

**Thameside West**

**ES Addendum Volume II:**

**TVIA Addendum**

May 2020



## PREAMBLE

Silvertown Homes Limited (SHL) and Greater London Authority Land and Property (GLAP) have submitted a hybrid planning application to the London Borough of Newham (LBN) for the redevelopment of the Thameside West site, accessed off Dock Road in Newham (the Site).

SHL is a property development company and joint land owners of the Site. SHL has over 65 years combined experience at delivering high quality regeneration projects across London. GLAP is a subsidiary corporation of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and took over assets and liabilities from the London Development Agency (LDA) in 2012. GLAP is primarily focused on delivering genuinely affordable homes and jobs for London.

The proposal is to construct a new high-quality residential-led mixed-use development comprising new homes, new industrial floorspace, a new local centre, a new primary school and nursery school, new community facilities, a new public park (with associated outdoor play facilities), enhanced SINC and over 800m of new riverside walk along the River Thames with ecological / biodiversity enhancements. This development has been designed to focus its community hub around the delivery of a new Dockland Light Rail (DLR) station that is proposed to be constructed on the Site by Transport for London's (TfL) in 2023.

The proposals have been designed by Foster & Partners, John McAslan & Partners, Patel Taylor and the wider project team (listed, right) taking into account comments provided by local residents during summer and public exhibition events and comments provided during pre-application discussions with a variety of statutory and non-statutory interests, including LBN and its Design Review Panel (DRP), the Greater London Authority (GLA), Transport for London (TfL), Environment Agency (EA), Port of London Authority (PLA) and London City Airport (LCA).

This document is one of a suite of planning application documents submitted to LBN, including an Environmental Statement. The planning application is available to review at LBN's office or using LBN's online services:

Search for planning application reference number 18/03557/OUT at: <https://pa.newham.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple>

The planning application can also be viewed on the GLA's website at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/planning-applications-and-decisions/public-hearings>

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# THAMESIDE WEST, ROYAL DOCKS

## TOWNSCAPE & VISUAL BASELINE CONDITIONS

Prepared on behalf of Silvertown Homes Ltd

April 2020

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# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

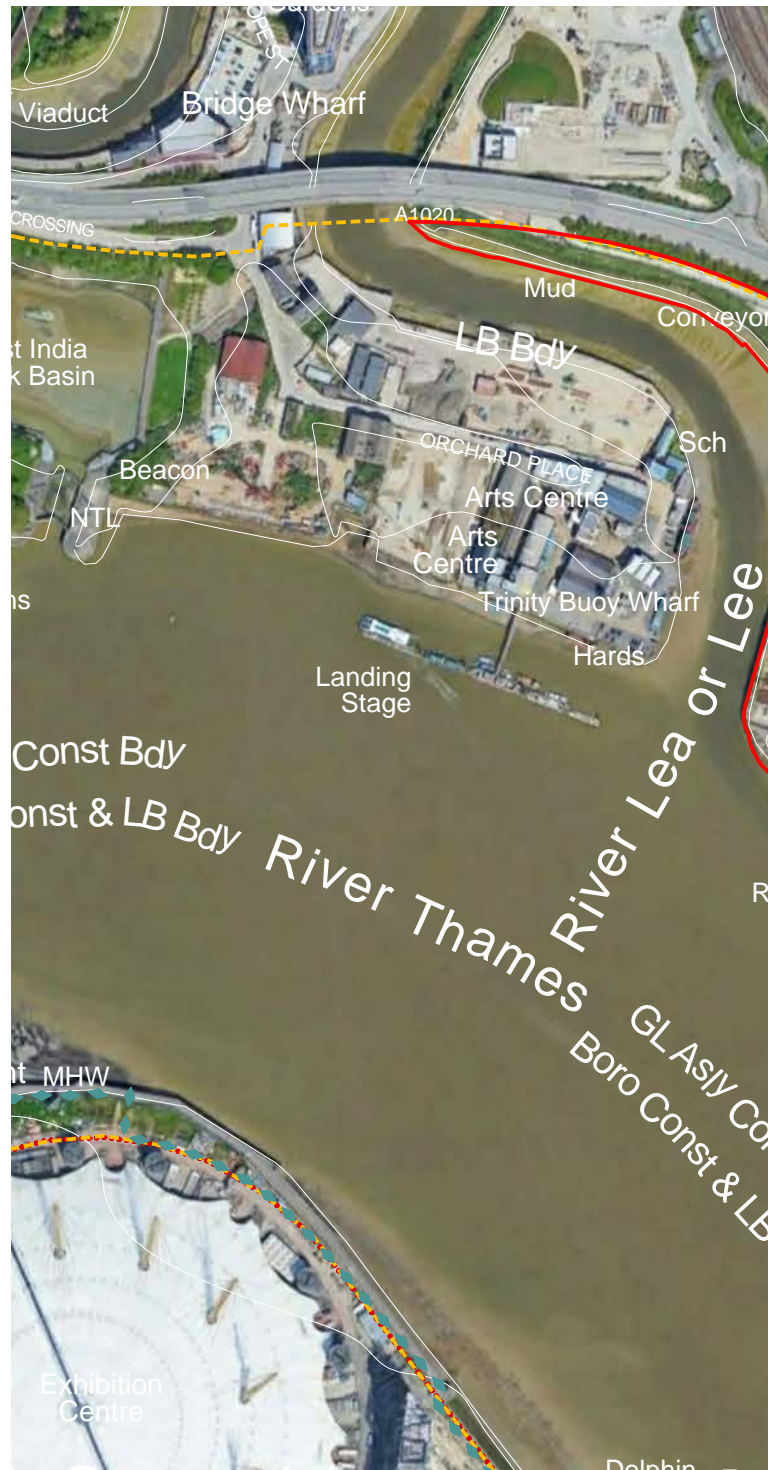
Barton Willmore Landscape Planning and Design (BWLPD) was commissioned by Silvertown Homes Ltd to provide townscape and visual advice in respect of the Proposed Development on the land at Thames Wharf/ The Silvertown Landing Area (the 'Site').

