

Newham Local Plan

Evidence Base:

Town Centres Update – 2024 data

August 2025

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Introduction

This document updates and extends the data contained within [Evidence Base: Town Centres](#) (July 2015) and the [Town Centres Update](#) (February 2023), based on survey data collected August-September 2024. The data therefore provides an updated baseline from which to assess a proposal's compliance with the requirements of policy SP9 in the Newham Local Plan (2018).

This update does not alter the policies or spatial allocations/designations contained within the [Newham Local Plan \(2018\)](#).

The survey data also does not change the emerging policies of the Draft [Submission Local Plan](#), which was agreed by Full Council decision in April 2025 to be submitted for examination. Instead, the data will assist in creating a baseline for the revised town centre-related policies.

Local Plan (2018) policy INF5 defines town centres boundaries across the Borough and sets out to manage them strategically as part of a town centre hierarchy and infrastructure network, seeking qualitative improvements that reflect their current and projected roles (as per policies S2-6) in providing access to shopping, services, employment (INF5, J1) and community facilities (INF8).

Integral to achieving the Local Plan town centre visions is the management of cumulative impacts through the application of policy SP9 which seeks to:

- Secure a robust retail core by ensuring that within Primary Shopping Frontages (PSFs), as shown on the Policies Map 2018 at least **70%** of units are in A1 use.
- Secure a high quality leisure offer by ensuring that at least **67%** of town centre leisure uses are D2, A4 or A3 and that betting shops, amusement arcades and takeaways (A5) account for no more than 33%.

The Authority Monitoring Reports provide further quantitative and qualitative data on the Borough's town and local centres.

Context

From 1 September 2020 the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 came into effect. A new use class E (Commercial, Business and Service uses) brings together many of the town centre uses that the Local Plan policies above address. These Regulations also moved some uses, particularly noise generating leisure uses, out of the previous use classes and into the "sui generis" category.

Use description	Pre Sep 2020 use class	Post Sep 2020 use class
Shops	A1	E(a)
Cafes and restaurants	A3	E(b)
Financial and professional services	A2	E(c)
Pubs and drinking establishments	A4	Sui Generis
Takeaways	A5	Sui Generis
Cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls	D2	Sui Generis
Community halls	D2	F2(b)
Gyms	D2	E(d)
Indoor sports and recreation	D2	F2(c)
Betting shops and adult arcades	Sui Generis	Sui Generis

Changes of use to, or between, Sui Generis uses always require planning permission.

Change of use within the same use class (e.g. Class Ea to Eb) will not require planning permission unless an existing planning condition limits the use on the site.

Methodology

The data contained within this document was derived from town centre surveys undertaken from August to September 2024. It reflects the boundaries of town centres as adopted through the Local Plan in December 2018.

Note that the data for Stratford does not reflect the area that falls under the London Legacy Development Corporation's Local Plan (2020). Future monitoring undertaken after the adoption of the new Newham Local Plan will provide survey data from across the whole town centre, reflecting the new integrated policy approach to this centre.

It should also be noted that the Use Classes assigned through the survey work are indicative of the observations on the day of survey and should not be taken as a confirmation of lawful use. Additionally, the data may have been superseded by further changes of use since the time of surveying.

Nevertheless, the survey data provides an accurate snapshot of the mix of uses within Newham's town centres, being robust, detailed and sufficiently up-to-date to allow for development management decisions to be taken on their basis.

Stratford (Metropolitan Centre, excluding LLDC area)

Robustness of the Retail Core:

Total number of units in PSF	84
Total number of units in PSF that are vacant	5
Total number of units in PSF in Ea Use Class	54
Percentage of Ea uses in PSF	66.3%

Stratford Shopping Centre comprises the PSF for Stratford Town Centre under the Local Plan (2018) and presents a healthy retail core complementing the offer of Stratford City (Westfield). The percentage of retail uses in the PSF is slightly below the requirement of policy SP9. The former Sports Direct shop remains vacant (3 units), as do a further 2 units in the same area of the mall. The former Peacocks store, which was vacant at the time of the 2021 survey, has since been occupied by a gym (Puregym, 3 units).

Quality Leisure Benchmark:

Leisure Use (not vacant)		Number of uses	Percentage of total
Subject to policy control	Takeaways (SG)	4	
	Arcades/Casinos (SG)	2	
	Betting Shops (SG)	5	
	Subtotal	11	21.2%
Quality focus	Cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls (SG)	1	
	Restaurants/cafes (Eb)	29	
	Pubs (SG)	7	
	Community halls (F2b)	2	
	Gyms (Ed)	1	
	Indoor sports and recreation (F2c)	0	
	Subtotal	40	76.9%
Other identified	Theatres (SG)	1	
	Night Clubs (SG)	0	
	Subtotal	1	1.9%
TOTAL		52	100%

As a Metropolitan Town Centre, Stratford provides a greater variety of leisure uses compared to Newham's, such as a theatre, a cinema, and a variety of food and drink destinations, including some multi-business uses such as Roof East (counted here as primarily Sui Generis pub use) and indoor market halls/food courts. While the night club in Stratford has closed, the Retail and Leisure Study (2022) has identified limited local demand for this type of evening and night time use, with other uses typically seen in Stratford

attracting more evening and night time footfall, and therefore there are no specific policy actions resulting from this loss.

