

Our Newham Local Plan: DESIGN

Main Changes from the Draft (Regulation 18) to the Draft Submission (Regulation 19) Newham Local Plan

Policy D5 incorporated into policies D3 and D1, and policies D6-D10 renumbered

D1: Design Standards; D3 Design-led site capacity optimisation

Living well at high density policy has been subsumed into Policy D3 and D1.

This change has been made following representations received from residents which outlined their concerns that the policy is not specific enough, and representations from developers which outlined their concerns that the policy may impede developments at densities of 250u/ha or more from coming forward. We considered a change was necessary to clarify that the policy intention is to deliver higher quality of design and not to limit the ability to make the best use of available land in line with the NPPF and Local Plan Policy D3. Following internal review we also noted that part 2 of the policy was a duplication of engagement requirements of policy D1, with this being retained only in policy D1.



Policy D3 has been renamed to 'Design-led site capacity optimisation'

D3: Design-led site capacity optimisation

The name of the policy has been changed to remove the word 'residential', so that the policy can effectively be used to guide all development types.

This change has been made following internal review with colleagues who assess planning applications which highlighted that the majority of the principles of the policy can also be applied to non-residential developments. to support the Local Plan objective to deliver high quality mixed use well-connected neighbourhoods and make effective use of all land.

Strengthened 'Agent of Change' principles

D6: Neighbourliness

The guidance for implementing 'agent of change' principles in Newham has been updated to provide additional detailed requirements.

This change has been made following representations received from an industrial operator (Tate & Lyle) which highlighted the need for additional guidance on measuring the worst case scenario amenity impacts of established employment uses. We agreed this change was necessary in order to meet the Local Plan objectives to deliver a strong inclusive economy while also promoting the health and wellbeing of all residents.

Inclusive Design Standards

D1: Design Standards, D2: Public realm net gain, D5: Shopfronts and advertising

New policy criteria and guidance to help integrate and optimise a range of design standards aimed at making the built environment more accessible and welcoming for a range of people with different needs, including designing for neuro-divergent people and to meet the needs of women and girls. These have been added to policies D1 and D2, and to the implementation guidance of policy D5.

This change has been made following representations received from residents, Newham Public Health and the LLDC which outlined their concerns that the policy is not integrating up-to-date guidance on making places inclusive. We agreed this change was necessary in order to meet the Local Plan objectives to create people-friendly, safe neighbourhoods and promote the health and wellbeing of all residents.



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Playspace in public realm

The policy now only strongly encourages that part of the playspace floorspace delivered by developments should be made publically accessible and it is no longer a mandatory requirement.

This change has been made following recommendations from completed Green and Water Space Infrastructure Study (2023) evidence, which resulted in public playspace requirements being added to suitable site allocations. We consider this approach is a more deliverable mechanisms to reduce play space deficits in the borough. Representations were also received from developers which expressed concern about allowing public access to playspace in certain circumstances (e.g. where playspace can only be provided at podium level). We agreed a change was necessary to provide greater clarity that the policy intention is to encourage the provision of playspace in the public realm delivered by a scheme.



Active Travel Zone Assessments D2: Public realm net gain

The policy now makes use of the Active Travel Zone Assessment (TfL), rather than a Transport Assessment and the Healthy Streets framework. Only major developments referable to the Mayor of London are required to undertake an Active Travel Zone Assessment, therefore the trigger point for policy D2.3 (obligations for public realm improvements beyond the site) has now changed to reflect this. Smaller major developments will instead be encouraged to provide contributions towards public realm net gain.

This change has been made following representations received from TfL to change the policy to require developers to undertake Active Travel Zone Assessments. We agreed this change was necessary in order to meet London Plan requirements and to provide greater clarity on the type of interventions that would be considered to deliver the policy requirement.



