

3.5 Hackney Wick and Fish Island

Vision

To create a vibrant new part of east London that builds on the area's unique heritage, open space and waterside character and Olympic inheritance to create a diverse range of new employment and housing opportunities. A new mixed use hub will be created around an improved Hackney Wick station and the MUA to provide new employment, retail, community sport and housing offers for the area's growing communities, and the reuse or redevelopment of the IBC/MPC will support and develop the area's cultural and creative industries. All new development will be of exemplar design quality and promote green enterprise district objectives. New and improved bridges, connections and streets will be created across the Lee Navigation and A12 to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the metropolitan centre at Stratford, and to existing communities in Homerton, Bow, Roman Road and Mile End.

Scale of change

GLA strategic modelling indicates that the Wick and Fish Island Sub-area as a whole has the potential to accommodate around 6,000 new homes and 160,000 sq.m of new and improved business floorspace in its main areas of change. This would result in around 3,700 children and 6,400 jobs. This form and scale of development indicates a need for eight form entry of primary school provision, seven form entry of secondary school provision, eight GPs, additional dedicated community facilities and local open spaces. New development in the sub-area should incorporate or contribute towards this provision.

Context

This sub-area forms the western part of the OLSPG area and extends as far as Clapton, Homerton and Bow. It contains a wide variety of land uses. Clapton, Homerton and Bow are primarily residential areas whilst Hackney Wick and Fish Island retain a concentration of industrial activities and a growing cluster of artists and creative businesses.

The sub-area includes large areas of open space including Hackney Marshes, Mabley Green, South Mill Fields, Clapton Park and the eastern half of Victoria Park. After the Games these will be supplemented by the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, in turn linking to the wider open spaces of the Lee Valley Regional Park. The Olympic Handball Arena at Hackney Wick will provide a further leisure facility as a multi use arena for activities ranging from international competition to community sports.

The sub-area has many waterways and is crossed by the River Lea, Lee Navigation and the Hertford Union Canal, whose towpaths provide pedestrian and cycle connections. The waterways create a risk of flooding in parts of the area, although flood defences along the eastern bank of the River Lea will be improved for the Games and the water levels in the area can be managed by for example using infrastructure at Three Mills Lock.

Substantial transport infrastructure runs through the sub-area, including the North London Line and major roads including the A12, A11, Homerton Road, Roman Road and Lea Bridge Road. Several of these are heavily trafficked, and together with the area's waterways the effect is to create a series of significant barriers to movement. The Games will leave improved connections into the new Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and into Stratford, but further improvements will be required to overcome the strategic barriers.

A number of development sites will become available in Hackney Wick and Fish Island after the Games, and the Mayor of London and Hackney and Tower Hamlets councils envisage the managed transition of industrial land for mixed use development. Reuse of the Broadcast and Press Centres could provide over 90,000 sq.m of business space with the potential to generate thousands of new jobs.

The Games Energy Centre at Kings Yard will provide sustainable cooling, heat and power, and has the capacity to support new development in Hackney Wick and Fish Island.



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Fig. 3.5.1 Hackney Wick/Fish Island context

Development principles

Homes and Communities

Building neighbourhoods and communities

The sub-area provides a significant opportunity to introduce additional employment and residential uses that respect and sensitively respond to the area's historical buildings and character.

Clusters of new well designed higher intensity commercial and residential buildings should be focused around Hackney Wick station and potentially along parts of the Lee Navigation so as to optimise land use and take advantage of higher public transport accessibility levels (PTALs). New development should be designed to complement and enhance the existing heritage and character of the area which provide a sense of place.

The north and middle of Fish Island have the most potential for land use change, primarily from the managed transition of currently protected strategic industrial locations to residential and mixed use, and should provide an attractive and sustainable mix of creative, cultural and light industrial premises for small and medium enterprises as well as new community facilities and new local open spaces, though care will need to be taken to avoid amenity conflicts.

The development platform at Old Ford presents an outstanding opportunity to create a new family focused residential neighbourhood, which would benefit from excellent access to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Located at the junction of the Lee Navigation and the River Lea, the area benefits from generous water frontages as well as being within a prime location next to the open spaces of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and close to Hackney Wick hub. Together these features make it an ideal location for well-designed family housing which meet lifetime homes standards as well as community infrastructure.

Opportunities to provide family housing exist alongside the Hertford Union Canal and the Lee Navigation to take advantage of the unique waterside environments this sub-area provides. These opportunities should be developed and incorporated into local masterplans and ensure easy and safe access to the existing and new open spaces and community facilities.

The OPLC has submitted legacy proposals for the Olympic Park which include housing development to the south and east of the IBC/MPC within the adjoining Olympic Park sub-area. This could face onto and help frame the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, though any such proposal would need careful assessment in terms of land-use, design, amenity and impact on the retained SIL and other employment sites within Hackney Wick, as well as the quantum, quality and location of the new public open spaces required by the 2007 Olympic planning approval.

Provision of social infrastructure

This form and scale of development indicates a need for five form of entry primary school provision, five form entry secondary school provision, four GP whole time equivalents, additional dedicated community facilities and local open spaces. New development in the sub-area should incorporate or contribute towards this provision.

