



# 10. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following chapter provides recommendations about how to best embed consideration of context and character across the planning system. These recommendations would enable the findings of this report to become material considerations in developing policies and guidance, as well as informing pre-application discussions and development management decision making processes.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Embedding the consideration of context and character across the planning process

The findings of the Characterisation Study should be used by Newham as the Local Planning Authority to better embed the consideration of context and character across the planning process. The recommendations below would help ensure that the findings of this report are material considerations in developing Local Plan/ Neighbourhood Plan policies and Local Plan guidance and ensure that the Royal Docks Opportunity Area Framework (OAPF) takes account of, amongst other things, the proposed approach to tall buildings.

They also seek to ensure more effective pre-application discussions and help ensure that issues of 'context' and 'character' are taken full account of when applications are determined. Finally, to reflect the cyclical nature of the planning process, it is recommended that the Council undertake post-development reviews of development schemes, to learn lessons and feed in to reviews on Local Plan policies and guidance and decision-making.

## The Council is recommended to:

- 1. Local Plan policies:** Take account of and apply the relevant Conserve, Enhance, Transform guidance and Tall Buildings strategy (set out in Chapter 7) and the Neighbourhood Vision Design Principles (set out in Chapter 8) as applicable when developing the following:
  - (a) Borough-wide policies;
  - (b) Place-based policies for each Neighbourhood; and
  - (c) Site Allocations.
- 2. Neighbourhood Plans:** Encourage those preparing Neighbourhood Plans to take full account of the findings in this report when developing their vision and policies.
- 3. Local Plan guidance:** Bring forward Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)/ supplementary plans or masterplans for key places and sites (including Beckton Riverside) and prepare a borough-wide Small Sites Housing Design Code. These should take account of the findings of this report and set out specific contextual and character considerations for particular sites and places and more detailed guidance for typical small site typologies.
- 4. Royal Docks OAPF:** Work with GLA officers to ensure that the OAPF reflects the findings of this report, particularly in relation to Sections 3 (Supporting Good Growth) and 4 (Places), and any subsequent Newham tall building policy that it informs.
- 5. Effective pre-application discussions**
  - (a) Revise the Pre-Application Advice Guidance Note & Charging Schedule for Categories C to F of development (Small Scale, Medium Scale, Large Scale and Strategic Scale), where relevant, work with GLA in the Royal Docks Team to require applicants and their design teams to demonstrate from the outset how their emerging proposals take account of the assessment and guidance in this report to fully consider 'context' and 'character' as they develop designs for proposed schemes; and
  - (b) Use the Borough-wide Design Principles in Chapter 9 and the Neighbourhood Vision and Principles set out in Chapter 8 as a high-level tool for positively engaging in the design process. These should be used as a high-level tool for assessing performance against the strategic design principles, placing the emphasis on the applicant to demonstrate and evidence their interpretation and successful application of the design guidance, allowing Council officers can to use the checklist to structure feedback, whilst applicants can use this to structure and present their work (see pre-application process checklist overleaf).

**6. Considering and determining planning applications:**

- (a) Revise the Planning Application Requirements note to make clear that, when required, Design & Access Statements, Master planning Statements, Tall Building Study and Heritage/Character/Place-making Asset Statements must demonstrate how the planning application scheme takes account of the assessment and guidance in this report;
- (b) Ensure that Development Specification, Parameter Plans and Design Codes in relation to 'outline' planning applications and the 'outline' element of hybrid planning applications establish a satisfactory framework for ensuring that subsequent Reserved Matters Applications conserve, enhance or transform local character, as appropriate;
- (c) Adopt the measures set out in London Plan Policy D4 (Delivering good design) to ensure that the design quality of approved schemes is maintained through to completion;

**7. Newham Design Review Panel Terms of Reference:**

Revise the Terms of Reference to make explicit that Panel Members will be expected to be familiar with this report and to take its assessment and guidance in to account when reviewing emerging schemes;

**8. Effective enforcement of planning breaches:** No action needed. This report will influence future Local Plan policies that will provide context for considering levels of harm and prioritisation of enforcement action, as set out in Newham's Planning Enforcement Policy; and

**9. Monitoring and review:** A process should be established for Post Development Reviews of a sample of completed development schemes in the borough, of various sizes and types. Such reviews should be undertaken by both Newham officers and councillors to consider their success (or otherwise) in conserving/ enhancing/ transforming character, learn lessons from them and feed in to the future review of Newham Local Plan policies and/or guidance.

