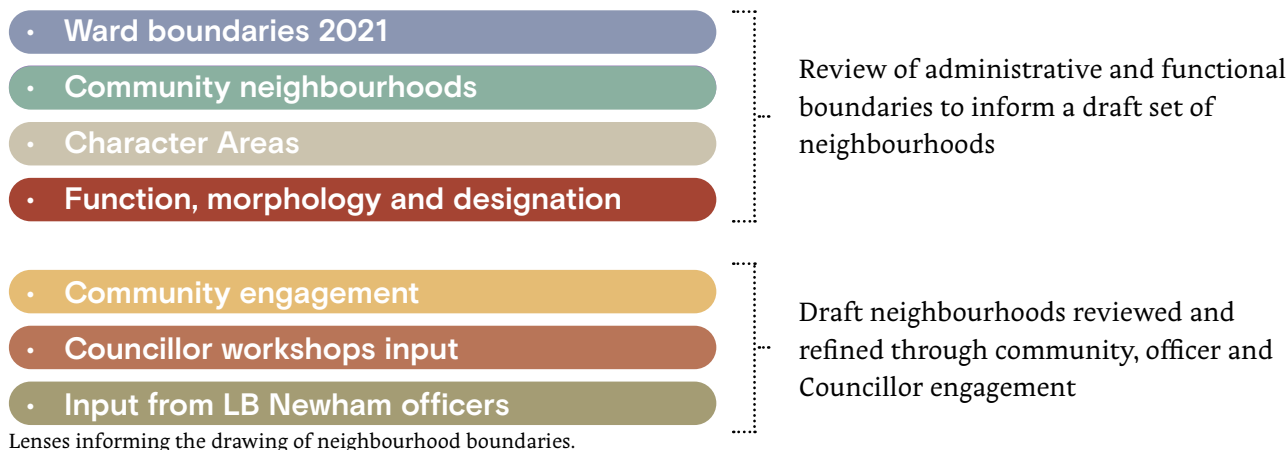# 6. NEIGHBOURHOODS

The following chapter consists of an a culmination of the borough-wide analysis to inform a process of defining neighbourhoods.

# CREATING NEIGHBOURHOODS
## A Series of Lenses

In creating neighbourhood boundaries for this Characterisation Study, a review has been made of the various ways in which the borough is currently sub-divided for different purposes, as well as reviewing an interpretation of these through public engagement, analysis of the borough and input through workshops.

These first three maps illustrate the ways in which the borough is currently designated utilising various boundaries. The Ward Boundaries map illustrates the 2022 ward boundaries. The Community Neighbourhoods illustrates the areas that Community Managers are responsible for and the Character Areas map illustrates the built characters assessed earlier in this study.

- · Ward boundaries 2021
- · Community neighbourhoods
- · Character Areas
- · Function, morphology and designation

Review of administrative and functional boundaries to inform a draft set of neighbourhoods

- · Community engagement
- · Councillor workshops input
- · Input from LB Newham officers

Draft neighbourhoods reviewed and refined through community, officer and Councillor engagement

Lenses informing the drawing of neighbourhood boundaries.

# Ward Boundaries 2022

The ward boundaries were analysed to understand the
current political boundary landscape of the borough.



Ward boundaries 2022

# Community Neighbourhoods

The Community neighbourhoods were analysed to understand the current landscape of community participation boundaries in the borough. These are currently being considered, but offer an important context for the consideration of new neighbourhood boundaries.

For administrative purposes, Newham's Wards are grouped into eight Community Neighbourhoods (CNAs) as shown in the Local Plan map extract overleaf. The CNAs provide a framework for service delivery, as well as community engagement. Each CNA is represented by a Council liaison Community Neighbourhood Manager, Councillors, and a member of the Council's Management Team.



Community Neighbourhoods (pre-2022)

# Character Areas

The Character Areas layers describes the urban characteristics of each area, including justification for the amended boundary positions. These cover Typology; Morphology; Urban structure; Green space; Boundary condition; and Density.



Olympic Legacy

Upton, East & West Ham, Plaistow

River Lea

Canning Town

Gallions Reach

Beckton

Royal Docks

Character Areas
Newham Character Study, 2017 (reviewed as part of this Study)

# Assessing Existing Boundary Conditions

As part of the assessment of these three maps, boundary conditions have been assessed across three existing maps. These help to define what decisions have been used to create edges to boundaries as these can vary from being definitive – such as rivers or significant natural features – through to being more subjective – such as part-way through residential neighbourhoods. By assessing how existing mapping has identified boundaries, the neighbourhoods can determine how best to apply boundaries of their own.

The edge conditions are broken up into 4 main categories. The first category and the most prominent is roads. Large roads or railway infrastructure can produce nuance in character on each side of the street and often performs as a physiological edge to a neighbourhood.

Green and blue spaces that are less permeable can create boundaries.

The maps also illustrate that edge conditions can arise from within residential areas or at the back edge of retail spaces. This offers an insight into how boundaries to neighbourhoods may be defined for the purposes of this study.

