

WE ARE SHAPING.

WE ARE NEWHAM.



OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS.



Introduction

This topic explores how we will develop the Local Plan's spatial approach, site allocations and spatial designations.

What are we required to consider and plan for?

The National Planning policy Framework (2021)

We are required by national policy to set out strategic policies that set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of development and making sufficient provision for:

- housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The areas of land safeguarded for these uses are discussed in more detail in the relevant topic chapters.

National policy also requires local planning authorities to prepare design guides or codes that reflect local character and design preferences, in order to set out expectations at an early stage. Design guides and codes can vary in their geographic coverage and their level of detail.

The London Plan (2021)

- The London Plan sets the spatial strategy for London as a whole. It identifies Strategic Industrial Locations (the capital's main reservoir of land for industrial, logistics and related uses) and defines a network of International, Metropolitan and Major town centres. Stratford is classified as a Metropolitan Centre with potential to become an International Centre and East Ham is classified as a Major centre.
- The London Plan identifies Opportunity Areas, which are significant locations with development capacity to accommodate new housing, commercial development and infrastructure (of all types), linked to existing or potential improvements in public transport connectivity and capacity. These Opportunity Areas are grouped together into growth corridors.
- The **Royal Docks and Beckton Riverside** and the cross-border **Poplar Riverside Opportunity** Areas form part of the Thames Estuary North and South growth corridor. This growth corridor represents the largest concentration of Opportunity Areas in London.
- The Royal Docks and Beckton Riverside Opportunity Area is identified as having indicative capacity for 30,000 homes and 41,500 jobs. An Opportunity Area Planning Framework is being jointly prepared by the GLA, in partnership with the Royal Docks Team, TfL and the Council. The Framework will guide future development of the area and will support the review of the Local Plan.
- The Elizabeth Line East growth corridor includes the area of the London Legacy Development Corporation, with the Olympic Legacy Opportunity Area providing 39,000 new homes and 65,000 new jobs.

- The London Plan states boroughs should undertake area assessments to define the characteristics, qualities and value of different places to develop an understanding of different areas' capacity for growth. These assessments should then be used to identify suitable locations for growth and the potential scale for growth. Boroughs should also follow a design-led approach to establish optimised site capacities for site allocations.



What new objectives and trends do we need to plan for?

The spatial approach in the Local Plan Review will be informed by a range of evidence and emerging trends, including evidence of Newham's housing, industrial, employment, retail and infrastructure needs.

- **The '15-minute city' concept** is an emerging principle from Paris with the aim of enabling residents to access all of their needs within a 15 minute walk or bike ride from their home. It is a way of reducing car use and encouraging active travel. It has become increasingly important as the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way people use their neighbourhoods, town centres and high streets, how they travel and how they access local services. For these reasons, the 15-minute neighbourhood forms a key pillar of [Newham's COVID-19 Reorientation and Recovery Strategy](#) to enable every resident to live in an accessible and inclusive neighbourhood which will provide all their social, civic and economic essentials (Pillar 5). The concept is also being explored by the Mayor of London as a way of supporting the recovery of London's High Streets. It will be important for the Local Plan Review, through working with communities on the Characterisation Study, to look at how 15-minute neighbourhoods will be delivered in a Newham context.

- Since declaring a **climate emergency** in 2019 the Council has been bringing forward a range of measures to address climate change, poor air quality and waste with the aim of making Newham carbon neutral by 2030. To address climate change the Local Plan Review needs to focus growth in locations that are easily accessed by public transport, walking and cycling. It will also need to consider the provision of and access to green space and how development can contribute to the building of a Green Economy, particularly at the Royal Docks.
- **There are many residents in Newham who face high levels of poverty and an unhealthy urban environment in terms of air quality, access to food and housing provision.** All of these factors contribute to a healthy life expectancy that is lower in Newham than the national average for both men and women. Economic, social and environment justice underpin the Council's [Community Wealth Building approach](#) so that long-term prosperity, wellbeing and fairness for all residents in the borough is achieved and the climate emergency can be addressed. The Local Plan Review presents an opportunity to identify a pattern of development that creates a healthier environment for all residents and addresses the imbalances in access to services and facilities.