The variety of leisure offer across the whole of the town centre is commensurate with Stratford's status in the London Plan (2021) as a Metropolitan Town Centre with a regional scale offer of the evening and night time economy, and expands the offer of Newham's other town centres.

Betting shops and other gambling premises, and hot food takeaway businesses remain below the town centre requirement of policy SP9 3a. The overall quality of the leisure offer meets policy SP9 criteria.

East Ham (Major centre)

Robustness of the Retail Core:

Total number of units in PSF	149
Total number of units in PSF that are vacant	3
Total number of units in PSF in A1 Use Class	111
Percentage of A1 uses in PSF	74.5

East Ham PSF is currently within SP9 targets of 70% of the units being retail (Ea) use. The vacancy rate in the PSF continues to be low, with only three units not in use.

Quality Leisure Benchmark:

Leisure Uses (not vacant)		Number of uses	Percentage
Subject to policy control	Takeaways (SG)	20	
	Arcades/Casinos (SG)	3	
	Betting Shops (SG)	9	
	Subtotal	32	43.8%
Quality focus	Cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls (SG)	0	
	Restaurants/cafes (Eb)	36	
	Pubs (SG)	2	
	Community halls (F2b)	0	
	Gyms (Ed)	2	
	Indoor sports and recreation (F2c)	1	
	Subtotal	41	56.2%
TOTAL		73	100%

Despite being the second largest centre in the Borough after Stratford, quality leisure and cultural facilities in East Ham centre are not well established. This was also reflected in the findings of the Retail and Leisure Study (2022). Hot

food takeaways are particularly concentrated along the Barking Road frontages, and gambling premises are also clustered in an important section of the PSF between Lloyd Road and Kempton Road. The percentage of quality leisure is below policy targets, and should be encouraged to further bolster East Ham's status as a Major Centre, including to enhance its night-time/ evening economy offer.

Canning Town (District Centre)

Robustness of the Retail Core:

Total number of units in PSF	26
Total number of units in PSF that are vacant	4
Total number of units in PSF in A1 Use Class	8
Percentage of A1 uses in PSF	30.7%

For this review, the baseline GIS layer address points have been updated, resulting in Canning Town's Primary Shopping Frontages accurately reflecting 26 units, up from the previous 20 (which included multi-unit spaces but were reported as singles). Many of the units in Rathbone Market have now been taken up, primarily by non-retail businesses such as education centres and a dentist. Retail representation in the PSF remains well below policy SP9 benchmark of 70%. There are 4 vacant units remaining.

Note that the market stalls are not counted in this assessment, which focuses on the permanent units.

Quality Leisure Benchmark:

Leisure Uses (not vacant)		Number of uses	Percentage
Subject to policy control	Takeaways (SG)	7	
	Arcades (SG)	1	
	Betting Shops (SG)	4	
	Subtotal	12	31.6%
Quality focus	Cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls (SG)	0	
	Restaurants/cafes (Eb)	19	
	Pubs (SG)	2	
	Community halls (F2b)	1	
	Gyms (Ed)	4	
	Indoor sports and recreation (F2c)	0	
	Subtotal	26	68.4%
TOTAL		38	100%

Canning Town has seen an increase in hot food takeaways since the last survey, with a few units changing from restaurants/café use and a Dominos

being established in Rathbone Market (note that the survey data does not reflect lawfulness of uses observed). The overall leisure offer has also increased with more frontages in Hallsville Quarter becoming available and occupied. Overall, the benchmark of policy SP9 is achieved, and the quality and balance of leisure uses should continue to be managed as part of an overall healthy mix of uses within the town centre.

Forest Gate (District Centre)

Robustness of the Retail Core:

Total number of units in PSF	23
Total number of units in PSF that are vacant	6
Total number of units in PSF in A1 Use Class	14
Percentage of A1 uses in PSF	60.8

For this review, the baseline GIS layer address points have been updated, resulting in Forest Gate's Primary Shopping Frontages reflecting 23 units, down from 31 previously, as a result of redevelopment at 39-45 Woodgrange Road resulting in larger units with new single address points. Forest Gate's PSF retail core was observed to be below SP9 targets. This is in part due to a higher number of vacancies, of which half represent the newly delivered to 39-45 Woodgrange Road redevelopment. The new spaces include one larger unit for a medium-sized food store (in line with Policy S6 requirement for Forest Gate) and two smaller units.

