

## **Friends of Queen's Market**

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### **Remaining MATTERS at the LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION**

#### **MATTER 9 Markets and events / pop-up spaces**

##### **Q9.7 Is policy HS4 relating to markets and events / pop-up spaces justified and consistent with national policy and the London Plan?**

No, this policy is not consistent as it does not adequately cover and therefore protect Newham's permanent street markets. The emphasis of the policy and great majority of the supporting text covers pop-ups, or temporary markets for meanwhile use. These are very different from Newham's permanent markets and there should be a much stronger emphasis on the permanent markets, this policy should be the place for summarising their attributes.

Note wording in HS4.1: internal and external would be better described as 'indoor and outdoor' as these are more recognised terms for a market. And it should be noted that Queen's Market is termed a 'covered market', meaning it is not closed-in and occupying a building, it is open at each end.

To be clear, there are just two large permanent markets in Newham: Stratford (indoor and outdoor) and Queen's Market, which is over 100 years old and the largest in the East End. Other markets operated by Newham Council are Pilgrims Way (2 stalls, according to the Markets Review) Kelland Road (8 pitches), Woodgrange Market (Saturdays only) and Rathbone Market, which has almost disappeared. These should be named in the text for the sake of clarity.

The affordability of the markets should above all be included in the text, as we have said before in relation to N14. Affordability appears elsewhere in the Plan, for example in the context of workspace and in the context of viability. In the *Newham Retail Study appendices: Topic - affordable retail*, the retail study sees markets in the context of affordability:

*"There is London level policy support in Policy E9 Part B in the new London Plan (2021) for ensuring a mix of retail uses and that 'where justified by evidence of local need, policies should secure affordable commercial and shop units.' This applies to retail, markets and hot food takeaways and that this should be informed by local evidence and town centre strategies."*

Also noted is BNF 3.3 the policy on sports facilities (building a fairer Newham)

*The following will also be required as a minimum for development involving the loss, reconfiguration or reduction of a cultural facility or sport or recreation facility:*

*.....information demonstrating the **affordability** of any reconfigured facility.*

Other cross-references to policy in the Plan which should be included:

1) The health benefits

In policy HS6 Justification *“There is an ongoing need to create a healthy food and drink environment, addressing affordability and access, to support the delivery of the 50 Steps to a Healthier Newham strategy (2024).”* This cross-reference could be included in the Markets policy and made clear, as markets provide fresh, healthy food.

2) The social and community role of markets, which is fully acknowledged, could be elaborated on and cross referenced, for example as it appears in the Characterisation Study.

In the High Streets introduction, it says: *“High street environments also offer opportunities for social interaction to help improve mental health and social isolation, and space to showcase the cultural diversity of the borough.”* Markets could also be mentioned somewhere in this introduction, as it is known that they have a very specific role that is different from other aspects of the High Street.

## **Pop-ups and Culture**

Pop-ups have a small but specific role in the London Plan within the chapter on Heritage and Culture (Policy HC5 Supporting London’s culture and creative industries): they can provide a cultural offer and benefit empty buildings as Meanwhile Use.

Importantly, the supporting paragraph in HC5 7.5.1 says: *“London’s rich cultural offer includes visual and performing arts, music, spectator sports, festivals and carnivals, pop-ups and street markets, and a diverse and innovative food scene..”*

This reference to markets as part of the culture should be highly relevant to Newham’s Markets policy and should appear within the text.

## **Implementation**

HS4.1 The implementation should not join together two very different aspects of redevelopment. The Social and Health value of the market is a completely separate issue from the physical aspects, layout, functioning, of a market. While the layout is very important to get right, social value can be

found within many different physical types of market. The Health and Social Value Impact Screening Assessment is also something that should be considered prior to any redevelopment. It should have its own implementation point within the policy.

The amount of detail relating to parts 2 and 3 of the policy should be applied to part 1 of the policy. For example, the need for a Markets Management Plan would be an obvious and very important requirement of any re-location of a market / development impacting on a site.

Reference must be made to genuine collaboration and co-working with traders and businesses within a market in the case of re-location or redevelopment. Without the full involvement and agreement of the traders, who know the market best, there can be no successful change.

#### **M10. Design**

**This matter considers policies BFN2, D1, D2 and D5 to D9. Policies D3 and D4 were considered under matter 3 (spatial strategy).**

##### **BFN2 Co-designed masterplanning**

**Q10.1 Is policy BFN2 justified and consistent with national policy and the London Plan? In particular: a) The requirement for a Meanwhile Use Strategy in part 4. b) The requirement for post occupancy surveys in part 5.**

We support all efforts to include genuine co-design in Masterplanning and would like to elaborate on this at the Hearing.

#### **M13. Social infrastructure**

##### **BFN3 Social value and health impact assessments**

**Q13.1 Is policy BFN3 justified and consistent with national policy and guidance and the London Plan?**

This addition to the Plan, putting Markets into the requirement for Social value and health impact assessments, is useful in principle.

However, we are not convinced by the detail. Our concern is that this assessment would be another box-ticking exercise that does not adequately challenge and stop the potential harm that might be caused by a development. The emphasis on 'mitigating' gives the impression that the exercise would be to make the best of a bad job. So while we support the idea in principle, the way it is carried out would be important to get right.

Friends of Queen's Market gave evidence to the London Assembly Planning Committee for the production of its report *Social Value in Planning and Regeneration: knowing the price of everything and the value of nothing*. <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-04/Social%20value%20in%20planning%20and%20regeneration%20report%20April%202025.pdf>

Sadiq Khan in a recent reply to a question at the London Assembly said: "There are some people who don't see the benefits of markets. I think they're important. What we see is yes, record investment from City Hall, but the challenge is the landowners can see more money's coming in from other use of the space. So one of the things we're looking into in relation to the next London Plan is how we can use planning to prevent change of use in terms of some of this space used for markets. The London Plan already is pretty robust and pretty strong but we're seeing people seeing the potential of land they own being used for for more profit if it's not a market. And we're going to consider the impact on the heritage of our city, aside from the individual families and businesses affected."

#### **SI1 Existing community facilities and health facilities**

**Q13.2 Is policy SI1 justified, effective and consistent with national policy and the London Plan? In particular, is the reference in part 2 (that if the loss of a facility can be demonstrated as being acceptable, then the preferred alternative use will be for the maximum viable amount of affordable housing) justified and will it be effective?**

We believe the markets should be mentioned within this chapter, but with reservations, given that the policy is about the loss of these facilities. We noted that the Community Facilities Needs Assessment (Publica (2022) did not have any mention of Queen's Market. In that report, it was found that the area where Queen's Market is located has a good number of community facilities and we make the point that if there was any threat to Queen's Market, alternative community facilities would not be a replacement for those offered by the Market. The market's character as a facility is open: anybody can walk into a market any time and be sociable. This is very different from facilities provided in other ways, where you may have to make an appointment, and so on.

We are concerned by the policy as it applies to all community facilities in Newham and the possible loss of them. We have seen the loss of community facilities and the loss of much-needed communal space.

SI1.2 The hope that there would be a maximum viable addition of affordable housing to somehow compensate for the loss of a facility is not very convincing.

We recognise that the Council's remedy for our point (being included in this list of community facilities) was to include Markets in the BFN3 Social value and health impact assessments policy.

**M16. Other soundness legal compliance issues**

**Q16.1 Are there any other soundness or legal compliance issues that have not been addressed under matters 1 to 15?**