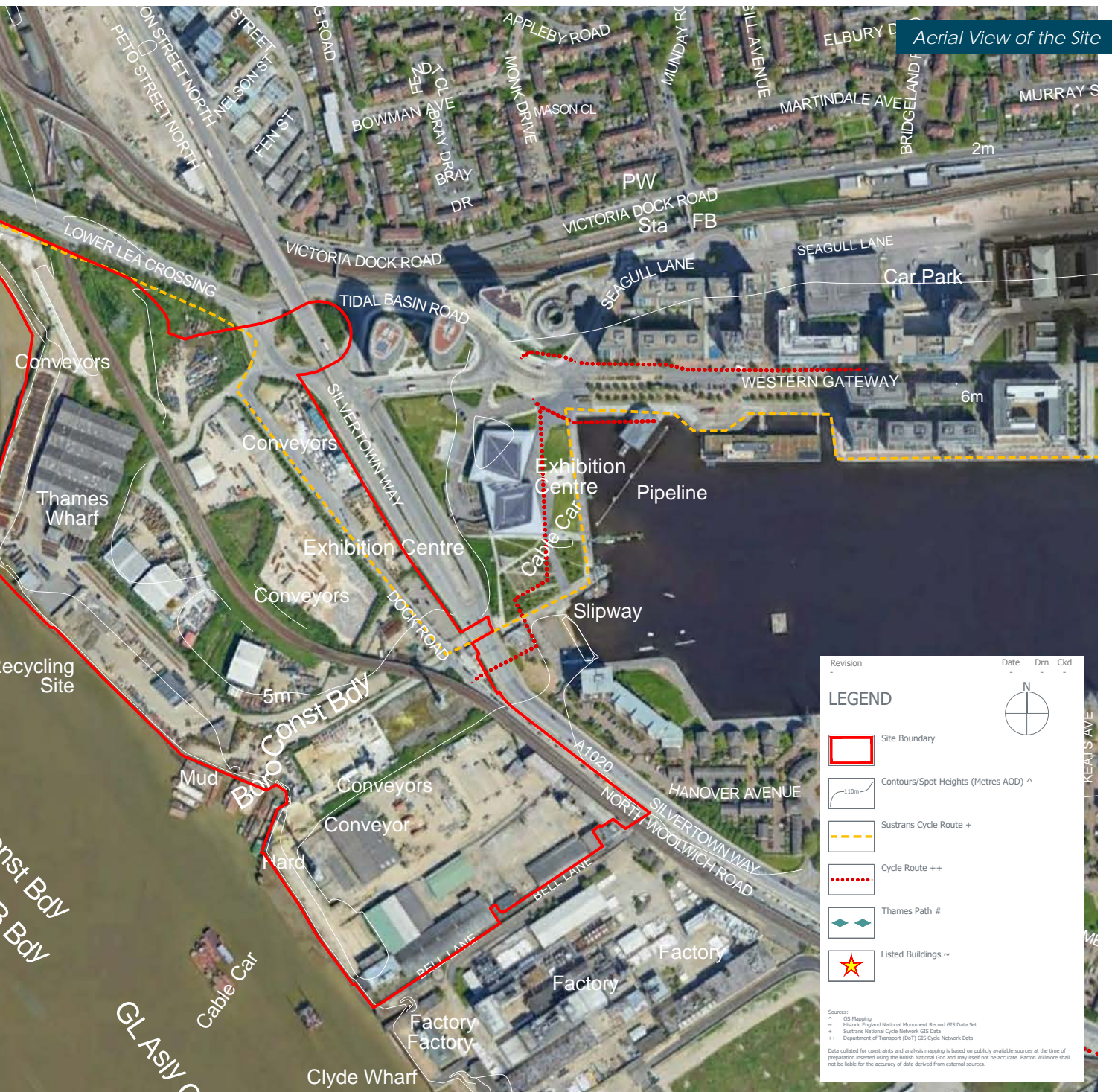
## 1. OVERVIEW

1.1 This Baseline Conditions Report includes a detailed analysis of the existing townscape and identifies views of and towards the Site. This analysis has then informed the iterative design process for the Proposed Development.

1.2 The aims of this Baseline Conditions Report are therefore to:

- Determine and set out the townscape characteristics and quality of the Site and its surroundings and function within the townscape;
- Assess the visibility of the Site and the nature and quality of the existing views from the surrounding area; and
- Identify the opportunities and constraints to the redevelopment of the Site, from a townscape and visual perspective.







# PLANNING OVERVIEW

## 2. PLANNING CONTEXT

### NATIONAL POLICY

#### National Planning Policy Framework, 2018

2.1 The NPPF outlines that "the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development", which is defined as "*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*".

2.2 The NPPF also clarifies that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

2.3 The NPPF states that the planning system has three overarching objectives, with the environmental objective outlined as follows:

*"To contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."*

2.4 Paragraph 9 of the NPPF also notes that the objectives should be delivered through the planning process but recognises that planning policies and decisions should "*take local circumstances into account, to reflect the*

*character, needs and opportunities of each area*".

2.5 Section 12: Achieving well-designed places sets out that "*the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve*". This section seeks to promote good design within the built environment and notes, in Paragraph 127, that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

*" a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

*b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*

*c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*

*d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

*e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*

*f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."*

2.6 Paragraph 130 states:

*"Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision maker as a valid reason to object to development..."*

2.7 NPPF Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment (Paragraph 170) states that the planning system should contribute to, and enhance, the local environment;

and explicitly acknowledges that this can be delivered by "*protecting and enhancing valued landscapes*".

#### National Planning Practice Guidance

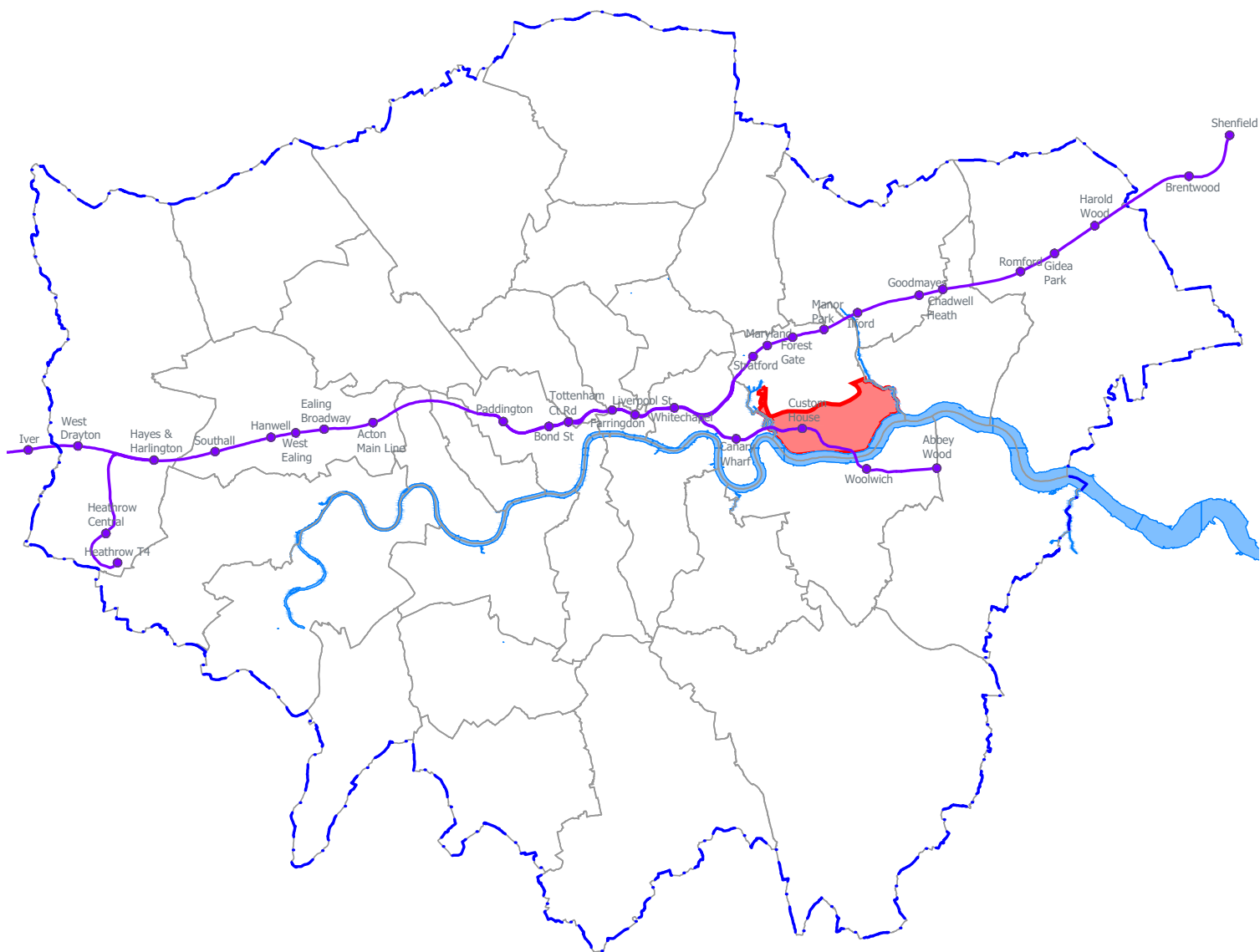
2.8 In relation to Design, the following are stated as 'well-designed' attributes:

- *"Functionality;*
- *Support mixed uses and tenures;*
- *Include successful public spaces;*
- *Be adaptable and resilient;*
- *Have a distinctive character;*
- *Be attractive; and*
- *Encourage ease of movement."*

2.9 Key issues in relation to the Natural Environment are:

- *"Landscape;*
- *Biodiversity and Ecosystems;*
- *Green Infrastructure; and*
- *Brownfield land, soils and agricultural land."*

# PLANNING OVERVIEW



Royal Docks and Beckton Riverside Opportunity Area in relation to Greater London

## REGIONAL POLICY

The London Plan

2.10 The London Plan was adopted in March 2016. This document constitutes the strategic development plan under Section 70 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990.

