

# Our Newham Local Plan: GREEN AND WATER SPACES

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

### **Green, water, play and community growing spaces** Green and Water Spaces chapter

The statistics in this chapter, relating to the amount of green, water, play and community growing spaces we have currently and the targets we set over the Local Plan period, have been refined.

These changes have been made following the findings and recommendations of the completed Green and Water Infrastructure Strategy (2024) and representations from residents, who strongly voiced the value of Newham's green, water, play and community growing spaces and the need for improvements both in terms of quantity and quality. A need for a clear, strategic approach to the planning and investment of Newham's green spaces including its community growing and play spaces was also raised. We consider that the changes were necessary to meet the Local Plan's objective to deliver improved green, water, play and community growing spaces.



### **Playing fields** GWSI: Green spaces

A new clause and implementation text has been added to Policy GWSI to address the need to protect existing playing fields. We have also made the policy clearer regarding the requirement, where a need has been identified, to deliver new playing fields.

This change has been made to implement the recommendations in the completed Newham's Playing Pitch Strategy (2024). Sport England also raised questions around our approach to playing fields and stressed the need for our policies to be informed by a robust and up-to-date evidence base. We consider this change was necessary to provide clarity on the protection of existing playing fields and the delivery of facilities to support the growth in homes and population.



### **West Ham Park Nursery Site** GWSI: Green spaces

The West Ham Park Nursery Site, in recognition of its Historic Park Status and last lawful use as a plant nursery, has been designated as a community growing space. The Local Plan does not consider this to be a suitable site for housing and as such it is not being designated as a Site Allocation. It should be noted that this would not stop a future application for residential or other uses from coming forward on this site. Any application would be assessed against the policies in the adopted Local Plan.

This change has been made following completion of the Green and Water Infrastructure Strategy (2024). Residents, two community groups, London Historic Gardens Trust and the CPRE strongly objected to the idea of development on the West Ham Park Nursery Site. The City of London made a number of representations to state that it was considering bringing forward the West Ham Park Nursery Site into a viable, beneficial and sustainable use. This included the potential redevelopment of the site, which may include provision of new homes and/or employment space and/or community facilities and/or new open space. We consider that this change was necessary to reflect the findings of the Green and Water Infrastructure Strategy (2024) which has identified a shortfall of community growing space in Newham.

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### Urban Greening Factor

**GWS3: Biodiversity, urban greening, and access to nature**

This policy has now changed to take forward the London Plan Policy G5 approach to the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) and not a bespoke Newham target score.

This change has been made following recommendations from the Green and Water Infrastructure Strategy (2024). It found that experience to date suggests that the target scores in the London Plan are achievable but challenging. We consider that this change was necessary to ensure the right balance between biodiversity improvements and deliverability.



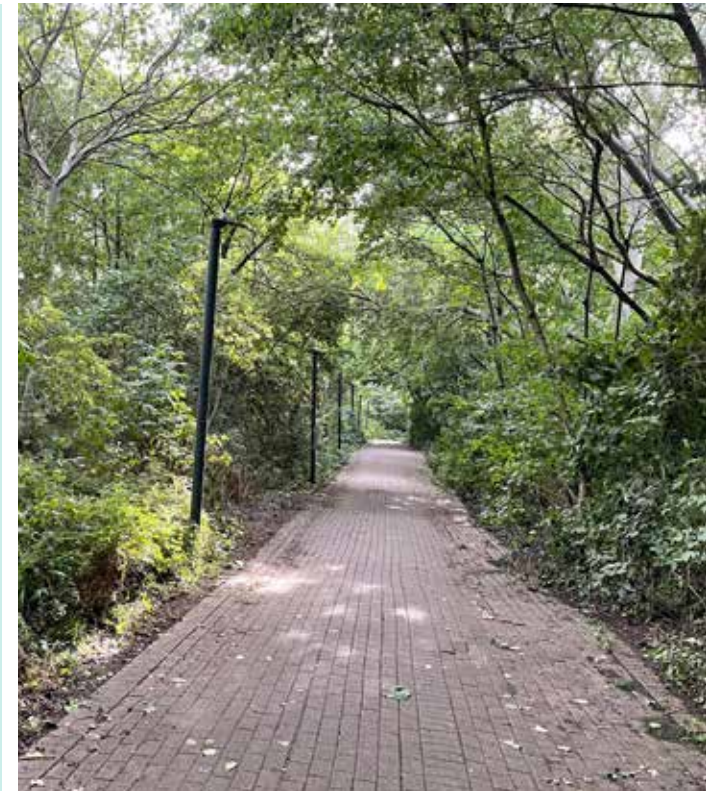
### Biodiversity Net Gain

**GWS3: Biodiversity, urban greening, and access to nature**

This policy approach has now changed to better reflect the Environment Act 2021 and the requirement for a minimum 10 per cent Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

This change has been made due to BNG becoming a mandatory requirement since April 2024 (for both major development and small sites) and to reflect further guidance issued recently by the government on its implementation. Natural England also made a number of suggestions to ensure the policy reflected the Environment Act 2021 and its requirements.

The change has also been informed by the Green and Water Infrastructure Strategy (2024) which concluded that, in Newham, raising the BNG requirement from at least 10% to 15% or 20% would have limited benefit. This is because the vast majority of development sites in Newham will have a low biodiversity baseline, and a percentage increase of 15% or 20% from a low baseline will result in marginal gains over and above the mandatory 10% requirement. We consider that this change was necessary to provide clarity on Newham's approach to BNG and to make it clear we are not exploring a higher target value.



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!**

