

## 12. Supporting community facilities

### Introduction

**12.1** Tower Hamlets has a range of community facilities such as health, social, education, leisure and sport facilities providing valuable services to both local communities and visitors. The provision of these essential community facilities plays a vital role in creating and sustaining liveable neighbourhoods through providing valuable services.

**12.2** Community facilities are facing increased pressure from higher land value uses, such as housing and employment, in the face of limited public funding and a fast-growing resident and worker population. Specific need gaps and priorities include the provision of public houses, youth centres, local presence facilities/Idea Stores, indoor sport facilities and community halls.

**12.3** These policies will seek to promote and facilitate the delivery of essential community facilities through new development (including changes of use, extensions and new builds) in line with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which outlines the existing capacity and future needs and priorities facing some of the community facilities in the borough. In particular, they aim to ensure that sufficient facilities are provided to meet the needs of the borough's growing population in the areas of greatest need and growth, as described in Section 4.

**12.4** This section contains the following policies:

- Policy S.CF1: Supporting community facilities
- Policy D.CF2: Existing community facilities
- Policy D.CF3: New and enhanced community facilities
- Policy D.CF4: Public houses.

### Policy S.CF1

#### Supporting community facilities

1. Development which seeks to protect, maintain and enhance existing community facilities will be supported.
2. Development will be required to contribute to the capacity, quality, usability and accessibility of existing community facilities, particularly where development will increase demand.
3. Development should maximise opportunities for the provision of high quality community facilities to serve a wide range of users. Where possible, facilities or services should be accessible to the wider community outside of core hours and co-located or shared to encourage multi-purpose trips and better meet the needs of different groups.
4. New community facilities will be directed towards the borough's centres in accordance with the town centre hierarchy and/or to locations which are accessible to their catchments depending on the nature and scale of the proposal.

### Explanation

**12.5** This policy seeks to maintain an adequate supply and range of community facilities across the borough to serve local needs and support the creation of more liveable and sustainable places in line with the vision and objectives set out in Section 2. Delivery of new and improvements to existing community facilities will be achieved through the use of developer contributions (as identified in Policy D.SG5) and working together with partners to ensure adequate services are in place to support the sustainable growth of the borough.

**12.6** For the purpose of this policy, community facilities include a range of social infrastructure that provide services to the community such as:

- a. Indoor sports and leisure facilities (e.g. leisure centres and swimming pools)
- b. Health facilities (e.g. hospitals and doctor surgeries)
- c. Cultural facilities (e.g. art galleries, museums and theatres)
- d. Education facilities (e.g. schools, nurseries and universities)
- e. Social facilities (e.g. places of worship, libraries, Idea Stores, local presence and public houses).

**12.7** Playing fields and outdoor sport facilities, such as multi-use games areas and tennis courts, are also important community facilities. These are addressed within Policies S.OWS1 and D.OWS3.

**12.8** Part 1 sets out a presumption against the loss of community facilities to ensure that sufficient provision is available to meet local needs.

**12.9** Part 2 promotes opportunities to expand or improve the capacity and accessibility of existing facilities, taking account of future projected community needs (as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan).

**12.10** Part 3 seeks to encourage the provision of multi-purpose and shared services which provide opportunities to co-locate or integrate a range of community uses and functions, such as community halls and sport facilities. Consideration should be given to promoting community facilities which can be easily accessed, support a wide range of users in line with the principles of active and inclusive design and make relevant provision outside of core hours, particularly in respect of childcare provision, external recreation space, sport facilities and appropriate classroom space.

**12.11** Part 4 seeks to ensure that community facilities are located within or at the edge of town centres in line with Policies S.TC1 and S.SG1. These locations are considered to be the most accessible places in the

borough and such uses contribute to the vitality and viability of town centres. In addition, new facilities will be directed towards locations which are accessible to their catchment areas.

**12.12** This policy will be delivered in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and other relevant strategies, including the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, Open Space Strategy, Green Grid Strategy and area-based masterplans. We will continue to work with key stakeholders and other service providers to ensure that new community facilities are provided at locations where there is a clearly demonstrated need.

### Policy links

- Policy D.SG3: Health impact assessments
- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy S.TC1: Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- Policy S.OWS1: Creating a network of open spaces
- Policy D.TR2: Impacts on the transport network

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Tower Hamlets Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Water Space Study (2017)
- Planning for Sport Development Management (Sport England, 2014)
- Active Design (Sport England, 2015)
- Building Bulletin 103: Area guidelines for mainstream schools (Department for Education, 2014)
- Baseline designs for schools: guidance (Department for Education, 2014)
- Health Building Note 00-01: General design guidance for healthcare buildings (Department of Health, 2014)

**Policy D.CF2****Existing community facilities**

1. Existing community facilities must be retained unless it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. there is no longer a need for the facility or an alternative community use within the local community, or
  - b. a replacement facility of similar nature that would better meet the needs of existing users is provided.
2. Where community facilities are re-provided on site as part of the development, the quality and accessibility of these facilities (including public access) should be enhanced.
3. Extensions to existing schools should demonstrate that:
  - a. there is a demonstrated local need, and
  - b. the current level of child play space will be enhanced and increased.

**Explanation**

**12.13** This policy seeks to protect and enhance the borough's existing community facilities where they are still needed to adequately meet local needs.

**12.14** Part 1 seeks to resist the loss of the borough's valuable community facilities, except in certain circumstances, see (a) and (b). Statements from relevant providers confirming that the existing or alternative community uses would not be needed or possible in the premises will be required. Where the loss of a community facility is justified, the applicant will need to explore the opportunity to accommodate an alternative community use which would better meet local needs, in accordance with relevant strategies, including the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, Open Space Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Loss of sports and recreational facilities will only be justified where an applicant can provide a robust assessment demonstrating surplus provision or where the proposal includes a replacement of the facility with at least an equivalent function, quality and quantity of sport provision that better meets the needs of the community.

**12.15** We recognise that in certain circumstances site redevelopment will require the relocation of existing uses to a location where the needs of the users will be more adequately met. To ensure that there is no unacceptable disadvantage to existing users, re-provision of community facilities should be within the relevant catchment area and should result in quality and access improvements, reflecting the principles of active and inclusive design. Proposals should also demonstrate that the quantity of floorspace will at least be kept at the same level as the existing uses and, where possible, it should be increased.

**12.16** Part 2 seeks to ensure that new development facilitates and promotes greater public access through good and inclusive design and signage.

**12.17** Where practicable, the replacement facility should be provided before the existing facility ceases operation to ensure that local people continue to receive a high quality service.

**12.18** Part 3 seeks to ensure that any extension to an existing school results in an increase of existing child play space to accommodate the additional needs arising from the development, with a view to promoting shared community use in line with Sport England's guidance. Proposals to replace indoor sports and recreational facilities must be of at least equivalent function, quality and quantity and in a suitable location.

### Policy links

- Policy D.SG3: Health impact assessments
- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Tower Hamlets Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy (2017)
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- Baseline designs for schools: guidance (Department for Education, 2014)
- Health Building Note 00-01: General design guidance for healthcare buildings (Department of Health, 2014)

### Policy D.CF3

#### New and enhanced community facilities

1. Proposals involving the provision of community facilities located outside the borough's town centres will be permitted where an up-to-date and robust local need can be demonstrated.
2. Community facilities within larger developments should be easily accessible to people who live and work outside of the host development.
3. Development of new early education and care facilities and primary and secondary schools which respond to local need will be supported where:
  - a. they are in locations which are accessible to the residents of their indicative catchment areas
  - b. they can demonstrate appropriate learning spaces (including external play space) can be provided, and
  - c. the design and layout of these facilities and play space provision reflects the relevant guidance from the Department for Education and Sport England, taking account of the level of air quality and other amenity considerations.
4. New adult, further and higher educational facilities will be required to provide information of the relevant certification and registration details from the Department for Education and meet Sport England's design guidance and other relevant national governing bodies' guidance.

## Explanation

**12.19** This policy seeks to ensure that appropriate high quality community facilities are provided in accessible locations throughout the borough to adequately support the growing population and meet identified needs.

**12.20** Part 1 seeks to ensure that expansion of existing and delivery of new community facilities is directed towards accessible locations such as town centres. However, new community facilities outside of town centres will only be supported where sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate that there is a local need not being met elsewhere in the neighbourhood. Facilities provided in these locations need to ensure that they are local in nature and scale and that there is no adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding residents. This includes the impact of people coming and going to the facility and the impact of users within the facility when it is in use, as well as the impact on the highway network and parking facilities. Where the provision of a community facility is proposed as part of a residential development, it should be demonstrated that it is accessible to people living outside of the development and designed to be visible from the street.

**12.21** Part 2 aims to ensure that new community facilities which form part of a wider development are designed to facilitate and encourage wider community use and do not look and feel exclusive to the occupants of the development. Consideration should be given to ensuring that the facility can be easily accessible to a wide range of users.

**12.22** Part 3 encourages the provision of education facilities at early years, primary and secondary level in appropriate locations, where they meet local need and demonstrate high quality and inclusive design in line with the relevant guidance from the Department for Education, Sport England and other relevant national governing bodies (for instance, suitable locations for early years could include the ground floor of residential blocks or secondary frontages in existing town centres).

**12.23** In order to ensure that education facilities are suitably located, applicants should outline the indicative catchment area for the recruitment of pupils and assess the impact of people (including pupils, parents, carers and staff) arriving and leaving the facility as well as the impact on the highway network and parking facilities.

**12.24** Demand for early education and care facilities will increase in the future as the borough's birth rate continues to rise. Early education and care facilities refer to places where a number of children under five years of age are brought together during part or all of a working day on a regular basis where they can play, learn and receive care (e.g. primary school nurseries, children's centres, pre-school and 'wrap-around' childcare). The provision of early year facilities will contribute towards reducing the borough's current below-average levels of achieving good cognitive development at age 5 and enable greater employment rates amongst parents in line with our statutory duty to provide childcare to some 2-year-olds and all 3-and-4-year-olds. Future provision will increasingly require innovative approaches to the use of land and floor space, including the co-location of early education and care facilities with compatible uses, such as primary and secondary schools and office buildings.

**12.25** Further and higher education (see Part 5) refers to the stage of education after secondary school and includes a wide range of institutions including universities and colleges (as defined in the glossary in Appendix 1) which provide lifelong learning. It is noted that some further education colleges do include sixth form provision. In order to meet these requirements, the applicant will need to provide evidence of the relevant certification from the Department for Education as well as details of student and staff numbers, enrolment criteria and curriculum details. Sport and recreation facilities within schools should also reflect Sport England and other relevant national governing body guidance.

## Policy links

- Policy D.SG3: Health impact assessments
- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy STC1: Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- Policy S.OWS1: Creating a network of open spaces
- Policy D.TR2: Impacts on the transport network

## Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan
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- Active Design (Sport England, 2015)
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- Baseline designs for schools: guidance (Department for Education, 2014)
- Health Building Note 00-01: General design guidance for healthcare buildings (Department of Health, 2014)

## Policy D.CF4

### Public houses

1. Where the loss of a public house is proposed, the following evidence will be required:
  - a. Evidence that all reasonable efforts have been taken to preserve the facility as a public house, including evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to diversify the business.
  - b. Evidence demonstrating that the public house has been marketed for at least 12 months as a public house at a reasonable market rent and free of tie and restrictive covenant and following this exercise there has been no interest in the property and there is no realistic prospect of continuing its current use.
  - c. Marketing evidence demonstrating there has been no interest in the property for an alternative community use over a further 12-month period following the marketing period in Part 1(b).
2. Where a public house is replaced or re-provided, adequate floorspace must be provided to ensure the continued viability of the public house.
3. Proposals within the curtilage of a public house must demonstrate that the continued operation and viability of the public house would not be compromised. Loss of converted pubs on the grounds of viability as a result of previous development will not be supported.

## Explanation

**12.26** Like many other London boroughs, Tower Hamlets has witnessed a significant net loss of public houses (otherwise known as pubs) since the millennium. The rate of decline has far exceeded both the London and national averages<sup>46</sup>. This policy therefore aims to afford greater protection to the borough's public houses and guard against their unnecessary loss.

**12.27** In order to satisfy Part 1(a), applicants seeking to demolish or replace an existing public house will need to provide evidence of appropriate maintenance and upkeep and efforts to diversify the business. Alternatively, if the property has not been appropriately maintained, we will expect this has been reflected within the asking rent or price of the pub. Details of pub accounts for current and previous trading years should also be provided.

**12.28** In order to satisfy Part 1(b), applicants will need to submit a full detailed marketing report outlining the asking price or rent for the public house and the terms on which it was offered (e.g. freehold or leasehold; whether or not it included living accommodation and whether any part of the property was excluded). The report should include details of any interest in the property, viewings, and why such interest was not taken forward. This information should also be provided for a subsequent 12-month period outlining attempts to let the property for alternative community uses as described under Part 1(c).

**12.29** Part 2 seeks to avoid future examples in the borough of what are termed 'trojan horse' pubs. This term refers to developments that have met policy requirements through the re-provision of floorspace for pub use but at a level that is insufficient to be practically let as a pub, resulting in a subsequent application to convert the space to an alternative use. This part of the policy seeks to ensure that there is a genuine intention to continue pub use where redevelopment is proposed. It must also be

demonstrated that appropriate soundproofing is to be installed so as to minimise conflict between the pub and any residential use. In order to satisfy this criterion, applicants should submit indicative floorplans demonstrating that, at a minimum, the proposed floorspace for pub use can support a bar area, appropriate seating, storage and toilets.

**12.30** Applicants seeking to reduce or remove outdoor space must demonstrate that the remaining space is of sufficient size and quality for the needs of pub users, and that the pub could continue to operate viably following any loss or reduction. It must also be demonstrated that any smokers displaced from such spaces would not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding properties by gathering in alternative locations.

**12.31** Where loss or conversion of ancillary function space or living accommodation is proposed, it must be demonstrated that the pub use would not be undermined through such loss. For the loss of function space, evidence is also required to demonstrate the availability of sufficient and suitable alternative facilities available within the local area.

### Policy links

- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy S.DH3: Heritage and the historic environment
- Policy D.ES9: Noise and vibration

### Evidence links

- Pubs in Tower Hamlets – Evidence Study (2017)

<sup>46</sup> Pubs in Tower Hamlets – Evidence Study (2017)

# 13. Enhancing open spaces and water spaces

## Introduction

**13.1** Tower Hamlets has a number of valued open spaces and water spaces which offer many important social, environmental and economic benefits, including:

- Enhancing amenity;
- Contributing to healthy lifestyles through providing opportunities for active travel and leisure
- Providing sport and recreation opportunities
- Providing meeting places for community activities and cultural events
- Helping to manage flood risk and mitigating the risks of climate change
- Enhancing biodiversity, and
- Providing a cooling effect to reduce elevated urban air temperature.

**13.2** The overall provision of publicly accessible open space remains low with some parts of the borough being acutely deficient, including the Isle of Dogs, Shoreditch and Whitechapel. This equates to 0.89 hectares per 1,000 residents, which is less than the borough's open space standard of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 residents<sup>47</sup>.

**13.3** In a densely populated borough like Tower Hamlets facing significant development pressure, there is limited scope to provide major additional open space to accommodate the needs of the growing population, such as new parkland and woodland. Nevertheless, the borough's open spaces make a significant positive contribution to the character and appearance of the borough, reflecting their popularity among residents and visitors, relatively good condition and varied use. Some parks (e.g. Victoria Park) are nationally renowned and have been awarded Green Flag status.

**13.4** In order to meet this shortfall, it is estimated that 220 hectares of additional publicly accessible open space will be required across the borough over the period to 2031.

**13.5** As the population continues to grow there will be an increasing need to protect and revitalise our existing open spaces as well as secure additional publicly accessible open space, especially within deficient areas (see Figure 13).

**13.6** Tower Hamlets has access to more water spaces than any other London borough, comprising the rivers Thames and Lea and the other connecting water spaces (e.g. Limehouse Cut, Regents Canal and Hertford Union Canal) as well as several docks and basins. However, much of the potential of the borough's water spaces remains untapped, due to fragmented public access and limited active recreation and leisure opportunities. Tower Hamlets has also experienced significant historic water loss, particularly around Shadwell Basin and the Ornamental Canal, while a considerable amount of water space has been reclaimed and re-used to frame development around West India Docks, Blackwall Basin and Poplar Dock in Canary Wharf. This has further limited the availability of water spaces for recreation, transport and other water-related activities. It has also impacted on the biodiversity of the waterways as well as the open character of our valuable water space heritage assets.

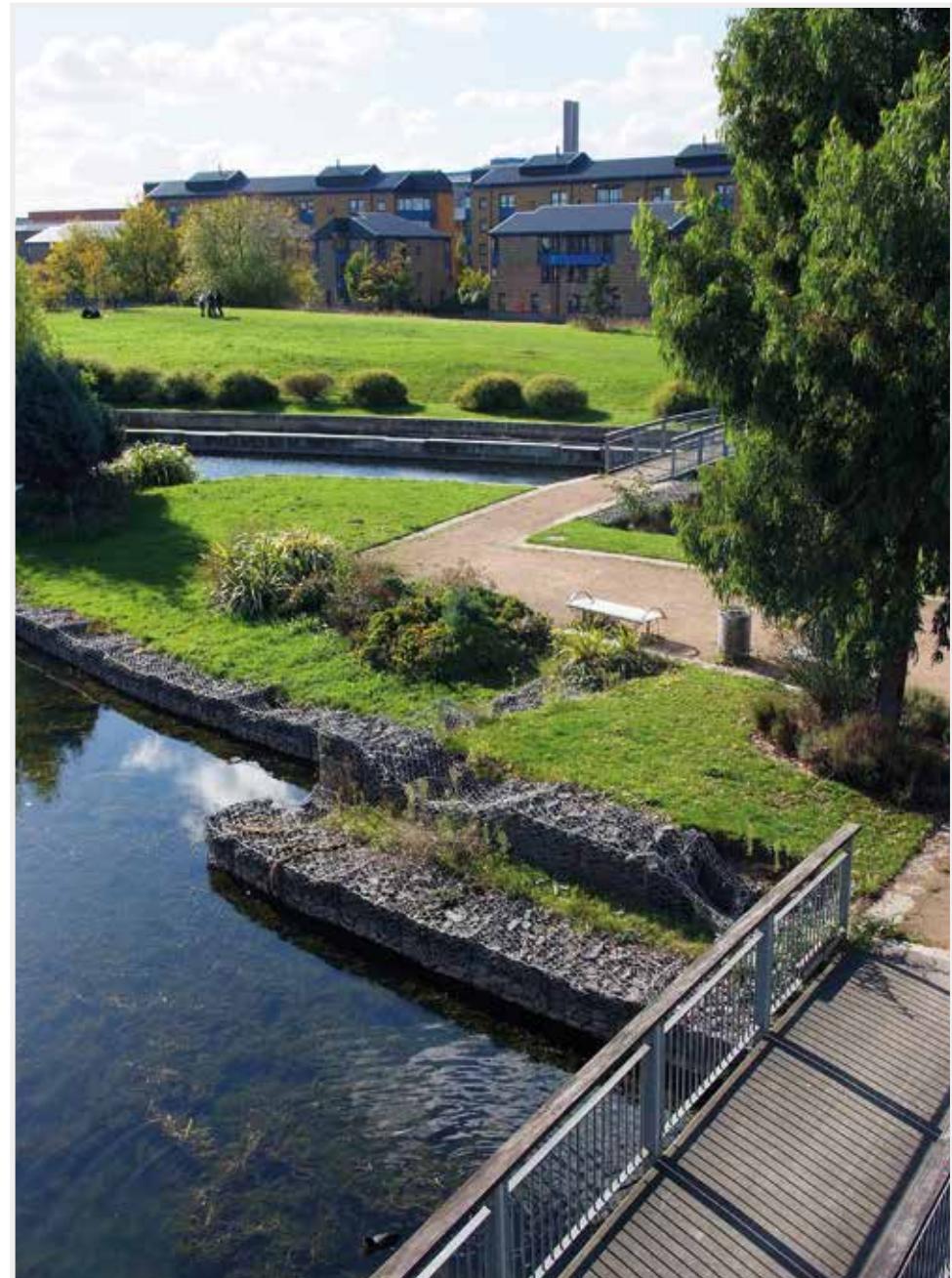
<sup>47</sup> In particular, Tower Hamlets faces a significant shortfall in the provision of playing pitches, especially outdoor sports provision, due to the fact that most grass pitches are located at parks or areas of open space where often they serve multiple functions, such as recreational open space and non-sports related activities. These requirements are identified within the Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy (2017).