2.11 Policy 1.1 sets out the overarching visions and objectives for London, whilst Policy 2.9 sets out the vision and strategy for Inner London. Policy 1.1B states:

*“Growth will be supported and managed across all parts of London to ensure it takes place within the current boundaries of Greater London without:*

- a) Encroaching on the Green Belt, or on London’s protected open spaces;*
- b) Having unacceptable impacts on the environment.*

*The development of east London will be a particular priority to address existing need for development, regeneration and promotion of social and economic convergence with other parts of London and as the location for the largest opportunities for new homes and jobs.”*

2.12 The Site lies within the Royal Docks and Beckton Waterfront Opportunity Area (28) as identified on Map 2.4 within the London Plan. Policy 2.13 sets out the planning framework for opportunity areas and intensification areas, with Policy 2.13B stating:

*“Development proposals within opportunity areas and intensification areas should:*

*a) Support the strategic policy directions for the opportunity areas and intensification areas... and where relevant, in adopted opportunity area planning frameworks;*

*b) Seek to optimise residential and non-residential output and densities, provide necessary social and other infrastructure to sustain growth, and, where appropriate, contain a mix of uses;*

*c) Contribute towards meetings (or where appropriate, exceeding) the minimum guidelines for housing...;*

*d) Realise scope for intensification associated with existing or proposed improvements in public transport accessibility, such as Crossrail...; and*

*e) Support wider regeneration (including in particular improvements to environmental quality) and integrate development proposals to the surrounding areas especially areas for regeneration.”*

2.13 The Royal Docks and Waterfront Opportunity Area (28) is described within Annex One of the London Plan as follows:

*“The Royal Docks will return to its former glory at the forefront of international trade and exchange. The regeneration of Silvertown Quays, Royal Albert Rock and Royal Albert Basin should build upon innovative and iconic developments such as the Siemens Crystal and*

# PLANNING OVERVIEW

*the Emirates Air Line cable car. The Enterprise Zone will support its role as a world class business destination with capacity for at least 6,000 jobs. Joint public and private investment will create London's first Asian business park. The potential for a new 'floating village' should be explored as part of the Royals' potential to accommodate at least 11,000 new homes. Key issues to be addressed include maximising the benefits of the Crossrail station at Custom House, future growth of London City Airport, capitalising on the success of ExCel and its potential as a focus for further visitor/business related growth and improving connections to London Riverside. For Thameside West, strategic development principles are set out in the adopted Lower Lee Valley OAPF. Thameside East, West and Beckton Waterfront are also key locations for river-related industries. The management of safeguarded wharves, including scope for consolidation, will be an important issue in realising the potential of these sites."*

2.14 Policy 2.18 sets out the planning policy requirements for green infrastructure, with Policy 2.18E stating:

*"Development proposals should:*

- a) Incorporate appropriate elements of green infrastructure that are integrated into the wider network; and*
- b) Encourage the linkage of green infrastructure including the Blue Ribbon Network, to the wider*

*public realm to improve accessibility for all and develop new links, utilising green chains, street trees, and other components of urban greening..."*

2.15 This is supported by Policy 5.1 which considers urban greening, with Policy 5.10C stating:

*"Development proposals should integrate green infrastructure from the beginning of the design process to contribute to urban greening, including the public realm. Elements that can contribute to this include tree planting, green roofs and walls, and soft landscaping..."*

2.16 Trees and woodlands are considered within Policy 7.21, which states that:

*"Existing trees of value should be retained... wherever appropriate, the planting of additional trees should be included in new developments, particularly large-canopied species".*

2.17 The quality and design of new housing developments is considered within Policy 3.5, with Policy 3.5B providing for:

*"The design of all new housing developments should enhance the quality of local places, taking into account physical context; local character; density; tenure and land use mix; and relationships with, and provision of, public, communal and open spaces, taking particular account of the needs of children and older people."*

2.18 Specifically regarding large residential developments, Policy 3.7 states that proposals should “...create neighbourhoods with a distinctive character...”.

2.19 Policy 7.1 provides the overarching framework to place shaping and ‘lifetime neighbourhoods’. In order to achieve neighbourhoods of a good quality and environment fostering active local communities, Policy 7.1D seeks that:

*“The design of new buildings and the spaces they create should help reinforce or enhance the character, legibility, permeability, and accessibility of the neighbourhood.”*

2.20 Specifically regarding local character, Policy 7.4 states:

*“Development should have regard to the form, function, and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. It should improve an area’s visual or physical connection with natural features. In areas of poor or ill-defined character, development should build on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character of the future function of the area.*

*Buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high quality design response that:*

*a) Has regard to the pattern and grain of the existing spaces and streets in orientation, scale, proportion and mass;*

*b) Contribute to a positive relationship between the urban structure and natural landscape features, including the underlying landform and topography of an area;*

*c) Is human in scale, ensuring buildings create a positive relationship with street level activity and people feel comfortable with their surroundings;*

*d) Allows existing buildings and structure that make a positive contribution to the character of a place to influence the future character of the area; and*

*e) Is informed by the surrounding historic environment...”*

2.21 Policy 7.5 of the London Plan explains that the quality of the public realm has a significant influence on quality of life as it affects people’s sense of place, security and belonging. For these reasons, public and private open spaces, and the buildings that frame those spaces, should contribute to the highest standards of comfort, security and ease of movement possible. Policy 7.5B provides that:

*“Development should make the public realm comprehensible at a human scale, using gateways, focal points and landmarks as appropriate to help people find their way. Landscape treatment, street furniture and infrastructure should be of the highest quality, have a clear purpose, maintain uncluttered spaces and should contribute to the easy movement of people through the space.*

# PLANNING OVERVIEW

*Opportunities for the integration of high quality public art should be considered, and opportunities for greening (such as through planting of trees and other soft landscaping wherever possible) should be maximised. Treatment of the public realm should be informed by the heritage values of the place, where appropriate."*

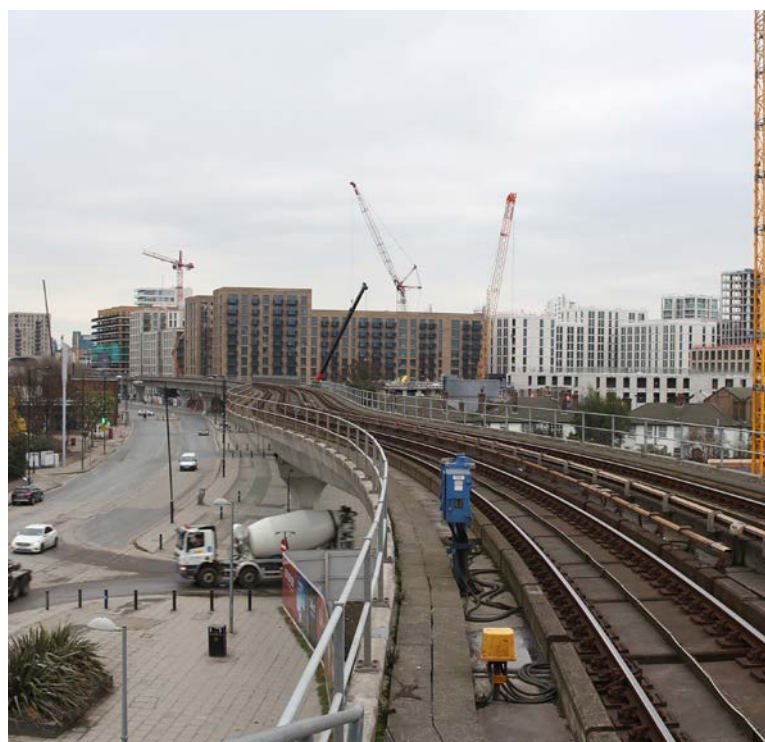
2.22 The quality of architecture is considered in Policy 7.6, which states:

*"Architecture should make a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context.*

*Buildings and structures should:*

- a) Be of the highest architectural quality;*
- b) Be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm;*
- c) Comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character; and*
- d) Not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy, overshadowing, wind and microclimate. This is particularly important for tall buildings..."*

2.23 Policy 7.7 of the London Plan explains that tall and large buildings should generally be limited to sites in the Central Activity Zone, Opportunity



Areas, Areas of Intensification or Town Centres that have good access to public transport, stating that *"tall and large buildings should not have an unacceptably harmful impact on their surroundings"*.

2.24 Furthermore, Policy 7.7 states that tall buildings should *"relate well to the form, proportion, composition, scale and character of surrounding buildings, urban grain and public realm"* and should *"improve the legibility of an area, by emphasising a point of civic or visual significance"*.

2.25 Policy 7.7E provides additional criteria with respect to the impact of tall buildings in sensitive locations, stating:



Construction activities under way to the south-east of the Site

*“The impact of tall buildings proposed in sensitive locations should be given particular consideration. Such areas might include conservation areas, listed buildings and their settings, registered historic parks and gardens, scheduled monuments, battlefields, the edge of the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land, World Heritage Sites or other areas designed by boroughs as being sensitive or inappropriate for tall buildings”.*

*This is supported by Policy 7.8 which seeks to protect heritage assets and archaeology, with “development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architecture detail”.*

## SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

### Guidance on Tall Buildings

2.26 Historic England published Advice Note 4 ‘Tall Buildings’ in December 2015, which updates the previous guidance on tall buildings prepared by English Heritage and CABE, and states that a tall building should satisfy the following design criteria:

- *“Architectural quality;*
- *Sustainable design and construction;*
- *Credibility of the design;*
- *Contribution to public space and facilities;*

# PLANNING OVERVIEW

- *Consideration of the impact on the local environment (and particularly at ground level); and*
- *Provision of a well-designed inclusive environment."*

2.27 The guidance notes in Paragraph 4.5 that a high quality tall building scheme will have a positive relationship with the following:

- *"Topography;*
- *Character of place;*
- *Heritage assets and their settings;*
- *Height and scale of development (immediate, intermediate and town-or city-wide);*
- *Urban grain and streetscape;*
- *Open spaces;*
- *Rivers and waterways;*
- *Important views including prospects and panoramas; and*
- *The impact on the skyline."*

2.28 As set out in Paragraph 4.8, in order to deliver architectural quality there must be consideration of a tall buildings':

- *"Scale;*
- *Form and massing;*
- *Proportion and silhouette;*

- *Facing materials;*
- *Detailed surface design;*
- *Relationship to other structures;*
- *Impact on streetscape and near views;*
- *Impact on cityscape and distance views; and*
- *Impact on the skyline."*

2.29 Paragraph 4.9 goes on to states that:

*"Tall buildings need to set exemplary standards in design because of their scale, mass, wider impact and likely longevity. Good design will take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and respond to local character and history..."*

2.30 While Paragraph 4.10 notes that:

*"...Consideration of the impact on the local environment is also important, including microclimate, overshadowing, night-time appearance, light pollution, vehicle movements, the environment and amenity of those in the vicinity of the building, and the impact on the pedestrian experience. Well-designed tall buildings provide an inclusive environment, both internally and externally, taking opportunities to offer improved permeability, accessibility and, where appropriate, the opening up or effective closure of views to improve the legibility of the wider townscape."*

## OTHER RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

### Local Plan Evidence Base - Tall Buildings

2.31 The Tall Buildings document, published by the London Borough of Newham in February 2017, forms part of the Local Plan Evidence Base to guide the formation of the tall buildings policy for the London Borough of Newham.

2.32 Under the heading of 'Issues with tall buildings' it is noted that:

*"It is worthwhile to consider the positive aspects of tall buildings which make them an attractive development from several perspectives. In the right place well-designed tall buildings can make a positive contribution to urban life..."*

*...Well-designed tall buildings can provide an inclusive environment, both internally and externally by providing safe and pleasant public realm, taking opportunities to offer improved permeability, accessibility and, where appropriate, the opening up or effective closure of views to improve the legibility of the wider townscape..."*

2.33 The Tall Buildings document provides an analysis of post 2012 consents, noting that nine sites were in locations where the building height matrix indicated a lower height, and were justified on the basis of public transport accessibility and the presence of neighbouring tall buildings.

2.34 The analysis goes on to conclude that:

*"No instances were found of an unjustified approval which directly contravened the policy but rather the policy has been formulated with an inherent flexibility to allow for design innovation pertaining to quality. The facility should be retained in the review."*

2.35 The following conclusions on tall buildings are provided:

- *"Importance of a plan-led approach to tall buildings, with more site specific detail on larger sites regarding appropriate and sensitive locations and scale, including integration considerations - this needs to include considerations of cross boundary spatial integration;*
- *A tall building may not be the best use of a site;*
- *Importance of integration of the tall buildings with the public realm, and general neighbourliness - 'giving something back'; and*
- *Design quality is of utmost importance and includes the development of high quality living accommodation for a tall building's residents; reference should be made to the new Historic England Advice note."*

## Local Plan Evidence Base - Tall Buildings Study 2017

2.36 The Tall Buildings Study 2017 also forms part of the evidence base and Options Appraisal for the review of the Local Plan. The document focuses on established appropriate densities and provides indicative appropriate heights for tall buildings at proposed and existing strategic sites across the borough.

2.37 The methodology for the study notes:

*"...The in-principle acceptability of a new tall building is established firstly by its location with good access to public transport; and secondly by its location in an area where local character would not be affected adversely by the scale, mass or bulk of a tall or large buildings...*

*...Appropriate building height ranges are then derived from the particular characteristics of the individual Strategic Site in the context of the characteristics of each community neighbourhood as identified by the Character Study based upon an examination of topography, views, heritage, public transport accessibility, and character including current tall building presence."*

2.38 The study notes that the Royal Docks neighbourhood area, within which the Site lies, is generally characterised by tall buildings.

2.39 With regards to Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs), it is noted that " *the possibility for new DLR stations in the borough will benefit the Beckton Riverside and Thames Wharf*

*strategic sites" while also recognising that increased accessibility will justify " high density development and tall buildings to mark the improved transport node[s]" .*

2.40 Concerning the Royal Docks Neighbourhood it is noted that " *new development generally have baseline heights of 6 to 8 storeys with taller elements of up to 15 storeys at key points" while concerning the as yet unbuilt 18 storey Marco Polo Building at Royal Wharf, it is considered " to be a focal point in the development of the riverside areas in this neighbourhood to which future schemes should relate" .*

2.41 Strategic sites within the borough are provided greater scrutiny. Concerning the south-eastern part of the Site, under the heading of 'Silvertown Landing' it is noted with respect to building heights that:

*"...Although currently a low-rise industrial location, the area is dominated by nearby tall buildings. Western Beach apartments immediately adjacent the site is between 8 and 12 storeys, buildings around Royal Victoria DLR station including the Hoola Towers extend up to 24 storeys. On the other side of the river, tall buildings 25 to 30 storeys high are visible around the O2 Arena and Greenwich Millennium Village. Further to the [east], a major development has been accepted at Silvertown Quays in outline form for heights of up to 16 storeys with the support of the Design Review Panel..."*

2.42 The conclusion to Silvertown Landing notes:

*“An overall datum of 6 to 8 storeys is considered appropriate at riverside strategic sites in Newham in line with current trends. The Design Review Panel has indicated in its assessment of proposals at a number of the riverside sites that heights of up to 15 storeys can be accepted at key locations. It will be difficult to justify a height exceeding this parameter when a unified approach to all the riverside strategic sites is focused on the Macro Polo Building (18 storeys) which stands at a prominent curve in the river on Bugsbys Reach as the dominant building in the area the setting of which is required to be enhanced by other new developments along the river. The indicative height for this site supports place-making in the borough by promoting a cohesive range of heights within the Arc of Opportunity”.*

2.43 It is further noted that *“ heights are indicative, based on the initial screening and SP4 spatial strategy, and variation from them would be through the detailed design process in line with SP4”*.