The Characterisation Study

The Characterisation Study will provide key evidence to inform the Local Plan Review.

It will map the physical and functional character of neighbourhoods in the borough (such as how residents in each area move to access shops, spend leisure time, work or study), as they currently are and how neighbourhoods could evolve for the better. It will also help identify how we can deliver our housing target through a design-led approach. It will capacity test strategic and large sites and provide area-specific small sites delivery guidance.

How is it being developed?

The Characterisation Study is being prepared with the help of consultants at Mccreanor Lavington, and through extensive engagement with local communities and in collaboration with key Council departments and other stakeholders such as the GLA (and their Royal Docks Delivery Team) and Historic England.

How will it inform the spatial approach?

Co-produced with local communities, the study will inform how the spatial approach reflects residents' lived experience of the borough. Through the 15 minute neighbourhood concept, it will look at how development activity can help overcome the shortcomings they identify and deliver the aspirations they have for their local areas.



Spatial Approach – what goes where

A spatial approach identifies the overall vision, priorities and objectives for a place, setting out 'what goes where'. It means developing a strategy, based on evidence, which identifies the location, pattern, uses, scale and quality of development that will come forward in Newham over the next 15 years.

It will mean looking at Newham's neighbourhoods and assessing their unique character and role in delivering growth, providing new homes, jobs, infrastructure, services and facilities. It will also mean looking at how new development should contribute to the role of each neighbourhood and how we can create places with the homes, jobs and infrastructure that residents need.

Our current spatial approach

The Local Plan is currently comprised of five neighbourhoods, each of which has their own policy. The neighbourhoods either reflect a single or combined Community Neighbourhood Area. Community Neighbourhood Areas are groupings of Newham's wards for community engagement and service delivery purposes.

The current Local Plan also divides the borough based on scale of potential development into:

- the 'Arc of Opportunity' which encompasses the vast majority of the strategic site allocations and major regeneration areas (Stratford and the Lea Valley, Canning Town and Custom House, the Royal Docks and Beckton); and
- 'Urban Newham', the historic neighbourhoods centred around Victorian, Edwardian and post-war estates (Forest Gate, Plaistow, Green Street, East Ham and Manor Park).

We know from recent engagement activities that the current spatial distribution of growth can lead to some residents feeling left out of the opportunities provided by recent large scale development – a feeling that 'it wasn't intended for them' and that 'change is happening to them' rather than being shaped with their needs in mind. Similarly, there can be a feeling that some parts of the borough are being forgotten and seeing less investment. The current broad neighbourhoods identified in the Local Plan also don't necessarily reflect where residents feel like they live and therefore they don't see their neighbourhoods reflected in the Local Plan.



Our Proposals

- 1. The 15 minute neighbourhood will be central to defining neighbourhoods in Newham:** informed by the engagement being undertaken as part of the Characterisation Study. This is likely to result in more neighbourhood specific policies which will provide a clear vision for each neighbourhood, their potential for growth and how development will be expected to contribute to this vision.

- 2. We want to reduce the duplication between the spatial policies and thematic policies:** to ensure that the policies for 'place' and the policies for 'use' better work together to give a clear steer on what is expected from development. This will involve looking at how the spatial approach is reflected in the thematic policies and better integrating the site allocations into the spatial policies to be clearer on their contribution to each neighbourhood.

What is a site allocation?

A site allocation is a policy which allocates a site for a particular use or development. They normally set out a preferred use or mix of uses and help safeguard the site for that use. Site allocations can also set out the principles and guidance which a new development would need to meet as well as infrastructure requirements (for example the need for a school, greenspace or better routes for walking and cycling).