Quality Leisure Benchmark:

Leisure Uses (not vacant)		Number of uses	Percentage
Subject to policy control	Takeaways (SG)	19	
	Arcades (SG)	0	
	Betting Shops (SG)	5	
	Subtotal	24	53.4%
Quality focus	Cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls (SG)	0	
	Restaurants/cafes (Eb)	16	
	Pubs (SG)	4	
	Community halls (F2b)	1	
	Gyms (Ed)	0	
	Indoor sports and recreation (F2c)	0	
	Subtotal	21	46.6%
TOTAL		45	100%

The mix of leisure uses within Forest Gate Town Centre falls below the policy benchmark of policy SP9, with 'subject to control' uses continuing to comprise

over half of all leisure uses within the centre. Cafes and restaurants units (Eb use) form the largest focus leisure use within the centre, helping to counterbalance the number of takeaways by providing alternative eating/drinking destinations. However the overall number of Eb uses remains low comparative to the overall size of the centre, and there are limited alternative leisure uses. Durning Hall community centre remains open, although there is a planning permission in place to redevelop the site.

Green Street (District Centre)

Robustness of the Retail Core:

Total number of units in PSF	209
Total number of units in PSF that are vacant	10
Total number of units in PSF in A1 Use Class	171
Percentage of A1 uses in PSF	81.8%

Green Street PSF exceeds policy SP9 expectations in terms of the robustness of its retail core. Vacancy rates within the PSF also remain low, reflective of the strength of the centre as a major destination for specialist food and non-food shopping, including a successful range of retail units surrounding the stalls of Queen's Market (Note the market stalls and kiosks are not counted in this assessment, which focuses on the permanent units).

Quality Leisure Benchmark:

Leisure Uses (not vacant)		Number of uses	Percentage
Subject to policy control	Takeaways (A5)	15	
	Arcades (SG)	2	
	Betting Shops (SG)	5	
	Subtotal	22	41.5%
Quality focus	Cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls (SG)	0	
	Restaurants/cafes (Eb)	29	
	Pubs (SG)	1	
	Community halls (F2b)	1	
	Gyms (Ed)	0	
	Indoor sports and recreation (F2c)	0	
	Subtotal	31	58.5%
TOTAL		53	100%

The mix of leisure uses within Green Street remains below the target of policy SP9. Restaurants and Cafes (Eb uses) make up the majority of quality focus leisure uses, with a higher concentration in the Plashet Grove frontages as well as units within East Shopping Centre. Hot food takeaways are also

focused along Plashet Grove. There remains scope to improve the diversity and quantity of the leisure offer of the centre to better relate to its size, responding to the findings of the Retail and Leisure Study (2022).

East Beckton (District Centre)

Robustness of the Retail Core:

Total number of units in PSF	17
Total number of units in PSF that are vacant	1
Total number of units in PSF in A1 Use Class	10
Percentage of A1 uses in PSF	58.8%

Beckton East PSF is defined by the Mary Rose Mall which is dominated by the ASDA Superstore and a small parade of shops, therefore the typology results in a disproportionate effect on ratios. Whilst the number of retail units has improved by one, the policy SP9 retail target for the PSF is not met. However, as previous surveys have indicated, the town centre is performing well with little change in operators and no long-term vacancies. During the 2024 survey, the betting shop had become operational once more, while NatWest bank had vacated.

Quality Leisure Benchmark:

Leisure Uses (not vacant)		Number of uses	Percentage
Subject to policy control	Takeaways (A5)	0	
	Arcades (SG)	0	
	Betting Shops (SG)	1	
	Subtotal	1	20%
Quality focus	Cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls (SG)	0	
	Restaurants/cafes (Eb)	1	
	Pubs (SG)	2	
	Community halls (F2b)	0	
	Gyms (Ed)	0	
	Indoor sports and recreation (F2c)	1	
	Subtotal	4	80%
TOTAL		5	100%

As with the PSF, the wider East Beckton town centre is characterised primarily by several large floorplate buildings (Premier Inn, the Beckton Globe, St Marks Church). Again, the small number of units has a disproportionate effect on ratios for leisure. While the quantity and diversity of leisure offer in the town centre remains low, the mix meets the benchmark of policy SP9. As identified by the Retail and Leisure Study (2022), leisure needs in this area of

the borough are met out-of-centre, primarily by the offer at Gallions Reach Retail Centre, and many people travel to further afield out-of-borough destinations, which indicates that the leisure offer is a key weakness for East Beckton town centre.

Appendix 1 – Definitions

‘Other’ leisure uses: uses that fall outside of the above definitions which are generally less representative of Newham’s current town centre offer (e.g. theatres and night clubs).