Business & Employment

The hub

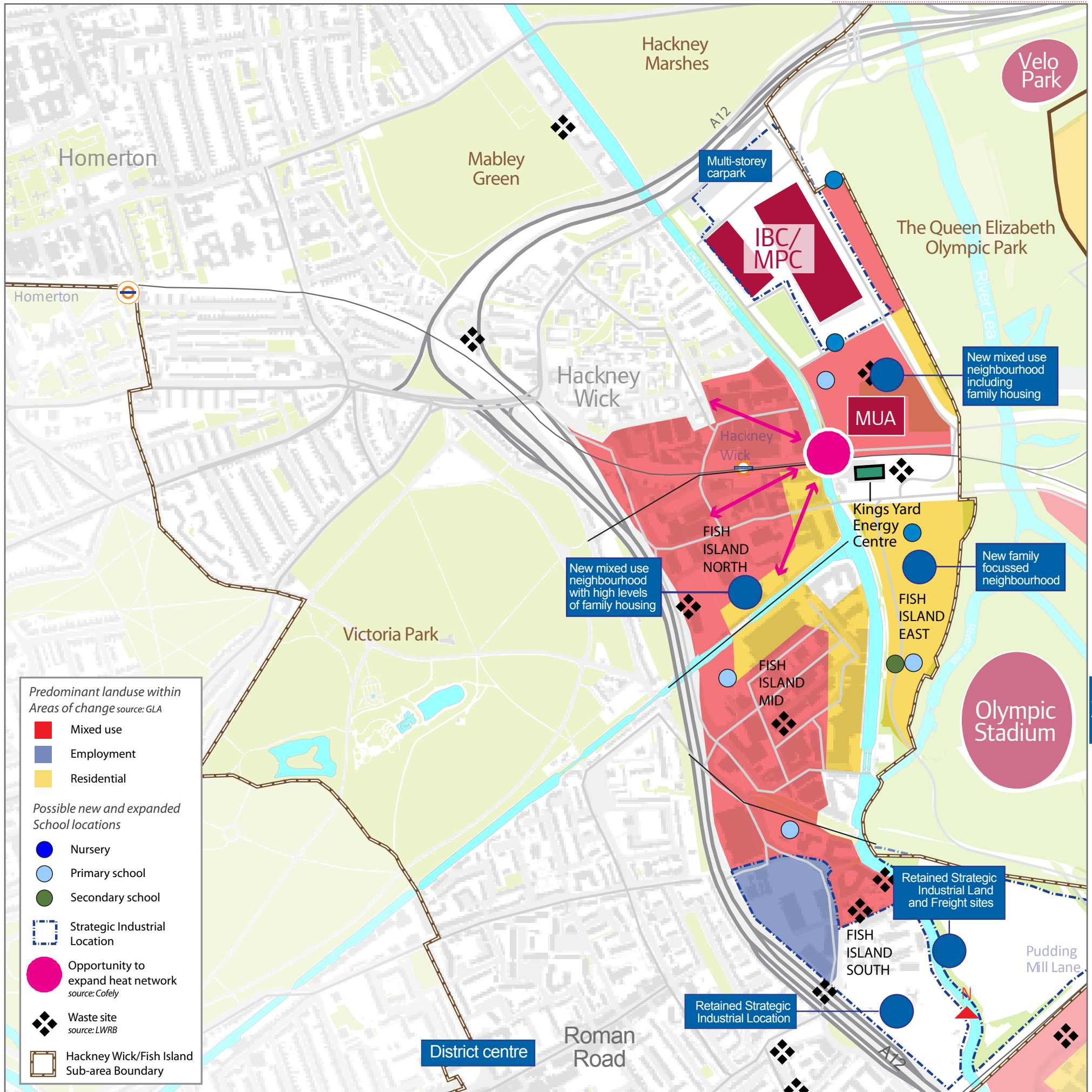
A new centre of activity will be created around Hackney Wick Station which will include a mix of uses including employment, residential, retail, culture and leisure uses that build upon and complement the existing character of the area.

New and emerging sectors

The Hackney Wick and Fish Island sub-area will provide a range of new and sustainable employment opportunities that contribute to a balanced economy across the OLSPG area. Improvements to transport, connectivity and digital infrastructure will make the area a desirable location for new and emerging businesses in the creative and cultural sectors, and small and micro businesses. After the Games, the retained or redeveloped IBC and MPC and its communication infrastructure should be used to help develop a high quality media and creative cluster, potentially of sub-regional or regional scale as part of the east London Tech City initiative, which could provide exhibition, studios, grow-on and incubation space for a range of creative and cultural businesses. Sites around the MUA also have the capacity to link into and support this initiative. Facilities suitable for small and medium size enterprises should also be provided, and new developments throughout the sub-area should offer tailored training and employment opportunities for local people.

Industrial Land

Some of the areas within Fish Island mid and Fish Island north currently designated as strategic industrial locations have the potential for de-designation to maximise the opportunities and benefits the Games' legacy will bring, as stated in emerging and adopted local development plan documents. Tower Hamlets council and the Mayor are working together to agree where the boundary of the retained SIL in the south of Fish Island should be set and the Mayor's position is set out in this guidance. In all cases care must be taken to protect the amenity of existing and new residents, particularly in Hackney Wick (north). The majority of the southern section of Fish Island should be retained as SIL to safeguard industrial uses and ensure that Tower Hamlets' sub-regional economic role is maintained. The northern section of the retained SIL could act as a physical buffer and transition zone to the more mixed use and residential areas to its north as envisaged in Tower Hamlets emerging AAP.⁴⁹ This would help mitigate potential conflict between the two areas.



3.5

Fig. 3.5.2 Hackney Wick/Fish Island land use



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Connectivity and transport

The 2012 Games present a unique opportunity to transform the sub-area, with new bridges and connections providing direct access from Fish Island and Hackney Wick to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Stratford. Improvements to the strategic and local movement network are required to make the area an easier place to access and move across and to support development.

Co-ordinating transport and land-use, and managing demand

Hackney Wick station will provide the main rail-based public transport access into the north-west of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and to its new and retained facilities. The LTGDC acquired land around the station and are working with landowners and planning authorities to radically transform the station and its surroundings to create a new focus or 'hub' for the area. This would include a redesigned and more accessible station entrance, a greatly improved public realm and cycle facilities. The possibility of creating a new north-south pedestrian link under the station should be explored by developers, landowners and planning authorities. If practical, a new north south pedestrian link under the station should also be provided to open up the area immediately around the station and improve connectivity.

Recent improvements now allow for a train every eight minutes in peak times at Hackney Wick and Homerton stations. The safeguarded Chelsea-Hackney line allows for a station at Homerton which would improve strategic connectivity and accessibility. The route is undergoing a review to ensure the scheme will provide the maximum benefit and value for money for London, and a number of options are currently being developed and tested before a preferred option is identified. These options may include an alignment that could improve accessibility to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and a new station at Hackney Wick.

Improvements should also be made to the Hackney Central and Hackney Downs interchange to create a direct pedestrian link to support an increase in use of public transport and enable access to a wider range of services and employment for users.

Improving connectivity and overcoming barriers to movement

The A12 currently forms a major barrier to east-west movement within the sub-area and this guidance identifies a number of projects and initiatives that can help reduce its adverse impact. New bus infrastructure should be introduced around the A12 to enable improved bus services as demand increases as well as to help reduce reliance on car travel.