13.7 Hence, it is important that policies protect our valuable water spaces from permanent infillings and oversailing and seek to improve their continuous public access; enhance biodiversity; promote water-related and water-dependent recreation; and ensure the delivery of high quality design to celebrate the heritage of our waterways.

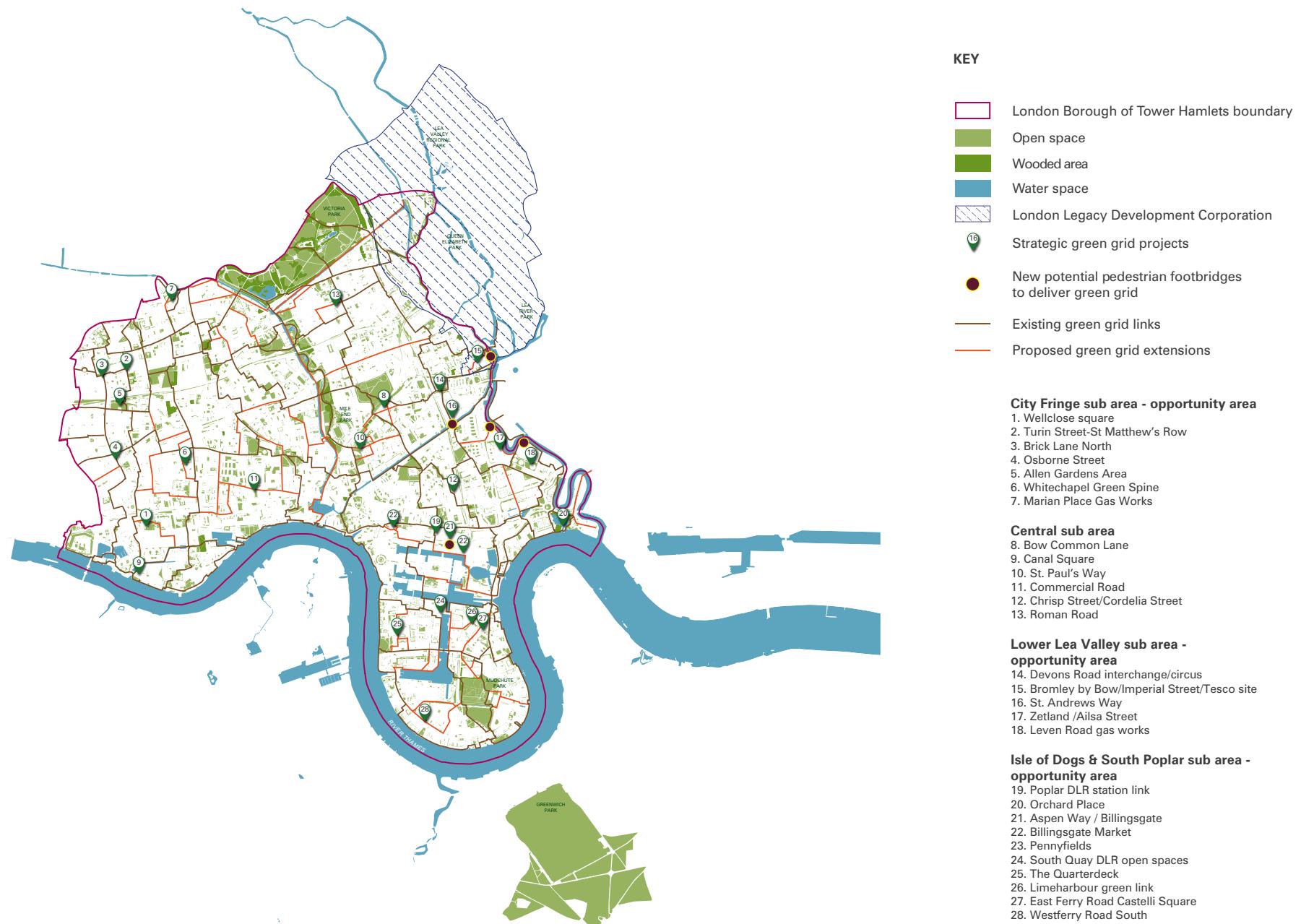
13.8 Figure 12 illustrates the existing and proposed network of well-connected publicly accessible open spaces and water spaces across the borough, drawing upon the principles set out in the All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Document.

13.9 This section contains the following policies:

- Policy S.OWS1: Creating a network of open spaces
- Policy S.OWS2: Enhancing the network of water spaces
- Policy D.OWS3: Open space and green grid networks
- Policy D.OWS4: Water spaces.



**Figure 12: An enhanced network of open spaces and water spaces**



**Policy S.OWS1****Creating a network of open spaces**

1. Proposals will be required to provide or contribute to the delivery of an improved accessible, well-connected and sustainable network of open spaces through:
  - a. protecting all existing open space to ensure that there is no net loss (except where it meets the criteria set out in Policy D.OWS3)
  - b. maintaining the open character of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)
  - c. improving the quality, value and accessibility of existing publicly accessible open space across the borough and neighbouring boroughs, in line with the Green Grid Strategy, Open Space Strategy, Local Biodiversity Action Plan and Sport England's Active Design Guidance
  - d. delivering an improved network of green grid links in line with the Green Grid Strategy to enhance access to key destination points (town centres, community facilities and publicly accessible open spaces) and to and along water spaces, as well as provide ecological corridors for wildlife
  - e. maximising the opportunities to create/increase publicly accessible open space (including playing pitches and ancillary sporting facilities) with a range of sizes and for a range of users, particularly in the following locations (which are expected to experience the highest level of open space deficiency)
    - Bethnal Green
    - Blackwall and Cubitt Town
    - Bromley North
    - Bromley South
    - Canary Wharf
    - Limehouse
    - Poplar
    - Shadwell
    - Spitalfields and Banglatown
    - St Dunstan's
    - St Peter's
    - Weavers
    - Whitechapel
  - f. assisting with the delivery of enhanced new strategic publicly accessible open spaces at Lea River Park (including the Leaway) and within site allocations.
2. Inappropriate development on areas designated as MOL (as shown on the Policies Map) will not be permitted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated in line with the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

## Explanation

**13.10** This policy seeks to protect and enhance the borough's valuable network of open spaces as well as promote the creation of new publicly accessible open spaces which are better connected and provide a wide range of opportunities for local communities and visitors in line with the Open Space Strategy, Green Grid Strategy and other relevant strategies.

**13.11** The Open Space Strategy sets out where strategic open space (i.e. one hectare or above) will be provided across the borough. This includes the requirements relating to the provision of playing pitches and a detailed action plan on how our open space priorities will be addressed. Further details on the specific needs and priorities for the provision of playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities are outlined in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Green Grid Strategy identifies opportunities on how to better connect existing open spaces and create smaller scale open spaces in areas of need.

**13.12** For the purposes of the Local Plan, open space means all land that offers opportunity for play, recreation and sport or is of amenity value, whether in public or private ownership, and where public access is unrestricted, partially-restricted or restricted. This includes all open areas consisting of: major parks (e.g. Victoria Park and Mile End Park), local parks, gardens, squares, playgrounds, ecological spaces, housing amenity land, playing fields (including playing pitches), allotments and burial grounds, whether or not they are accessible to the public. This definition does not include water bodies.

**13.13** Figure 12 illustrates the distribution of publicly accessible open spaces across the borough. Detailed boundaries of the borough's publicly accessible open spaces are shown on the Policies Map. Some of the borough's open spaces and water spaces are designated as Metropolitan Open Land (including East India Dock Basin and Brunswick Wharf, Island Gardens, Lee Valley Regional Park, Meath Gardens, Mile End Park, Mudchute Park, Millwall Park, Tower Hamlets Cemetery and Victoria

Park) which form part of London's strategically defined open space network.

**13.14** Part 1(a) seeks to protect all open spaces regardless of their size, type, ownership and where access is unrestricted, partially restricted or restricted.

**13.15** Part 1(b) seeks to protect the open character of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). MOL is a unique open space designation in London and is afforded the same level of protection as the Green Belt within the London Plan.

**13.16** Part 1(c) promotes the enhancement of the borough's existing open space to improve their quality and multi-functionality to serve a variety of users. This will be delivered through the provision of new outdoor sport facilities, such as playing pitches (e.g. ancillary facilities and changing rooms), outdoor gyms and multi-use games areas within existing parks (e.g. Victoria Park, Mudchute Park and Mile End Park). Proposals should also aim to incorporate the principles of Sport England's Active Design Guide.

**13.17** Part 1(d) promotes the delivery of a well-connected and high quality network of publicly accessible open spaces through new and improved green grid connections, in accordance with the Transport for London's healthy streets initiative. This can be achieved through new planting in the public realm (including streets, trees and vegetation) and maximising opportunities to create access to nature, natural play and educational elements along the green grid as well as improved signage and posting to enhance way-finding. The Green Grid Strategy has identified a series of strategic green grid projects (as shown on Figure 12) to improve cross-borough connections and help address deficiencies across the borough as well as other parts of London.

**13.18** Parts 1(d) and (e) promote the provision of new publicly accessible open spaces to serve the borough's growing population, particularly where they are of a wider strategic importance (e.g. Lea River Park) and in areas of significant open space deficiency (see Figure 13<sup>48</sup>).

48 Publicly accessible open space deficiency is mapped using 400 metre catchment areas from parks of 1 hectare or above.

**13.19** The provision of new or improved publicly accessible open space and green grid linkages will be promoted throughout the borough in accordance with the principles set out in the Open Space Strategy, Green Grid Strategy and Mayor of London's All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance, notably at the following locations:

- a. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (i.e. improving links to open spaces and the Lea Navigation and Hertford Union canals)
- b. Lea Valley (including a series of new open spaces as part of the Lea River Park and a new continuous north-south route through Lea Valley connecting the Lea Valley Regional Park to the River Thames as well as new pedestrian footbridges)
- c. Mile End Park and Victoria Park (including green grid extensions to the existing canal walkways and nearby schools)
- d. Whitechapel (including the delivery of the Green Spine – a new north-south pedestrian route linking Whitechapel District Centre with Commercial Road along with a series of open spaces featuring new public squares behind the proposed civic centre and next to St Augustine with St Philip's Church)
- e. Thames Path (i.e. maintaining and expanding the Thames Path to provide continuous public access to the river).

**13.20** Larger open space (i.e. one hectare and above) provision will be secured on allocated sites (as identified in Section 4) through new development.

**13.21** Delivery of smaller publicly accessible open spaces such as pocket parks and linear verges will be promoted through new development.

**13.22** Innovative approaches to delivering new open space (e.g. roof-top gardens/greenhouses, community gardens and green/brown roofs) in these areas as well as locating parks in areas of the borough where accessibility to public open space is poor will be promoted.

**13.23** There is a general presumption against inappropriate development on areas designated as MOL (as shown on the Policies Map). Inappropriate development (as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework) will not be allowed in the MOL unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

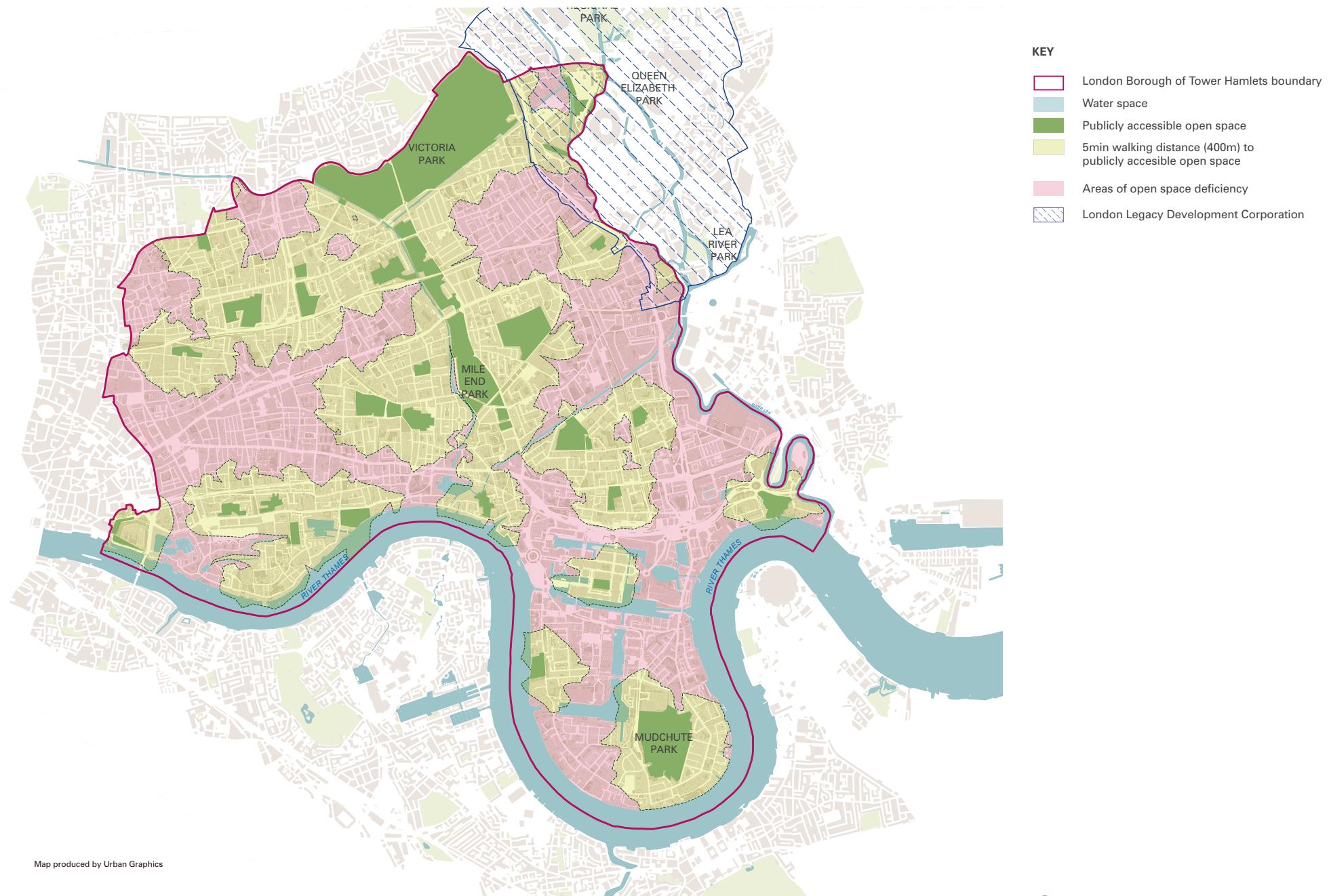
**13.24** Exceptional circumstances necessitating alteration of the boundary of the MOL to exclude land at 82-84 Rhodeswell Road have been established. Please note: this land has been excluded from the extent of the MOL on the Policies Map which illustrates geographically the application of Policy S.OWS1.

### Policy links

- Policy S.SG2: Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- Policy D.SG3: Health impact assessments
- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy S.CF1: Supporting community facilities
- Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity
- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Water Space Study (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2014)
- All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2012)
- Active Design Guidance (Sport England, 2015)
- Tower Hamlets Playing Pitch Assessment (2017)

**Figure 13: Areas of open space deficiency**

**Policy S.OWS2****Enhancing the network of water spaces**

1. Proposals will be required to support the creation of a network of high quality, usable and accessible water spaces network through:
  - a. protecting the integrity of the borough's water spaces
  - b. maximising opportunities for enhancing the aesthetic, ecological and biodiversity values of the borough's water spaces (including the immediate and surrounding areas) and the water quality, in line with the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan
  - c. improving accessibility and way-finding to and along water spaces to maximise opportunities for public use and enjoyment
  - d. promote water spaces for cultural, recreational and leisure activities as well as movement, including passenger and freight transport (e.g. along the River Thames)
  - e. working in partnership with the Port of London Authority and the Canal and River Trust to ensure that residential and commercial moorings are in appropriate locations that do not negatively impact on navigation, water quality, the openness and character of the water space and the amenity of surrounding residents, and
  - f. supporting the aims of the European Union Water Framework Directive, Thames River Basin Management Plan, Thames Estuary 2100 Plan, Thames Vision, and any relevant Marine Plans (e.g. South East Marine Plan)

**Explanation**

**13.25** Water spaces make a positive contribution to the economy, society and the environment and should be safeguarded for water-related purposes with priority given to water management, improving water quality, managing land drainage, and avoiding, reducing and managing flood risk.

**13.26** This policy seeks to protect and enhance the borough's valuable network of water spaces and also ensure that they are easily accessible and provide a wide range of water-related opportunities for local communities and visitors.

**13.27** For the purposes of the Local Plan, water space means an area of water (permanently or intermittently) and includes rivers, canals, docks, basins, ponds, marshland and other water bodies.

**13.28** Part 1(a) seeks to ensure that development does not result in further loss or over sailing of the borough's valuable water spaces unless it is a water-related or water-dependent use at appropriate locations. Water-dependent uses are defined as an activity which can only be conducted on, in, over or adjacent to the water because its function requires direct access to, along and across the water or involves, as an integral part of the activity, the use of the water. Appropriate infrastructure to support water-dependent uses includes:

- a. Walkways and slipways for pedestrians, boaters and cyclists
- b. Bridges and tunnels (e.g. across the rivers Lea and Thames)
- c. Water-based sport and leisure (e.g. sailing and kayaking)
- d. Security and safety (e.g. lifebuoys and other life-saving equipment)
- e. Water-based passengers, tourism, transport support and freight infrastructure (e.g. piers and clippers)
- f. Marine support facilities
- g. Moorings (including permanent and visitor moorings) and their support infrastructure.