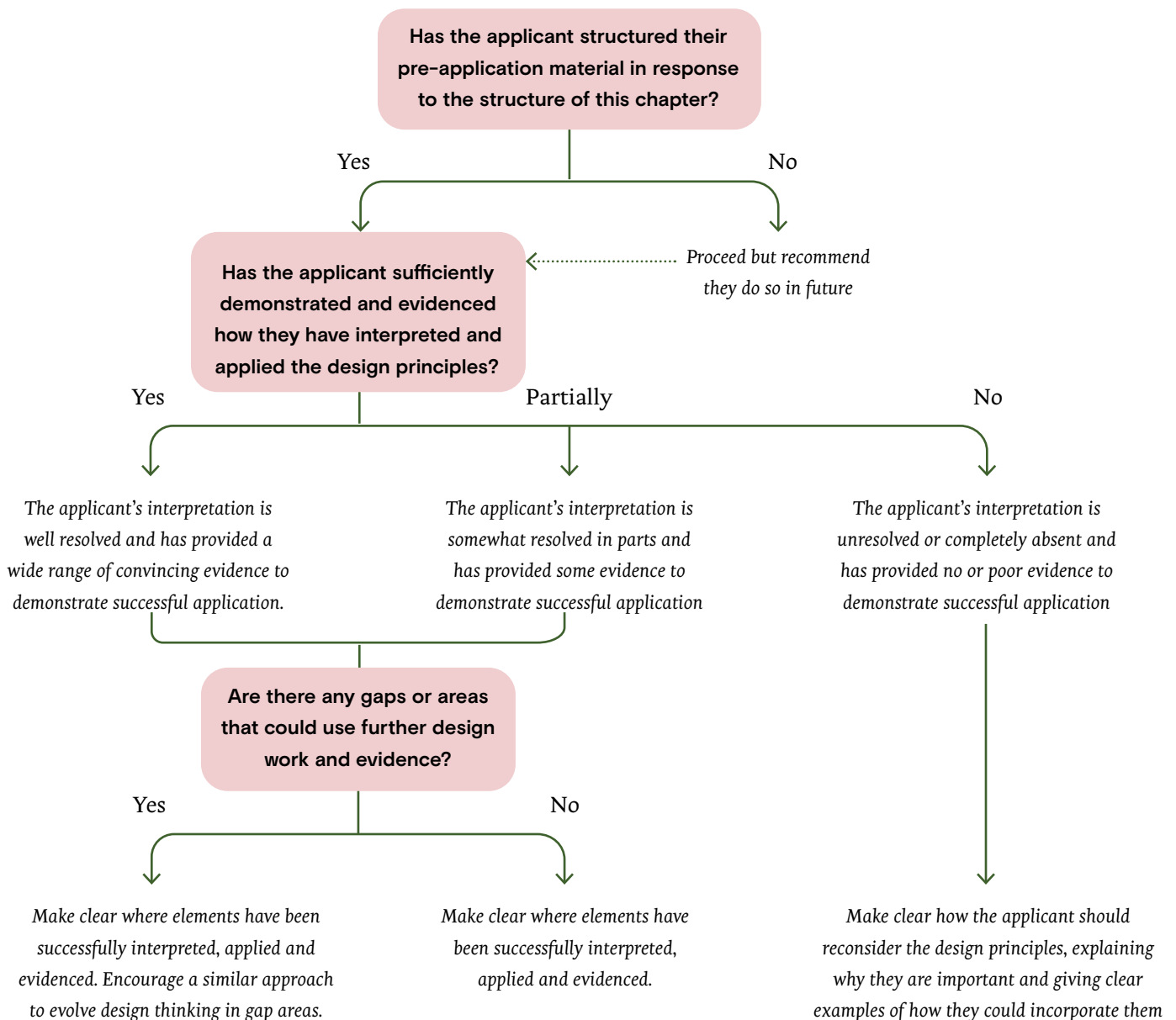
## Pre-application process checklist

The holistic guidance set out in this chapter sets a number of strategic design priorities for enhancing local character in Newham. It is principles-based in order to have a wide application and utility, rather than a prescriptive approach which can stymie design innovation, if used in a 'one-size-fits-all' blanket approach. Greater detailed studies are necessary to take forward these guiding principles into specific design guides or design codes. Ideally these would take the form of a Supplementary Planning Document, in order to hold significant material weight and support implementation.

However, the design principles in this chapter can still be used as a high level tool for positively engaging in the design process. The guidance holds greatest influence

when used as early in the process, to weave in the strategic design priorities into the brief and objectives for any scheme, where applicable. Therefore, a checklist has been prepared to assist the pre-application process and steer discussions.

It is a high level tool for assessing performance against the strategic design principles, placing the emphasis on the applicant to demonstrate and evidence their interpretation and successful application of the design guidance. Officers can use the checklist to structure feedback, whilst applicants can use this to structure and present their work.





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