A number of new bridges will be provided connecting Fish Island west over the Lee Navigation to Fish Island east, and further connections linking Fish Island east, over the River Lea to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

A widened Eastway bridge will provide very important access between Hackney Wick and the IBC/MPC site and is perceived by the Mayor and both Hackney and Newham councils as providing essential connectivity to this area. In addition the White Post Lane Bridge that is currently closed will reopen for pedestrians and cyclists (with controlled access for local businesses), and a new land bridge will link from the east marsh over Ruckholt Road and the A12 connecting Hackney Marshes directly to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Provision should be made for a cycle ramp on the western side of Bridge H10

North-south connections along the River Lea and Lee Navigation should be improved and a wayfinding strategy developed to support walking and cycling. Additional improvements should also include new pedestrian and cycle links across the Hertford Union Canal and Lee Navigation as well as improvements to the sub-regional pedestrian and cycling connections between Mile End Road and Victoria Park.

The Sub-area also includes two important strategic rail freight Sites,⁵⁰ at Bow East and Bow West located to the south of Fish Island and north of Pudding Mill Lane, which whilst needed in strategic transport terms should be safeguarded to enable existing transport operations to be maintained and to allow for future expansion. Should all or part of these sites no longer be required to meet strategic freight or transport needs, alternative SIL uses such as waste or energy infrastructure could be appropriate.

Sustainable development

Waste

Tower Hamlets' Core Strategy identifies the southern part of Fish Island as being one of four areas of search for a new waste management facility within the borough. This is consistent with the Mayor's Green Enterprise District objectives.

Energy

The Olympic Energy Centre at Kings Yard provides the opportunity for new developments in the sub-area to connect to the wider energy network for the OLSPG area and the possibility of a waste facility in Fish Island providing additional fuel for the Olympic Park Energy Centre should continue to be explored by developers, land owners and planning authorities.

Flooding

Parts of the Hackney Wick and Fish Island sub-area are in the flood plain of the River Lea and are at risk of both fluvial and fluvial flooding (from the Thames Estuary). The boroughs and the Mayor of London are committed to working with the Environmental Agency and other key development partners to develop and implement strategic approaches to reduce and mitigate flood risk in this area.

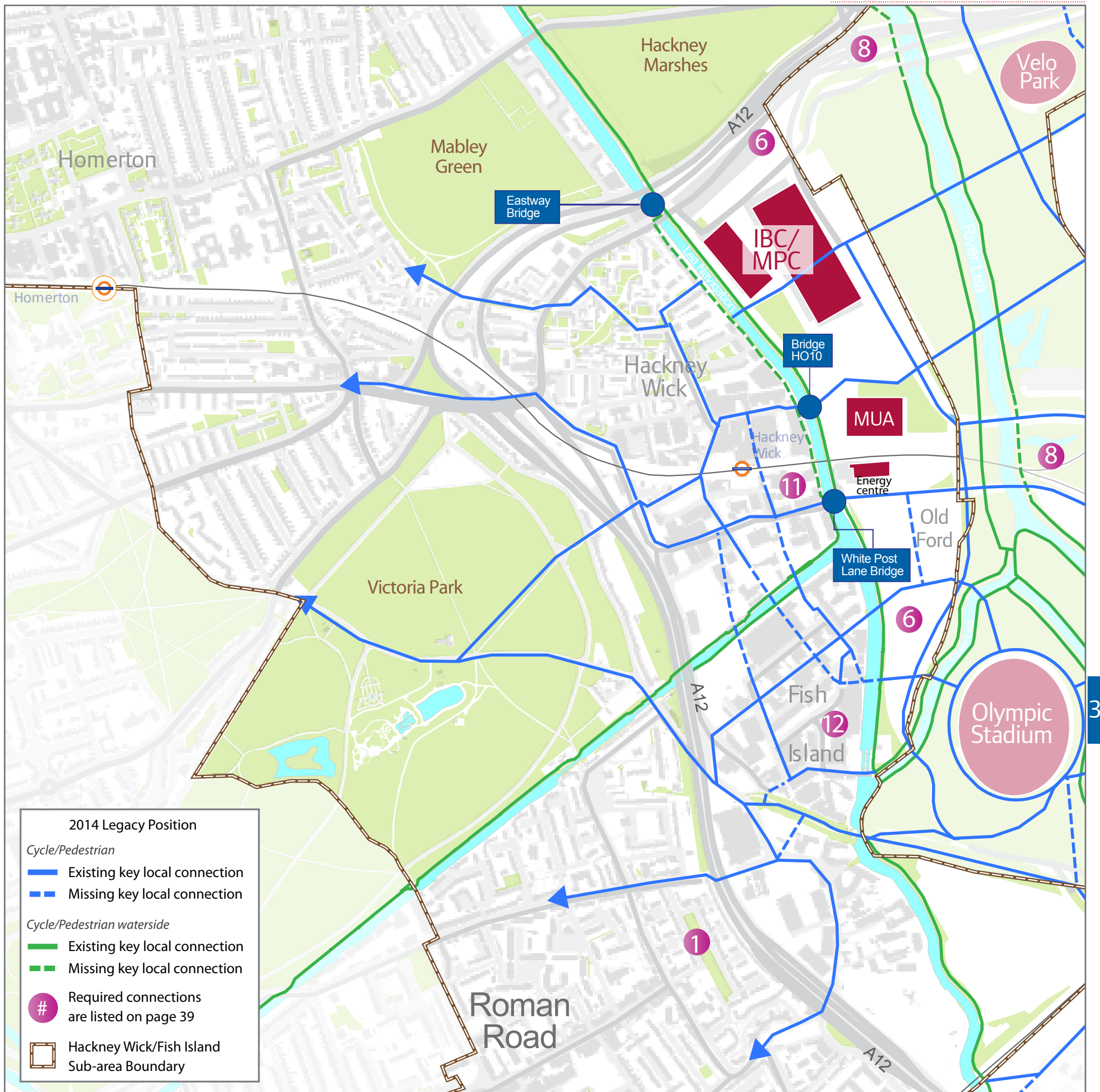


Fig. 3.5.3 Hackney Wick/Fish Island key local connections

Urban Form

Heritage led renewal and local character

The area's yards and historic buildings should be used to help define the scale and form of new development in Fish Island and Hackney Wick. Development in the area should protect, enhance and respond to the character, setting, scale and urban grain of the area defined by the warehouses, industrial buildings and heritage of the area. The conservation areas in the sub-area will provide a framework for the management of development within and adjacent to their boundaries.