**13.29** In addition, other water-related uses may also be considered at suitable locations where there is clear evidence that they are specifically designed to enhance the public access, use or enjoyment of the water space and will have a positive contribution to the character of the water space without causing any adverse negative impacts on biodiversity (e.g. activate the water space to enhance it as a waterside destination). An important consideration in decision making will be the cumulative impact of existing and proposed new water related uses in order to ensure that that there is no adverse impact on the character and openness of the borough's water space and the amenity of surrounding residents.

**13.30** Despite their urban setting and heavily modified nature, the borough's network of rivers, canals and docks are important for biodiversity, supporting a wide range of species of wild plants and animals (including rare and protected species) and allowing people to come into contact with nature. In accordance with Part 1(b), development will be expected to preserve and enhance biodiversity and increase the resilience of wetland ecosystems. This can be achieved through a range of measures, such as the restoration and creation of priority habitats and planting native species to create more natural landscapes along the waterways, and the prevention of overspill of artificial lighting onto waterways or onto adjacent areas of soft landscaping.

**13.31** Some of the borough's water spaces are difficult to find and access from nearby transport hubs (e.g. River Lea, Shadwell Basin and West India Middle and South Docks) or have restricted and disjointed access (e.g. River Thames). Part 1(c) of the policy seeks to ensure that access to all water spaces is improved through appropriate signage for better way finding. Many of the borough's water spaces (including Blackwall Basin, Hermitage Basin, Limehouse Basin, East India Dock Basin, Limehouse Cut Canal, Millwall inner and outer docks, Poplar Dock, St Katherine's Dock, Wapping Canal, West India Docks and the rivers Lea and Thames) are located within or adjacent to areas of open space deficiency in access to parks. These water spaces and the adjacent land

therefore provide important open space functions and make a valuable contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

**13.32** In delivering Part 1(d), additional opportunities will be explored to maximise the use of the borough's water spaces for transport and freight at suitable locations (e.g. Trinity Buoy Wharf and along the River Thames), including the introduction of additional Thames Clipper stops. Policies STR1 and DTR4 provide further guidance on sustainable transport and freight.

**13.33** Creating and enhancing the borough's high quality, usable and accessible network of water spaces will be delivered through a coordinated approach with a wide range of stakeholders, including the Canal and River Trust, Port of London Authority, Inland Waterways Association, neighbouring boroughs and other relevant organisations, see Parts 1(e) and (f).

**13.34** This policy also recognises the importance of several strategic documents which provide the framework for the sustainable development of the borough's water spaces and, more specifically, the River Thames and its tributaries, see Part 1(f).

- a. The European Water Framework Directive provides a framework for protecting and improving the ecological quality of all water bodies.
- b. Following on from the European Water Framework Directive, the Thames River Basin Management Plan sets out actions to protect and enhance the river's natural environment.
- c. The Thames Strategy East sets out a long term framework to guide the sustainable management of the Thames Policy Area (as shown on the Policies Map) and promotes development principles, such as greater connectivity through improved foot and cycle access to and along the River Thames and the provision of water support infrastructure (e.g. bridges, piers and flood defences, etc) which respects and contributes to the river's character.

- d. The Thames Estuary 2100 Plan sets out a comprehensive action plan to manage tidal flood risk across the River Thames.
- e. The Thames Vision sets out the goals and priority actions to help manage and promote the River Thames, which include: more trade and more jobs associated with the river; improved use of the river for the transportation of passengers and freight; and an improved environment and river heritage.
- f. Tower Hamlets falls within the remit of the Marine Plan for the South East inshore area. Once adopted, the Marine Plan for the South East will influence the sustainable marine development and activities which include a section of coastline or tidal river. The detailed boundaries of the Marine Plan for the South East inshore area (within the borough) are shown on the Policies Map. Until the Marine Plan is adopted, any development and activities within the rivers Thames and Lea should have regard to the Marine Policy Statement, which sets out the policies for managing development and activities for coastal and tidal waters.



### Policy links

- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy S.H1: Meeting housing needs
- Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity
- Policy D.ES4: Flood risk
- Policy D.ES5: Sustainable drainage
- Policy D.ES6: Sustainable water and waste water management
- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel
- Policy D.TR4: Sustainable delivery and servicing

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Water Space Study (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2014)
- European Union Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC)
- Thames River Basin Management Plan (Environment Agency, 2015)
- Thames Estuary 2100 Plan (Environment Agency, 2014)
- Thames Vision Project (Port of London Authority, 2016)
- Thames Strategy East (Thames Estuary Partnership, 2008)
- UK Marine Policy Statement (2011)

## Policy D.OWS3

### Open space and green grid networks

1. Development on areas of open space (excluding Metropolitan Open Land) will only be supported in exceptional circumstances where:
  - a. it provides essential facilities that enhance the function, use and enjoyment of the open space (e.g. ancillary sport facilities to the playing field use), or
  - b. as part of a wider development proposal, both an increase of open space and a higher quality of open space can be achieved, and
  - c. in any of the circumstances described in Parts 1(a) and (b), it is demonstrated that it will not result in any adverse impacts on the existing ecological, heritage or recreational value of the open space and the flood risk levels within and beyond the boundaries of the site, and
  - d. it is an outdoor sport and recreational space or facility, the sporting and recreational benefits of which would outweigh the harm resulting from its loss
2. Strategic development should contribute to the delivery of new publicly accessible open space on-site which should:
  - a. be visible and accessible from the public realm surrounding the site
  - b. be of a high quality and inclusive design and provide facilities to promote active recreation and healthy lifestyles
  - c. be well-connected and way-marked to other open spaces, in accordance with the Green Grid Strategy and Open Space Strategy
  - d. contribute towards meeting the demand that they generate through the provision of on-site sport facilities and/or providing additional capacity off-site
  - e. incorporate soft landscaping and sustainable urban drainage systems, and
  - f. enhance biodiversity, contributing to the objectives identified in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.
3. Development should not solely rely upon existing publicly accessible open space to contribute towards on-site communal amenity space and child play space.
4. Development should not adversely impact on the public enjoyment, openness, ecological and heritage value of the borough's publicly accessible open spaces.
5. Development adjacent or in close proximity to the green grid network (i.e. 200 metres) is required to demonstrate that it will not have adverse impacts on the access, design, usability, biodiversity and recreational value of the green grid network. It should also contribute to the expansion and the enhancement of green grid links to connect communities to publicly accessible open spaces and water spaces as well as other main destination points, such as town centres, schools, health facilities and transport hubs.
6. Development of community allotments, gardens and pocket parks will be encouraged, particularly where they bring into use vacant developable land on a temporary basis.

## Explanation

**13.35** This policy aims to ensure that development does not negatively impact on the existing network of publicly accessible open space and contributes to its expansion and enhancement. It also seeks to maximise the opportunities for delivery of new open space and for enhancing accessibility and connectivity to the wider network, which is considered crucial to addressing the borough's open space deficiency (as shown on Figure 13).

**13.36** Development on areas of open space will be resisted unless in the circumstances specified in Part 2(a) and (b). The types of development that are considered to be acceptable in principle within areas of open space include changing rooms, play equipment and seating. They should be of a scale and function proportionate to the open space in which they are to be located and should be purely ancillary to it.

**13.37** In relation to part 1(b), there may be instances (e.g. in housing estate regeneration schemes) where building on fragmented areas of poor quality open space enables the provision of a larger consolidated area of open space which is more usable for the local community. In these circumstances, the starting point will be no net loss of open space but if the development is resulting in an increase in population then additional open space will be required in accordance with the principles set out in Policy S.OWS1.

**13.38** Part 1(d) seeks to ensure that outdoor sport and recreation facilities are protected against unjustified loss in line with the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

**13.39** Part 2 seeks to promote delivery of new publicly accessible open space and the provision of new publicly accessible open space on strategic schemes (i.e. more than 100 homes or over 10,000 square metres floorspace) where development is considered to place significant additional demand on existing publicly accessible open space, particularly in identified areas of open space deficiency (see Figure 13).

**13.40** Where publicly accessible open space is provided on site, it should aim to meet the local standard of 1.2 hectares per 1000 residents (as identified in the Open Space Strategy) and be designed to support the key open space functions, as specified in Part 2 (a) to (e) in line with the All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance. Future management and maintenance of new publicly accessible open space will be secured through planning conditions or legal agreements to ensure the highest possible level of public access, function and use.

**13.41** Where the new publicly accessible open space is delivered to a satisfactory standard that meets all criteria specified in Part 2, we may consider this on-site provision as payment in kind. The provision of amenity space or landscaping required as part of good design to mitigate the impact of development will not be considered as appropriate publicly accessible open space provision. The level and nature of any sports provision should take account of the recommendations set out in Sport England's guidance and our Open Space Strategy and its associated action plan.

**13.42** Where on-site provision of adequate publicly accessible open space is not possible, a contribution will be sought from the developer towards the delivery of the opportunities and the strategic projects identified in the Open Space Strategy and Green Grid Strategy in accordance with the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.

**13.43** Part 3 seeks to ensure that residential developments will not place undue pressure on publicly accessible open space and will not be allowed to solely rely upon nearby public open space to contribute to adequate outdoor communal amenity space, including child play space in line with the principles set out in Policy D.H3.

**13.44** In accordance with Part 4, development will be expected to demonstrate that it will enhance and not negatively affect the borough's publicly accessible open space, including the Lea Valley Regional Park (consisting of East India Dock Basin and linear towpaths along the River

Lea Navigation, Hertford Union Canal and Limehouse Cut) the Lea River Park (including the Leaway) and the Transport for London's Lea Valley Walk initiative. The Lee Valley Regional Park forms an important part of the borough's green grid and water spaces network and has the potential to contribute to creating healthy and liveable communities, particularly where links into this network can be enhanced and complemented with new open space delivered as part of development<sup>49</sup>. We will work together with the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority and the Environment Agency to support proposals set out in the Tower Hamlets' Local Biodiversity Action Plan, the Park Plan and Park Development Framework where they relate to the borough. We will also work with neighbouring authorities and relevant stakeholders to support the delivery of the Lea River Park (including the Leaway), which connects Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the Lea Valley Regional Park to the Royal Docks and the River Thames through a new continuous walking and cycling route along the River Lea. Further development principles and guidance are included in the Lea River Park Primer and Lea River Park Design Manual.

**13.45** For the purposes of implementing this policy, development would be considered to be in close proximity to the green grid where it is located within 200 metres (equivalent to around three minutes walking time) of the green grid network (see Part 5).

**13.46** Development sites located adjacent to or in close proximity to the green grid (i.e. within the Green Grid Buffer Zone, (as shown on the Policies Map) – including the Lee Valley Regional Park, Lea River Park, Thames Path National Trail and canal towpaths - will be required to contribute to linking and improving the connectivity of green grid links in accordance with the Green Grid Strategy and the Mayor of London's All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance. This should be supported with adequate signage and facilities for visitors and tourists.

<sup>49</sup> The Lea Valley Regional Park Authority has a statutory duty to either provide directly or work with partners to provide facilities for sport, recreation, leisure, entertainment and nature conservation throughout the park.

**13.47** Part 6 encourages the creation of community allotments, gardens and pocket parks which promote healthier lifestyles and greater social interactions.

### Policy links

- Policy S.SG2: Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- Policy D.SG3: Health impact assessments
- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH2: Attractive and safe streets, spaces and public realm
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy S.CF1: Supporting community facilities
- Policy S.ES 1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity
- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2014)
- All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2012)
- Lea River Park Design Manual (2016)
- Lea River Park Primer (2016)
- Park Plan (Lea Valley Regional Park Authority, 2000)
- Park Development Framework (Lea Valley Regional Park Authority)
- Tower Hamlets Playing Pitch Assessment (2017)

**Policy D.OWS4****Water spaces**

1. Development within or adjacent to the borough's water spaces is required to demonstrate that:
  - a. it does not result in loss or covering of the water space, unless it is a water-related or water-dependent use at appropriate locations and of appropriate scale
  - b. there are no adverse impacts on the existing water spaces network, including navigation, biodiversity, water quality, visual amenity, character and heritage value of the water space, taking into consideration the adjacent land and the amenity of existing surrounding developments
  - c. there are no unacceptable impacts on the openness of the water space
  - d. it enhances the ecological, biodiversity and aesthetic quality of the water space, taking into account the design and landscaping of the adjacent land area, in line with the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the European Union Water Framework Directive
  - e. it does not have an adverse impact on other existing active water uses
  - f. it will provide increased opportunities for continuous public access, use of the water space for water-related uses and sport and recreational activities
  - g. it responds positively and sensitively to the setting of water space, while respecting and animating water space to improve usability and safety, and
  - h. it provides suitable setbacks from water space edges to mitigate flood risk and to allow riverside walkways, canal towpaths and cycle paths, where appropriate. Where necessary, development should contribute to the restoration of the river walls and embankments.
2. Development within the Thames Policy Area (as shown on the Policies Map) is required to consider the guidance provided within the most up-to-date Thames River Basin Management Plan and the relevant Southeast Marine Plan, where applicable.
3. Development adjacent to the borough's waterspaces is required to enhance the area's links with the water space and contribute to the delivery of continuous walkways, canal towpaths and cycle paths (e.g. completion of the Thames Path).
4. Development of moorings will be considered acceptable at suitable locations, and where they do not cause any adverse impact on navigation, biodiversity, micro climate, amenity of surrounding residents and the public enjoyment of the water space.

## Explanation

**13.48** This policy seeks to provide details of how the borough's water spaces will be protected and how the various functions they offer are maintained and enhanced.

**13.49** Part 1 requires development to demonstrate that it will not result in loss or covering of water space and that it will not compromise the suitability of the water space for water-related uses (as defined in Policy S.OWS2). Further water loss and over-sailing from development will be resisted throughout the borough, particularly at locations that have experienced significant water space loss, such as West India South Dock, West India Middle Dock, West India North Dock, Blackwall Basin and Poplar Dock in Canary Wharf.

**13.50** In line with London Plan policies and guidance, provision of appropriate water space support infrastructure (including but not limited to: transport and essential access infrastructure into and alongside water spaces, boatyards, moorings, jetties and safety equipment) will be supported at suitable locations. Further details on infrastructure for water-related and water-dependent uses are included in Policy S.OWS2. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides information on the current need for some water support infrastructure (e.g. bridges).

**13.51** The sense of openness greatly contributes to a person's perception and enjoyment of water spaces. This is of particular importance in a borough like Tower Hamlets where there is a high deficiency of open space. When assessing planning applications, consideration will be given to the water coverage and human experience of the openness of water space in terms of its visibility and visual connections across the water from the surrounding public realm.

**13.52** Public access to and along the borough's water spaces will be improved, particularly where access is currently restricted, including the docks around Canary Wharf (including West India Middle Dock and Blackwall Basin), the River Lea and the River Thames (e.g. the Thames Path).

**13.53** Safety and public use of the borough's water spaces will be improved through development design which provides good pedestrian access, active frontages to improve surveillance and riparian lifesaving equipment, where appropriate. Increased appeal through active frontages will be particularly important for the docks in Canary Wharf as well as areas around Trinity Buoy Wharf, Limehouse Basin and along the River Lea which can have significant potential to attract visitors.

**13.54** The edges of water space are an extremely important part of the functioning of water space as ecosystems, open space and transport networks. Development proposals must ensure that such areas are protected and provide setbacks from the edges of the water space as well as contribute to restoration following the Environment Agency's Estuary Edges guidance. How this restoration should be undertaken will need to be considered against the functions of the water space and an appropriate balance will be sought between uses on the water space and access to and interaction with the water space and ecological enhancements in line with the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Setbacks from waterways are also required for flood management purposes and further details outlining their use are provided in Policy D.ES4. Where setbacks are required they provide an opportunity to increase enjoyment of the waterways and should be designed to look and feel publicly accessible (e.g. through the use of signposting).

**13.55** The River Thames provides important additional opportunities to that of other water spaces within the borough, acting as a transport link of strategic and historical importance. Developments in the Thames Policy Area (as identified on the Policies Map) should ensure that their use and design establishes a positive relationship with the river in accordance with the most up-to-date guidance within the Thames Policy Area (e.g. Thames Strategy East and Thames River Basin Management Plan) and supplementary planning documents (see Part 2).

**13.56** Part 3 promotes the improved public access to and along the borough's water spaces, particularly where it is currently restricted, partially restricted or fragmented (e.g. along the River Thames, the River Lea and the docks around Canary Wharf, including West India Middle Dock and Blackwall Basin). The Thames Path forms part of the National Trail. We are committed to maintaining the existing National Trail and expanding the Thames Path along the eastern part of the Isle of Dogs to connect it to the Leaway as a publicly accessible continuous route. Developments adjacent to the River Thames should contribute towards the delivery and maintenance of this route. Where the Thames Path cannot be delivered adjacent to the River Thames, due to heritage reasons, we will require the development to contribute towards the signposting, design and maintenance of an alternative route.

**13.57** We will work together with the Port of London Authority and Canal and River Trust to determine the suitability of moorings (including residential and commercial moorings) on the borough's water spaces. Key considerations in assessing the impact of mooring proposals will include: navigation, water quality, biodiversity, openness and character of the water space and surrounding area, surrounding residential amenity, waste management and air quality as well as the adequate supply of electricity provision. The Tower Hamlets Water Space Study identifies some of the locations which may be considered suitable for further development of residential moorings, including at the Regents Canal, Blackwall Basin, Poplar Dock, Milwall Inner and Outer Docks and the West India South Dock.

## Policy links

- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity
- Policy D.ES4: Flood risk
- Policy D.ES5: Sustainable drainage
- Policy D.ES6: Sustainable water and wastewater management
- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel
- Policy D.TR4: Sustainable delivery and servicing

## Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Tower Hamlets Open Space Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Water Space Study (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2014)
- European Union Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC)
- Thames River Basin Management Plan (Environment Agency, 2015)
- Thames Estuary 2100 Plan (Environment Agency, 2012)
- Thames Vision Project (Port of London Authority, 2016)
- Thames Strategy East (Thames Estuary Partnership, 2008)
- UK Marine Policy Statement (2011)
- Estuary Edges: Ecological Design Guidance (Environment Agency, 2011)

# 14. Protecting and managing our environment

## Introduction

**14.1** There is a pressing need to plan and manage growth and resources in a sustainable manner in a way that conserves, maintains and enhances the borough's environment. Sustainable growth requires careful stewardship of our resources (land, water and energy) to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, conserve water resources, protect biodiversity and mitigate flood risk.

**14.2** Despite its urban character, Tower Hamlets has areas of notable biodiversity value, including three Local Nature Reserves and 35 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. However, parts of the borough, including the City Fringe, Poplar and the western edge of the Isle of Dogs, are considered to be nature deficient<sup>50</sup>.

