energy plant (boilers/CHP) and industrial installations where necessary.



- Prediction of the impact of the proposed development on local air quality, including
  - description of the impacts at individual receptors;
  - description of likely changes in air quality conditions as a result of the development, including any exceedances of the air quality objectives/air quality assessment levels which are created or sustained by the development;
  - consideration of emissions from all sources, including combined impacts road traffic and energy plant.
- Prediction of the exposure of future residents, occupants, or users of the proposed development, including contour maps of pollutant concentrations where appropriate.
- Description and quantification of further mitigation measures required to make the development acceptable in air quality terms.
- An assessment of the significance of the impacts after mitigation.
- An assessment of the cumulative impacts with other development during construction and operation.
- A statement as to whether the development is or is not consistent with relevant policy,.
- Conclusion of the assessment

Section 6 and 7 of the EPUK/IAQM 'Planning for air quality' guidance gives more in-depth information on how to address the requirements listed above.

Air quality assessments carried out using realistic worst-case assumptions to minimise the uncertainty in the outcomes are considered most robust. If certain parameters are unknown or uncertain, this ensures that the results of the assessment are conservative in nature.

Air quality assessments should also take into account the cumulative air quality impacts of other development, including developments that are under construction or have been granted planning permission in the vicinity of the proposed development, where practicable.

Early consultation with the air quality officer is recommended to ensure that the methodology of the air quality assessment is agreed, and that all relevant local considerations and cumulative development are accounted for.

### **2.3 Construction phase assessments**

Information on the assessment and mitigation of air quality and dust impacts during the construction phase is provided in the Mayor of London's Control of Dust and Emissions during Construction and Demolition SPG.

#### **2.3.1 Construction Dust Risk Assessment**

A construction dust risk assessment is an assessment of the risk of dust and PM10 impacts from a construction site. It considers the risk of impacts from demolition, earthworks, and construction, as well as from dirt and dust tracked out onto the highway from construction vehicles (track out). The construction dust risk assessment will inform the level of mitigation to be implemented over the duration of the construction works.

A construction dust risk assessment should be carried out in accordance with Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of the Control of Dust and Emission during Construction and Demolition SPG.

#### **2.3.2 Air Quality and Dust Management Plan (AQDMP)**

The AQDMP outlines the measures and protocols which will be

implemented to reduce the impacts of dust and PM10 during the construction works and will reflect the outcomes of the construction dust risk assessment. It may also outline the dust and particulate matter monitoring protocols to be implemented on-site.

The AQDMP should be prepared in accordance with the requirements in Chapter 5 of the Mayor of London's SPG.

### **2.3.3 Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM)**

NRMM includes mobile machines and transportable industrial equipment or vehicles which are fitted with an internal combustion engine and not intended for transporting goods or passengers on roads. NRMM, particularly from the construction sector, can be a significant contributor to London's air pollution.

All NRMM on construction sites, with a power rating between 37 kW and 560 kW, will be required to meet the emissions standards of the NRMM Low Emission Zone by planning condition. These emissions standards are based on those defined for both variable and constant speed engines in EU Directive 97/68/EC and its subsequent amendments, for both NOx and PM.

The current standards are Stage IV for construction machinery operating in the Central Activities Zone and Opportunity Areas (including Canary Wharf) and Stage IIIB in the rest of London. Stage IV standards will apply throughout London from 1st January 2025, and Stage V from 2030.

Prior to commencement of works, all NRMM must be registered on the NRMM register, which can be accessed at [www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/pollution-and-air-quality/nrmm](http://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/pollution-and-air-quality/nrmm). A number of exemptions also apply to individual pieces of equipment.