Primary Shopping Frontage (PSF): defined within the Local Plan (2018) as ‘likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods.’ See boundaries on [Policies Map 2018](#).

Primary Shopping Area (PSA): defined by the NPPF as ‘an area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage)’. See boundaries on [Policies Map 2018](#). In some centres the PSA and the PSF are the same.

‘Quality’ leisure use: as defined by policy SP9 3a.ii, uses within former Use Classes D2, A4 and A3, many of which are now Sui Generis. The uses are restaurants and cafes (Eb Use Class), pubs, cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls

‘Subject to control’ leisure use: as defined by policy SP9 3a.ii, hot food takeaways (formerly A5 Use Class, now Sui Generis), betting shops (Sui Generis Use Class) and amusement arcades (Sui Generis Use Class) that require careful monitoring due to their potential cumulative impact.

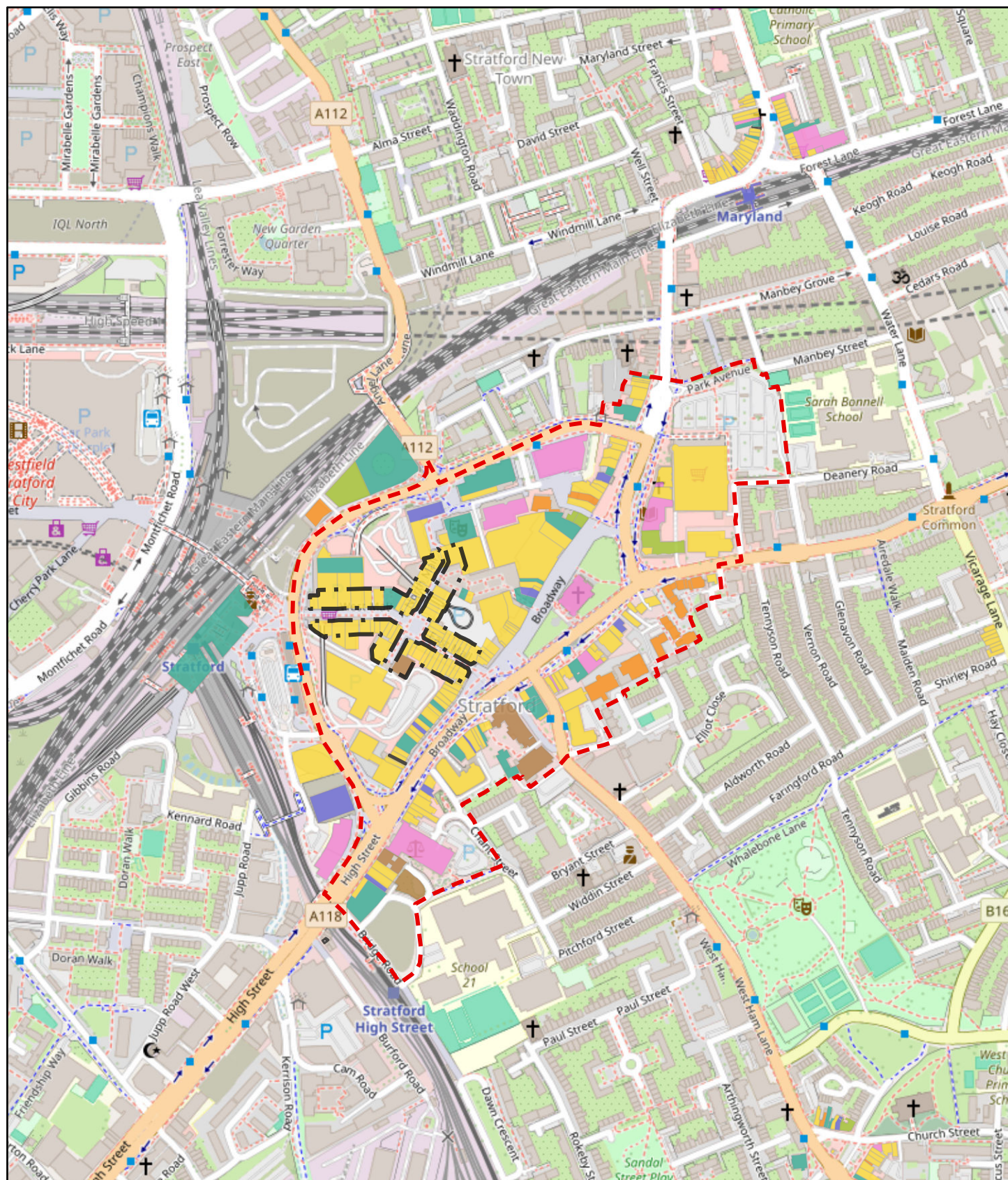
Unit: as defined in relation to street naming and numbering. New units may be created through subdivision of a property (e.g. 2a and 2b) or redevelopment. Units are different to frontages (frontages are a reflection of the part of a building façade associated with a unit, so for example a subdivided unit may result in 2 units and two half frontages).