Consideration has been given to being less definitive than those set out here, focusing on the core of neighbourhoods rather than the edges.
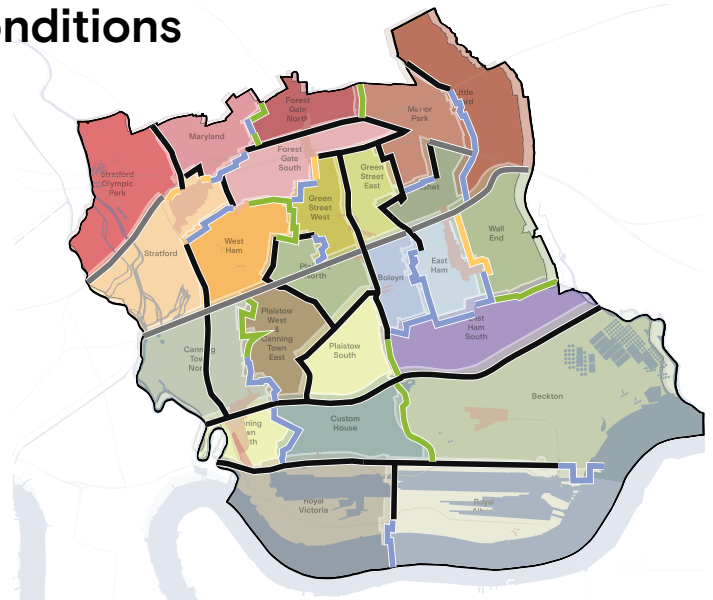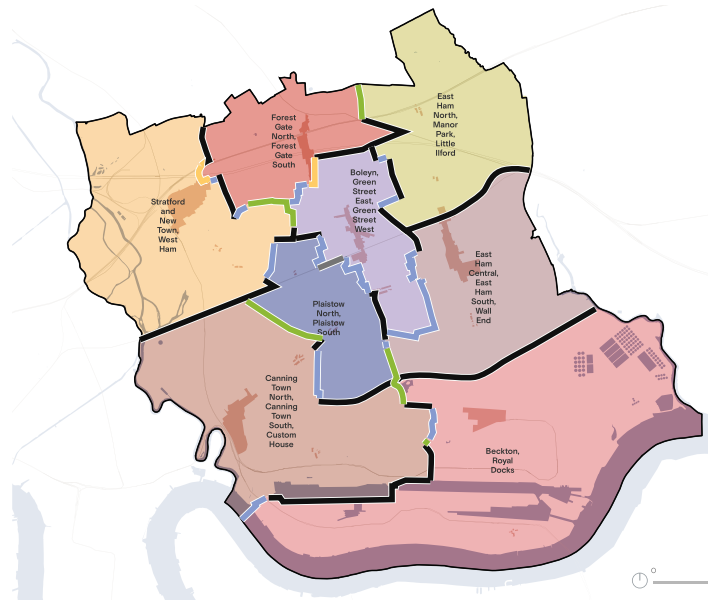
| | |
|---|---|
| ▬▬ | Road |
| ▬▬ | Residential |
| ▬▬ | Green / Blue |
| ▬▬ | Back of retail |



Ward Boundaries 2021



Community Neighbourhoods



Character Areas
Newham Character Study, 2017 (reviewed as part of this Study)

# Function, Morphology, Designation

The Study has been able to take findings from assessing functional and built characters, coupled with current land designations. These paint a picture that marries, for the most part, with character areas defined in 2017, though begins to highlight certain sub-divisions such as in the Royal Docks, and between Canning Town and Plaistow.