**14.3** Parts of the borough are at potential risk of flooding. Whilst the Thames Barrier and other flood defences currently provide effective protection, their continued maintenance, along with further investment in flood defences, is required. Climate change will also have an impact on flood risk and must be considered in order to mitigate the risk of flooding for the expected lifetime of a development. The borough also has a number of critical drainage areas which are at higher risk of surface water flooding. Despite this, London has lower rainfall than the national average, whilst having a very high population density. This combination has resulted in London being declared an area of serious water stress and this trend is likely to be exacerbated by climate change<sup>51</sup>.

**14.4** Carbon emissions in the borough have been falling steadily over recent years, but Tower Hamlets still produces the third highest level of total carbon dioxide emissions of all the boroughs in London<sup>52</sup>.

**14.5** The whole of the borough falls within an Air Quality Management Area (as shown on the Policies Map), parts of which exceed the World Health Organisation guideline limits and European Union safe legal limits / national air quality objectives on harmful pollutants.

**14.6** This section contains the following policies:

- Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality
- Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity
- Policy D.ES4: Flood risk
- Policy D.ES5: Sustainable drainage
- Policy D.ES6: Sustainable water and wastewater management
- Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough
- Policy D.ES8: Contaminated land and storage of hazardous substances
- Policy D.ES9: Noise and vibration
- Policy D.ES10: Overheating.

50 Tower Hamlets Green Grid Strategy (2017)

51 Securing London's Water Future: The Mayor's Water Strategy (GLA, 2011)

52 UK Local Authority and Regional Carbon Dioxide Emissions: 2005 – 2014 (National Statistics, 2016)

**Policy S.ES1****Protecting and enhancing our environment**

1. Proposals will be supported which minimise the use of natural resources and work proactively to protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment, through:
  - a. reducing the areas of sub-standard air quality in the borough and contributing towards delivering the objectives of the latest Tower Hamlets Air Quality Action Plan
  - b. protecting and enhancing biodiversity, with the aim of meeting the objectives of the latest Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan and Thames River Basin Management Plan and improving opportunities to experience nature, in particular in deficient areas
  - c. using the sequential and exceptions tests to direct development away from high flood risk areas and reduce flood risk in the borough
  - d. reducing water use
  - e. following the energy hierarchy: be lean, be clean and be green
  - f. maximising climate change adaptation measures, and
  - g. improving water and land quality and mitigating the adverse effects of contaminated land on human health.

**Explanation**

**14.7** This policy seeks to protect and enhance the key aspects of the borough's environment in line with local, sub-regional, regional, national and international plans and programmes.

**14.8** Development plays a key role in improving air quality and reducing exposure to poor air quality. Areas of sub-standard air quality are areas where nitrogen dioxide levels exceed 40 micrograms per cubic meter of air ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ): the European Union legal limit / national air quality objectives. This includes areas in which the particulate (PM2.5) levels exceed 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  annual mean limits (World Health Organisation guideline limits). The Tower Hamlets Air Quality Action Plan identifies the ways in which development can improve air quality in the borough.

**14.9** The Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan identifies priority species and habitats to ensure the ongoing improvement of biodiversity across the borough. The Thames River Basin Management Plan sets out objectives to protect and enhance the water bodies in the basin/catchment. Part 1(b) of the policy ensures that development contributes to meeting the objectives of these plans. In addition, to address nature deficiency and deficiency of access to nature (areas shown on the Policies Map), we aim to maximise opportunities for biodiversity in and around developments in order to deliver a net gain in biodiversity and a range of wider environmental benefits.

**14.10** In recognition of the borough's areas of flood risk, more vulnerable development should be located away from areas of flood risk, as shown on the Policies Map. As part of our commitment to reducing the risk of flooding, we will work closely with national and regional bodies and neighbouring authorities to:

- a. Maintain and improve the existing flood defences
- b. Ensure effective emergency-planning practices are in place
- c. Keeping up-to-date information about flood risk in the borough

- d. Supporting the development of the Thames Tideway Tunnel and associated storm relief connections.

**14.11** Development must also address London's water stress by reducing water use.

**14.12** Development should aim to reduce carbon emissions and adhere to the principles of the energy hierarchy set out below.

- a. Be lean: use less energy
- b. Be clean: supply energy efficiently
- c. Be green: use renewable energy.

**14.13** New development (including buildings and the spaces between them) also needs to be planned, designed and constructed to respond to future anticipated changes in climate such as warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers and the risks associated with such changes: the urban heat island effect, heat waves, flooding and droughts. Further guidance can be found in the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2014).

**14.14** Development must also consider and mitigate existing contamination as well as prevent any further contamination of water or land.

### Policy links

- Policy S.OWS2: Enhancing the network of water spaces
- Policy D.OWS4: Water spaces
- Policy S.MW1: Managing our waste

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Air Quality Action Plan
- Tower Hamlets Biodiversity Action Plan (2015)
- Tower Hamlets Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017)
- Thames River Basin Management Plan (Environment Agency, 2015)
- Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2014)



## Policy D.ES2

### Air quality

1. Development is required to meet or exceed the 'air quality neutral' standard, including promoting the use of low or zero emission transport and reducing the reliance on private motor vehicles.
2. An air quality impact assessment, based on current best practice, is required as part of the planning application for:
  - a. Major developments
  - b. Developments which will require substantial earthworks or demolition
  - c. Developments which include education and health facilities or open space (including child play space), and
  - d. New build developments in areas of sub-standard air quality (as designated and shown on the Policies Map).
3. Where an air quality assessment indicates that a development will cause harm to air quality or where end users could be exposed to poor air quality, development will be resisted unless mitigation measures are adopted to reduce the impact to acceptable levels.
4. New build developments which propose to provide any private, communal, publicly accessible open space or child play space in areas of sub-standard air quality are required to demonstrate that they have considered the positioning and design of the open space to reduce exposure of future users to air pollution.

### Explanation

**14.15** Improving the borough's air quality is one of our key priorities. Levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulates (PM10 and PM2.5) are of particular concern, due to their impacts on human health<sup>53</sup>. In parts of the borough, including the City Fringe and along all major roads, the levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulates (PM2.5 and PM 10) exceed World Health Organisation guideline limits and, in the case of nitrogen dioxide, European Union safe legal limits /national air quality objectives<sup>54</sup>. Poor air quality has well-evidenced significant adverse effects on health. Further guidance on the 'air quality neutral standard' is outlined in the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2014)<sup>55</sup>.

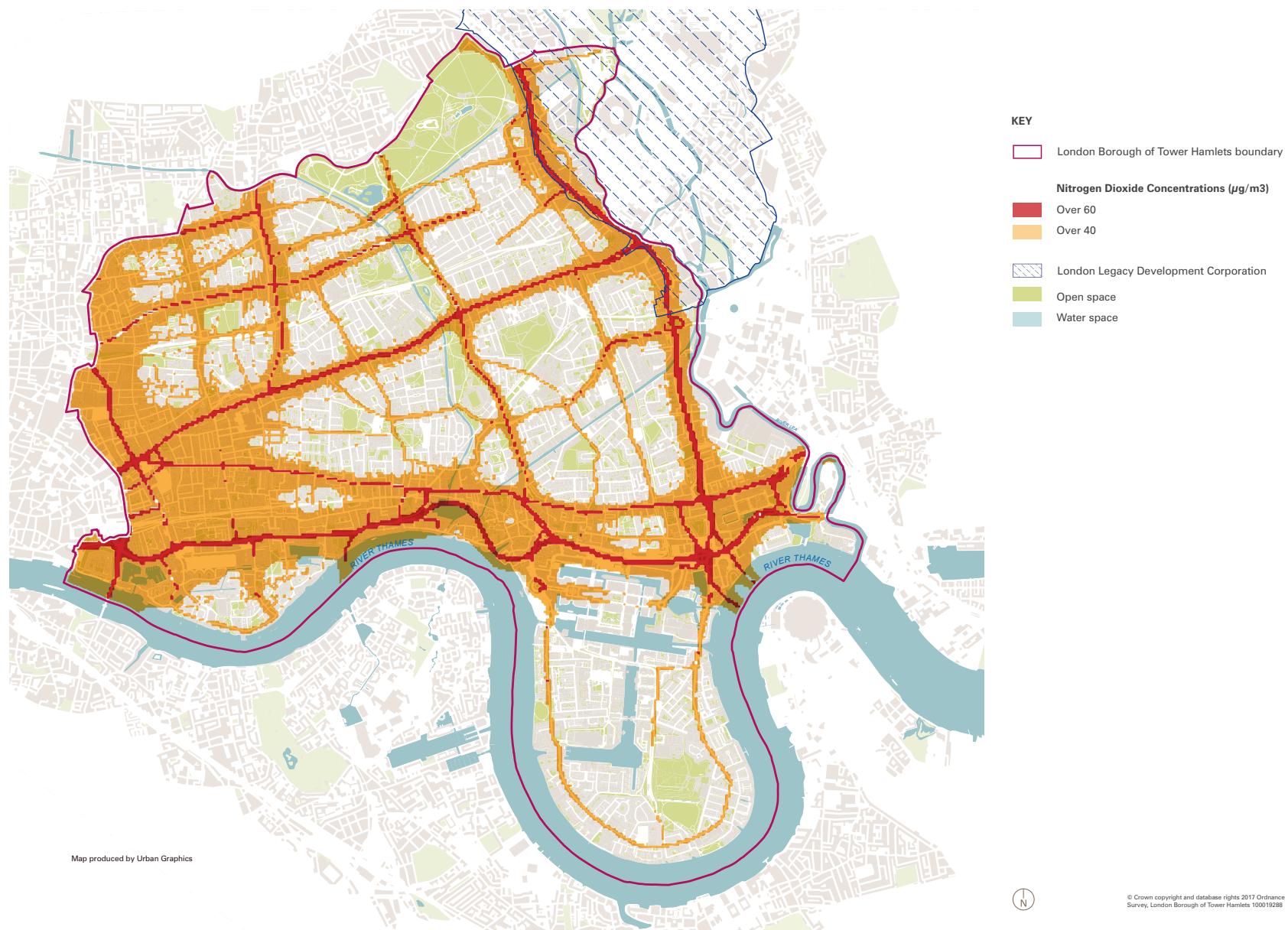
**14.16** In those parts of the borough where air quality is below European Union safe limits for nitrogen dioxide levels, particular focus will be placed on improving air quality, protecting users from the effects of poor air quality and protecting vulnerable uses, such as schools. Education uses covered under this policy are primary and secondary schools and does not include further or higher education facilities. Areas of sub-standard air quality refer to areas where nitrogen dioxide levels exceeding 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (the European Union legal limit / national air quality objectives). This includes areas in which the particulates (PM2.5) levels exceed 10 µg/m<sup>3</sup> annual mean levels (World Health Organisation guideline limits) as identified on the Policies Map and Figure 14. Please note: air quality fluctuates and applications should be guided by the latest available monitoring data.

<sup>53</sup> Tower Hamlets Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Strategic Planning and Health (2016)

<sup>54</sup> Tower Hamlets Air Quality Annual Status Summary Report (2016)

<sup>55</sup> Please note: Part 1 does not apply to infrastructure projects, such as road schemes.

Figure 14: Areas of substandard air quality in Tower Hamlets



**14.17** The air quality assessment must consider the potential impacts of pollution from the development on occupants of the site and neighbouring areas during construction and operational phases. It should also consider the cumulative impact of surrounding developments. Cumulative impacts should be considered for developments occurring in a one kilometre radius. The air quality assessment and the construction management plan should contain details of compliance with European emissions standards. Proposals that would give rise to diffuse air pollution must consider the potential for effects on European sites of nature conservation importance, in particular Epping Forest.

**14.18** The air quality assessment must also outline the measures to mitigate any adverse effects during construction or operation. This could include:

- a. Reducing vehicular traffic levels
- b. Encouraging sustainable movement patterns
- c. Methods of carrying out construction
- d. Actions to reduce emissions throughout the lifetime of the building
- e. Reducing emissions from associated plant equipment
- f. Improving or greening the public realm
- g. Ensuring decentralised energy facilities do not contribute to poor air quality.

**14.19** Under Parts 3 and 4, mitigation measures to reduce people's exposure to poor air quality could include the following (in order of priority):

- a. Maximising distance from pollutant source (the recommended distance would be over 50 metres from the pollution source)
- b. Considering proven ventilation systems
- c. Parking considerations (in accordance with our transport policies set out in STR1 and DTR3)
- d. The use of winter gardens, instead of balconies
- e. Internal layout and minimising internal pollutant emissions.

## Policy links

- Policy D.SG3: Health impact assessments
- Policy D.SG4: Planning and construction of new development
- Policy S.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy S.CF1: Supporting community facilities
- Policy D.CF3: New community facilities
- Policy S.OWS1: Creating a network of open spaces
- Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough
- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel
- Policy D.TR3: Parking and permit-free
- Policy D.TR4: Sustainable transportation of freight

## Evidence links

- Land-use Planning and Development Control: Planning for Air Quality (Institute of Air Quality Management, 2017)
- London Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance (GLA, 2016)
- Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction (Institute of Air Quality Management, 2014)
- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Volume 11 Environmental Assessment (Highways Agency, 2012)

**Policy D.ES3****Urban greening and biodiversity**

1. Development is required to protect and enhance biodiversity, through:
  - a. maximising the provision of 'living building' elements
  - b. retaining existing habitats and features of biodiversity value or, if this is not possible, replacing them within the development, as well as incorporating additional measures to enhance biodiversity, proportionate to the development proposed, and
  - c. protecting and increasing the provision of trees, through:
    - i. protecting all trees, including street trees
    - ii. incorporating native trees, wherever possible
    - iii. providing replacement trees, including street trees, where the loss of or impact on trees in a development is considered acceptable.
2. Major development is required to submit an ecology assessment demonstrating biodiversity enhancements that contribute to the objectives of the latest Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the Thames River Basin Management Plan.
3. Planting and landscaping around developments must not include 'potentially invasive non-native species'. Invasive non-native species listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act must be controlled, and eradicated where possible, as part of redevelopment.
4. Development must not negatively impact on any designated European site such as Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation or Ramsar sites. Developments which might have the potential to adversely impact a Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation outside the borough will be required to submit a Habitat Regulations Assessment.
5. Developments which affect a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, or significantly harm the population or conservation status of a protected or priority species, are required to be managed in accordance with the following hierarchy:
  - a. Adverse impacts to the biodiversity interest should be avoided.
  - b. Where avoidance is not possible, proposals must minimise and mitigate the impact to the biodiversity interest.
  - c. As a last resort for exceptional cases where the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the biodiversity impacts, appropriate compensation will be sought.
  - d. Where appropriate compensation is not possible, planning permission will be refused.

## Explanation

**14.20** Tower Hamlets has a diverse range of sites of biodiversity value, including areas of open space, waterways and formally designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Living building elements enhance biodiversity, both directly through planting and indirectly through providing habitats<sup>56</sup>. They also have flood reduction, climatic and air quality benefits, helping to remove carbon dioxide from the air and reduce temperatures.

**14.21** In implementing Part 1(a) 'living building' elements need to contribute to local biodiversity through providing priority habitats, and/or features for priority species, as identified in the latest Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan. The types of 'living building' techniques we consider appropriate include living roofs, walls, terraces and other building greening techniques. 'Living building' elements should also be considered alongside the sustainable urban drainage requirements outlined in Policy D.ES5, and green grid requirements outlined in Policies S.OWS1 and D.OWS3. Providing living building elements is considered particularly beneficial in areas of sub-standard air quality or in areas at particular risk of experiencing the urban heat island effect. The risk of experiencing the 'heat-island' effect should be considered over the lifetime of the development. Details of ongoing maintenance of the 'living building' elements will also be required.

**14.22** According to the London Climate Change Partnership, areas at particular risk of experiencing the urban heat island effect include the following:

- a. Areas of green space deficiency (see Figure 13). This includes developments within identified areas of deficiency of access to nature

- b. Areas of high density development with clusters of tall buildings. This includes developments within identified Tall Building Zones (see Policy D.DH6)
- c. Areas experiencing high levels of pollution. This includes developments within identified areas of sub-standard air quality (as shown on the Policies Map and Figure 14).

**14.23** In implementing Part 1(b), consideration will be given to the size, scale and nature of the development and whether an appropriate level of provision is proposed. Even minor development, such as rear extensions, have the ability to provide biodiversity measures through items such as living roofs, walls and habitat structures (e.g. bat and bird boxes).

**14.24** The latest Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan should give details of priority habitats and/or features for priority species (see Parts 1 and 2). Features of biodiversity or ecological value include:

- a. Linear corridors, such as watercourses, hedgerows and buffer zones
- b. Veteran trees
- c. Old hedges
- d. Habitats or species identified as local<sup>57</sup>, London<sup>58</sup> or national<sup>59</sup> priorities, and features which might support such species.

Where geographically relevant, the Thames River Basin Management Plan objectives should also be incorporated.

**14.25** Due to the environmental importance of trees, at least a 'one-for-one' replacement rate is required for any trees affected by a development (see Part 1). Where we are convinced these cannot be incorporated on site, we will consider the provision of a replacement tree on a suitable site, as close to the development as possible. We will also expect developments to incorporate additional trees, wherever

56 Tower Hamlet Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2015)

57 Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2015)

58 London Biodiversity Action Plan (GLA, 2007)

59 Species of Principal Importance in England identified under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2016)

possible. Their location must be carefully considered to ensure there is no adverse impact on overshadowing, wind effects, air quality, ecology or flood risk. Where trees are proposed along the river corridor, their positioning must be carefully considered to ensure there are no adverse impacts on ecology or flood risk. A buffer of at least five metres is suggested between the bank and tree. We will take a 'right tree for the right site' approach which takes account of historic context, availability of space, soil conditions, wildlife value, potential improvements to air and soil quality, provision of shade and reducing the effects of and adapting to climate change. This will need to be evidenced in the ecology assessment.

**14.26** 'Potentially invasive non-native species' include plants listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and plants identified as species of concern by the London Invasive Species Initiative. In addition, planting schemes should be selected according to their suitability for local growing conditions (soil, temperature ranges, rainfall, sunlight and shade), their ability to attract wildlife (e.g. nectar rich planting) and to conserve water. Planting along river corridors should only include native species. This will need to be evidenced in the ecology statement.

**14.27** Part 4 seeks to protect the integrity of any European or nationally designated site of nature conservation importance. There are no such sites within Tower Hamlets, but development may have the potential to adversely impact sites beyond its boundary – such as the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation and the Lea Valley Special Protection Area - through air pollution and/or increased visitor pressure. Where the application is of such a scale, location or nature as to potentially have such an effect on a European site, applicants should seek advice from Natural England as to whether a Habitat Regulations Assessment

would be required. The assessment will need to demonstrate that the development will not adversely impact on the integrity of the European site. Proposals will be resisted where they will have significant adverse impact on European sites.