2.44 With regards to the north-western part of the Site, which is considered under the heading of Strategic Site (SO8) Thames Wharf, the same text as is provided for Silvertown Landing in relation to building heights is outlined.

2.45 Concerning views, it is noted that:

*“The location of the site on the riverfront means that new tall buildings will be prominent in views*

*of the north bank of the Thames. All the more so when enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes and promenades are being developed on the south bank of the river giving unbroken and direct views across the river to Newham.*

*Views of the river from highways and public areas on the Newham side are currently obstructed by existing development. Careful layout of new development will afford opportunities to open up views of the river, and the south bank of the allocation affords the potential for a riverside path which in time can [be] integrated with other routes at similar development sites along the river.*

*There are also opportunities at this site for views to the Royal Docks to be made use of in the layout of its development as vistas and linkages in the blue ribbon network.”*

2.46 The conclusion states:

*“Given the proposed new local centre and DLR station, plus the new evolving height context, high density development is considered appropriate at this location with heights generally of between 6-8 storeys, and up to 15 storeys at key locations subject to master-planning and aviation constraints. Despite precedents for taller buildings in the area, new development on Newham’s riverside is laid out in a cohesive and well-planned way with a co-ordinated range of heights across all the riverside sites within the Arc of Opportunity.”*



# SITE CONTEXT

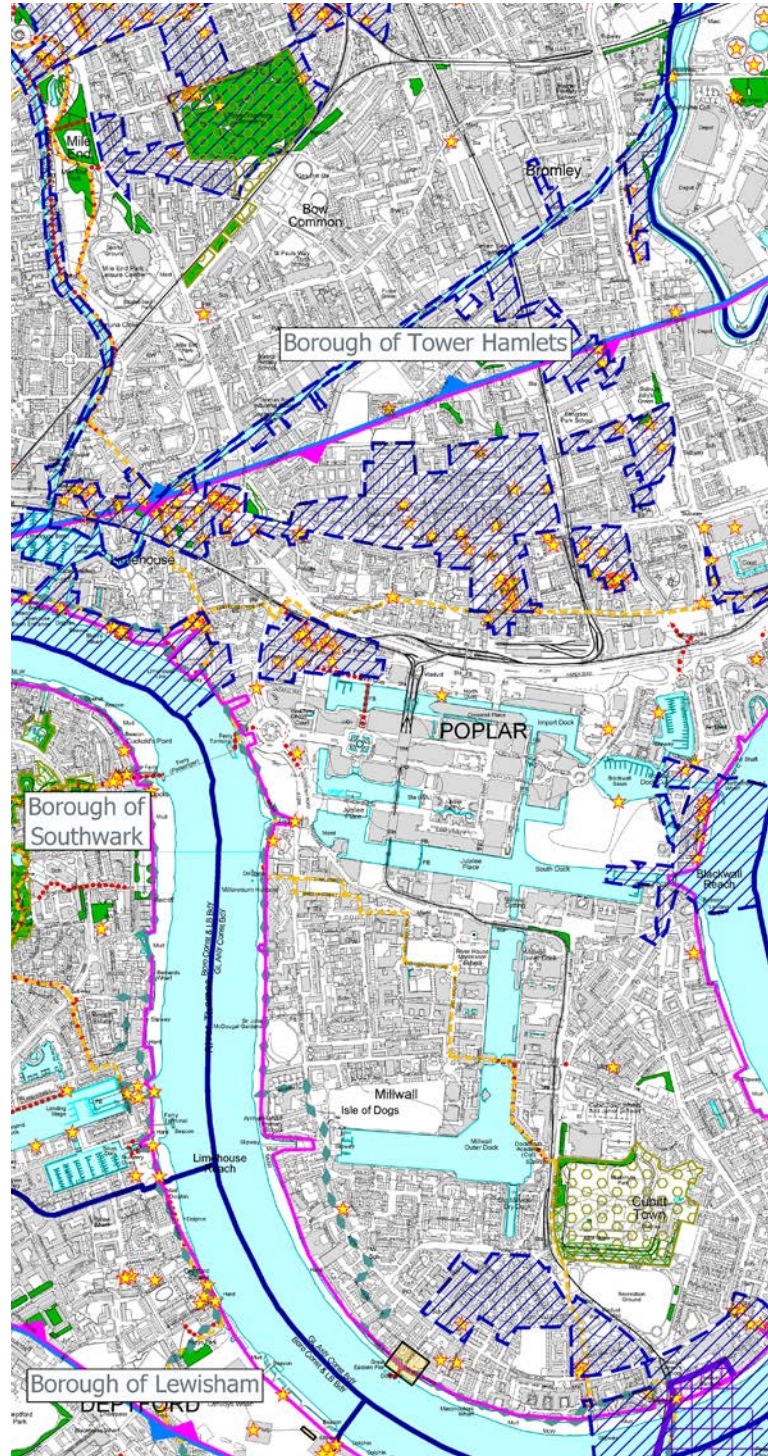
## 3. TOWNSCAPE SETTING

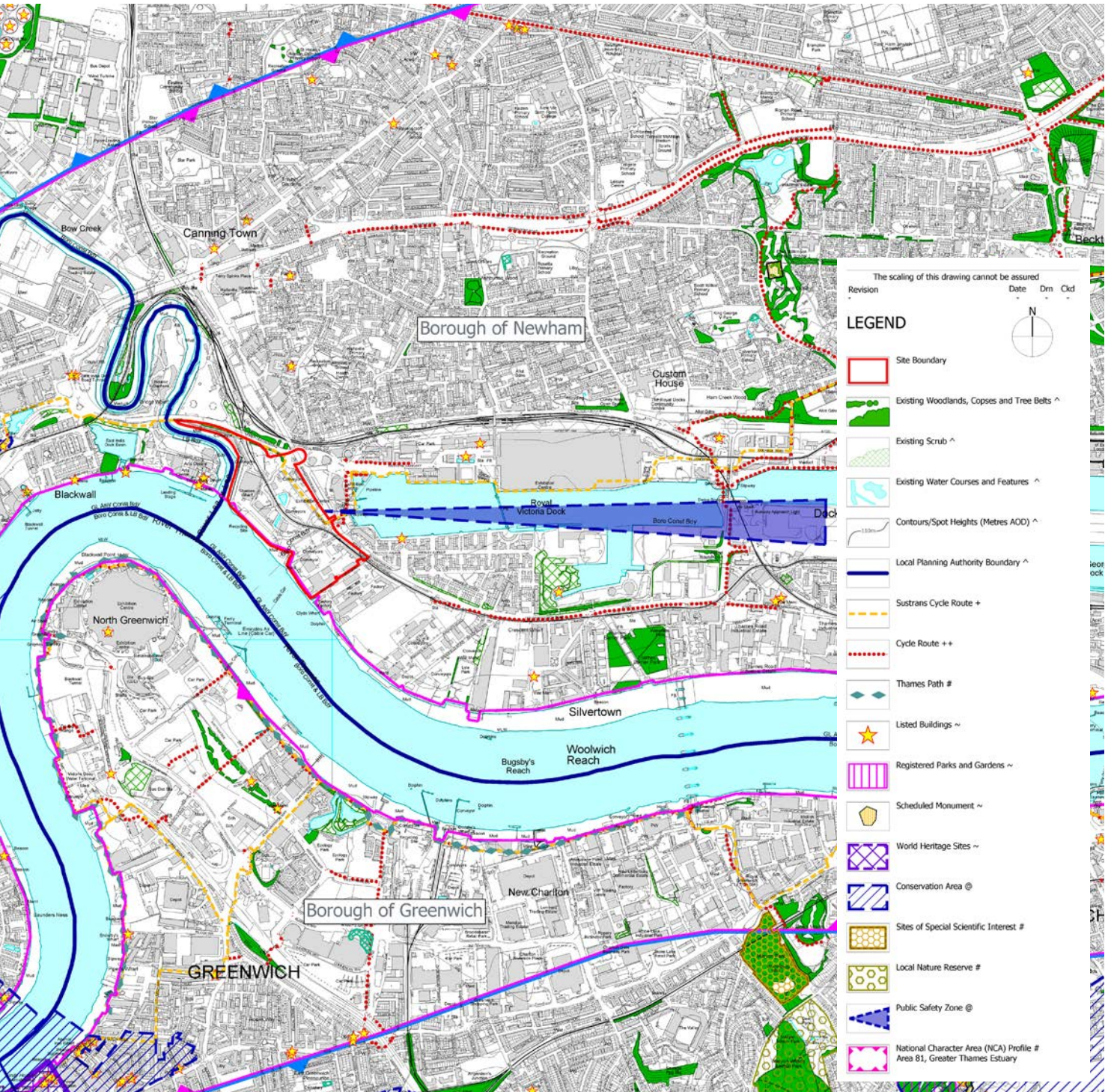
### LAND USE

3.1 As illustrated in the adjacent Site Context Plan, the Site adjoins the confluence between the River Lea and the River Thames within the London Borough of Newham. Accordingly, the River Lea forms the western boundary to the Site and the River Thames forms the southern boundary. The northern boundary of the Site is defined by the A1020 Silvertown Way, while Bell Lane defines its eastern boundary.

3.2 The land use of the Site predominantly comprises a series of industrial units that are generally three storeys in height arranged around workyards/courtyards, that are cluttered with various equipment and materials. Two roads pass through the Site, Dock Road and Scarab Close, which are accessed off the A1020, while the elevated Docklands Light Railway (DLR) also passes directly through the centre of the Site. Two Emirates Air Line towers and a pylon tower also lie within the Site, with some scrub and tree vegetation also present.

3.3 The surrounding area is characterised by a diverse range of land uses of varying scale and built form. Low-rise industrial and commercial units occupy Trinity Buoy Wharf, which lies to the west of the Site across the River Lea, while to the north of this Wharf is the Leamouth Peninsula, which features high-rise residential built form. Further to the west, beyond Trinity Buoy Wharf, larger scale residential and office blocks predominate, gradually stepping up in height towards the iconic Canary Wharf that stands at over 50 storeys at its peak.





# SITE CONTEXT

3.4 Across the River Thames to the south, the world-renowned O2 Arena occupies the northernmost point of Greenwich Peninsula. Much of the peninsula is currently subject to intense construction activities that will result in high-rise development across this area. The Emirates Air Line southern terminus is also located on Greenwich Peninsula.

3.5 North-east of the Site, beyond the A1020 Silvertown Way lies Royal Victoria Dock, which forms the western part of the Royal Docks. Predominantly 3 - 5 storey residential development lies to the south of this body of water, while larger scale mixed-use development lies to the north. Millennium Mills also lies to the south of Royal Victoria Dock, beyond the aforementioned residential development, while London City Airport lies further afield to the east.

