

3. FUNCTIONAL CHARACTER

The following chapter consists of an investigation into borough-wide mapping to understand functional character of the borough.

CHARACTER AND LAND DESIGNATIONS

The map below maps various categories of the built environment and land designations which will later inform the potential for change across the borough for each neighbourhood. These designations are informed by Newham’s Local Plan 2018 and the London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan 2020 (LLDC).

Understanding the existing land uses and planning designation set out across the borough guides the creation of neighbourhoods and the form of future development. For more detailed analysis of the typologies that comprise each classification, please see Chapter 4.

Data source: Maccreanor Lavington analysis





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Historic Inner Suburb



© Google street view

Post War Inner Suburb



© Google street view

Urban Neighbourhood



© Google street view

Town Centre



© Google street view

Local Centre



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Industrial



© Google street view

Out-of-town Retail



© Google street view

Green Space

The various characters and land use designations across the borough, illustrated on the map on the previous spread, are defined below.

Historic Inner Suburb

Historic inner suburbs consists of mostly terraced housing, with social amenities such as libraries, churches and schools, and a number of local and town centres focused on main roads with predominantly independent shops and other businesses reflecting the multi-cultural diversity in the area.

The street pattern predominantly consists of a medium-to-fine grid of streets that creates long urban blocks.

The area also contains a number of important parks, including West Ham Park, Central Park and Manor Park Cemetery and the City of London Cemetery (a grade I Historic Park) which fit into the urban structure.

A number of historic buildings and Conservation Areas also located in this area

Post War Inner Suburb

Post war inner suburbs consists of a mixed housing character that reflects a period of fast-paced state-led systematic development. In Newham it can include unembellished low-rise and mid-rise brick walk-up flats; low-rise brick and timber-clad detached, semi-detached and short-run terrace houses; and tall point block buildings containing stacked apartments.

All buildings generally have a poor relationship with the street often characterised by deep set back building lines dominated by off-street surface car parking, high impermeable fencing or are set within poorly defined layouts far from the street and lacking clear frontage.

Where set in perimeter blocks these are often relaxed, spacious and curvi-linear in form. In free form blocks the street network is typically illegible and inaccessible e.g. cul-de-sacs. In most cases public space design is poor as large parts of sites are dedicated to parking lots, private green space set behind fences and 'left over' green spaces with little obvious function or use.

Urban Neighbourhood

Urban neighbourhoods consists of mid-rise and tall buildings of medium density residential, hotel and office use. They consist of mostly contemporary buildings that directly interface with the street with no setback, or have a small planted hedge and a generally good urban quality. The urban structure consists of a gridded networks of streets and perimeter blocks.

These areas are generally recently newly designed through masterplans and even though these areas exhibit physically good quality urban design principles, these areas often lack a mix of uses and access to services that contribute to the 15 minute liveable neighbourhood. There is also often less communal amenity spaces available to residents when compared with post-war inner suburb developments.

Town Centres

Town centres consist of metropolitan, major and district centres. District centres are distributed more widely than metropolitan and major centres, providing convenience goods and services for more local communities and accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. Typically they contain 10,000–50,000 sqm of retail, leisure and service floorspace.

Metropolitan and major centres serve wider catchments, drawing residents from across the borough and beyond. They enjoy high levels of accessibility and contain a higher proportion of comparison goods in addition to employment, leisure, service and civic functions. Stratford and East Ham are the only metropolitan and major centres in the borough respectively.

Local Centre

These areas typically serve a localised catchment often most accessible by walking and cycling and include local parades and small clusters of shops, mostly for convenience goods and other services. They may include a small supermarket (typically up to around 500 sqm), sub-post office, pharmacy, laundrette and other useful local services.

Industrial

Industrial areas across the borough includes warehouse and logistics type buildings, large scale infrastructure and some unused, historic industrial infrastructure. These

areas are generally inaccessible to the public, or form part of gated industrial estates. The built form consists of post-war and modern industrial park development, comprising industries located in sheds and offices of varying sizes, usually constructed in concrete and steel. Newer industrial units are constructed within gated industrial estates, with planted and private streets, leaving large areas of impermeable plots.

A large portion of the industrial land across the borough interfaces with the River Lea or Thames.

Out of town retail

Out-of-town shopping / retail are enclosed shopping areas located outside of a town centre, generally surrounded by large parking lots and accessed by car with little pedestrian or cycling accessibility. Users generally utilise these retail areas to undertake large purchases of goods.

Green Space

Newham enjoys a mix of green spaces across the borough with larger spaces like Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park alongside local green spaces providing most residential areas with access to some public open space. The east-west Greenway provides a unique green link and active travel route across the borough connecting wider green spaces.

Overall, the northern parts of the borough contain a higher portion of green spaces. Historical industrial areas including Canning Town, Royal Docks and the area around the Beckton Sewerage Works lacking access to green space.

London City Airport

London City Airport is an international airport and is located in the Royal Docks in the south of the borough, approximately 6 miles east of the City of London and 3 miles east of Canary Wharf. These are the twin centres of London's financial industry, which is a major user of the airport. The airport creates a distinct identity in the area around Gallions Point Marina.

Strategic Industrial Land

Strategic Industrial Locations (SILs) are London's main reservoirs of industrial and related capacity. They are

essential in supporting a healthy mix of employment uses across the borough and to the functioning of wider London. The character of these areas varies with the types of industry from heavy industry to light-industrial parks.

The quality of the public space design and integration with surrounding areas also varies largely with the nature of industry. Larger concentrations of heavier-industry such as Beckton Sewage Treatment Works creating greater barriers and offering less flexibility than light-industrial areas which can co-exist more readily adjacent more vulnerable uses like residential.

Heritage Conservation Areas

A Conservation Area is a place, including buildings, streets and spaces, with special architectural and historic interest, which the council protects (or designates). It is important to maintain and enhance the character and look of these areas. There are nine Conservation Areas in Newham:

- Durham Road Conservation Area, Manor Park
- East Ham Conservation Area
- Forest Gate Town Centre Conservation Area
- Romford Road Conservation Area, Forest Gate
- Stratford St John's Conservation Area
- Sugar House Lane Conservation Area, Stratford
- Three Mills Conservation Area
- University Conservation Area, Stratford
- Woodgrange Estate Conservation Area, Forest Gate

It is important to note that all trees in Conservation Areas are protected if they have a stem of more than 7.5cm wide and stand more than 1.5 metres high.