Height Parameters (D4 Tall Buildings)

A reference to number of storeys has been added to the prevailing height and maximum height parameters in Table 1: Tall Building Zones to provide an estimate number of storey that could be achieved. Further clarification has been added to the implementation text to better explain that policy D4 applies to all buildings of 21 m, irrespective of use and related floor-to-floor height.

This change has been made following representations received from developers which expressed their concern on the inconsistent reference to height - expressed in meters in the tall building zones and expressed in number of storeys in the site allocation design principles. In particular, they raised that different land uses could require different floor-to-floor heights and could therefore result in a different number of storeys. We agreed this change was necessary to add clarity and remove any conflict with Neighbourhood policy requirements.



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Additional Tall Building Zones D4 Tall Buildings

New tall building designations have been added to support industrial intensification in Strategic Industrial Land (SIL) and to support development in additional site allocations considered suitable for tall building developments.

This change has been made following representations received from developers with an interest in developing their land in the borough, including industrial land. We considered a change was necessary in order to reflect the findings of the suitability exercise undertaken to identify suitable locations for tall buildings and to ensure the deliverability of industrial intensification and remove any conflict with the employment policy requirements.



Proposed Maximum Height Parameters D4 Tall Buildings

A number of proposed maximum heights have been amended to reflect the spatial hierarchy, the desire to create legible and consolidated clusters and to reflect the findings of the suitability analysis undertaken to identify suitable locations for tall buildings.

This change has been made following representations received from developers, the LLDC and the Royal Docks team who raised concerns regarding viability and inconsistencies between consented schemes and proposed maximum heights. We considered a change was necessary in order to better reflect further findings of the suitability analysis undertaken to identify suitable locations for tall building developments and the spatial hierarchy of the borough as well as enable the delivery of the early phase of Beckton Riverside independently from the DLR extension.



Design detail and impact of tall buildings D4 Tall Buildings

Further policy requirements have been added to Policy D4 to ensure high quality design for tall buildings, including their ability to define good quality public realm; to minimise the impact of tall buildings on watercourses, open spaces and microclimate; and to address the importance of conserving and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and key views set out in the London View Management Framework and in adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

This change has been made following representations received from residents, expressing their concerns on the design quality of tall building developments when they are not well integrated with their surroundings; from an internal review with the Newham Design Review Panel; from Historic England and the Greater London Authority, who outlined their concerns about the impact tall buildings could have on conservation areas and on London View Management Framework View 9A.1; from public bodies (the Canal River Trust, Environment Agency and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority) and residents who raised concerns regarding the impact tall building developments could have on watercourses, open spaces and microclimate, impacting on plant growth, as well as quality of the amenity space and pedestrian and cycling experience. We agreed a change was necessary in order to ensure conformity with the NPPF and London Plan and to ensure high quality design for tall buildings and the public realm they define.

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Heritage protection

D5: Shopfronts and Advertising; D7 Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape Value; D9 Designated and non-designated heritage assets, ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens

Policy implementation texts have now changed to require an assessment of heritage impacts of developments. Policy D7 and D9 provide more detailed requirements for a Heritage Impact Assessment and, in the case of tall buildings, also requires a Townscape Visual Impact Assessment, to justify the design solution and help mitigate any impacts on the significance of heritage assets or their setting.

This change has been made following representations received from residents, which outlined their concerns that the policy does not provide enough guidance for the quality of shopfronts and advertisements in the setting of conservation areas and other heritage assets, and that Newham's heritage should be better protected overall. Representations were also received from Historic England which outlined their concerns that the policy is insufficiently clear how protection of heritage assets and conservation areas will be sought in areas where the Plan also promotes transformation of character, primarily Stratford. We agreed this change was necessary in order to meet NPPF requirements and to ensure a balanced delivery of the spatial strategy and growth needs alongside protection and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets in the borough.



Submit your comments online, by email, by post or in-person at our drop-in sessions. Find out more by scanning the QR code or by visiting your local library.

Have your say before 5pm, 6 September 2024!