3.6 In addition, the Crystal building and the Emirates Air Line northern terminus also adjoin Royal Victoria Dock to the north of the Site, as does ExCel London, to the north-east and opposite Millennium Mills across Royal Victoria Dock. Smaller scale residential development at Canning Town predominates further afield to the north, away from the Royal Docks.

3.7 To the immediate south-east of the Site the land use predominantly comprises a mix of industrial units of varying scale, interspersed with areas of vacant land as well as Lyle Park. Further to the east there are extensive construction activities ongoing associated with the redevelopment of Minoco Wharf (also known



as Royal Wharf), beyond which lies the Thames Barrier Park and the Thames Barrier itself.

3.8 At a more strategic scale, the centre of London lies to the west; Stratford to the north; Greenwich to the south and Woolwich to the east, across the River Thames.

## TRANSPORT ROUTES

3.9 The nearest station to the Site is the Emirates Air Line northern terminus, which is located 220m to the north-east of the Site. Numerous



*View of the Site from the Emirates Air Line*

other stations forming part of the DLR network lie in proximity to the Site, including East India, Canning Town, Royal Victoria (the nearest, at approximately 340m to the north-east), West Silvertown (also nearby, at approximately 360m to the east), and Custom House. The latter will also form part of the Crossrail route.

3.10 The A1020, which defines the north-eastern boundary of the Site facilitates access to both London City Airport (in the east) and connects with the A1011, the A13 and the A1203, all of which are key thoroughfares within east London.

3.11 There are no PRoW within the Site or the immediate vicinity given the urban context. The nearest promoted path is the Thames Path, which follows the course of the River Thames along its southern banks.

3.12 The North Greenwich Pier, providing River Bus services, is located on the opposing foreshore to the Site across the River Thames. Generally though, despite the widespread availability of different transport connection options in the vicinity of the Site, it is somewhat cut-off/severed from the wider townscape, lacking permeability.

## HERITAGE ASSETS

### Historical Development

3.13 Originally a marshy fen-land, London Borough of Newham's historical development owes much to the mid 1800s, whereby new railway lines extending from London into Essex strongly dictated the urban form of the borough. Development followed the course of the railway lines, with large detached houses and rows of terraced houses commonly located in proximity to the newly introduced stations.

3.14 With the railways also came the substantial expansion of riverside wharves and docks, facilitating heavy industry and shipping-related activity. However, bombing during World War II decimated the industrial and dockside areas, and accordingly the majority of recognised historic assets are located in the northern part of the borough, away from the River Thames.

3.15 Following the end of the war, comprehensive redevelopment of large areas of Canning Town, West Ham and North Woolwich progressed, culminating in the provision of large residential areas predominantly two storeys in height. More modern industrial units were constructed within the dockside areas.

3.16 By the early 1980s the Royal Docks ceased trading, resulting in the clearance of former industry and warehouses, leaving fragments behind of this past land use. Since then, London City Airport was established, and new contemporary building blocks have begun to emerge in the area.

### Listed Buildings

3.17 The Site is not subject to statutory listing. However, listed buildings do lie within the vicinity of the Site, with those nearest to the Site including the following:

- Trinity House Chain Locker and Lighthouse Blocks (Grade II), which lies approximately 110m to the west;
- Trinity House Buoy Wharf Quay and Orchard Dry Dock (Grade II), which lies approximately 160m to the west;
- Blackwall Pier and Entrance Lock to Former East India Dock Basin (Grade II), which lies approximately 450m to the west;
- Stothert and Pitt Cranes on North and South Sides of the Royal Victoria Dock (Grade II), which lies approximately 170m to the east;
- Silvertown War Memorial (Grade II), which lies approximately 880m to the south-east
- Silo D (Grade II), which lies approximately 810m to the east; and
- Church of St Luke (Grade II), which lies approximately 330m to the north.