Open space

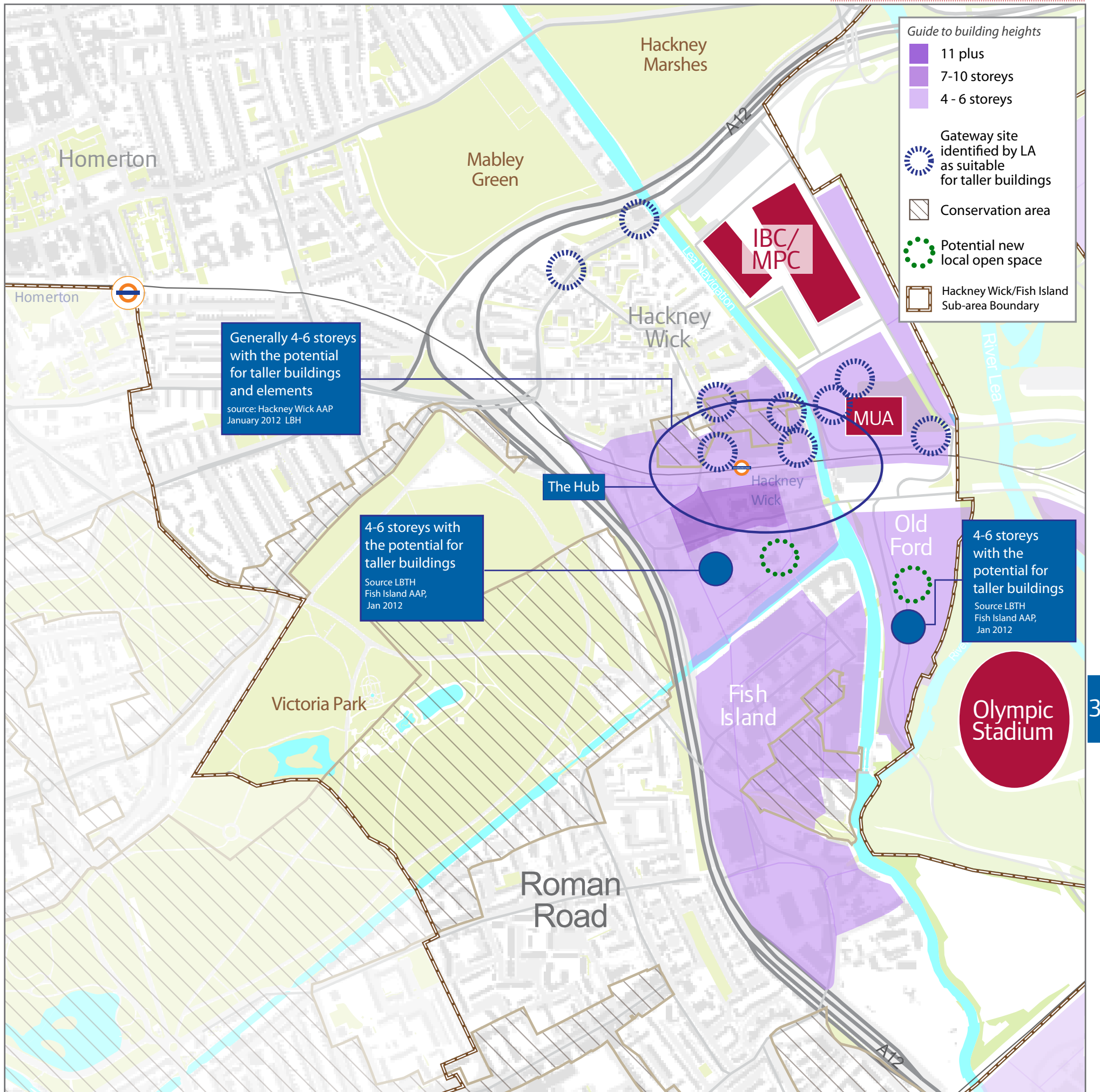
The area has good access to metropolitan open land, which will include both the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to the east, and Victoria Park to the west, as well as Hackney and Walthamstow Marshes to the north. The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park will form the core of the public open space embedded in the main 2007 Olympic planning approval, which requires 102 ha of open space provided capable of designation as metropolitan open land and available for amenity and recreational purposes. However the area will require additional local and neighbourhood parks to ensure existing and future residents will have access to open spaces of a range of types and functions. New public open spaces will be required within Fish Island and Hackney Wick which should provide a mix of soft and hard landscaped areas suitable for sport and relaxation. These new spaces will contribute to and connect with the wider network of open spaces and streets within the sub-area and the wider OLSPG area, as set out in Green Grid documents.⁵¹ Smaller areas of publicly accessible open space should be integrated into development sites around the Hub as defined by the existing industrial character of the area.

Use of the waterways

The waterfronts of the Lee Navigation, the Hertford Union Canal and the River Lea are one of the key assets of the sub-area. At suitable locations development along these waterways will provide an opportunity to physically and/or visually open up the canals to new activity.



Figure 3.5.4 Hackney Wick/Fish Island Sub-area - emerging urban form



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Figure 3.5.5 Hackney Wick/Fish Island urban form



3.6 Northern Olympic Fringe

Vision

To regenerate and to renew the neighbourhoods of Lea Bridge, Leyton, and Chobham by providing new links into the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the wider Lee Valley Regional Park, and the new employment and retail opportunities at Stratford. This will be supported by new residential uses, enhanced open spaces, employment generators and retail opportunities. The retail centre at Leyton Mills will be revitalised by the introduction of additional town centre uses, including residential, and further public transport improvements will improve accessibility from the north.