**Legend:**

- Historic Inner Suburb
- Post War Inner Suburb
- Urban Neighbourhood
- Town Centre
- Local Centre
- Industrial
- Out of town retail
- Green Space
- Major Infrastructure / attractor
- Commercial
- Transition to Urban Neighbourhood
- Tall Building Zone
- Strategic Industrial Land (SIL)
- Heritage Conservation Area
- Newham Strategic Sites
- LLDC Boundary
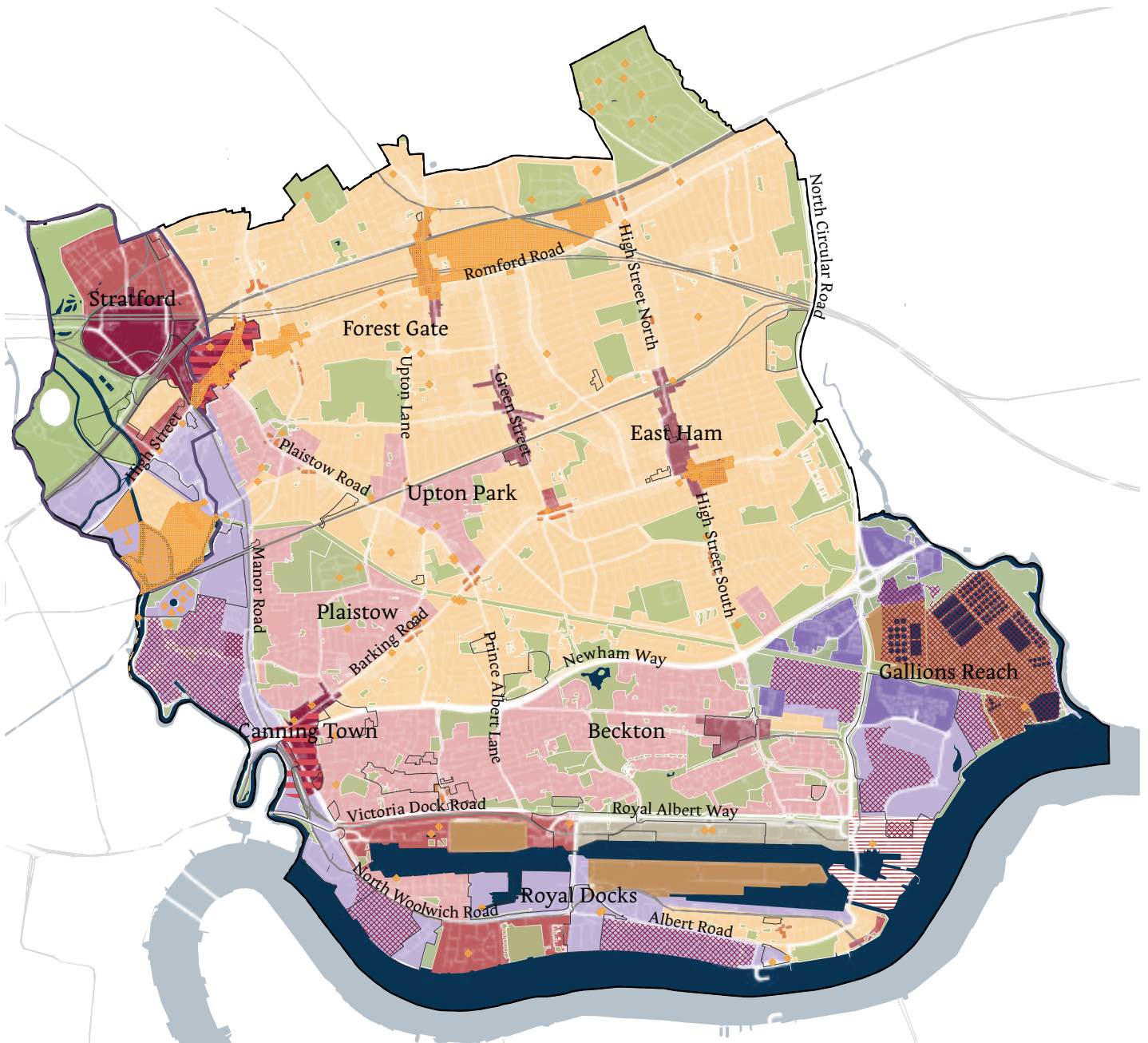


Function, Morphology, Designation

# Community engagement: process

Community engagement formed an important lens through which to interrogate the notion of neighbourhoods and their boundaries. Indeed, community engagement offered the opportunity to express and articulate different meanings and understandings of neighbourhoods through 'soft' methods, acting as a balance to the more 'hard' review of functional character and administrative boundaries.

An engagement programme was delivered to engage with Newham's population with the ultimate aim to uncover participants' perceptions of what contributed to the character of their neighbourhoods, what the extent of these neighbourhoods are, and how they understood their local areas in terms of the 15-minute neighbourhood concept.

A series of engagement activities and methods were used to elicit feedback and draw findings from local residents and workers. Engagement was delivered across four primary methods as summarised below.

- **Characterisation Study Survey**
  Making use of Newham Council's Co-Create engagement platform, the Characterisation Study Survey was created to develop a comprehensive understanding of participants'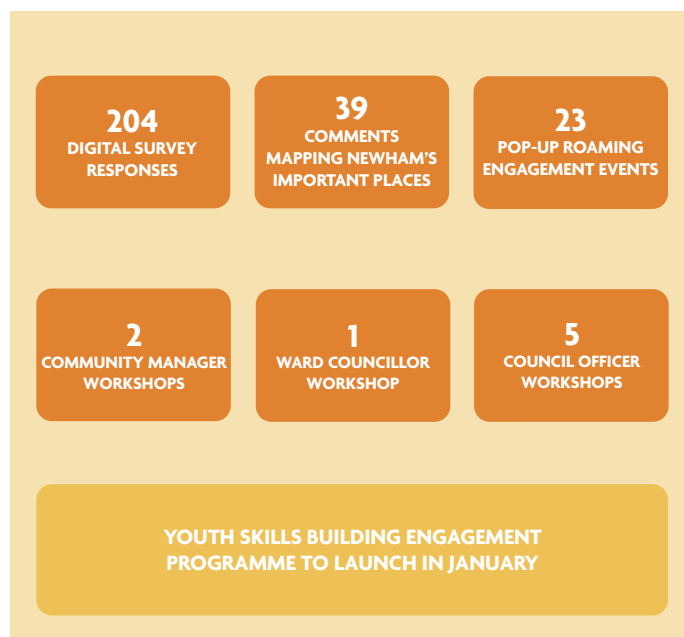 perceptions of their neighbourhoods and how they used them, and to explore how they functioned through the lens of the 15 minute neighbourhood concept.

- **Mapping Newham's Important Places**
  Mapping Newham's Important Places was developed to take advantage of the map surveying capabilities of Newham Council's Co-Create engagement platform. This tool allows participants to pin locations across the Borough, and share information on them. As part of the Newham Characterisation Study, this tool was adapted to be used to develop a community mapping and identification of spaces and places significant to local people, representing a diverse area of landmarks.