**14.28** Part 5 seeks to protect locally designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and important species. The presence of protected species is a material planning consideration where a development is likely to result in harm to a habitat or species. Priority species are those identified in the Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan, Species of Conservation Concern in London and Species of Principal Importance in England, as identified under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act. If a SINC or a protected or priority species is likely to be affected, an ecology assessment will be required. The ecology assessment should include:

- a. Information assessing the characteristics and situation of the site
- b. Details on how the proposals will protect, replace and enhance existing biodiversity on the proposed site, including measures for wildlife habitats and features aimed at particular species.

**14.29** Applications should also detail how recommendations are being included in the development proposals. Should the ecology assessment indicate an adverse impact on the biodiversity interest of the site, this will be managed using the hierarchical approach outlined in Part 4. Should compensation be sought, it would be at the level required to adequately offset the impact on the SINC or protected/priority species, through the provision of an alternative site or habitat.

### Policy links

- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy S.OSW1: Creating a network of open spaces
- Policy S.OSW2: Enhancing the network of water spaces
- Policy D.OSW3: Open space and green grid network
- Policy D.OSW4: Water spaces

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2015)
- Tower Hamlets Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017)
- London Biodiversity Action Plan (GLA, 2007)



## Policy D.ES4

### Flood risk

1. Development is required to be located in areas suitable for the vulnerability level of the proposed uses with:
  - a. highly vulnerable uses not allowed within flood zone 3a
  - b. essential infrastructure and more vulnerable uses within flood zone 3a required to pass the exception test, and
  - c. highly vulnerable uses within flood zone 2 required to pass the exception test.
2. Development is required to provide a flood risk assessment if it meets any of the following criteria:
  - a. The development site is over 1 hectare in size within flood zone 1
  - b. The site is within flood zones 2 or 3a
  - c. The development may be subject to other sources of flooding, as defined in the Tower Hamlets Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
3. The flood risk assessment should include:
  - a. A sequential test if the development is in flood zone 2 or 3
  - b. The risks of both on and off-site flooding to and from the development for all sources of flooding including fluvial, tidal, surface run-off, groundwater, ordinary watercourse, sewer and reservoir
  - c. An assessment of tidal risk in the event of a breach in the River Thames defences
  - d. The impact of climate change using the latest government guidance
- e. Demonstration of safe access and egress, and
- f. Mitigation measures, taking account of the advice and recommendations set out in the Tower Hamlets Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
4. Site design of development which meets criteria outlined in Part 2 above is required to:
  - a. undertake a sequential approach to development layout to direct highest vulnerability uses to areas of the site with lowest flood risk, and
  - b. incorporate flood resilience and/or resistance measures.
5. Development is required to protect and where possible increase the capacity of existing water spaces and flood storage areas to retain water.
6. Development is required to enable effective flood risk management through:
  - a. requiring development along the River Thames and the River Lea and its tributaries to be set back by the following distances unless significant constraints are evidenced:
    - i. A minimum of a 16-metre buffer strip along a tidal river, and
    - ii. A minimum of a 8-metre buffer strip along a fluvial river.
  - b. optimising opportunities to realign or set back defences and improve the riverside frontage to provide amenity space and environmental enhancement.

## Explanation

**14.30** Large parts of Tower Hamlets, including the Isle of Dogs and Lower Lea Valley, are in medium to high risk flood areas (zones 2 and 3a). The flood risk zones are shown on the Policies Map and Figure 15. New development must not increase the risk of flooding and must provide mitigation measures to reduce their impact on flood risk, including enabling the repair and further delivery of flood defences.

**14.31** For Parts 1 and 4 of the policy, the vulnerability of uses is defined within the National Planning Policy Framework and are contained in the latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Highly vulnerable uses include a self-contained basement without internal access to the upper floors above breach level. More vulnerable uses include a basement with access to upper floors above the breach level. All basement developments are required to conduct a basement impact assessment to demonstrate that proposals safeguard structural stability, are safe from a flood risk perspective, and will not have any adverse impacts on local hydrogeology. It should take account of the guidance provided in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

**14.32** In order to address Parts 2 and 3, the flood risk assessment should also:

- a. be proportionate with the degree of flood risk that the proposed development is exposed to and may exacerbate
- b. consider the cumulative impact of existing and future development, and
- c. demonstrate where adjacent to flood defences that development will safeguard and maintain the existing flood defences over its lifetime.

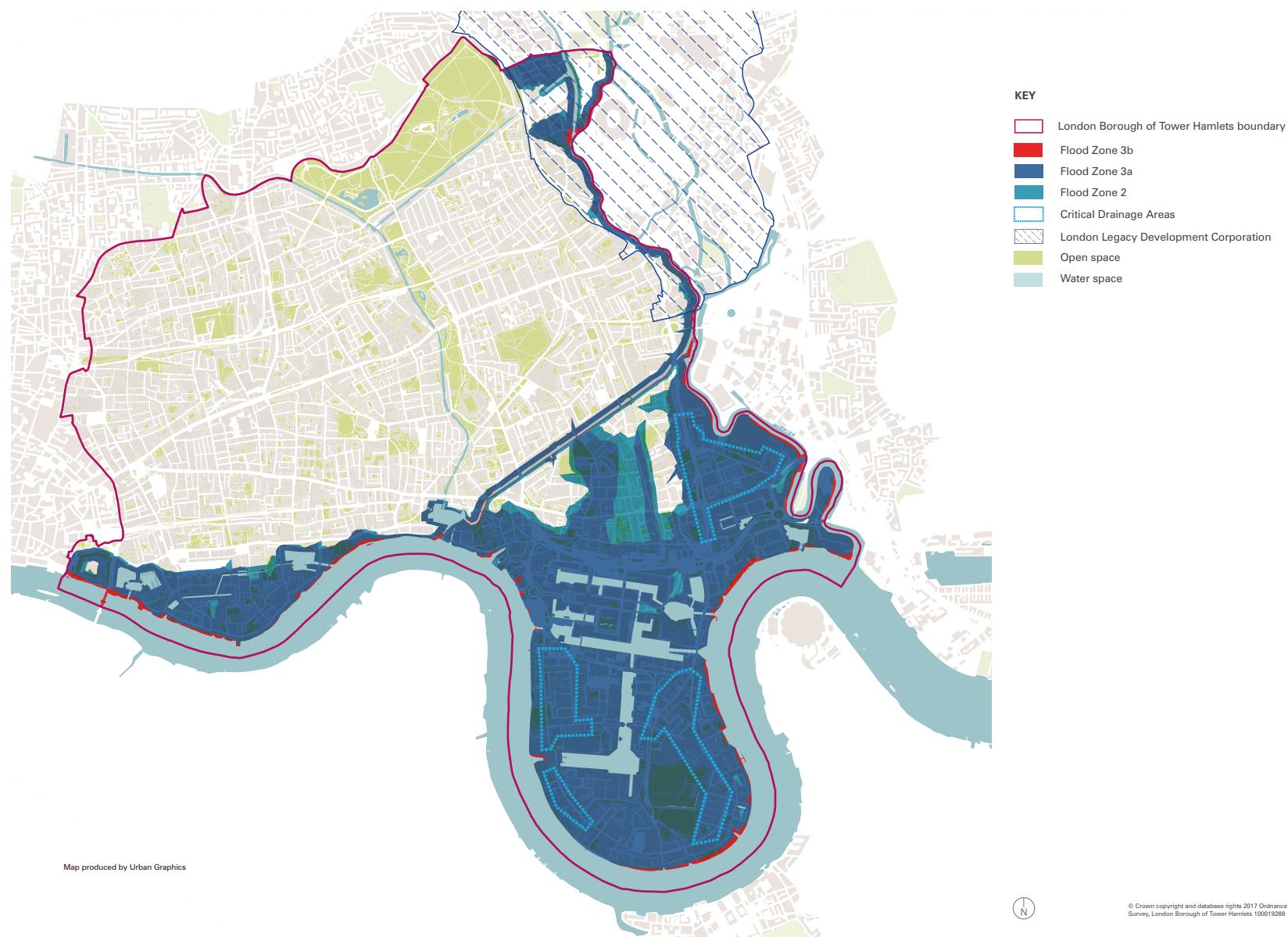
**14.33** Developments within site allocations (see Section 4) which seek to deliver their allocated use do not have to undertake a sequential test, even if the site is in flood zone 2 or 3, as required under Part 3(a)<sup>60</sup>.

**14.34** Flood resistance refers to constructing a building in such a way as to prevent floodwater entering the building and damaging its fabric. Flood resilience refers to constructing a building in such a way that, although flood water may enter the building, its impact is minimised (i.e. no permanent damage is caused, structural integrity is maintained and drying and cleaning are facilitated).

**14.35** Part 5 should also be considered alongside Policy D.OWS4. The requirement to include an adequate buffer zone (see Part 6) between waterways and developments applies to main rivers only (as identified in the Tower Hamlets Strategic Flood Risk Assessment). It is to enable sustainable and cost effective flood risk management, including upgrading of river walls and embankments.

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<sup>60</sup> The sequential test has already been undertaken in the Tower Hamlets Site Allocation Sequential and Exceptions Tests (2017).

**Figure 15: Flood zones in Tower Hamlets**

**14.36** Where the preferred level of setback is unachievable, current and future flood risk must be alleviated to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency and through consideration of the specific recommendations of the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan. This can include:

- a. Raising existing flood defences to the required levels in preparation for future climate change impacts or otherwise demonstrating how tidal flood defences can be raised in the future, through submission of plans and cross-sections of the proposed raising (in particular to demonstrate that the development does not preclude future raising of the defence in line with the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan)
- b. Demonstrating improved access to existing flood defences and safeguarding land for future flood defence raising and landscape, amenity and habitat improvements
- c. Maintaining, enhancing or replacing flood defences to provide adequate protection for the lifetime of the development
- d. Where opportunities exist, re-aligning or setting back flood defence walls and improving the river frontage to provide amenity space, habitat, access and environmental enhancements
- e. Requiring the delivery of flood risk management infrastructure and/or improvement measures that mitigate directly related impacts from the development, where these have been identified in the Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

**14.37** These setback requirements can also contribute towards opportunities for public access and recreation, as outlined in Policy S.OWS1.

### Policy links

- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy S.DH3: Heritage and the historic environment
- Policy D.H5: Gypsies and travellers accommodation
- Policy S.OWS2: Enhancing a network of water spaces
- Policy D.OWS4: Water spaces

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017)
- Tower Hamlets Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2015)
- Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Thames Estuary 2100 (Environment Agency, 2011)



## Policy D.ES5

### Sustainable drainage

1. Development is required to reduce the risk of surface water flooding, through demonstrating how it reduces the amount of water run-off and discharge from the site through the use of appropriate water reuse and sustainable drainage systems techniques.
2. Major development is required to submit a drainage strategy which should demonstrate that surface water will be controlled as near to its source as possible in line with the sustainable drainage systems hierarchy.
3. Development is required to achieve the following run-off rates:
  - a. New development in critical drainage areas is required to achieve a greenfield run-off rate and volume leaving the site
  - b. All other development should seek to achieve greenfield run-off rate and volume leaving the site. Where this is not possible, the minimum expectation is to achieve at least 50% attenuation of the site's surface water run-off at peak times prior to re-development.

### Explanation

**14.38** A further source of flood risk is from surface water flooding. This arises following periods of intense rainfall when the volume and intensity of a rainfall event exceeds the capacity of the drainage system, resulting in localised flooding. Current critical drainage areas in the borough are in the Isle of Dogs, with other smaller areas of high surface water flood risk found throughout the borough. These are shown on the Policies Map and Figure 15.

**14.39** In order to reduce the amount of water being discharged from sites, this policy requires development to reduce the run-off from hard surfacing. When assessing the requirements of this policy consideration will be given to the size, scale and nature of the development and whether relative provision has been made. Even minor development (e.g. rear extensions) have the ability to provide sustainable drainage measures.

**14.40** Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider the requirements for sustainable urban drainage systems at the earliest opportunity, as this will enable their more effective integration and provision. Sustainable urban drainage systems should also be considered alongside the 'living building' requirements outlined in Policy D.ES3, and green grid requirements outlined in Policy S.OSW1, as sustainable urban drainage systems can also have biodiversity and urban greening benefits.

**14.41** Applicants should demonstrate that they have considered different types of sustainable urban drainage systems, their ability to remove pollutants, their capacity and future maintenance.

**14.42** In order to satisfy the requirements within Parts 1 and 2, all major developments will be required to submit a drainage strategy alongside the original planning application. All other relevant developments will also be strongly encouraged to do so.

**14.43** Surface water reduction and the required run-off rates should be achieved by following the sustainable urban drainage systems hierarchy, which is outlined in more detail in the London Plan.

**14.44** Infiltration sustainable urban drainage systems techniques should only dispose of clean roof water into clean, uncontaminated ground. They should not be used for foul discharges or trade effluent, and may not be suitable within source protection zone 1<sup>61</sup>.

### Policy links

- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy S.OWS2: Enhancing the network of water spaces
- Policy D.OWS4: Water spaces

### Evidence links

- Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2014)
- Tower Hamlets Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017)
- District Heating Manual for London (GLA, 2014)

### Policy D.ES6

#### Sustainable water and wastewater management

1. Development is required to reduce water consumption: new residential developments must achieve a maximum water use of 105 litres per person per day and refurbishments and other non-domestic development should meet BREEAM water efficiency credits.
2. New development is required to minimise the pressure on the combined sewer network.
3. Major development is required to demonstrate that the local water supply and public sewerage networks have adequate capacity both on and off-site to serve the development, taking into consideration the cumulative impact of current and proposed development.

<sup>61</sup> The Environment Agency has defined source protection zones: these are available to view from their website.

## Explanation

**14.45** London is an area of serious water stress<sup>62</sup>. Developments should therefore seek to reduce the pressure on the fresh and waste water systems through increasing water efficiency. In recognition of this, Part 1 requires all new residential developments to meet the national higher standard of 105 litres per person per day. BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) applies to non-residential developments, residential development arising from conversions and changes of use. This method provides a holistic assessment of the environmental sustainability of a development.

**14.46** Measures to achieve Parts 1 and 2 could include the installation of water efficient fittings and appliances (which can help reduce energy consumption as well as water consumption) and by capturing and re-using rain water and grey water on site. Major developments and high or intense water use developments, such as hotels, hostels and student housing, should include a grey water and rainwater harvesting system. Where such a system is not feasible or practical, development must demonstrate to our satisfaction that this is the case. Developments are expected to submit a water efficiency calculator to demonstrate how they have met this requirement.

**14.47** In relation to Part 3, major development (as defined in the glossary in Appendix 1) is required to demonstrate that there is adequate capacity both on and off site to serve the development. Developers should contact Thames Water as early as possible (preferably in advance of the submission of a planning application) to discuss their development proposals and intended delivery programme to assist with identifying any potential water and wastewater network reinforcement requirements in order for Thames Water to undertake the necessary upgrades. Where there is a capacity constraint phasing conditions may be applied to any approval to ensure that any necessary infrastructure upgrades are delivered ahead of the occupation of the relevant phase of development.

## Policy links

- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy S.OWS2: Enhancing the network of water spaces
- Policy D.OWS4: Water spaces

## Evidence links

- Water Stressed Area – Final Classification (Environment Agency, 2013)

<sup>62</sup> Water Stressed Area – Final Classification (Environment Agency, 2013)

**Policy D.ES7****A zero carbon borough**

- Development is required to meet the carbon dioxide emission reduction standards as set out below.

**Residential development**

Year	Improvement on the 2013 building regulations
2016-2031	Zero carbon (to be achieved through a minimum 45% reduction in regulated carbon dioxide emissions on-site and the remaining regulated carbon dioxide emissions to 100% - to be off-set through a cash in lieu contribution)

**Non-residential development**

Year	Improvement on the 2013 building regulations
2016-2019	45% regulated carbon dioxide emissions reduction
2019-2031	Zero carbon (to be achieved through a minimum 45% reduction in regulated carbon dioxide emissions and the remaining regulated carbon dioxide emissions to 100% - to be off-set through a cash in lieu contribution)

- Development is required to maximise energy efficiency based on the following standards:
  - All new non-residential development over 500 square metres floorspace (gross) are expected to meet or exceed BREEAM 'excellent' rating

- All major non-residential refurbishment of existing buildings and conversions over 500 square metres floorspace (gross) must meet at least BREEAM non-domestic refurbishment 'excellent' rating
- As a minimum, all self-contained residential proposals will be strongly encouraged to meet the Home Quality Mark.
- Major residential and major non-residential development will be required to submit an energy assessment. Minor non-residential development will be strongly encouraged to prepare an assessment.
- The energy assessment should demonstrate how the development has been designed in accordance with the energy hierarchy and how it will:
  - maximise energy efficiency as per the requirements set out in Part 2
  - outline the feasibility of low nitrogen dioxide decentralised energy, and
  - seek to provide up to 20% reduction of carbon dioxide emissions through on-site renewable energy generation.
- The sustainable retrofitting of existing development with provisions for the reduction of carbon emissions will be supported.

## Explanation

**14.48** In order to contribute towards the London Plan target of a 60% reduction of carbon emissions (below the 1990 level) by 2025, Tower Hamlets needs to reduce carbon dioxide emissions per person significantly more than most other London boroughs. Currently, Tower Hamlets is the third worst performing borough within London<sup>63</sup>. Since 2010, Tower Hamlets has only achieved a 22% reduction against this target<sup>64</sup>. This policy maintains our long term trajectory which has required progressive reductions in carbon emissions from developments. This follows the London Plan's approach and is endorsed in the Housing Strategic Planning Guidance (GLA, 2016)<sup>65</sup>.

**14.49** Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the policy seek to ensure that all new developments (including non-residential development) in Tower Hamlets contribute towards reducing carbon emissions. The policy also recognises that on-site carbon reductions have a greater impact on reducing carbon emissions than contributions in lieu. Funds raised through carbon offsetting (e.g. retrofitting) are spent on priorities outlined in the Tower Hamlets Carbon Offset Study (2016), as supported in part 4. Further information on carbon offsetting is available in the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.

**14.50** In relation to Part 1, the improvements in carbon dioxide emission reductions within new build developments are based on building regulations requirements. Should the building regulations be updated during the lifetime of this plan, we will provide an update on the onsite reduction standards required. The requirement to reach zero carbon will remain. For refurbishment schemes, the baseline should be determined by modelling using building regulation compliance software to determine a building emission rate/dwelling emission rate of the regulated carbon dioxide emissions from the existing building before refurbishment<sup>66</sup>.

**14.51** Energy assessments should be informed by preliminary standard assessment procedures for residential developments or the national calculation method for non-residential development. Energy assessments should detail the measures included in the development and the carbon dioxide emission savings achieved at the time of implementing the relevant planning permission. To ensure we achieve our sustainability objectives, energy assessments for non-major development will also be sought.

**14.52** In relation to Part 2, developments should consider how the design, layout, orientation, insulation materials and other sustainable construction techniques can contribute towards maximising energy efficiency.