Scale of Change

GLA strategic modelling indicates that the Northern Olympic Fringe Sub-area as a whole has the potential to accommodate around 3,000 new homes and 110,000 sq.m of new and improved business floorspace in its main areas of change. This would result in around 1,900 children and 4,400 jobs. This form and scale of development indicates a need for four form entry of primary school provision, four form entry secondary school provision, four GPs, additional dedicated community facilities and new local open spaces. New development in the sub-area should incorporate or contribute towards this provision.

Context

The Northern Olympic Fringe (NOF) sub-area generally follows the southern boundary of Waltham Forest and includes Leyton, Sidmouth Park, and parts of Leytonstone, Lea Bridge and Chobham. It forms the north-eastern element of this guidance and is characterised by Victorian terraced streets to the north, and a variety of protected open spaces to the west. Other distinct areas include the Walthamstow and Leyton Marshes, a number of established industrial estates along Argall Way, and gasholders and playing fields adjoining Orient Way in the north. There is considerable railway infrastructure running northwest to southeast that includes sidings and a large Eurostar engineering depot. New Spitalfields wholesale market is to the south. The Leyton Mills retail park and nearby Leyton station lie to the east of the sub-area.

Main roads within the area include the A12, Leyton High Road, Lea Bridge Road, Ruckholt Way and Orient Way. Several of these roads carry heavy traffic and create significant barriers to pedestrian and cycle movements. This is compounded by New Spitalfields Market and the railway infrastructure focused at Temple Mills, combining to create significant barriers to east-west and north-south movement through the area.

The A12 also has a significant negative impact on the physical environment. The Lea Valley pathway traverses the area from the reservoir in the north, into the Hackney Marshes and beyond in the south.

The sub-area includes a significant section of the Lee Valley Regional Park including Walthamstow Marshes an important nature reserve to the north of the sub-area, Low Hall sports ground to the east, and a range of important regional sporting, leisure and visitor facilities along Lea Bridge Road, including the LVRPA's ice centre, riding centre and waterworks centre as well as additional nature reserves. These provide important regional facilities and valuable resource for sporting, recreational, culture, nature conservation activities Other important open spaces include Marsh Lane fields; Ive Farm; the Lammas land park; Seymour playing fields, allotments and Drapers Field and Eton Manor. The River Lea and Dagenham Brook run north to south through the sub-area.

The sub-area will inherit some important physical infrastructure from the games, including improvements to the playing fields at Drapers Field and the creation of a number of new connections into the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park area from the north.

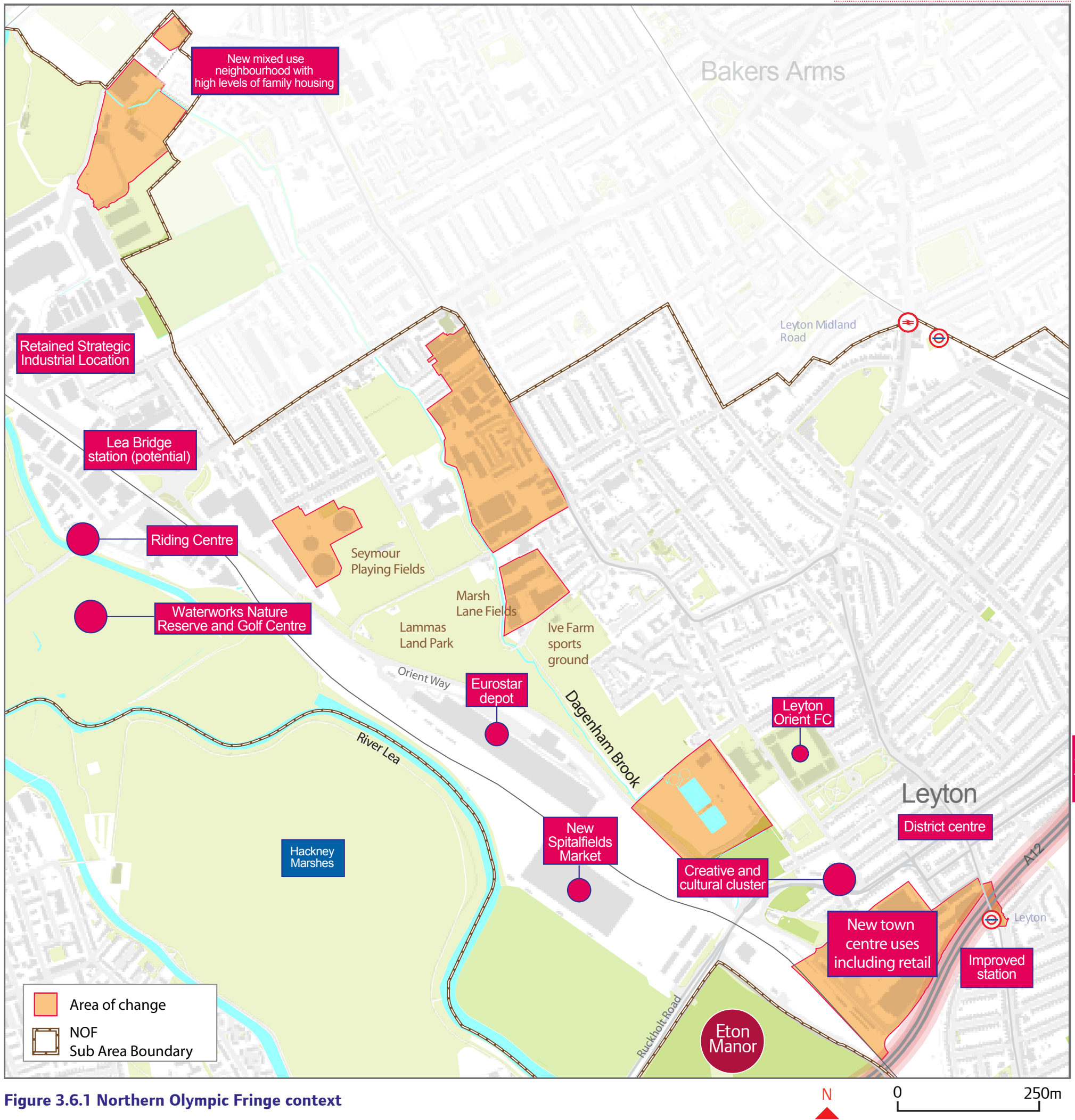
Development principles

Homes and communities

Building neighbourhoods and communities

Other uses, particularly residential could be introduced into Leyton Mills to create a more balanced new neighbourhood and help deliver public realm improvements. A new green link between Leyton Mills and Eton Manor should be provided to overcome existing severance. Waltham Forest council would expect financial contributions towards the cost of a new footbridge into Eton Manor from Leyton Mills. This would provide direct access into the Olympic Park from Leyton and greatly improve the connections between the new and existing communities; and upgrade Leyton Underground station. Options and costs should be explored through feasibility work.