- **Roaming Pop–Up Engagement**
  A comprehensive series of roaming pop-up engagement events were delivered as part of the Newham Characterisation Study. Traveling by cargo-bike, the project team visited all 20 Council Wards over the course of 23 pop-up events. These took place in a wide array of locations, from high streets to libraries, shopping centres to parks.



| 204 DIGITAL SURVEY RESPONSES | 39 COMMENTS MAPPING NEWHAM'S IMPORTANT PLACES | 23 POP-UP ROAMING ENGAGEMENT EVENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2 COMMUNITY MANAGER WORKSHOPS | 1 WARD COUNCILLOR WORKSHOP | 5 COUNCIL OFFICER WORKSHOPS |

**YOUTH SKILLS BUILDING ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME TO LAUNCH IN JANUARY**

Summary of number of different events and responses

- **Youth Design Jam**
  Youth engagement as part of the Newham Characterisation Study was primarily focussed on establishing co-design opportunities with young people, focussing on development of Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) installations as part of parallel work being developed elsewhere in the Council for delivery later in 2022. This creative activity acted as a framework to explore young peoples' perceptions of their local areas, how they use them, and particular reflections on the challenges for young people in gaining equal access to public space.

The findings from the engagement were considered in the round alongside those from the other lenses of analysis, with a summary of key observations set out overleaf. A more detailed record of activities and findings can be seen in the engagement report in the appendix.
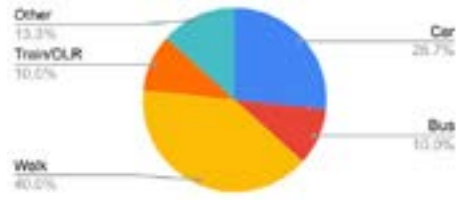
Summary of responses to "How often do you travel to the following activities/places?" and "What transport method do you use most often to travel to these activities/places?"





Photograph from youth engagement event

Examples of promotional material raising awareness of the engagement activities and how to get involved

# Community engagement: findings

Based on the initial analysis of administrative boundaries, functional character and edge conditions, a set of draft neighbourhood boundaries were drawn for use in the community engagement activities.

Analysis of feedback across multiple engagement strands revealed a number of observations and themes which helped to steer the definition of emerging neighbourhood boundaries. Engagement activities focussed on identifying a range of local assets, from significant community landmarks to everyday amenities.

Through a mixture of data received through online surveys and conversations during in-person engagement events, a range of insights have helped to inform an understanding of local residents' perceptions of their neighbourhoods; what features are central to them and what barriers or severances helped to shape their outer limits. This understanding is not comprehensive, and a key emerging theme was the extent to which some areas of the Borough had more easily defined neighbourhood features, while others, particularly those in the south and west, saw less easily drawn consensus. A summary of common themes is set out below and opposite.



**2** Stratford perceived as defined by new development areas

**3** Neighbourhoods defined around key high streets, with softer boundaries. Proposed neighbourhoods conform with locally understood areas.

**1** Not presently understood as a 'neighbourhood'

**4** Critical boundary edge, perceived across Borough

**5** Potential split of northern docks

**6** Opportunity to boost place-based development of eastern end of Royal Docks

Review of draft neighbourhoods in response to public engagement feedback

## North / South divide

In large areas of the north and centre of the Borough, residents generally were more definitive in their identification of the neighbourhood in which they lived or visited. These were formed around central commercial high street areas, and conformed to our expectations based on previous definitions of the Boroughs neighbourhoods. Residents orientated their perceptions of their neighbourhoods towards these nearby high streets, which helped to define both the character of these neighbourhoods, and the central node of peoples' understanding of access to amenities within 15 minutes. Broadly these areas were viewed positively in terms of these two analytical frameworks; contributing to a distinct sense of place and as having a good mix of access to everyday amenities. These areas also broadly conform to widely identified named neighbourhoods as understood by local residents (3 - see plan opposite).

Conversations and findings in the south and western areas of the Borough overall suggested a less clear definition of what sat at the heart of neighbourhoods. Some areas, for example North Woolwich were highlighted for a lack of extensive high street amenity. Residents in areas of significant and rapid new residential development, for example Royal Albert Wharf, noted a lack of sense of place while surrounding developments were ongoing and a wider array of amenities were yet to be introduced (6 - see plan opposite).

## Non-residential neighbourhoods

Pop-up roaming engagement events were held in a number of non-residential spaces within the Borough. In these spaces, the vast majority of participants were workers or passing through on longer journeys. These areas were not perceived to be neighbourhoods per-se, lacking both the necessary sense of place and amenity. In the west of the borough (1 - see plan opposite), clearly divided from the rest of the borough by Manor Road and the DLR line, this severance poses a significant challenge to integrated active travel. This is a similar challenge in the south east (6 - see plan opposite), bordering on development at Royal Albert Wharf identified by participants as lacking a clear sense of place presently.

## Soft and hard boundaries

The emerging neighbourhood boundaries provide a positive reflection on local residents' expressed perceptions of a number of clear areas of severance that subdivide the Borough, and contribute to the division of neighbourhoods as they are presently understood.