**14.53** In addition, developments should implement at least the minimum standards set out in BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) which applies to non-residential developments, non-self-contained housing and residential development arising from conversions and changes of use. This method provides a holistic assessment of the environmental sustainability of a development. The Home Quality Mark is one way of demonstrating the standard of a new residential dwelling, which includes measures for low carbon dioxide, sustainable materials, good air quality and natural daylight. We strongly encourage schemes to use the Home Quality Mark. Developments which are unable to meet these standards must provide evidence demonstrating the constraints and provide an alternative assessment against the requirements in the GLA's Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance. If BREEAM/Home Quality Mark/Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance is replaced or amended during the lifetime of the plan, the equivalent replacement requirements will be applied, subject to discussion with our sustainability service.

<sup>63</sup> UK Local Authority and Regional Carbon Dioxide Emissions 2005 – 2014 (National Statistics, 2016)

<sup>64</sup> Tower Hamlets Carbon Policy Evidence Base (2016)

<sup>65</sup> The importance and viability of this approach has been detailed in the Tower Hamlets Carbon Policy Evidence Base (2016).

<sup>66</sup> The implementation dates for the requirements in Part 1 are from 1 October 2016 for residential developments and from 1 October 2019 for non-residential developments.

**14.54** In relation to Part 4, new developments should be designed in a manner fully compatible with any existing or planned future decentralised energy network<sup>67</sup> in accordance with any relevant energy masterplan and the District Heating Manual for London (GLA, 2014) or equivalent replacement document (including appropriate design of building systems to minimise return temperatures). Developments must connect to the decentralised energy network if it is expected to be operational within five years of the development being completed.

**14.55** For the chosen solution for on-site renewable energy, applicants should provide details on:

- a. Energy generated and the carbon dioxide saved
- b. Capacity and quantity of the proposed technology/ies, and
- c. Location of the technology/ies marked on site plans.

**14.56** We will seek contributions from developers towards the costs of the decentralised energy network in line with the avoided costs of their own plant installation. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate the low air quality impacts of any decentralised energy network.

**14.57** In order to address Part 5, the expected carbon reductions should be demonstrated within an energy assessment.

### Policy links

- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality

### Evidence links

- District Heating Manual for London (GLA, 2014)
- Housing Strategic Planning Guidance (GLA, 2016)
- Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2014)

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<sup>67</sup> Please note: a district heating system is a type of decentralised heating network.

**Policy D.ES8****Contaminated land and storage of hazardous substances**

1. Where development is proposed on contaminated land or potentially contaminated land, a desk study and site investigation in line with current guidance is required and remediation proposals agreed to deal with the contamination before planning permission is granted.
2. Development will not be supported which involves the storage or use of hazardous substances or which is located in close proximity to hazardous installations where it would cause a significant threat to health and the environment.
3. Certain contaminating developments, processes or land uses proposed within or in close proximity to sensitive locations, including source protection zones, may not be acceptable.

**Explanation**

**14.58** Part 1 of this policy provides additional guidance on protecting health of the borough's residents and workers and the environment from contaminants and hazardous substances. This should be read in conjunction with the guidance set out in the London Plan (GLA, 2016).

**14.59** Contaminated land is land that has been polluted with harmful substances to the point where it now poses an unacceptable risk to health and the environment. Tower Hamlets has a history of industrial land uses and we want to ensure that the impacts of these past and current land uses do not affect the health of people and the environment. We keep and update a public register of contaminated land (which is available from our website) and any site included in the register or any site which is potentially contaminated will be required to carry out a site investigation and agree a scheme of mitigation with us to ensure that contaminated land issues are considered at the planning application stage.

**14.60** A verification report will be required through condition in order to provide confirmation that the remediation work has been undertaken properly in line with best practice.

**14.61** Part 2 of the policy relates to the management of hazardous substances which are outlined in the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations (2015). There are a small number of listed hazardous installations in or near to the borough. Hazardous substances are also controlled by the need for a separate hazardous substances consent. As such, it will be necessary to demonstrate that any developments which involve hazardous substances would not cause a significant hazard to the health and well-being of local residents or to the local environment.

**14.62** We will apply the Health and Safety Executive's land use planning methodology in the event of a proposal being located near to a hazardous installation. In combination with advice provided by the Health

and Safety Executive, consideration will also be given to site-specific circumstances and any proposed mitigation measures. If the Health and Safety Executive advise against development, planning permission will only be granted in circumstances where it can be demonstrated that the benefits arising from the proposed development would significantly outweigh the potential risks to health and the local environment.

**14.63** Source protection zones are spatial areas around public drinking water abstraction points. Locations of source protection zones are available on the Environment Agency's website. Applicants are advised to speak to our environmental health service and the Environment Agency, where relevant.

### **Policy links**

- Policy D.SG4: Planning and construction of new development

### **Evidence links**

- Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11) (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Environment Agency, 2004).
- Guidance for the Safe Development of Housing on Land Affected by Contamination (National House Building Council and Environment Agency, 2008).
- Sustainability of Soil and Groundwater Remediation (Homes and Community Agency, 2010).
- Development Industry Code of Practice V2 " The Definition of Waste" (CL:AIRE, 2011)

### **Policy D.ES9**

#### **Noise and vibration**

1. Development is required to:
  - a. use the most appropriate, layout, orientation, design and use of buildings to minimise noise and vibration impacts
  - b. identify/outline mitigating measures to manage noise and vibration from new development, including during the construction phase
  - c. separate noise-sensitive development from existing operational noise, and
  - d. provide a noise assessment where noise-generating development or noise-sensitive development is proposed.
2. Where new noise-sensitive land uses are proposed in proximity to existing noise-generating uses, development is required to robustly demonstrate how conflict with existing uses will be avoided, through mitigation measures.
3. Development is required to demonstrate that the level of noise emitted from any new heating or ventilation plant will be below the background level by at least 10dBA.

## Explanation

**14.64** This policy seeks to manage noise and vibration from new development and manage existing sources of noise on sensitive development.

**14.65** Noise and vibration can have a major effect on local amenity and well-being: the World Health Organisation, for example, states that excessive noise can seriously harm human health, disturb sleep and have cardiovascular and behavioural effects.

**14.66** The increasingly high-density and mixed-use nature of development in Tower Hamlets means it is essential that building design and use minimises noise pollution and disturbance. Part 1 therefore sets out measures to minimise noise from new development and separate noise-sensitive uses such as housing, hospitals and schools from existing noise sources to protect the amenity and well-being of the area.

**14.67** In particular, the noise assessment should include the following.

- a. Source and absolute level of the noise together with the time of day it occurs
- b. For non-continuous sources of noise, the number of noise events, and the frequency and pattern of occurrence of the noise
- c. Pitch and tone of the noise
- d. The cumulative impacts of more than one source should be taken into account along with the extent to which the source of noise is intermittent and of limited duration
- e. In cases where existing noise sensitive locations already experience high noise levels, a development that is expected to cause even a small increase in the overall noise level may result in a significant adverse effect.

**14.68** Where the avoidance of noise conflicts is impractical, mitigation measures such as effective sound-proofing for noise attenuation (e.g. noise absorbing cladding) and restrictions on operating hours will be implemented through appropriate planning conditions.

**14.69** There have been a number of examples across London of long-standing entertainment venues closing or becoming at risk of closure due to a combination of factors, including noise complaints from new residents and venues being purchased for redevelopment (particularly for housing). This has implications for the long-term future of London's creative and cultural sector which has an impact not just on residents but also its tourism potential<sup>68</sup>. Part 2 uses the agent of change principle to seek to reduce this phenomenon. This principle may also apply to other noise-generating uses, such as industrial uses. Applicants must submit detailed noise assessments and demonstrate that noise levels within the proposed development emitted from nearby uses would be at an acceptable level. Where we are not satisfied that the operations of nearby uses would not be compromised, applications will be refused.

**14.70** Part 3 sets out that heating and ventilation plants should be designed so that they do not adversely affect nearby amenities, including open spaces which are valued for their quiet environment.

**14.71** Appendix 6 provides further guidance on how this policy will be implemented.

### Policy links

- Policy D.SG4: Planning and construction of new development
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy D.CF4: Public houses

<sup>68</sup> London's Grassroots Music Venues Rescue Plan (GLA, 2015)

**Policy D.ES10****Overheating**

1. New development is required to ensure that buildings (both internally and externally) and the spaces around them are designed to avoid overheating and excessive heat generation, while minimising the need for internal air conditioning systems.

**Explanation**

**14.72** Climate change is causing increased occurrence of overheating, which can cause significant discomfort to residents and building users. Relying on air-conditioning systems to cool buildings can be very energy intensive, ineffective and can also cause discomfort to building users. Large developments in particular have the potential to alter the local climate. For example, a light coloured building that reflects heat will stay cool on the inside and the outside, whereas a dark building will absorb heat during the day to raise internal temperatures and slowly release this heat as the temperature cools keeping the local air temperature warmer. Internal air-conditioning systems also produce heat which increases the outside temperature and adds to the heat island effect.

**14.73** Major development schemes are expected to evidence compliance with this policy within their design and access statements. Details should include the measures used to avoid overheating (including overheating analysis against a mid-range climate scenario for the 2030s) and excessive heat generation. This should look at not only the physical form of the building but also the operation of the building.

**14.74** This policy should be read alongside the London Plan (GLA, 2016), which sets out a cooling hierarchy that indicates the cooling methods to be used in the design process, starting with minimising internal heat generation and the amount of heat entering a building in the summer through energy efficient design, including orientation,

shading, fenestration, insulation and green roofs and walls. Subsequent methods include thermal mass and high ceilings, passive and mechanical ventilation and low-carbon active cooling systems.

**Policy links**

- Policy D.SG2: Planning and construction of new development
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity

**Evidence links**

- Climate Change and Adaptation Strategy (GLA, 2011)

# 15. Managing our waste

## Introduction

**15.1** The management of waste is one of the most pressing issues facing Tower Hamlets. The borough will have significant growth in the coming decades and with this comes a greater need to reduce, recycle and recover more waste and divert it away from landfill.

**15.2** Tower Hamlets is a unitary waste planning authority, waste collection authority and waste disposal authority. In our capacity as a waste planning authority, we have a statutory duty to prepare a waste local plan in line with legislation<sup>69</sup>. This is being fulfilled through the inclusion of waste policies in the Local Plan<sup>70</sup>.

**15.3** The Local Plan must identify sufficient opportunities to meet the identified needs of an area for the management of waste, aiming to drive waste management up the waste hierarchy (see Figure 16). We have to plan for seven waste streams<sup>71</sup>, including household, business and construction waste. In particular, the London Plan requires boroughs to identify existing facilities and suitable land to provide enough capacity to manage the tonnages of household and business waste apportioned in the London Plan (GLA, 2016). This policy is to enable London to be net self-sufficient in managing these waste streams by 2026. Tower Hamlets has been apportioned the following tonnes of waste:

**Table 4: Housing, commercial and industrial waste requirements**

	2021	2026	2031	2036
Household and commercial/industrial waste arisings (Tonnes per annum)	248,000	252,000	256,000	261,000
London Plan apportionment (Tonnes per annum)	252,000	302,000	307,000	313,000

*Source: London Plan (GLA, 2016)*

**15.4** The apportionment figures are higher than the total amount of waste predicted to arise in the borough. The London Plan is currently being reviewed and the borough's apportionment targets may change as a result. Achieving these targets presents a particular challenge because parts of the borough is densely built-up and there are competing pressures from higher value land uses such as housing and employment.

**15.5** There is not enough capacity within existing waste facilities in the borough to meet our waste needs. To meet the apportionment targets for household and business waste, Tower Hamlets will safeguard existing waste sites (Policy S.MW1.1) and identify land suitable for new waste facilities under Policy S.MW1. It has been calculated that between 3.65 and 5.27 hectares of land is required to meet the capacity gap up to 2036, and it is estimated that 5.28 hectares of land will come forward within the areas of search for new waste sites (see Policy S.MW1) through business turnover and vacancies<sup>72</sup>. The borough is not allocating individual sites for waste but identifying areas within which individual sites could come forward; this approach is supported by both national policy and the waste industry. The total amount of suitable industrial land in the borough is just under 22 hectares. We will continue to monitor the amount of land capable of providing new waste capacity over the course of the Local Plan period.

<sup>69</sup> Article 28 of the Waste Framework Directive (2008)

<sup>70</sup> A waste data study has been produced to support these policies (Tower Hamlets Waste Management Evidence Base Review, 2017).

<sup>71</sup> Municipal/household waste; commercial/industrial waste; construction/demolition waste; low level radioactive waste; agricultural waste; hazardous waste; and waste water waste.

<sup>72</sup> Tower Hamlets Waste Management Evidence Base Review (2017)

**15.6** The figures below demonstrate that Tower Hamlets can meet its apportionment targets through existing sites and identifying enough land suitable for new waste facilities. The ranges shown denote the differences in throughput per hectare for each type of facility/technology.

**Table 5: Waste capacity forecasts and land requirements**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2031</b>	<b>2036</b>
Existing apportionment capacity (tonnes)	51,874	51,874	51,874	51,874
Potential capacity from vacant safeguarded waste sites* (tonnes)	23,850 - 34,450	23,850 - 34,450	23,850 - 34,450	23,850 - 34,450
Capacity gap (tonnes)	165,676 - 176,276	215,676 - 226,276	220,676 - 231,276	226,676 - 237,276
Additional land required (hectares)	2.55-3.92	3.32-5.03	3.40-5.14	3.49-5.27
Additional land identified (hectares)	5.28	5.28	5.28	5.28

*\*Please note: it is assumed that the throughput of each site could range between 45,000 and 65,000 tonnes per hectare per annum.*

**15.7** Areas listed in Policy S.MW1 below have been identified as suitable for new waste facilities primarily due to the industrial nature and access to the strategic transport network so that waste and vehicle movements can avoid local roads and protect the safety and amenity of residents and heritage assets. Areas of search are not solely designated for waste management purposes and are also suitable, in principle, for other uses that are considered appropriate for their respective policy designations.

**15.8** There is also a capacity gap for construction, demolition and excavation waste in the borough. Around 80% of this waste is currently managed on site and 70% of the remainder goes to landfill. Through Policy S.MW1, Tower Hamlets is seeking to increase the proportion of construction, demolition and excavation waste which is reused and recycled to 95% by 2020, in line with the London Plan. Nevertheless, some construction, demolition and excavation waste will continue to be exported to landfill in the wider south east region throughout the plan period and we will liaise with recipient waste planning authorities on an on-going basis to monitor these waste movements.

**15.9** Tower Hamlets is also required to plan for hazardous waste, waste water, agricultural waste and low-level radioactive waste. The evidence concludes that no additional facilities are required within the borough for these waste streams because they are only produced in very small quantities and/or they are managed at specialist facilities outside the borough.

**15.10** Any proposals for new or extended waste facilities in Tower Hamlets will be assessed against criteria in the National Planning Policy for Waste, the London Plan and Local Plan policies. The London Legacy Development Corporation is the planning authority for part of the borough of Tower Hamlets but it does not have a separate apportionment. We are therefore planning for waste across all of its administrative area. We will continue to work closely with the London Legacy Development Corporation on delivering our strategic plan for waste.

**15.11** Our duties as a waste collection authority and waste disposal authority include helping households to prevent waste as well as reuse items and recycle as much waste as possible. The London Plan has set a target for London as a whole to exceed 50% in recycling/composting levels by 2020 and 60% by 2031. It also sets a target of recycling and composting at least 70% of London's commercial and industrial waste by 2020, maintaining these levels to 2031. Whilst London boroughs have

not been set individual targets for recycling these waste streams, Tower Hamlets is working towards meeting the London-wide target. The design of new developments are required to ensure integrated waste collection and bulking systems are included which contribute to the borough's ability to implement the waste hierarchy and increase recycling/composting rates (see Policy D.MW3).

**15.12** The London Plan is seeking to move towards a future where goods are designed to be reused and recycled and very little waste will require disposal in the future (a 'circular economy'). Tower Hamlets will contribute to this approach in various ways (e.g. new developments will be required to recycle and reuse construction materials – see Policy S.MW1).

**15.13** This section contains the following policies.

- Policy S.MW1: Managing our waste
- Policy D.MW2: New and enhanced waste facilities
- Policy D.MW3: Waste collection facilities in new development.

**Figure 16: Waste hierarchy**



**Policy S.MW1****Managing our waste**

1. The following existing waste sites within Tower Hamlets (as shown on the Policies Map) are safeguarded for waste use over the plan period.

**Schedule 1: Existing waste sites in Tower Hamlets**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Name/location</b>	<b>Other designations</b>	<b>Site area (ha)</b>	<b>Operational capacity/ contribution to apportionment (tonnes per year)</b>
1.	Clifford House, Towcester Road	Strategic Industrial Location	0.46 (0.144 which is currently involved in waste management to be safeguarded)	418/0
2.	Northumberland Wharf Yabsley	Safeguarded Wharf	0.88	111,243/2,654
3.	Ailsa Street <sup>73</sup>	Ailsa Street: site allocation	0.53	0/23,850 - 34,450

2. The following are existing waste sites in the London Legacy Development Corporation area (LLDC) and will be subject to planning policies in the LLDC Local Plan.

**Schedule 2: Existing waste sites in LLDC**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Name/location</b>	<b>Other designations</b>	<b>Site area (ha)</b>	<b>Operational capacity/ contribution to apportionment (tonnes per year)</b>
4.	McGrath House, Hepscott Road	Hepscott Road: site allocation	1.47	73,064/10,539
5.	455 Wick Lane	Strategic Industrial Location: Preferred Industrial Location	0.47 (0.027 currently used for waste purposes ancillary to civil engineering works)	0/36,958

3. Development which seek to maximise the efficiency and/or capacity of waste facilities in the borough will be supported.
4. Applications for non-waste uses on safeguarded sites will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that compensatory capacity will be delivered on a suitable replacement site within the borough in the first instance or another part of London which provides equivalent to, or greater than the maximum annual throughput that the existing site can achieve.
5. Development that prevents or prejudices the safeguarding of these sites will only be supported where alternative waste capacity provision is made.
6. Areas in Schedules 3 and 4 (below) are considered suitable for new waste facilities (as shown on the Policies Map).

<sup>73</sup> Ailsa Street is a planned waste site but is not currently operational. Its contribution towards apportionment targets is based on average throughputs per hectare, depending on the facility/technology.