National policy requires us to plan for and allocate sufficient sites to deliver the strategic priorities of the area (except where it can be demonstrated these needs can be met more appropriately through other mechanisms, such as brownfield registers or non-strategic policies) and allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet retail, office and leisure needs, looking at least ten years ahead.

The London Plan requires boroughs to follow a designed approach to establish optimise site capacities for site allocations and boroughs are required to set out acceptable building heights, scale, massing and indicative layouts for allocated sites, and where appropriate, the amount of floorspace that should be provided for different land uses provided.

What is our current approach?

The adopted Local Plan includes 31 strategic site allocations (in Appendix 1) and 36 non-strategic site allocations (in Appendix 2). The strategic site allocations, which are Newham's larger sites and are strategic in nature, provide the following information:

- The allocation which specifies uses, design and connectivity principles, tall building specifications and cross references to relevant Local Plan policies.
- Further sources of information which cross-refers to evidence base documents.
- Constraints and other advisory information including other land use designations (such as Strategic Industrial Locations).
- Partners, this is who is thought may bring the site forward for development.
- Phasing, indicating when these sites will come forward.
- A map with the boundary of the allocation, connectivity principles and any other Strategic Site Allocations and strategic industrial locations within the proximity of the site.

The non-strategic site allocations provide the following information:

- The allocation which specifies the use and cross references to relevant Local Plan policies.
- Further information such as whether the site is in a conservation area or its Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL).
- Partners and phasing, indicating when these sites will come forward.



Our Proposals

1. We will follow the **design-led approach to site allocations** to be consistent with the London Plan, informed by the work being undertaken by the Characterisation Study, the Calls for Sites exercise and the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment.
2. Our **site allocation methodology** will consider:
 - a. whether we need to distinguish between strategic site allocations and non-strategic site allocations;
 - b. the size of sites we allocate to meet both national policy requirements relating to smaller sites and to ensure an even distribution across the borough; and
 - c. the role of sites in achieving the Newham's strategic priorities and achieving the vision for each neighbourhood.
3. **We want to provide clarity to all stakeholders about what is expected from each site allocation** in terms of design principles, the uses to be provided and how development should address specific constraints and designations. We need to balance this alongside needing to provide flexibility for the plan period and recognising that there are often different ways of bringing sites forward for development. As part of this, we will consider the level of detail to be provided for each site allocation and how this is presented through maps and diagrams to provide a more visual representation of what is expected from sites and how they will contribute to the vision for the relevant neighbourhood.

4. We will **better integrate the site allocations and spatial policies by including them together** rather than as an appendix so it is clearer how the site allocations contribute to each neighbourhood.





What are Spatial Designations?

Spatial designations are designations that protect land for different uses and functions and are displayed on maps and diagrams. National policy states plans should be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation. Broad locations should be indicated on a key diagram and land-use designations and allocations identified on a policies map.

What is our current approach?

The Local Plan policies map was adopted alongside the Local Plan and shows where area based policies and site allocations apply. It includes a wide range of spatial designations set out in the Local Plan including:

- LLDC and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority boundaries in Newham.
- Site allocations, including strategic, residential, residential-led mixed-use and community allocations.
- Conservation designations.
- Industrial and employment designations.
- Town centre, retail and community designations.
- Safeguarding for waste and transport uses and flood defences.
- Green infrastructure, including Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Green Space.

Our Proposals

1. The Local Plan Review will make **better use of digital tools** to makes the Policies Map clearer, easier to use and more accessible. An interactive policy map could allow people to can change the mapping layers to easily see what designations apply to a site or area. This approach will also apply to maps and diagrams in the Local Plan to help explain the vision for each neighbourhood and the borough overall. We will also keep up to date on projects being led by national government to create more interactive Local Plans and other interactive tools, including the ability to link policy sections to maps.



You tell us

- Do you agree with the proposed changes?
- Are there other changes we should consider?
- Is there anything missing?