As above, in the case of the difference between perceptions in the north and south of the Borough, the north is characterised by a series of softer boundaries between historic neighbourhoods defined around high streets. Generally, the boundaries identified in are 3 (see plan opposite) are softer, with many participants in these areas noting that they may access other high street areas depending on their need or desire for more specialist amenities.

In the south of the Borough, a range of severances present much clearer boundaries. In particular, participants identified the Newham Way as a significant boundary point across a range of engagement activities. This represented both a key boundary between neighbourhoods, and a wider perceptual boundary of long-term significance (4 - see plan opposite).

## Stratford

Stratford and the areas in the north west of the Borough have proven the most difficult to develop a clear consensus on as part of analysis of feedback and input (2 - see plan opposite). This is in part impacted by the particular role Stratford has taken in the perception of participants, identified by many local residents as emblematic of uneven investment across the Borough.

The neighbourhood was identified by a significant number of participants as an area they were most likely to travel a greater distance to access from across the Borough. Generally, participants identified Stratford in terms of its recent commercial and residential development, defining its character in terms of the area north and west of Romford Road.

# Input from LB Newham officers

An initial set of boundaries were drawn based on analysis from the initial sequence of lenses, which were tabled with LB Newham officers for a vision workshop. The annotations below indicate initial reactions and responses recorded from the session.



Includes parts of Forest Gate to be integrated

Parts of Maryland should be in 14

What makes this a part of Stratford?

Green Street area feels quite large

Feels too big. Not sure about the north - south divisions of East Ham across the town centre

Area east of High Street South feels more spacious and suburban

Is the area south of Boleyn local centre (11) that different from the southern part of East Ham (9)

What makes this a boundary?

Area around Abbey Arms local centre (6) has more in common with Greengate (8)

Boundaries between industrial land to be reviewed

Boundary to be reviewed

Input from LB Newham officers

# Councillor Workshop

The intention of the Councillor workshop was to gain an understanding on a range of topics from the group across various scales of the borough and to explore the 15 minute neighbourhood principle. A summary of responses is included below:

- 15 minute neighbourhood is more about your resources in your neighbourhood, what's within 15 minutes walk – access to resources for everyone, not just privileged
- Important to plan for services and amenities at the heart of neighbourhoods and reverse the out of town trend which can be inaccessible for many
- Don't instigate a situation where we fortify boundaries – gang violence is an issue. Also, be aware that some young people can't go to different areas.
- Need to ensure affordability and accessibility for the local people they serve – e.g. supermarket they can afford, not necessarily a local specialist shop.
- Language used to engage with local people should be carefully considered. For example, '15-minute neighbourhood' can be abstract and people may identify more with their 'manor' than 'neighbourhood'.
- Beckton and Cyprus neighbourhoods boundaries should reflect Royal Docks Road.
- North Woolwich is referred to as 'the island' and has maintained a steady demographic over the years.
- The A13 presents a psychological, physical and cultural boundary which is reflected in the demographics of people living there.
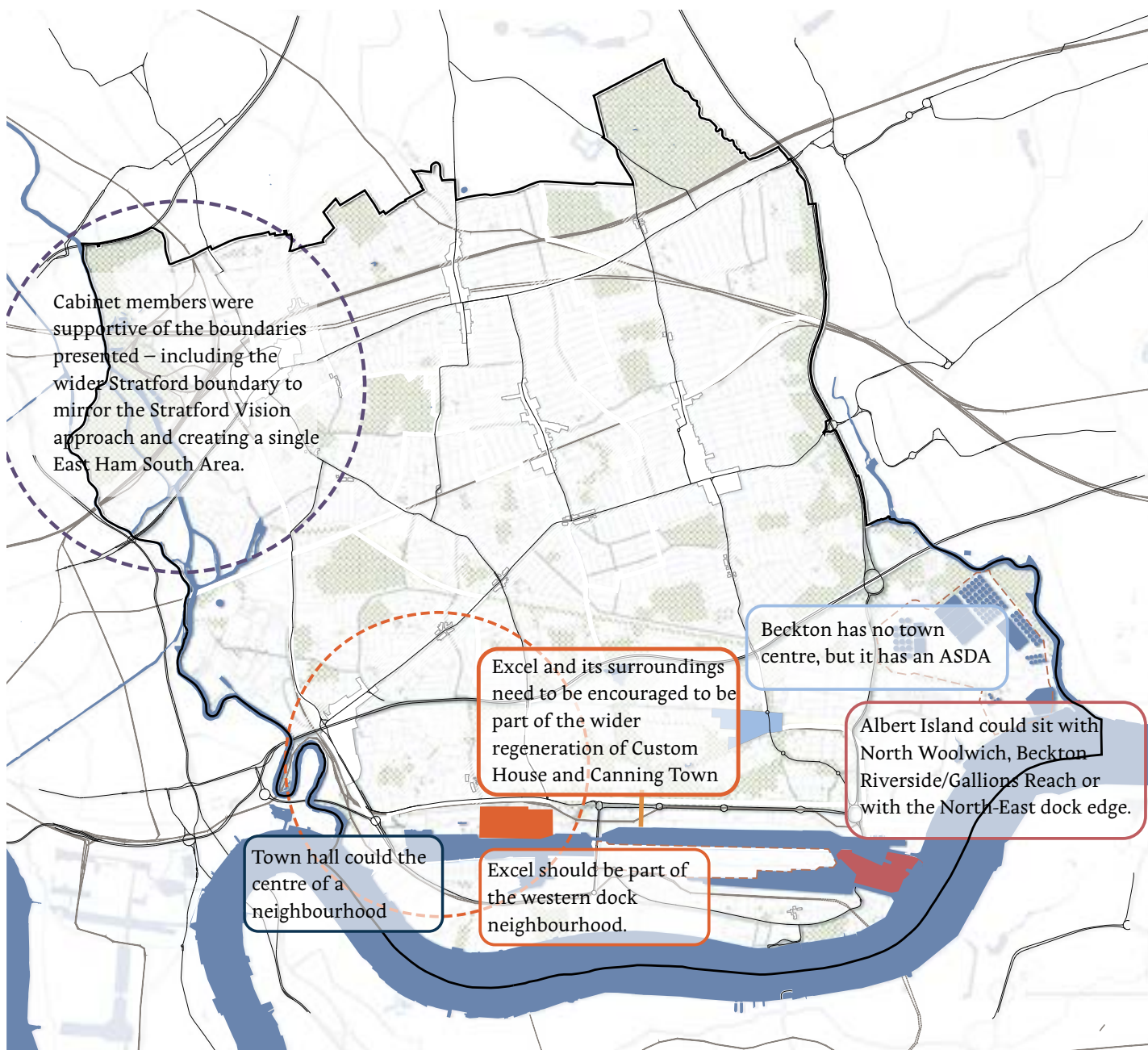