Leyton Mills has the potential to accommodate taller buildings, potentially in the form of a landmark building. Taller buildings may also be suitable along the A12, to the west of Leyton Orient Football Club, and towards the railway tracks. Appropriate tall buildings might optimise the use of land that has better access to services and transport, dropping down in scale as they approach the adjoining lower scale residential properties.



3.6

Figure 3.6.1 Northern Olympic Fringe context

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New residential uses could also come forward on underutilised employment sites around Church Road. For the most part, new housing should reflect the character of the area, although there may be scope for more significant development around the gasholders and adjacent to retained employment uses.

Leyton Mills Retail Park has significant potential for change by large-scale urban design improvements and the introduction of housing. Higher levels of family housing should be provided on the areas identified on Figure 2.A.2 in order to capitalise on the new green link to Eton Manor sports grounds, Coronation Gardens open space and the marshes more generally. Access to quality open space is an important consideration to inform the location of family housing. Significant land use change should be focused on a relatively small number of areas of change, which would mean that the existing predominantly residential areas would remain largely unchanged, although many parts of the area would benefit from the improved connectivity that this guidance promotes. Some of the areas of change the OLSPG identifies will also incorporate non residential uses as set out in Waltham Forest's adopted Northern Olympic Fringe Area Action Plan.

Provision of social infrastructure

New residential development should also provide social infrastructure in line with the principle of convergence, (including primary and secondary school provision and primary health care). These facilities should provide additional uses or access to the wider community beyond their core function. The Waltham Forest council has particular concerns that the Chobham Academy will not be able to meet the pressure of an existing acute shortfall of school places as a result of the housing growth the OLSPG promotes and has reinforced the need for new developments to contribute to the provision of sufficient social infrastructure and highway infrastructure to cater for the needs of the local community.⁵²

Sporting legacy

The Northern Olympic Fringe will be connected with the open spaces and sports facilities within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park through improved pedestrian access and connections. Maximising the local use of any proposed open spaces, sports and leisure facilities at Eton Manor and Chobham Farm as part of the Olympic sporting legacy will be central to this. The continued use as open area recreation of existing playing fields such as Drapers Fields and those at Marsh Lane should be promoted. In addition, access and views into the Lee Valley Regional Park will be promoted so as to connect it to the wider area.

Business and employment

Leyton Town Centre

Leyton town centre is at the heart of the Northern Olympic Fringe, and its development potential and proximity to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and its legacy means that development and connectivity promoted in this area will be a key to ensuring convergence. The Mayor and Waltham Forest council both have ambitions to promote the diverse and mixed retail character of the area, to improve the public realm, to better integrate Leyton with the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to secure new social infrastructure and to consider the potential for taller landmark buildings at highly accessible sites.