3.18 As outlined previously, there are few recognised heritage assets in the southern part of the London Borough of Newham due to the bombing runs that occurred during the Second World War. However, the Hallsville Tavern; the Compressor House on Ruscoe Road; the Flying Angel; the Millennium Mill at Pontoon Dock; and the Harland and Wolff Gates at Lyle Park are all identified as locally listed buildings within the wider surroundings of the Site.

### Scheduled Monuments

3.19 There are no scheduled monuments within the vicinity of the Site.

### Conservation Areas

3.20 The Site is not located within a conservation area, however the following lie within the wider context of the Site:

- Naval Row conservation area; and
- Coldharbour conservation area.

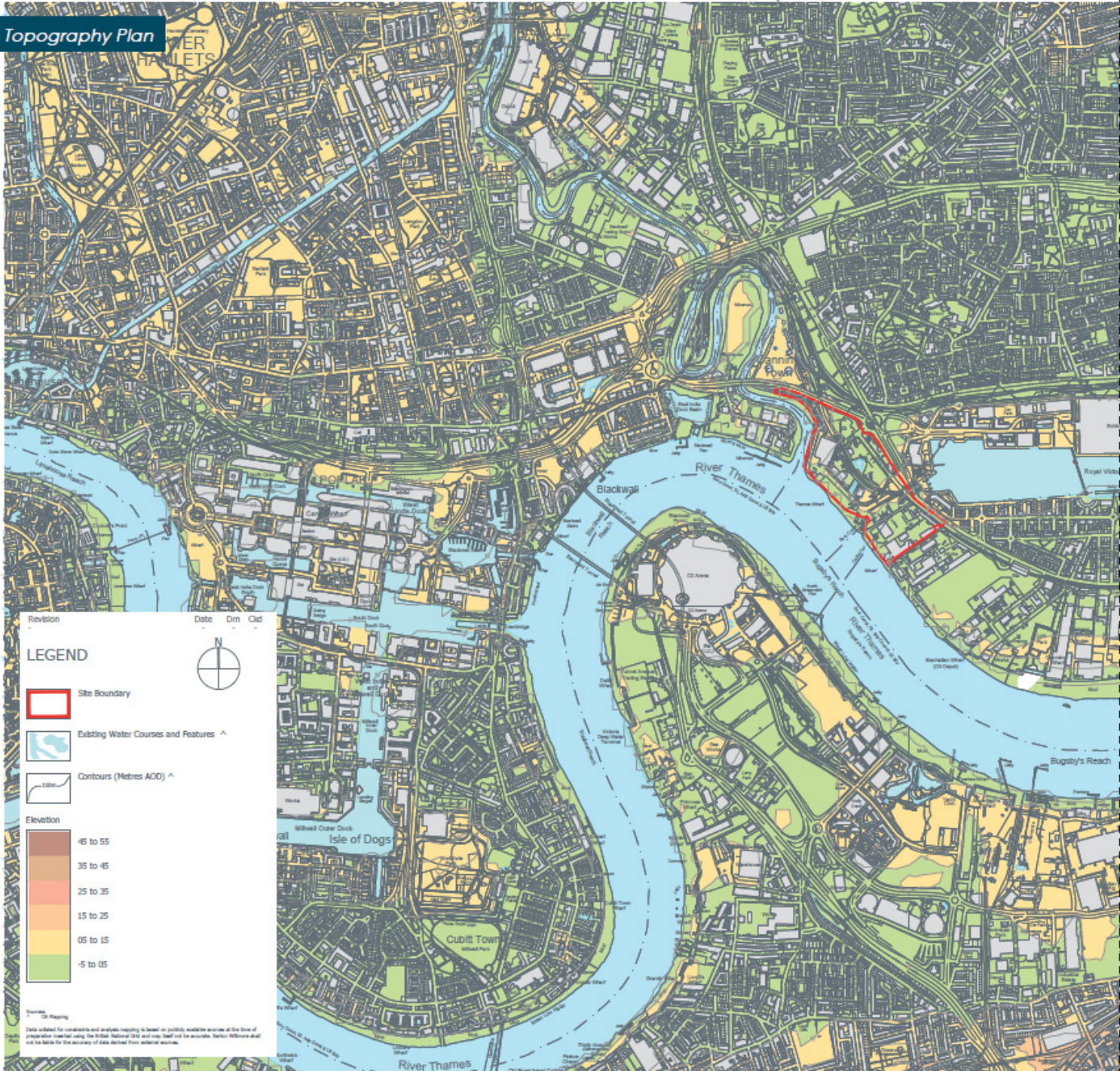
3.21 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be paid in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

3.22 The Naval Row conservation area lies approximately 800m to the west of the Site and comprises the surviving structures associated with an historic port and shipbuilding activities dating from the 19th century, retaining a maritime character.

3.23 The Coldharbour conservation area lies approximately 1.2km to the south-west of the Site on the eastern side of the Isle of Dogs and survives as one of the last examples of the narrow streets that once characterised the River Thames' perimeter. Coldharbour conservation area safeguards two historic ship entrances to the original West India Basin and to Blackwall Reach and is almost predominantly residential in use but preserves a maritime character.

# SITE CONTEXT

## Topography Plan





## TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

3.24 As demonstrated by the accompanying Topography Plan, the settlement pattern overlays a generally uniform low-lying landform ranging in height between -5m and 15m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). South of the River Thames, the landform rises slightly more abruptly (albeit this is still a very gradual rise) towards Shooter's Hill and Greenwich Park/Blackheath, which forms part of an extended ridgeline, to an elevation of approximately 60m AOD.

3.25 The Site is mainly defined by the built form (including the elevated DLR) and areas of hardstanding. However, there are some areas of substantial vegetation across the Site, including a number of tree species within the western and north-western parts of the Site, providing a degree of containment and compartmentalisation. Scrub vegetation also follows the course of the elevated DLR, while shrubs (and the occasional tree) run alongside Dock Lane and partially soften the appearance of the built form.

3.26 Within the wider area there are pocket parks and areas of amenity grassland and ornamental planting, such as at Lyle Park, the Thames Barrier Park and around the Crystal building; with street trees also a common feature within the residential street network. Larger tracts of vegetation are more commonly located south of the River Thames, such as at the Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park; Greenwich Park; and Maryon Park.



# CHARACTER ANALYSIS

## 4. NATIONAL CHARACTER

4.1 As part of Natural England's responsibilities in delivering the Natural Environment White Paper, Biodiversity 2020 and the European Landscape Convention, Natural England has developed a series of National Character Area (NCA) Profiles.

4.2 These NCA Profiles provide a broad range of information including an outline of the key characteristics of a given area; a description of the ecosystem services provided and how they relate to people, wildlife and the economy; and they identify an array of opportunities for positive environmental change.