Ref	Name/location	Other designations	Site area (ha)	Waste facility type	Operational capacity/contribution to apportionment (tonnes per year)
6.	The Highway	Local Industrial Location	2.71 (an estimated 0.65 to become available over the plan period)	Reuse/refurbishment/repair	29,250 – 42,250
7.	Empson Street	Strategic Industrial Location	10.07 (an estimated 2.42 to become available over the plan period)	Recycling, composting or recovery	108,900 - 157,300

**Schedule 3: Areas of search for new waste sites in Tower Hamlets**

Ref	Name/Location	Other designations	Site area (ha)	Waste facility type	Operational capacity5t/contribution to apportionment (tonnes per year)
8.	Fish Island	LLDC Local Plan: Strategic Industrial Location	9.21 (an estimated 2.21 to become available over the plan period)	Recycling, composting, recovery	99,450 - 143,650

- 7. Small-scale integrated waste facilities within new developments outside of areas of search in Schedules 3-4 may be acceptable where they contribute to managing apportioned waste and are of a scale and nature that does not compromise adjacent existing and proposed land uses.
- 8. New development will be expected to reuse and recycle construction, demolition and excavation waste on or close to the site where it arises.

## Explanation

**15.14** This policy seeks to develop a well-planned and integrated network of waste management facilities across the borough to address future capacity needs and contribute towards managing waste generated within the borough over the plan period.

**15.15** Meeting this need will require both waste facilities on existing sites (operational and non-operational) and new facilities in areas of search and other suitable locations which comply with the criteria set out in Policy D.MW2. Waste facilities within the areas of search will be directed towards the most suitable locations within these areas to make sure that they are as far away as possible from sensitive receptors (such as residential uses, schools and health facilities) and/or mitigation measures are provided to ensure any significant detrimental environmental and amenity impacts can be adequately addressed. Where existing facilities can be enhanced to maximise their use, this will be encouraged.

**15.16** The London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) is the planning authority for those sites and areas of search within its boundary (as shown in Schedules 2 and 4). The LLDC Local Plan (2015-2031) safeguards existing waste sites (listed in Schedule 2) and identifies areas of employment land suitable for waste uses (listed in Schedule 4). To secure the delivery of an effective waste plan for the borough, Tower Hamlets and the LLDC agree that the area of search listed in Schedule 4 is potentially suitable for waste management use. Acceptability of proposals for waste management uses in those locations will be determined with reference to policies within the LLDC Local Plan and any other relevant material considerations that apply to that proposal. Any applications for planning permission in these locations will need to be submitted to the LLDC as the local planning authority governing the area.

**15.17** Some existing safeguarded waste sites (McGrath House and Ailsa Street) are within areas of regeneration and may be released for other uses, providing the requirements set out within Policy S.MW1 (see Part 4) are met<sup>74</sup>.

**15.18** Compensatory capacity will be sought which is equivalent or greater than the maximum annual throughput over the last five years, as per the Environment Agency's Waste Data Interrogator. Compensatory provision should be provided locally. The area of search for a replacement site or increased capacity within an existing facility should be within Tower Hamlets in the first instance, or failing that, elsewhere in London. Compensatory provision will usually be secured through conditions and/or a legal agreement at the planning permission stage.

**15.19** Competition for land means the borough has to look beyond traditional industrial locations when seeking space for waste facilities. There is an opportunity for innovative technologies to be incorporated into new development to manage some of the waste generated over its lifetime. Part 7 of the policy therefore allows modern waste facilities to be integrated within suitable new development outside the areas of search. Small scale facilities which come forward will be assessed on a case-by-case basis against criteria in Policy D.MW2 and regional and national policies.

**15.20** On-site materials processing systems for food are an important aspect to consider in this borough due to the particular challenges to collection services within blocks of flats. The principle of these systems is two-fold:

- a. To carry out preliminary processing of raw materials at source, thereby reducing the tonnage and volume of solid waste to be managed and the subsequent burden on collection services

<sup>74</sup> The McGrath site at Hepscott Road in Fish Island is also a site allocation within the LLDC Local Plan for mixed-use development. There are plans to move the operations at the facility to another site within London and the Greater London Authority have confirmed that this approach is in line with London Plan policies. Ailsa Street is located within Polar Riverside Housing Zone.

- b. To make use of valuable end products such as unlocking the energy held within the waste material itself.

**15.21** There are a number of pieces of equipment, which may provide appropriate on-site waste processing including, but not limited to, micro anaerobic digesters.

**15.22** The flexibility of these systems is such that it reduces the need to separate collections of food waste to be carried out within the development and thereby reducing vehicle movements. Where systems such as anaerobic digesters are proposed, it will be the responsibility of the managing agent to maintain the system/facility. An agreement will also need to be made with us with regards to how the waste is accounted for in terms of contributing to our apportionment targets prior to permission being granted.

**15.23** Integrated waste collection systems are also required for new developments under Policy D.MW3. We will also consider the allocation of community infrastructure levy contributions towards provision of strategic waste management facilities.

**15.24** For Part 8 of the policy, developers should submit a plan for on-site waste to demonstrate how much construction, demolition and excavation waste will be reused and recycled, taking account of the London Plan target of 95%. The sustainable transportation of waste (by water and rail) will be assessed as part of Policy D.MW2, see Part 1(f).

**15.25** All sites and areas mentioned under Policy S.MW1 are shown on the relevant policies maps for Tower Hamlets and the London Legacy Development Corporation.

## Policy links

- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality
- Policy D.ES4: Flood risk
- Policy D.ES5: Sustainable drainage
- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel
- Policy D.TR2: Impacts on the transport network

## Evidence links

- Environment Agency Waste Interrogator



**Policy D.MW2****New and enhanced waste facilities**

1. Proposals to construct a new waste facility or replace or extend an existing waste facility will be supported where:
  - a. it contributes towards the aims of sustainable waste management in line with the waste hierarchy
  - b. it is located within a safeguarded waste site or area of search or integrated into a suitable new development
  - c. it incorporates a high quality design, is of a scale and nature which integrates into its surroundings and ensures compatibility with adjacent existing and proposed land uses (including within neighbouring boroughs)
  - d. it co-locates with other compatible uses (including existing waste facilities)
  - e. it proposes technology which is suitable for the location and nature of the site
  - f. it has good access to the strategic transport network, including, where possible, rail and canal/river links that offer the potential to transport waste
  - g. there is adequate road capacity to accommodate any vehicle movements generated and that vehicles can enter, wait, unload and leave the site without prejudicing the safety of pedestrians and other vehicles
  - h. it provides effective on-site measures to ensure safety and security
  - i. it is enclosed, unless it can be demonstrated that environmental and amenity impacts, including the emission of air pollutants, noise, vibration, dust, glare, vermin, odours can be mitigated, both during and after operations, and
  - j. it incorporates measures to minimise carbon emissions and maximise the use of lower-carbon energy sources.

**Explanation**

**15.26** This policy relates to new waste management facilities (including those replacing or expanding existing sites as well as capacity on sites) and seeks to direct them towards the most appropriate and sustainable locations which maximise the efficient use of the land and do not have any unacceptable visual, environmental and transport impacts.

**15.27** New waste management facilities will be directed towards existing safeguarded sites and areas of search (as set out in Policy S.MW1). In other locations, such facilities will still be expected to meet the criteria set out in Policy D.MW2 as well as any other relevant policies within the plan.

**15.28** Developments providing additional waste management capacity will be encouraged to co-locate alongside other waste facilities and other compatible uses without having any significant detrimental impacts on the amenity and function of the immediate and surrounding area to optimise the potential of sites and address the intensification of land uses, as per Part 1(d).

**15.29** The types of waste technology that will be suitable will depend on the nature and scale of the proposed scheme and the characteristics of the site and its surroundings, as required under Part 1(e). Broad types of facility suitable for each area of search are set out in the schedule of areas in Policy S.MW1. These are likely to be small-scale facilities due to the constrained nature of the borough.

**15.30** Part 1(f) seeks to ensure applicants demonstrate that opportunities to transport both construction and operational waste from the site via rail and water are explored (including shared facilities at existing railheads, wharves and depots) as a means to reduce congestion and vehicular movements on the road network. Information on sustainable transportation of waste should be submitted as part of the planning application, alongside details of re-use and recycling of waste arising during the construction phase in line with Policy S.MW1 (see Part 8).

**15.31** Part 1(i) seeks to mitigate adverse air quality impacts associated with waste facilities. Waste management facilities should be enclosed and covered on all vertical sides with small access and egress points, fitted with fast-acting doors, and incorporate an air filtering system to reduce airborne particulate concentrations in and outside of the building in line with Environment Agency advice. This provides an effective way of controlling dust and particulate pollution within waste developments. In cases where enclosure is not possible, proposals must provide details of proposed measures demonstrating how the control measures can adequately mitigate these impacts. Operators will be expected to obtain the appropriate Environment Agency permits and meet the conditions of those permits.

**15.32** In order to minimise the impact on climate change, waste management facilities should incorporate opportunities to be attached to the district heating network and/or incorporate opportunities for energy recovery and combined heat and power, see Part 1(j). In instances where this is not feasible, an energy statement must be submitted with the planning application demonstrating that it is not technically feasible or economically viable.

## Policy links

- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality
- Policy D.ES4: Flood risk
- Policy D.ES5: Sustainable drainage
- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel
- Policy D.TR2: Impacts on the transport network

## Evidence links

- Environment Agency Waste Interrogator

**Policy D.MW3****Waste collection facilities in new development**

1. All new development must include sufficient accessible space to separate and store dry recyclables, organics and residual waste for collection, both within individual units and for the building as a whole.
2. New major residential developments must incorporate high quality on-site waste collection systems that do not include traditional methods of storage and collection and are compatible with our waste collection methods outlined in Appendix 4. In instances where this is not practicable, supporting evidence must be submitted with the application to demonstrate this.

**Explanation**

**15.33** This policy will help to ensure that waste is collected and managed in a sustainable manner in line with the principles of the waste management hierarchy as set out in Figure 16. It is also intended to increase the amount of waste which can be recycled and composted from all developments, and to improve waste collection systems in developments with communal waste facilities. Tower Hamlets is working towards meeting the London Plan target of recycling/composting 50% of household waste by 2020 and 60% by 2031. In 2015, only 27% of household waste was reused, recycled or composted in Tower Hamlets and this needs to increase.

**15.34** This policy seeks to ensure that dry recyclables, organics and residual waste can be segregated, and for residential developments bulked, at source within new developments to:

- a. minimise transport movements from waste collection operations
- b. minimise the financial and operational burden on existing waste collection system
- c. maximise efficient use of collection resources
- d. encourage recycling behaviour by residents and reduce

- contamination of recyclables collected, and
- e. make a positive impact on the quality of the street scene.

**15.35** Incorporating sufficient waste storage capacity within new developments should be done from the outset to avoid capacity shortfalls or inadequate services. Applicants will need to forecast how much organic, recyclable and residual waste will be generated when the development is occupied and demonstrate that sufficient space has been allocated to the storage and/or bulking of this waste in both individual units and for the development as a whole.

**15.36** Tower Hamlets is seeking to move away from the traditional waste storage methods, such as standard wheeled bins, bagged collections and Euro bin containers, towards central bulking systems particularly for residential developments that require communal waste collection facilities. Using larger containers than standard bins and communal Euro bins, means more waste can be stored before needing collection and more waste can be collected in a single round. As a general rule, all of the systems using bulk containers allow waste to be stored in a smaller footprint than standard communal Euro bins. The location of storage containers should be chosen to maximise operational convenience and minimise environmental, amenity and transport impacts.

**15.37** Under Part 2 of the policy, new major residential developments will be expected to incorporate on-site waste collection systems that do not incorporate the traditional storage and collection and are compatible with our waste collection services. Such systems could include compactors, underground storage containers, vacuum systems and automated waste collection systems. These systems require land to be set aside to store bulked waste materials, with the size and footprint of the space varying from system to system. Preference should be given to systems that can provide for a weekly collection service as a minimum and can collect organic wastes separately or facilitate onsite composting. Applicants should discuss options with our team that manages waste collection prior to the submission of an application.

**15.38** In instances where it is not practicable or we consider it inappropriate for non-traditional waste collection systems to be incorporated within the development, the developer or managing agent will have to provide adequate space as well as collection containers that are in accordance with our waste management requirements set out in Appendix 4.

**15.39** Planning applications should clearly set out the access route of the occupiers and the servicing vehicles, including a clear swept path in accordance with our waste collection specifications, and access arrangements to container stores. The waste storage area must be designed to ensure that refuse vehicles are able to enter and exit the highway in a forward gear and perform all collection activities within the curtilage of the site. Applicants are advised to contact our team that manages the collection of waste prior to submitting a planning application and adopt a collaborative approach to ensure these arrangements are in line with our waste collection services. Further advice is available in Appendix 4.

**15.40** In the case of large-scale development (i.e. 100 or more residential units or 20 or more Euro container bins), applications should be accompanied by a recycling and waste management strategy which considers the above matters and demonstrates the ability to meet local authority waste management targets, and demonstrate compliance with the standards set out in Appendix 4.

## Policy links

- Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality
- Policy D.ES4: Flood risk
- Policy D.ES5: Sustainable drainage
- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel
- Policy R.TR2: Impacts on the transport network

## Evidence links

- Waste Management Planning Advice for New Flatted Properties (London Waste and Recycling Board, 2014)



## 16. Improving connectivity and travel choice

### Introduction

**16.1** Tower Hamlets is a well-connected part of London; it enjoys an extensive public transport network and will benefit from a step change in transport capacity, including improvements to the Docklands Light Railway and London Underground as well as the opening of the Elizabeth line stations at Whitechapel and Canary Wharf (as set out in Figure 17). However, planned growth in new homes and jobs, coupled with London's overall growth, will significantly increase resident, commuter and freight movement within and through the borough. This will create further pressure on the transport network which is already at or close to saturation in some parts of the borough at peak times, as well as adversely affect air quality and the natural environment.

**16.2** As a result, congestion and overcrowding of the transport network are amongst the most significant challenges facing Tower Hamlets, which have the potential to significantly affect development density and economic activity in the borough. Growth is dependent on the successful implementation of a first-class sustainable transport network to move people, goods and services. Planned improvements will go some way to alleviate pressure on the existing network, but recent studies have identified that further investment in infrastructure will be required to support the level of growth which is expected to come forward during the plan period<sup>75</sup>. In addition, the health implications of physical inactivity is also an important local issue, which the promotion of active travel can help to address in accordance with the Mayor of London's 'healthy streets' initiative.

**16.3** These factors underscore the importance of delivering a more connected and efficient transport network across Tower Hamlets that supports the population, reduces the need to travel and incentivises a modal shift to cycling, walking and public transport. Development must manage its impact on the entire network to ensure it contributes positively to the health and well-being of residents, employees and visitors across the borough.

**16.4** This section contains the following policies:

- Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel
- Policy D.TR2: Impacts on the transport network
- Policy D.TR3: Parking and permit-free
- Policy D.TR4: Sustainable delivery and servicing.



<sup>75</sup> Tower Hamlets Strategic Transport Assessment (2016)

## Policy S.TR1

### Sustainable travel

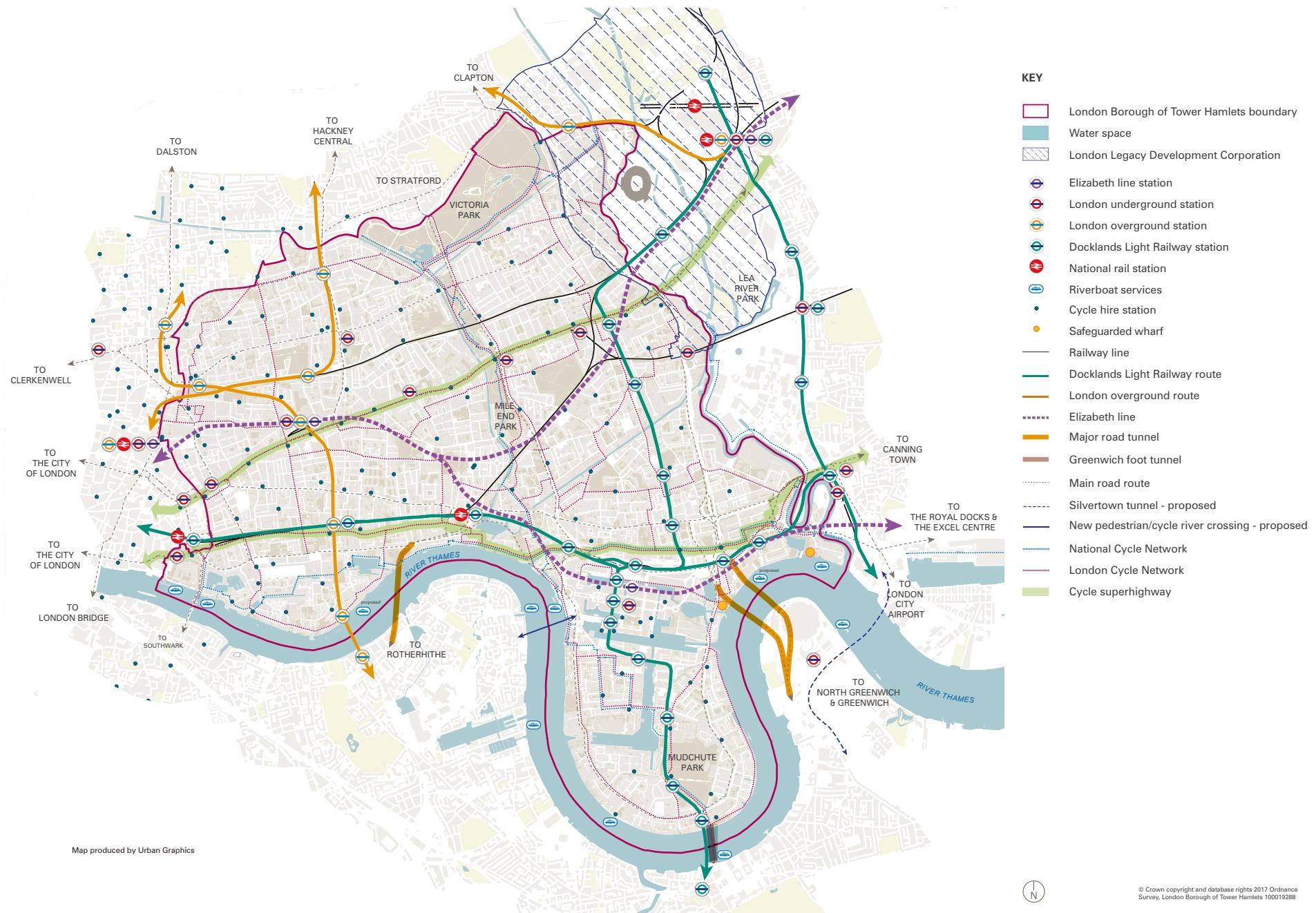
1. Travel choice (including connectivity and affordability) and sustainable travel will be improved within the borough and to other parts of London, and beyond. Development will therefore be expected to:
  - a. prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists as well as access to public transport, including river transport, before vehicular modes of transport
  - b. be integrated effectively alongside public transport, walking and cycling routes to maximise sustainable travel across the borough
  - c. be focused within areas with high levels of public transport accessibility and the town centre hierarchy, in respect of developments generating significant levels of trips, and
  - d. not adversely impact the capacity, quality, accessibility and safety of the transport network in the borough.
2. Where appropriate, development must support and safeguard land for transport and freight infrastructure enhancements to meet the demands arising from future growth, including improvement to capacity, connectivity, quality and interchanges across the network.