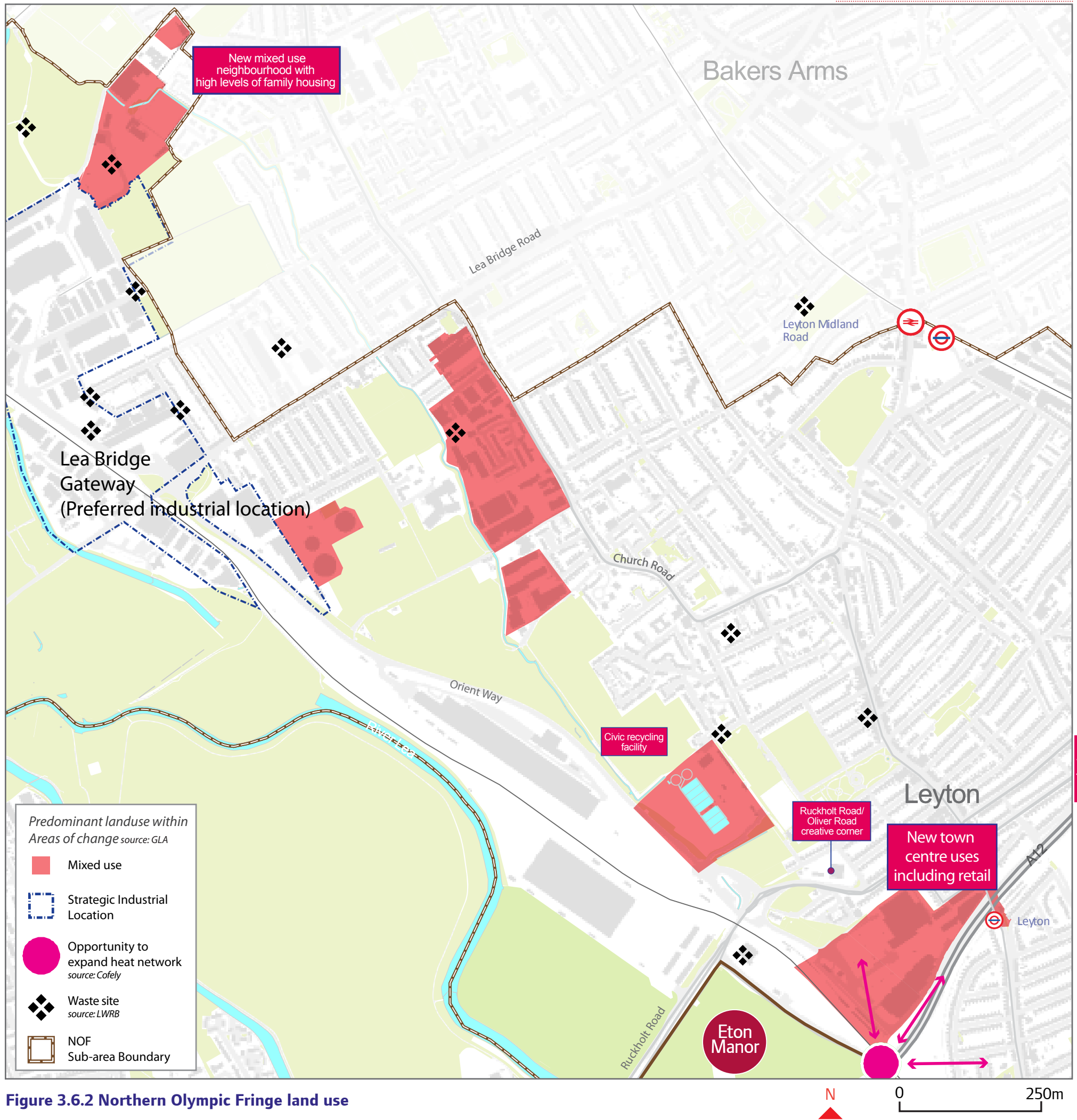
New and emerging sectors

The area around Leyton High Road is identified by Waltham Forest council as a core community and creative quarter where the cultural and creative sectors and micro and small businesses will be supported and the corner site near the junction of Ruckholt Road and Oliver Road could provide artist studios and creative businesses. Throughout the sub-area small and medium size enterprises should be provided to take advantage of their proximity to Stratford, and proposed developments should offer tailored training and job opportunities for local people. They also have the potential to support town centre activities at Stratford as its retail and office sectors expand.

Industrial land

Waltham Forest's Employment Land Study⁵³ supports the retention of the majority of industrial land uses in the Lea Bridge Road area, and the employment areas around Argall Way, Rigg Approach and Lammas Road which are currently well occupied and offer a diverse range of employment uses. These sites have good strategic road access and their detachment from residential areas makes them suitable for employment purposes. However, the site at 97 Lea Bridge Road should be de-designated from strategic industrial location (SIL) to mixed use with employment and other appropriate development to aide regeneration in the Northern Olympic Fringe which is a key component of the broad strategy for the area.

Public realm improvements along Lea Bridge Road should be delivered and the possibility of small retail units to serve the nearby homes and businesses should be explored by developers, land owners and planning authorities. The reopening of Lea Bridge station could help stimulate and facilitate growth in the wider sub-area.



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3.6

Mixed Use

New employment led mixed use development will be developed on underutilised employment sites around the Church Road area which could provide additional jobs and training opportunity for local people. Within the local employment sites, there will be a focus on the development of a pleasant waterside environment on the eastern side of Dagenham Brook. As part of new development on borough protected employment sites, the riverbank edges will be enhanced as a key asset in the area with an attractive pedestrian and cycle path established along its length, thereby providing a connection south to Leyton and north to Lea Bridge Road.

Connectivity and transport

A key requirement to achieve the changes this guidance promotes for this sub-area will be the creation of new links to and across the area connecting it physically, socially and economically with Stratford and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Strategic connectivity

A number of options to improve strategic rail connectivity north of Stratford are set out in Section 2.C of this guidance. The reinstatement of the Hall Farm curve, a short stretch of tracks linking the Chingford to Liverpool Street route to the Coppermill Junction to Stratford line, and reopening of Lea Bridge Station could stimulate and facilitate growth in the wider sub-area although capacity improvements at Stratford Station may be required. This would widen the appeal of local attractions, and promote a modal shift from the use of car onto rail. This would connect areas north of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park with Stratford and provide additional journey possibilities to destinations such as Canary Wharf on the DLR and create a strategic link to the orbital Overground network. Equally, the reinstated Chingford-Stratford line would make it easier for people to access the Lee Valley Regional Park and Epping Forest.

Improving local connectivity and overcoming barriers to movement

Dagenham Brook should be restored and a pedestrian link created to improve local amenity, provide additional recreational opportunities and to encourage movement through the area. North to south connections along the River Lea should be improved and an area wide wayfinding strategy developed to encourage and support walking and cycling.

Coordinating transport and land-use, and managing demand

The marshes and riverside walks in the north of the area will become major visitor attractions and the existing poor configuration of roundabouts and junctions around Ruckholt Road should be improved to provide a direct route into the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Improvements to the Ruckholt Road junction will help provide a key route between Hackney Wick and Leyton, while the pedestrian realm along Leyton High Road should also be enhanced to provide a better link to Stratford Town Centre. The expansive yards and security fencing on Temple Mills Lane and along Orient Way, whilst necessary to surround the train depot, create a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists and should be improved.

Sustainable development

Waste

Existing provision for waste processing in the Sub-area is situated at Low Hall Depot, Walthamstow, and a further important waste management site is located at the Bywaters site in Gateway Road, which whilst potentially capable of accommodating additional uses in line with Waltham Forest Council's emerging Northern Olympic Fringe AAP, would need to retain or re-provide its waste throughput within such a redevelopment, or on an alternative, suitable new site.

Energy

The Sub-area is strategically located for the north and eastward expansion of the Stratford City energy network to provide natural gas powered Combined Cooling, Heat and Power supply to new and existing development. Points of connection will need to be secured at Angel Lane Bridge and also Leyton Road Bridge.

Flooding

The River Lea and its associated tributaries flow through the Northern Olympic Fringe. The Sub-area is at risk of flooding. Waltham Forest Council is in close liaison with the Environment Agency and other appropriate bodies to provide a Strategic Flood Risk Management Plan to provide flood mitigation, to protect and enhance the water environments of the Dagenham Brook, the River Lea and the Lee Flood Relief Channel.⁵⁴



3.6

Figure 3.6.3 Northern Olympic Fringe key local connections

Urban form

Heritage led renewal and local character

Development in the sub-area should enhance and protect the character, setting and scale of the area defined by the warehouses, industrial buildings and heritage of the area. The conservation areas in the sub-area will provide a framework for the management of development within and adjacent to their boundaries. The sub-area can be seen to consist of four character areas:

1. Leyton

The tightly knit urban fabric of Leyton is centred round Leyton High Road and the Leyton Mills site, with a typical pattern of long narrow streets and terraced housing. Key locations exist in this character area for development to improve the quality of the environment and establish landmark gateway sites into the interface between the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, with Eton Manor a key location, and the rest of Waltham Forest.

2. Marsh Lane /Church Road

In the centre, this area is characterised by a small amount of traditional Victorian housing, with clusters of playing fields and other open space uses at Marsh Lane and a number of light industrial and employment uses adjacent to Dagenham Brook.