Use: the observed primary Use Class of the business surveyed; note that this may take up more than one unit (as defined above), and will not reflect ancillary uses. It will also not be a reflection of lawfulness of the observed use of a unit.

Appendix 2 – Mapping

The maps on the following pages show the main surveyed use classes for each of the town centres and are provided for illustrative purposes.

Stratford Metropolitan Town Centre - 2024 surveyed uses



13/08/2025, 12:30:19

Local_Plan2018_Town_Centres

PSF

Town_Centre_Surveys2024

C1

C3/C4

E

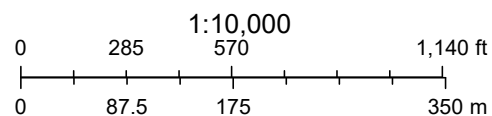
F1

F2

Sui Generis

Unclear

Other



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ArcGIS Web AppBuilder
Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA |

East Ham Major Town Centre - 2024 surveyed uses



13/08/2025, 12:26:26

 Local_Plan2018_Town_Centres

 PSF

Town_Centre_Surveys2024

 C3/C4

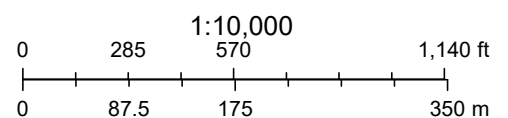
 E

 F1

 F2

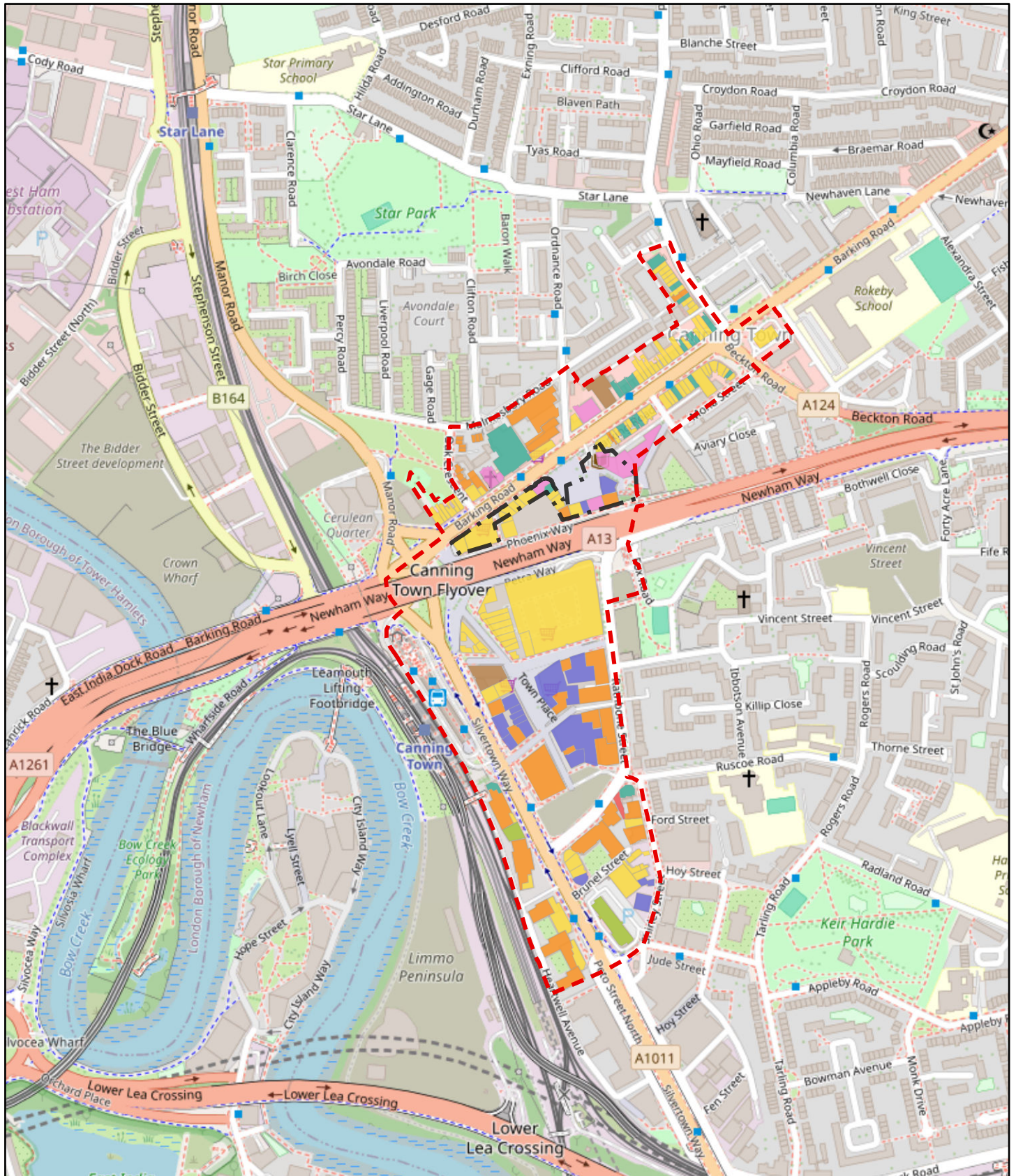
 Sui Generis

 Unclear




Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA

Canning Town Town Centre - 2024 surveyed uses



13/08/2025, 12:46:10

 Local Plan2018_Town_Centres



Town_Centre_Surveys2024

 B2

■ C1

■ C3/C4

E

51

FI

■ F2

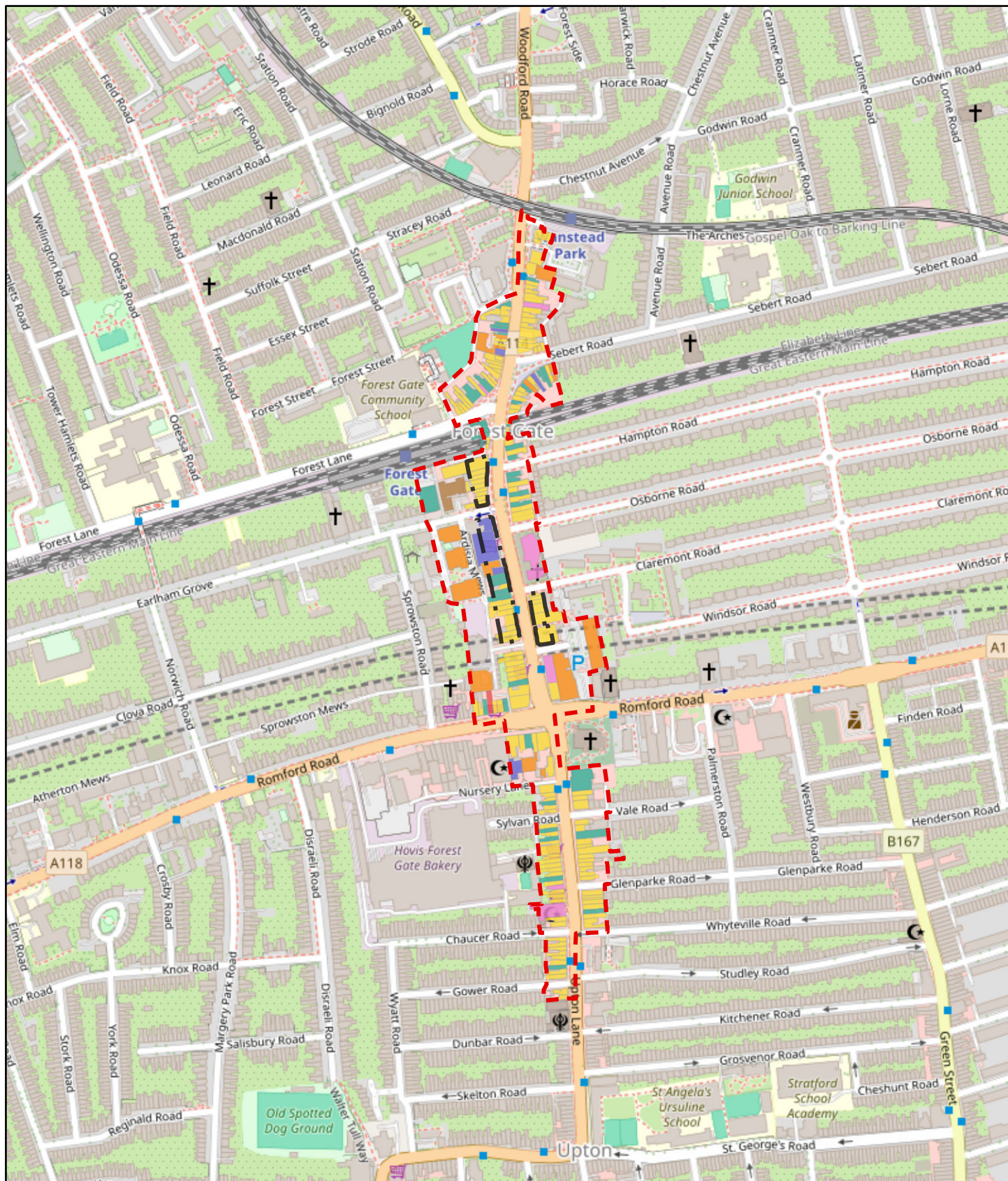
 Sui Gen

☐ Unclear

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ArcGIS Web AppBuilder
Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA |

Forest Gate Town Centre - 2024 surveyed uses



13/08/2025, 12:32:59

 Local_Plan2018_Town_Centres

 PSF

Town_Centre_Surveys2024

B2

C3/C4

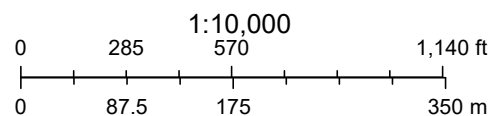
E

F1

F2

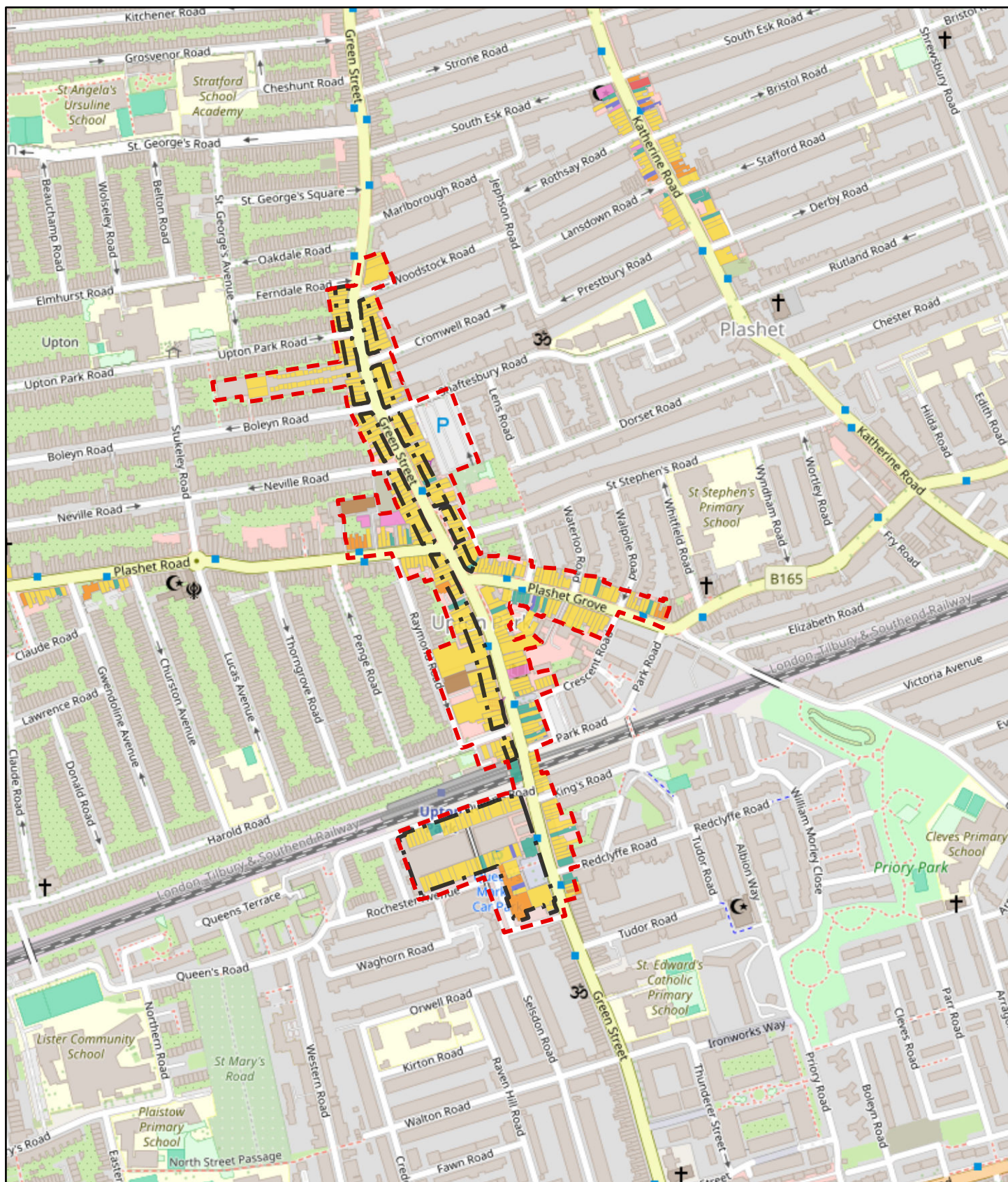
Sui Generis

Unclear



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA

Green Street District Town Centre - 2024 surveyed uses



13/08/2025, 12:24:05

 Local_Plan2018_Town_Centres

 PSF

Town_Centre_Surveys2024