Councillor workshop input.

# NEIGHBOURHOODS

## Reflection on changes to initially proposed boundaries

Broadly, the emerging neighbourhoods (drawn through the administrative and functional analysis) in the north of the Borough conformed to local community perceptions of their neighbourhoods, formed around key high street areas. While a slight disconnect was found between south East Ham high street, with part of this falling over the boundary of two neighbourhoods, anecdotal data from on-street engagement in this area suggested that local residents understand these two neighbourhoods as interlinked, and would regularly travel between the two to access amenities. The southern high street also acts as a centre and focus, rather than boundary.

It was recommended the area stretching along the north bank of Royal Docks would benefit from being split, as conversations with residents at either end of this space suggest a general lack of permeability and travel across this area. Residents west of the ExCeL Centre tend to be orientated in terms of amenity along Silvertown Way, and as discussed above, residents towards Royal Albert Wharf note a lack of local neighbourhood centre and suitable amenity.
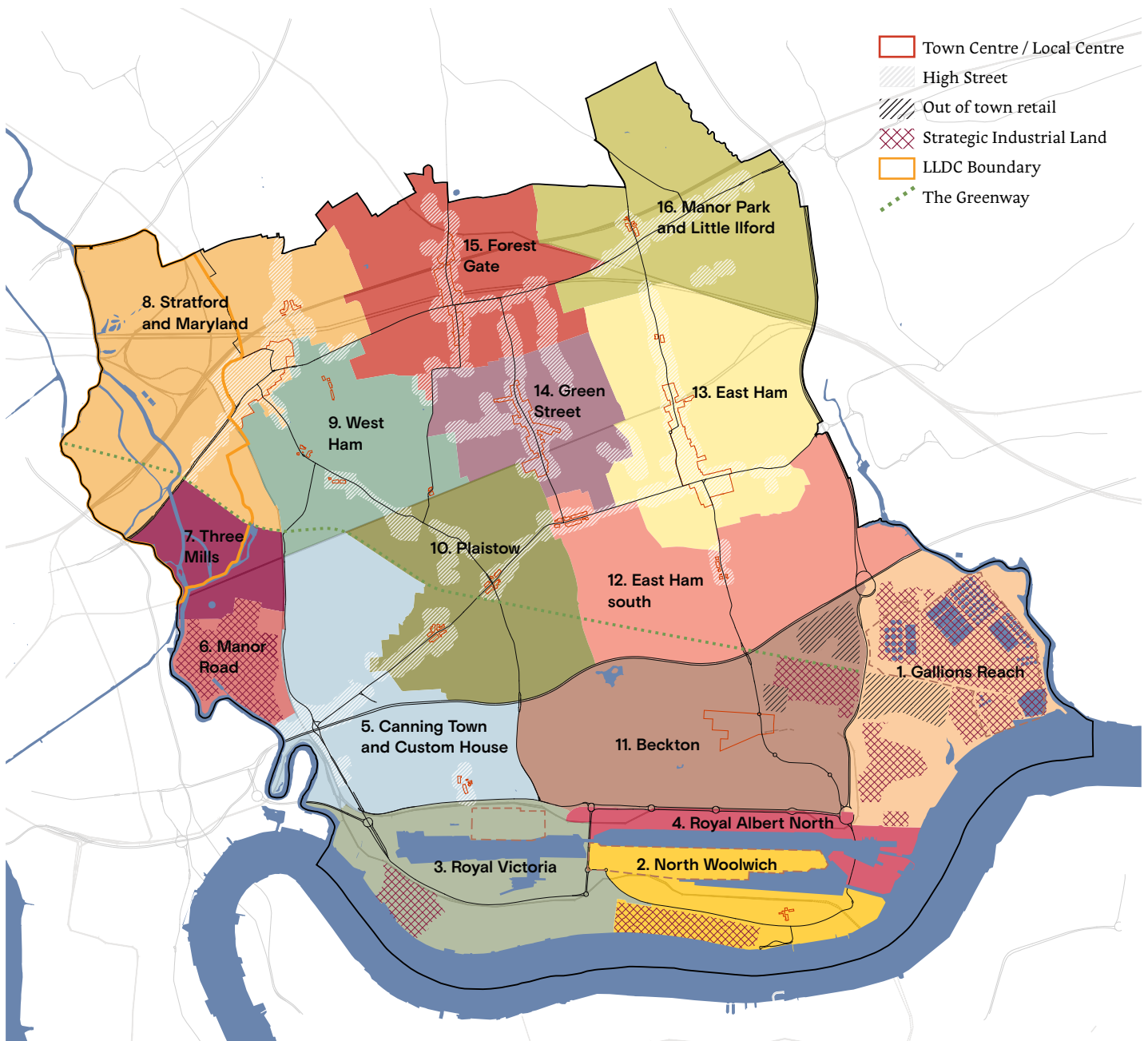
The area around Royal Albert Wharf was found to benefit from reconsideration. Local residents identified a lack of an existing sense of place. However, it is noted neighbouring new development will enlarge this area northwards, increasing amenity. A wider definition as an emerging neighbourhood may support place-development ambitions.