### Explanation

**16.5** In order to address the significant issues surrounding highway congestion, poor air quality and capacity constraints across the public transport network, a number of strategic and local transport improvements are underway or planned. However, further infrastructure investment will be required to accommodate the predicted population and employment growth, and in some locations, development could be significantly hindered without appropriate enhancements to the transport network.



**Figure 17: Strategic transport connectivity**



**16.6** Tower Hamlets has low car ownership ratio with only 37% of households owning one or more cars, compared to 43% across London<sup>76</sup>. This correlates with travel-to-work data which indicates that residents favour sustainable modes, such as public transport (60%), walking or cycling (26%). The level of journeys to work by car, at 12%, is lower than the London average, at 30%<sup>77</sup>. This reinforces the need for developers to prioritise sustainable travel in the design and delivery of their schemes, particularly walking, cycling and public transport, helping to relieve congestion, reduce air pollution and improve journey times.

**16.7** This policy seeks to manage growth to ensure it does not increase traffic congestion and crowding on public transport due to trip generation from developments as well as through-trips. The location of development close to services and amenities; integration with the transport network; prioritising the most sustainable forms of travel; and facilitating and enabling behaviour change away from car use are crucial factors in accommodating the predicted population and economic changes over the plan period.

**16.8** Part 1(a) promotes walking, cycling and public transport as a primary means of travelling. In order to ensure compliance with green grid policies (S.OWS1 and D.OWS3), development should incorporate an improved pedestrian and cycling environment that is safe, accessible and permeable both within the borough and into neighbouring boroughs. It also identifies the necessity to link development to the borough's strategic walk network and cycling network in accordance with the borough's adopted cycle strategy, particularly strategic cycle routes, as well as the need to improve access to river transport (see Figure 17), where possible.

**16.9** Part 1(b) ensures that development supports the use of and connects to public transport, cycling and walking facilities that surround the site. The design, management and operation of a development should encourage its users to travel in a sustainable manner; it should also be permeable and provide links to existing or planned infrastructure as well as relevant on-site infrastructure, such as bicycle storage, workplace showers and changing facilities.

**16.10** Part 1(c) identifies the need for development to be located in an area appropriate to the trips it generates. The scale of any development must reflect the level of public transport available. Transport for London (TfL) has mapped the Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL) across the whole of London; this is a measure of accessibility to the public transport network. In Tower Hamlets, ratings range from highly accessible areas – such as Canary Wharf, Whitechapel, Bethnal Green, Bow and Mile End - to areas with lower levels of public transport accessibility, including parts of the Lower Lea Valley. The scale of development should also have regard to the town centre hierarchy set out in Policy STC1, whereby development densities should consider the availability of nearby shops, services and amenities, thereby reducing the need to travel.

**16.11** Part 1(d) seeks to ensure that development does not cause an unduly detrimental impact to the safety and efficient operations of existing transport networks, once appropriate mitigation measures have been taken into account. In particular, it is important that development does not:

- a. compromise the safety of the highway user and/or the ability of public transport providers to safely operate services which includes consideration of adequate driver welfare facilities and bus stands
- b. increase demand on the borough's transport networks beyond operational limits and/or capacity

<sup>76</sup> Travel in London, Report 9 (Transport for London, 2016) - 2015/16 figure

<sup>77</sup> Travel in London, Report 9 (Transport for London, 2016) - 2015/16 figure

- c. bring about a reduction in the quality of stations, stops or services, or
- d. restrict access to the same services.

**16.12** Development is expected to be well-integrated with the public transport network and contribute to its efficient running and service improvements. Developers should ensure they engage early with relevant bodies (e.g. Transport for London) in order to establish the likely impacts and/or appropriate mitigation measures to be funded through developer contributions in accordance with Policy D.SG5.

**16.13** Part 2 identifies the role of development in supporting improvements and enhancements to the borough's transport and freight infrastructure (including safeguarded wharves and consolidation centres). Applicants should work with us to support planned and future transport initiatives that underpin new growth; and any development that adversely affects or planned infrastructure improvements will not be supported.

**16.14** We will work in partnership with neighbouring boroughs, Transport for London and other agencies (e.g. Highways England) to understand and address the future transport needs of the borough. The list below sets out a number of planned interventions that are required to support the borough's transport network<sup>78</sup>.

- Delivery of the Elizabeth line
- Enhancements to bus services and the Dockland Light Railway
- Improved river services and potential new piers at Wapping, Canary Wharf East and Trinity Buoy Wharf
- New cycle infrastructure, including the Mayor of London's cycle hire network
- New pedestrian and cycle connections, including a new pedestrian bridge and cycle crossing between Canary Wharf and Rotherhithe and other river crossings.

<sup>78</sup> These are identified in the Tower Hamlets Strategic Transport Assessment (2016).

**16.15** The list is not exhaustive and new interventions will arise from other transport strategies and assessments alongside regional policies, such as the Mayor of London's Vision for Cycling in London, the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy and Transport for London's own infrastructure delivery plans. Development may also be required to contribute financially towards new transport infrastructure and improvements in accordance with Policy D.SG1.

### Policy links

- Policy S.SG1: Areas of growth and opportunity within Tower Hamlets
- Policy S.SG2: Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- Policy D.SG4: Planning and construction of new development
- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- Policy S.TC1: Supporting the network and hierarchy of centres
- Policy D.OWS3: Open space and green grid network
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality
- Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough

### Evidence links

- Tower Hamlets Cycling Strategy (2016)
- Mayor of London Transport Strategy (GLA, 2017)
- Tower Hamlets Water Space Study (2017)

## Policy D.TR2

### Impacts on the transport network

1. Major development and any development that is likely to have a significant impact on the transport network will be required to submit a transport assessment or transport statement as part of the planning application.
2. Development that will have an adverse impact to traffic congestion on the highway network and/or the operation of public transport (including crowding levels) will be required to contribute and deliver appropriate transport infrastructure and/or effective mitigation measures.

### Explanation

**16.16** This policy seeks to address the impact that development has (both individually and cumulatively) on the transport network, particularly issues of congestion, air quality, severance, safety and/or accessibility for cyclists and pedestrians. In doing so, it sets out how development should accurately and robustly assess the severity of impact it has on existing transport infrastructure and services, including the approach taken to mitigate any adverse impact on capacity, connectivity and congestion.

**16.17** Current congestion levels in many parts of the borough are severe and the interconnectedness of the highway network - whether local or strategic – plays a significant role in contributing to this congestion. A development's impact on congestion is not just a matter of building size but depends on its location, use, design, density and operational factors (for instance, a relatively small development could be judged to have a severe impact if it generates a high number of vehicle trips and/or is in a sensitive location). Given the significant capacity constraints on the public transport and highway network, any development that generates a net increase in vehicle trips has the potential to have a severe impact on the safety and operation of this network within Tower Hamlets.

**16.18** Part 1 seeks to ensure applications provide an independent, objective and accurate transport assessment or transport statement appropriate to the scale of development. A transport assessment or statement must be prepared in accordance with the most up-to-date guidance from Transport for London. The level of detail required will be dependent on the type and scale of the development. Applicants/developers should seek pre-application advice to determine whether a transport assessment or statement will be required. A transport assessment should be submitted with a draft construction management and logistics plan and a delivery and servicing plan.

**16.19** A transport statement is a simpler document that identifies the impact and assesses its significance in conjunction with more modest mitigation measures; therefore, it is appropriate for smaller developments. A transport statement may require a construction management and logistics plan or a delivery and servicing plan depending on the type of land use and its location; this should also be established in conjunction with our transport and development management teams at the pre-application stage.

**16.20** Transport assessments and statements will be required to provide detailed information on the range of transport users and modes, including the movement of people and goods, both before and after a proposed development has been constructed. A transport assessment or statement should identify and address transport impacts on all modes of transport and set out the measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate identified impacts of the development.

**16.21** Applicants/developers should also submit a travel plan alongside the planning application, where appropriate. The scale of development and the level of impact determined by the transport assessment or statement will dictate the type and scope of the travel plan. Transport for London provides guidance that sets out the requirements for each type of travel plan. Such plans must be action-orientated and provide a long term strategy to meet sustainable transport objectives. They should contain a package of measures that will minimise the number of

car-borne trips (e.g. restricting car parking provision), encourage use of sustainable transport and reduce the need to travel to and from the development. Travel plans must set targets, objectives and provide detail on implementation, funding and monitoring.

**16.22** Part 2 seeks to ensure that development does not exacerbate or overload transport networks through trips associated with its uses. Where appropriate, conditions and/or planning contributions will be sought through Section 106 monies to secure mitigation measures required to make a development acceptable in transport terms. This is in addition to community infrastructure levy contributions which fund transport infrastructure improvements on a borough-wide scale. All contributions towards new transport infrastructure improvements must be in accordance with Policy D.SG5 and the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

**16.23** Areas in the borough anticipated to accommodate higher levels of the population and economic growth such as the Isle of Dogs and City Fringe are where existing highway and/or public transport demand is already close to or exceeding supply during peak travel times. Other areas of the borough also experience local highway or public transport stress during these times. Development that increases demand without appropriate mitigation (including infrastructure contributions to service improvements and/or delivering effective modal shift) will not be supported.

## Policy links

- Policy S.SG2: Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- Policy D.SG4: Planning and construction of new development
- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality
- Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough
- Policy D.MW2: New and enhanced waste facilities

## Evidence links

- Travel Plan Guidance (Transport for London, 2013)



## Policy D.TR3

### Parking and permit-free

1. Development is required to comply with the parking standards for vehicles and bicycles set out in Appendix 3.
2. Residential development is required to be permit-free in terms of on-street car parking. All parking associated with a development will be required to be located off-street.
3. Development is required to prioritise sustainable approaches to any parking through ensuring:
  - a. Priority is given to space for cycle parking
  - b. The allocation of car-club spaces
  - c. There are sufficient electric-charging points
  - d. Any parking spaces are distributed across all tenure types with priority given to family homes and accessible properties, and
  - e. Where suitable, publicly-accessible shared cycle hire scheme docking station(s) are provided as part of the development (or through a financial contribution).



### Explanation

**16.24** This policy seeks to ensure that parking is controlled and managed both on-street and off-street to facilitate sustainable travel patterns and address congestion. Minimising car parking provision releases space to accommodate other more efficient uses, such as housing, employment, community facilities, play areas, amenity spaces and cycle parking.

**16.25** Demand for on-street parking exceeds capacity, creating a significant amount of stress across the borough's street network. This demand has also increased significantly in recent years as a result of population growth. In addition, the issue of on-street parking outside of controlled hours (usually overnight and at weekends) often overcrowds streets; results in unacceptable safety and accessibility issues for vulnerable road users; and, in some cases, restricts traffic flows and increases journey times.

**16.26** Due to excessive on-street parking and land use intensification, the borough does not have the capacity for development to come forward that does not manage its own parking within the curtilage of the site.

**16.27** However, we recognise that some people, businesses and organisations rely on private vehicle use as their only transport option. If car parking is essential, it must be fully justified in the transport assessment (in line with the parking standards in Appendix 3) and provided entirely on-site.

**16.28** Any development seeking to make alterations to on-street parking and/or loading must be fully justified and will only be permitted where there is proven on-street capacity. Any permitted changes must be fully funded by the developer.

**16.29** Part 1 directs applicants and developers to the detailed parking standards for vehicles and bicycles in Appendix 3. A sufficient amount of cycle parking should be provided to accommodate current demand

and to encourage further use over time. Design of cycle parking has been extensively covered in the Transport for London's Cycle Design Standards and developers are required to take account of this when designing cycle facilities.

**16.30** Parking may be required for those with accessibility or wheelchair needs; and accessible parking bay provision should form a proportion of the overall parking provision (as calculated using the Mayor of London's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance). In applying the residential parking standards (see Appendix 3), applicants/developers should consider any future changes to public transport accessibility levels (PTAL) as a result of new infrastructure provision, particularly in areas of low public transport accessibility (PTAL 1 and 2). Furthermore, where development exceeds the PTAL density range set out in the London Plan, we will apply the parking standards in Appendix 3 based on the proposed density rather than the PTAL rating.

**16.31** Part 2 ensures that all residential development will be permit-free and any parking required must be provided off-street.

**16.32** Part 3 requires sustainable approaches to parking within new developments such as car clubs and pool car schemes; this space must be accommodated and designed before any other parking is considered. This will enable exemplary design and ensure the cycle parking provided is fit for purpose. Car clubs are cheaper alternatives to car ownership and will allow for occasional car use but discourage unnecessary car journeys.

**16.33** Development should also provide parking bays and charging points for electric vehicles, based on the standards and design principles set out in the London Plan.

**16.34** However, we recognise that residents, particularly those in affordable housing, do not always have the choice over where they live. As such, where development provides car parking, first priority should

be given to families (units of three or more bedrooms) and the disabled across all tenures in the development.

**16.35** A parking management plan that directs the occupiers as to how the parking will be managed, allocated and enforced may be a requirement where development includes vehicle parking.

**16.36** Around 80% of our residents live in flats, and much of this accommodation has extremely limited cycle parking, cycle storage or docking space. To increase access to cycling in the borough, we are working closely with the Mayor of London and Transport for London to extend the existing cycle hire scheme with new docking stations in appropriate locations. Where appropriate, development will be expected to safeguard land within the site where Transport for London has identified a need to accommodate publicly-accessible shared cycle-hire station(s).

**16.37** This policy must be read in conjunction with Policy D.TR4 and Appendix 3 to ensure that along with on-site parking provision, development provides adequate delivery and servicing facilities within the site as well as encouraging shared servicing arrangements and timing of deliveries.

### Policy links

- Policy S.SG2: Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- Policy D.SG5: Developer contributions
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality
- Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough

### Evidence links

- Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (GLA, 2016)
- London Cycling Design Standards (Transport for London, 2015)

## Policy D.TR4

### Sustainable delivery and servicing

1. Development that generates a significant number of vehicle trips for goods or materials during its construction and/or operational phases is required to demonstrate how:
  - a. impact to the transport network and amenity will be avoided, remedied or mitigated through transport assessments, construction management and logistic plans and delivery and servicing plans
  - b. delivery of goods and servicing will be provided within the site to encourage shared arrangements and timing of deliveries, unless demonstrated it can take place on-street without affecting highway safety or traffic flow
  - c. movement by water and/or rail; and the use of low emission vehicles, electric vehicles, bicycles and freight consolidation facilities have been prioritised, and
  - d. deliveries to sites will be reduced through suitable accommodation and management.
2. Development adjacent to safeguarded wharves and rail depots is required to ensure it does not compromise their operation.
3. Development of new wharves or other facilities for freight transfer between road, rail or water will be supported where these minimise impacts on the environment and neighbouring amenities.

### Explanation

**16.38** Deliveries and servicing are essential to the economic growth of the borough. By 2025, the continued growth of London is expected to result in a 15% increase in demand for freight and servicing<sup>79</sup>. These trips will add to traffic congestion and, if they are not managed and contained off the highway, will lead to blocking of both local and strategic roads whilst loading/unloading of goods takes place. This will significantly increase journey times, particularly for buses.

**16.39** Freight vehicles are typically some of the most polluting vehicles on our roads. Furthermore, the projected growth in the borough will lead to increased construction traffic and associated vehicles which tend to bring more pollution, noise and dust.

**16.40** This policy seeks to address the challenges the borough faces in ensuring the efficient, safe, timely and sustainable movement of goods and materials across the borough, whilst seeking to improve air quality and reduce impacts arising from the freight network such as accidents, spillages or wastes.

**16.41** As the proportion of cyclists and pedestrians has increased, pedestrian and cycle safety has become an area of increasing concern in Tower Hamlets, particularly given the rise in fatalities on busy arterial roads. Across London, nearly two-thirds of cyclist deaths and around a quarter of pedestrian deaths involve a heavy goods vehicle<sup>80</sup>. This policy seeks to reduce the impact of delivery, servicing and construction traffic on the environment and the health and well-being of residents in terms of noise disturbance and its contribution to road congestion and air pollution.

**16.42** Part 1 ensures that development generating a significant number of vehicle trips for goods or materials will be assessed in relation to its likely impact on the transport network and with reference to the most up-

<sup>79</sup> Transport 2025: Transport vision for a growing world city (Transport for London, 2013)

<sup>80</sup> New measures to rid London of dangerous lorries (Transport for London, September 2016)

to-date Transport for London guidance relating to deliveries, servicing and construction logistics. An assessment may also be required where a development has the potential to have a significant impact on the transport network. The level of assessment required will be decided through the development management process. Development will need to plan and manage its freight movements through the construction and operational phases of the development. Construction management plans and/or delivery and servicing plans are required to show how the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standard has been incorporated and that fleets serving the site have Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) silver accreditation.

**16.43** In addition, development will need to provide sufficient space for deliveries and servicing within the site curtilage and off the public highway (including refuse collection). If this is not practical then on-street provision may be considered so long as it:

- a. can be clearly demonstrated and adequately justified
- b. does not restrict traffic flows, or
- c. does not compromise the safety of other roads users.

**16.44** Development must seek to prioritise sustainable methods in the movement of goods and services, particularly sites with significantly greater delivery and servicing frequencies and sizes. Construction can make significant environmental and cost savings through more sustainable methods of recycling existing materials; this can significantly reduce freight movements by vehicles such as tipper trucks which tend to be more polluting and more hazardous to cyclists compared to other vehicles.

**16.45** Part 1(d) requires development to minimise the amount of deliveries it receives; this may be achieved through a number of measures in the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy and Transport for London's supporting documents. Residential development will require bespoke management and delivery accommodation when compared to commercial development. The rapid acceleration of internet shopping

has resulted in a significant growth of smaller light goods vehicles, which increase congestion and pollution at peak times as well as traditionally quieter times. Delivery vehicles to residential addresses often park on the highway causing traffic flow and safety concerns. This disruption increases with missed deliveries whereby the same address receives a second or third delivery attempt. Development should provide space for these deliveries and help ensure all such deliveries are completed on the first attempt.

**16.46** The borough's river and rail network represents an underused resource and priority should be given to utilising the railways, rivers and canals to facilitate the movement of waste and goods, particularly the safeguarded wharves such as Northumberland Wharf and Orchard Wharf (see Parts 2 and 3). The policy also requires adjacent development to recognise the role of wharves and depots and must not negatively impact their functions.

### Policy links

- Policy S.SG2: Delivering sustainable growth in Tower Hamlets
- Policy D.SG4: Planning and construction of new development
- Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm
- Policy S.EMP1: Creating investment and jobs
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality
- Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough
- Policy S.MW1: Managing our waste
- Policy D.MW2: New and enhanced waste facilities

### Evidence links

- Mayor of London's Transport Strategy (GLA, 2017)
- London Cycling Design Standards (Transport for London, 2015)
- Delivery and Servicing Plan Guidance (Transport for London)
- Construction Logistics Plans Guidance (Transport for London, 2017)