4.3 The Site lies within the NCA Profile 81: Greater Thames Estuary. The key characteristics of this NCA Profile are outlined as follows:

- *"Predominantly flat, low-lying coastal landscape where extensive open spaces are dominated by the sky, and the pervasive presence of water and numerous coastal estuaries extend the maritime influence far inland...;*
- *Distinctive landmarks of coastal military heritage including Napoleonic military defences, forts and 20th century pillboxes...;*
- *Highly urbanised areas within London and on marsh edges subject to chaotic activity of various major developments...; and*
- *Increasing development pressures around major settlements and especially towards London, with urban, industrial and recreational sites often high visible within the low-lying marshes."*





- A | Canvey Wick SSSI, Essex
  - B | Canary Wharf, East London
  - C | Queen Elizabeth II Bridge, Rainham Marshes
  - D | Northward Hill RSPB Reserve, Canvey Island
  - E | Brent Geese over reclaimed arable farmland
  - F | Isle of Grain, Kent
  - G | Darnet Fort, Medway
- \* images on this page © Natural England



## 5. REGIONAL CHARACTER

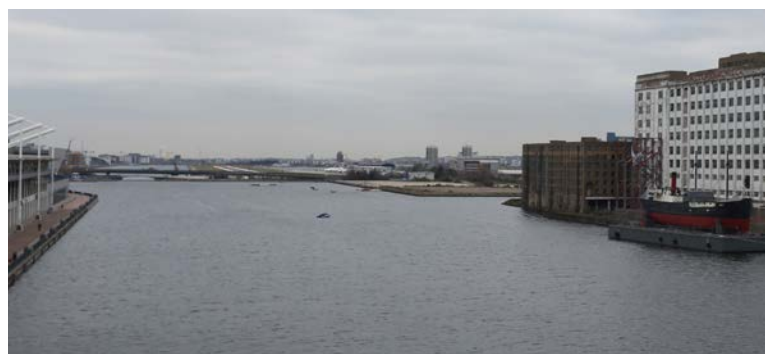
5.1 In addition, Natural England commissioned Alan Baxter and Associates LLP to prepare a report entitled 'London's Natural Signatures: The London Regional Landscape Framework' in 2009, which was published in January 2011. The document sets out the Natural Landscape Areas and their 'Natural Signatures' that comprise the urban area of London.

5.2 Within this document, the Site is identified within Natural Landscape Area 14: Lower Thames Floodplain. However, this document focuses on London's green spaces and natural character and does not provide detail on the urban character of specific areas.

5.3 The Lower Thames Floodplain Natural Landscape Area is described as follows:

*"The Lower Thames Floodplain Natural Landscape Area covers the tidal Thames and its associated floodplain from Battersea in the west to Rainham Marshes and Crayford Marshes in the east. As the river flows east from Battersea it takes on more of the character of an estuary as it reaches Rainham and Crayford Marshes. The Area's boundaries coincide with the wide band of alluvium, which has been laid down by the river over thousands of years, and which has created a broad, level corridor of around 3.5km width through the heart of the city..."*

*In general, the gravel terraces to the north of the floodplain rise less abruptly than those to the south, where a ridge formed by more resistant bedrock (where the gravelly sands and clays*



*of the Lambeth Group are capped by the pebbly beds of the Harwich Formation) provides some fine views over the Thames, including the famous view from Greenwich Park.*

*Low-lying and prone to flooding, this area of the floodplain would have comprised intertidal saltmarsh, unsuitable for human settlement, though an important resource for grazing. The desire to make use of this resource led, from the 19th century onwards, to the construction of a simple flood defence system of river walls*



A



B



C



D

- A | Thames Barrier
- B | Greenwich Peninsula and the Isle of Dogs
- C | Millennium Mills overlooking the Royal Victoria Dock
- D | Public Art referencing the local Industrial Heritage

*backed by networks of drainage ditches. Remnants of this system survive today at Rainham Marshes.*

*The other influence on the development of the Lower Thames Floodplain Natural Landscape Area was the function of the Thames as the principal artery for trade...Deeper quays and, increasingly, large docks were required to handle London's river traffic...such as those in the meander of the Isle of Dogs or, further down, the Royal Docks. The creation of the London*

*Docks and their subsequent transformation into Docklands have had a significant impact on this landscape.*

*Associated with docks came industry which both filled in the spaces between the docks...*

*Aside from the floodplain, the foreshore and areas of land away from the river are dotted with green features that continue to offer vital natural assets and views."*

## 6. LOCAL CHARACTER

### EXISTING BASELINE CONTEXT

6.1 A townscape character assessment of the London Borough of Newham Council was published in September 2011, which outlines a series of character typologies and character areas across the borough and identifies how these relate to different parts of the borough contributing to local distinctiveness.

6.2 The Site is identified within the 'Industrial land (older concentrations of industry)' typology, which is described as follows:

- *"Agglomeration of smaller enterprises including small scale manufacturing, waste management, off-site construction and storage, scrap recycling, car maintenance and distribution of building materials;*
- *Apparently random collection of buildings and yards of varying design and scale;*
- *Some older industrial buildings may be listed or worthy of protection; or*
- *Older large-scale manufacturing plants, such as Tate and Lyle's sugar factory."*

6.3 Specifically relating to the Site, it states:

*"A jumble of industrial uses some of which use river transport."*

6.4 It is also noted that this typology has an *"untidy appearance"* and that it is a *"cluttered townscape"*.

6.5 The Site is also identified within the much wider Royal Docks character area, which is described as follows:

- *"Significant impacts of roads, railways, docks and river - development squeezed and over-extended in linear comb-like formation, lacking central focal points;*
- *Significant, but underutilised open spaces along the Docksidcs, Thames, (Barrier Park, Royal Victoria Gardens, Lyle Park), limited pocket parks in North Woolwich;*
- *Poor permeability and legibility in most parts - several isolated residential enclaves have been created through poor integration with existing neighbourhoods, and whilst segregated pedestrian/cycling routes contribute to permeability, they are isolated and not overlooked, with safety/security implications, especially at night; and*
- *Absence of clear composition of development, leading to fragmentation of many typologies and associated routes."*

6.6 To provide a finer grain of detail over and above the detail provided in the Newham Character Study, the following local Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) have been identified by BWLPD, and summarised at a high-level, to facilitate a better understanding of the context within which the Site lies, while their extent and distribution is illustrated in the following plan overleaf.

## EXISTING TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

### Poplar Suburbs (TCA 1)

- Predominantly a residential area, with the building typology exhibiting substantial contrasts in vernacular and scale; and
- Area partially severed by the main thoroughfares of the A13 and the A312.

### Leamouth and Thames Estuary (TCA 2)

- Predominantly industrial uses, adjacent to the River Lea and River Thames. Generally poor and cluttered appearance; and
- Built form of variable height, mostly low-rise although some high-rise development on the Leamouth Peninsula.

### Canning Town and Custom House (TCA 3)

- Predominantly residential, comprising post-war two to three storey built forms; and
- Simple and uniform area, with built form arranged across disconnected but repetitive street pattern.

### Royal Victoria Dock (TCA 4)

- The expanse of open water is the defining characteristic of the area, with mixed-use developments predominating; and
- Distinctive built forms, including Millennium Mills; the Excel Centre; and the Crystal.

### West Silvertown (TCA 5)

- Predominantly residential, comprising low-rise flats and houses between three and five storeys; and
- Broadly regular/geometric grid pattern urban structure, incorporating car parking and small pockets of amenity space.

### Minoco Wharf (TCA 6)

- Much of the area is currently undergoing construction activities, with some mid-rise residential built form completed; and
- Elsewhere there are industrial uses present, while the Thames Barrier Park is a key feature.

### Canary Wharf and Docklands (TCA 7)

- Land use is predominantly commercial/office, with the built form tall and centered around a series of wharfs;
- The built form is modern and contemporary, with a strong sense of place. Some construction activities are ongoing.

### Isle of Dogs (TCA 8)

- Predominantly residential area with built form generally four to six storeys in height; and
- Street pattern largely orientated towards the River, with a large area of open space in the centre.

### Greenwich Peninsula West (TCA 9)

- Predominantly industrial land use, with views of Canary Wharf and the O2 Arena a defining characteristic; and
- Some large scale built form, set against swathes of open/vacant land.

### Greenwich Peninsula East (TCA 10)

- Mixed-use contemporary development, featuring the landmark O2 Arena to the north; and
- Built form is generally tall and of a large scale, with substantial construction activities also ongoing in the area.

### New Charlton (TCA 11)

- Industrial area, with a number of loading jetties extending into the River Thames; and
- Warehouses are commonplace, as are spoil heaps associated with aggregate materials.