B2

C3/C4

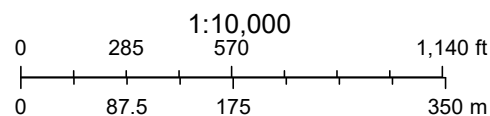
E

F1

F2

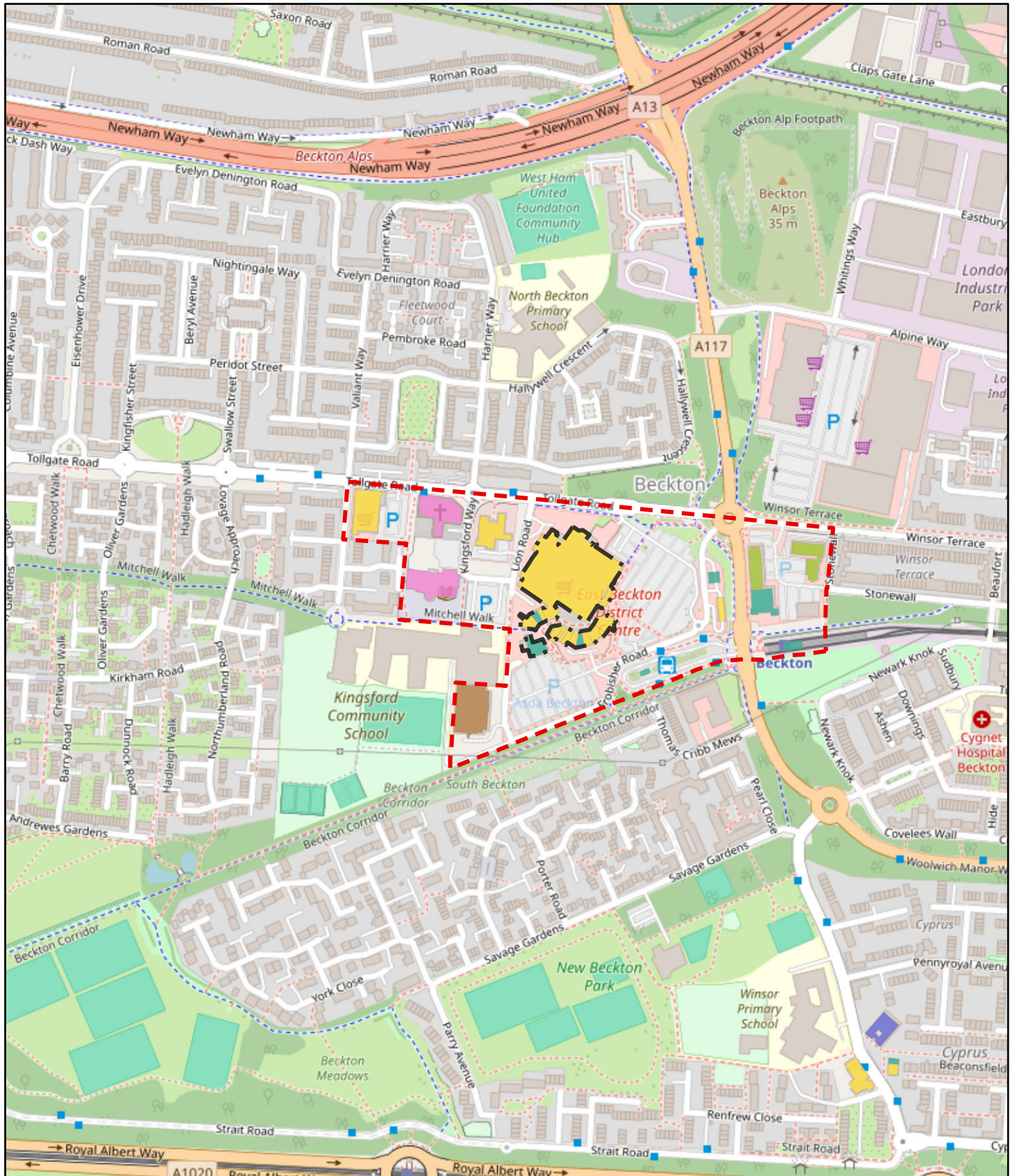
Sui Generis

Unclear



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA

East Beckton Town Centre - 2024 surveyed uses



13/08/2025, 12:47:50

Local_Plan2018_Town_Centres

PSF

Town_Centre_Surveys2024

C1

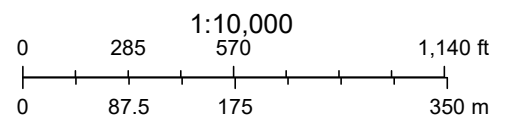
E

F1

F2

Sui Generis

Unclear



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