## Neighbourhoods mapping

The map below illustrates the proposed new neighbourhoods, labelled 1-16. The neighbourhoods are formed from an assessment of the existing character areas, ward boundaries, neighbourhood communities, function, morphology, planning designations as well as the public engagement.

The new neighbourhoods are located around an existing local centre or shopping street with main retail corridors running through the centre of them such as High Street North and South, Green Street, Barking Road. Certain

highways and major roads produce barriers between neighbourhood, such as Royal Albert Way, the eastern part of Newham Way. This is clearly defined in the change in character on either side of these streets, as a result of the highway producing an infrastructure barrier between neighbourhoods.



**Legend:**
- Town Centre / Local Centre
- High Street
- Out of town retail
- Strategic Industrial Land
- LLDC Boundary
- The Greenway

**Neighbourhoods:**
- 16. Manor Park and Little Ilford
- 15. Forest Gate
- 8. Stratford and Maryland
- 14. Green Street
- 13. East Ham
- 9. West Ham
- 7. Three Mills
- 10. Plaistow
- 12. East Ham south
- 1. Gallions Reach
- 6. Manor Road
- 5. Canning Town and Custom House
- 11. Beckton
- 4. Royal Albert North
- 3. Royal Victoria
- 2. North Woolwich

Neighbourhoods.

# 15 MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOOD PRINCIPLE

## CONCEPT

The 15 minute neighbourhood has emerged internationally as a concept for sustainable neighbourhood design that offers the right conditions to achieve the three pillars of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic. Its premise is giving residents access to the goods and services they need on a daily or regular basis within a short, safe, and convenient 15-minute walk or cycle. These goods and services include: suitable housing options, shops for groceries, child-care facilities, schools, health-care facilities, public open spaces, spaces for recreation, and frequent affordable public transport.

It takes a holistic approach to build the 15 minute neighbourhood: living, working, learning, caring, and playing are all equally important as are amenable, people-centred, interconnected public streets and recreational spaces. Together with services, crucial components include housing choices, active travel opportunities and good public realm. The public engagement for this study has identified context-specific elements and nuances that relate directly to Newham.

The 15 minute neighbourhood approach is not intended to create isolated and self-sustaining areas, but rather encourage close proximity to resources and infrastructure for everybody. Beyond those resources that are needed on the doorstep, there is an acknowledgement of broader networks forming part of the neighbourhood approach, whereby resources across other neighbourhoods and even boroughs can support the network of resources needed for people.

According to residents responses to the public engagement process, immediately outside of the Borough, Hackney Wick, Canary Wharf and Wanstead Flats were all noted by participants as places they regularly visited. Further afield, participants noted central London as a regular destination.