3. Lea Bridge

In the north east, this area is characterised by a number of strategically important industrial sites, such as Argall Way and Rigg Approach. The area provides an important function as an industrial area and will work to retain, intensify, support and enhance these uses. Furthermore, new development around the Lea Bridge neighbourhood centre should promote the area as a gateway into the Waltham Forest and improve the public realm.

4. The Lee Valley Regional Park

In the north west, this area provides a gateway from Lea Bridge Road into the Lee Valley Regional Park and Walthamstow Wetlands, and it contains a number of important regional recreational facilities such as the LVRPA's Ice Rink and Riding School. These are depicted on Figure 2.E.1 (Open space). The Park Authority wish to establish the Lea Bridge Road area as a major visitor node to the LVRP by enhancing existing sport and leisure facilities, developing options for visitor accommodation (focused at its waterways centre on Lea Bridge Road), and improving open spaces and visitor infrastructure. This includes the creation of a Nature reserves and important ecological resources will be protected and enhanced and measures to improve public access for nature conservation, educational and heritage interests developed further.

Open space

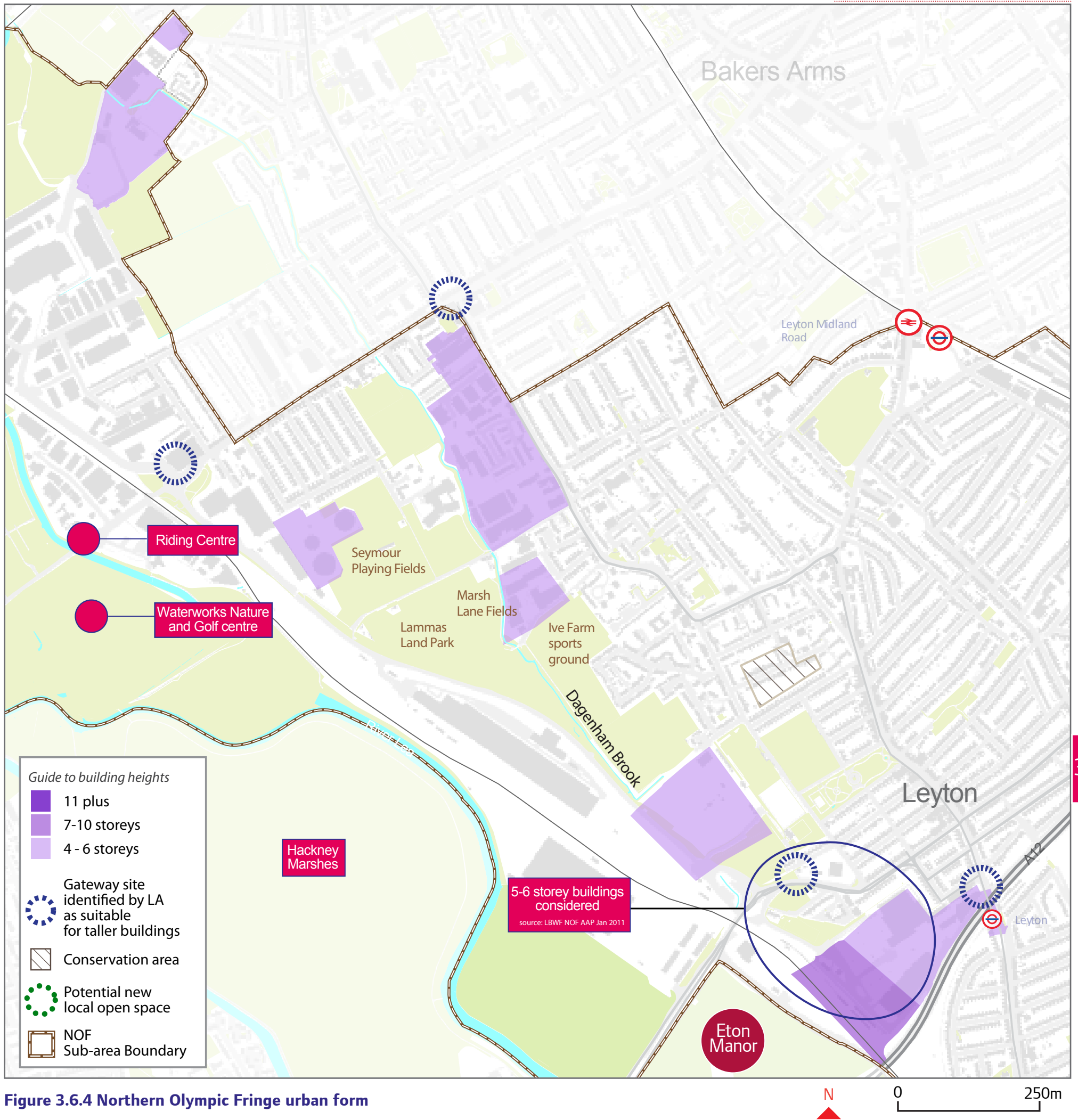
The Walthamstow Wetlands project would improve access to approximately 400 hectares of blue and green open spaces and help deliver convergence, increase the attractiveness of the area as a place to live and visit, and strengthen neighbourhood pride. Specifically, it aims to create an urban wetland centre and nature reserve at the Thames Water owned Walthamstow Reservoirs and to turn the extensive waterscape into a regional destination, a valuable environmental and recreational resource and a focus for learning for local people. Delivery will help achieve the Mayor's strategic objectives such as delivery of an All London Green Grid.

Biodiversity

The Walthamstow Wetlands which comprise some 400 hectares of reservoirs, marshes, nature reserves, rivers and local parks extending north from Hackney Marshes offer a very important ecological resource as well as a visitor destination which should be better linked to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to maximise Legacy benefits. Proposals must consider their impacts on any sites designated for their European nature conservation value to ensure that the designated interest features are not adversely affected in the short and long term.

Use of the waterways

The River Lea is one of the key assets of the Sub-area and developers, land owners and planning authorities should explore opportunities to improve their visibility and pedestrian access, and also introduce new water based activities.



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Figure 3.6.4 Northern Olympic Fringe urban form

3.6