Local network for walkable amenities and resources

Wider network for inter-neighbourhood amenities and resources

## APPROACH
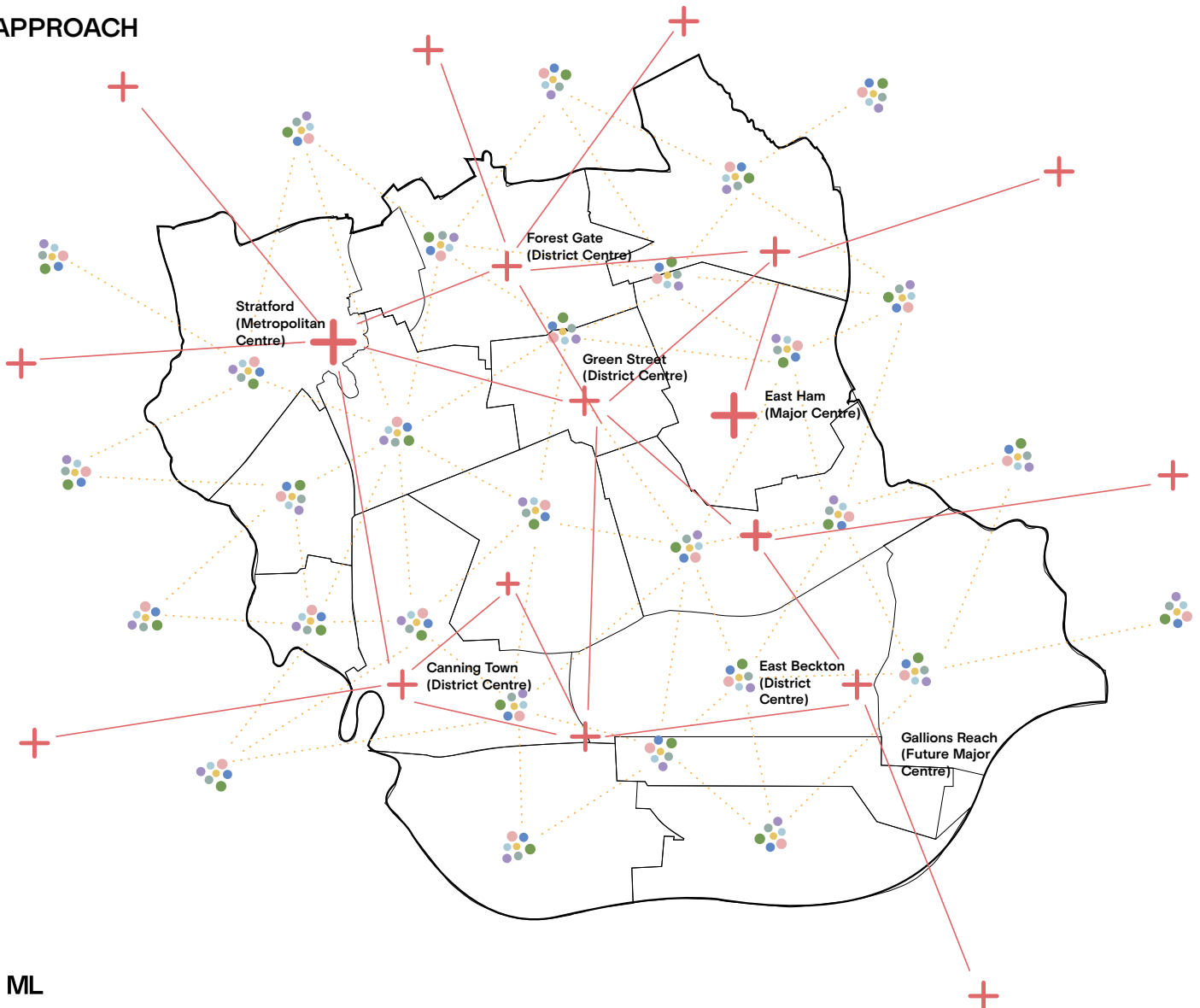
## PRINCIPLES
### Equitable

The 15 minute neighbourhood intends to make Newham more equitable, supporting the less mobile such as elderly people, people with disabilities, children and teenagers, parents of young children or people from lower socio-economic demographics. They provide more access to opportunities for everyone to participate in economic life, improving social mobility.

### Health and Wellbeing

The 15-minute neighbourhood principle intends to not only ensure good access to services and resources, it also promote an active lifestyle by encouraging walking and cycling. An active lifestyle reduces health risks including obesity, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and mental health issues. Liveable cities support the creation of cohesive communities, which reduces social isolation, improving mental health and well-being.

### Environment Positive

The 15 minute neighbourhood can help Newham to adapt and respond to and mitigate further climate change. Liveable cities are designed to have minimal environmental impact by supporting walking and cycling. The subsequent reduced need for frequent, short car journeys improves air quality and reduces carbon emissions. The 15 minute neighbourhood design also presents opportunities for climate resilience through the integration of a green and blue infrastructure, enhancing biodiversity, reducing flood risk and the urban heat island effect.

### Mixed Neighbourhoods

The 15 minute neighbourhood relies on compact growth, an effective density, and a mixed and balanced community to provide sufficient demand for the viability of a mix of commercial and social functions. The functional integration of a mix of uses, particularly on the ground floor, creates an active streetscape, provides resources and services, improves character, and ensures a perception of community and safety.

### Diverse and Inclusive

A diversity of population is crucial for the social and economic sustainability of urban areas. Different socio-economic and demographic traits in the population promotes a mixed and balanced community as well as sustaining a broad range of commercial activity and services that need to be in place to meet the needs and choices of the population in the long term.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT · SPORT · CYCLE NETWORK · NATURE · WALKABLE STREETS · PARKS · SAFE STREETS · PLAY · ACTIVE TRAVEL · PUBLIC REALM · COMMUNITIES INPUT ON ACTIVE TRAVEL · COMMUNITIES INPUT ON PUBLIC REALM · COMMUNITIES INPUT ON HOUSING · COMMUNITIES INPUT ON SERVICES · HOUSING CHOICES · MIX OF FUNCTIONS · HOMES FOR ALL AGES, FAMILIES&BACKGROUNDS · JOBS · MIX OF TYPOLOGIES · EDUCATION · AFFORDABLE HOMES · LEISURE&CULTURE · RETAIL&MARKETS · HEALTH&CARE

KEY COMPONENTS OF NEWHAM 15 MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS