

**Peter Dunn  
Daniel Glaessl  
Cecilia Magnusson  
Yashovardhan**

**CARPENTER'S ESTATE**

**COMMON  
GROUND**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Carpenter's Estate is a council housing estate undergoing a substantial social and spatial transformation. Its experience today is the particular result of its unique situation. Its location adjacent to the future Olympic Park and Stratford City have created immense development pressures on a previously neglected piece of East London. A large number of luxury developments currently under construction will introduce a new, larger population to the area. Meanwhile, the physical condition of the estate housing threatens to displace the existing population, which has deep roots in the area. The issues on the Carpenters Estate are also representative of a common trend in London today. Local authorities are passing their responsibilities for social housing to private housing associations, and property development interests place pressures on vulnerable communities. The situation of the Carpenter's Estate presents opportunities to improve the lives of its current and future residents. Even so, the threats to its future are great. Our proposed interventions seek to enable the Carpenter's Estate to respond to this growth and change in a way that will develop its character as a great London neighbourhood.

Our analysis of the site today included on-site interviews, our own observations of the space, reviews of planning documents, and statistics measuring the area's deprivation. The resulting picture reveals a neighbourhood with a rich history that enjoys strong social assets and community ties. It also points to two major changes: First, millions of pounds of investment are going into the construction of new residential towers building on the even larger Stratford City and Olympic developments in the area. Second, Newham Council has decided to decant and demolish the three tower blocks on the estate, displacing hundreds of residents from their homes.

As a dense and diverse residential neighbourhood with a central location near major amenities, the Carpenter's Estate has the opportunity to become a great place for its residents to live. However, we identify polarisation, privatisation, and fragmentation as the primary threats to this site, which could too easily become a landscape of lifeless property investments and walled-off houses where residents of different backgrounds would effectively live in different worlds. Our approach in response to this situation is organised around the theme of common ground. Common grounds are the essential spaces, institutions, and people of the city that happen in between houses and private territory. Together with

New Developments

Carpenter's Estate



homes, they compose the sort of urban neighbourhood that people want to be a part of because it has both character and value.

Reflecting the complexity of the neighbourhood, our approaches to intervention are layered in distinct but intersecting components. They begin with the spaces in residential buildings themselves. The next layers address routes of travel and open green spaces where people have casual public interactions. The most formal layer proposes a series of institutions and spaces that would both provide services to the community and form an essential component of the neighbourhood. While a great deal of development is already underway on the site, the final layer suggests a new approach to future residential development here.

Olympic Park

Stratford Station

Stratford City



## ANALYSIS

The Carpenter's Estate was first developed the late nineteenth century. The Worshipful Company of Carpenters, an ancient London livery company, bought what was then farmland in West Ham, close to the small town of Stratford. It developed the estate industrially, either directly or by leasing land to various entrepreneurs. For decades, many of London's factories lined the canals of the River Lea, the railroads, and Carpenters Road. To house the workers for these factories, the Carpenters Company built rows of typical Victorian terraced houses between Carpenters Road and Stratford's town centre, creating a fairly self-contained community. Jobs were nearby, families rarely moved, and the sense of neighbourhood identity and community was strong. During this time, the Carpenters Company made efforts to improve the lives of the area's employees and residents, including the creation of a school and social club.

The Second World War forever changed this era. Located close to railroads, the docklands, and factories, Stratford was a frequent target for air raids. By the end of the war, nearly two-thirds of the housing on the Carpenter's Estate was destroyed or badly damaged. Throughout the 1950s a lack of funds and landlord neglect prevented any major improvements, and the physical condition continued to worsen. Nevertheless, the estate community remained strong through difficult times.

### **The Construction of Council Housing**

In the 1960s, the response to the slum conditions on the Carpenter's Estate was the same as that in neighbourhoods across the country at that time. The local authority became involved in an effort to provide 'cheap, decent homes' by issuing a compulsory purchase order on the land and building council housing. By 1968, the recently incorporated Newham Council built terraced housing, three-story apartment blocks, and three 22-storey tower blocks comprising a total of some 700 units on the estate. For many residents, the housing was received as a great gift, as it provided clean new housing complete with modern conveniences like indoor plumbing. At the same time, life in the towers was difficult to adjust to. Communal spaces on the roof were rarely used, and children had few places to play. Neighbours sharing a corridor did not feel the same as neighbours sharing a street. Moreover, as the Carpenters towers were being completed, a tower block in nearby Canning Town with similar concrete slab construction partially collapsed in a gas explosion just two months after it was completed, raising questions about the structural integrity of tower blocks. In the following decades, a decline in employment opportunities at the factories and docks coincided with an increase in crime and drug use in the area.

Nevertheless, the people of the estate actively maintained the institutions of community and their informal connections as neighbours. They created and managed 'The Club', a social space for residents. The Carpenters Company continued to have a presence in the area by managing the Carpenters' and Dockland Centre, an on-site youth centre that was a charitable continuation of the Carpenters Company's original involvement in its residents lives. For the most part, however, Newham Council has replaced the Carpenters Company as the institution with the most influence on the estate. As new residents moved to the estate, including a sizeable populations of immigrants, they were welcomed into a stable community. With the introduction of the right-to-buy scheme in the 1980s, many Carpenters residents became freeholders of their homes. Today, most of the terraced houses and some of the flats are privately owned.

### **The Tenant Management Organisation**

In 1997, Carpenter's Estate residents voted to form a Tenant Management Organisation, or a TMO. In an agreement with the London Borough of Newham, the landlord of the estate, the Carpenters TMO took over many of the council's responsibilities for the estate's residents, finances, and buildings. Volunteers from the estate's residents are elected to the Carpenters TMO board, which then holds regular meetings open to all residents. The TMO oversees maintenance and improvements to common spaces, gives residents advice, and serves as a liaison with LB Newham. Residents see the TMO as an opportunity to take direct control of their homes, giving them more power in dealing with the council. Carpenters residents have twice since 1997 voted overwhelmingly to extend its contract with Newham for five years, showing a confidence in their organisation. The effort taken to form and sustain the TMO is one of many indications that the Carpenter's Estate is more than housing for its residents, but a home with real meaning.

### **Physical Site Description**

The Carpenter's Estate is located in the northeast corner of the London Borough of Newham, about four miles east of the City of London. It lies on the border of two very different types of neighbourhood. To its west is the River Lea and its navigation canals, an area which has for more than a century been the site of industrial activities. To the east are several residential neighbourhoods, mostly rows of terraced houses, from West Ham to Stratford to Leyton. On such an edge, the estate is currently marginal to its surroundings. However this landscape is undergoing significant changes for the coming 2012 London Olympics. The Lea Valley in the areas north of the Carpenter's Estate is the site of the Olympic Park, which has displaced much of the industry in the area. On the edge of the park, also close to the estate, will be the enormous Stratford City development, which will feature a large shopping mall, hotels, offices, and housing. The estate is also adjacent to Stratford

Station, which has some of the best transport connections in London with services from two Underground lines, the Docklands Light Rail, the Overground, and National Rail services to Essex.

Local level connections from the site are more difficult, as strong physical boundaries define all of the site's edges. To the northwest, an elevated rail viaduct runs the entire length of the site. Tracks at grade carry the Jubilee line to the northeast. The southwest is bounded by the Waterworks River, a canal branch of the River Lea. The final side of the site is largely cut off by streets with no outlet. The clearest route through the site is High Street from Stratford to Bow, which is itself a minor boundary to anyone trying to cross. The high street has little pedestrian activity and functions primarily as highway.

The typologies of the estate and its surroundings are typical 1960s estate architecture. The three tower blocks dominate the estate visually. Each is 22 stories, with a rectangular plan two units wide and several units long. These sit on open plots with car parks or green space at their bases. The estate's remaining flats are in undistinguished brick buildings of three stories. Finally, cheaply constructed terraced houses line the estate's streets.



Present-day assets on site include the Tentants Management Organisation, as well as the Greenway, the Docklands Centre, the Carpenters Primary School, the Building Crafts College, and Duncan House, home to the Law School of UEL

### Measuring Deprivation

According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), the population of the Carpenter's Estate is among the most deprived in all of England. The LSOA that includes the Carpenter's Estate is in the bottom 9th percentile in England according to its composite IMD ranking.

Within this overall picture, the seven defined domains give a more detailed description of the area's deprivation. The worst of these domains is Barriers to Housing and Services, followed by Income, which are both in the fifth percentile. The best domain compared to the rest of England is Education Skills and Training, in which Newham 013d ranks above nearly 41% of the country's LSOAs.

### Limitations of the IMD

The IMD served as our initial point of entry for analysis of the site and its people. However, this approach has serious limits as a tool for social analysis. First, the data sources themselves raise concerns. While the most recent statistics are dated 2007, much of their underlying data are less recent, from 2004 or often the 2001 census, creating an anachronistic picture of the population. The selection and combination of this data then raises more questions. Every time the index's creators

identify a piece of data as relevant and assign it a relative weight, they make implicit statements of value. Despite its apparent statistical objectivity, the weighting processes cannot occur without subjective judgements.

The IMD is also limited by its heavy emphasis on income and employment. The choice and weighting of input data suggest a belief that lower income means more deprivation. Furthermore, while it can be useful in analysing a particular population, the IMD are limited in offering site analysis and context around the relevant population. Its data deals exclusively with a site's residents, saying nothing about people who work there, shop there, or simply visit there. Additionally, it has nothing to say about the spatial characteristics of the site itself.

Finally, the IMD is of limited use in this analysis because of its focus entirely on the negative aspects of the present, with nothing to say about any positive assets or anything about the future. In our site visits and conversations at the Carpenter's Estate we identified a number of assets. Perhaps most apparent are the bonds neighbours share and the TMO that represents them, a real contrast from many of London's more isolated and politically weak housing estates. However, such an asset bears no direct impact on the data that produce the IMD.

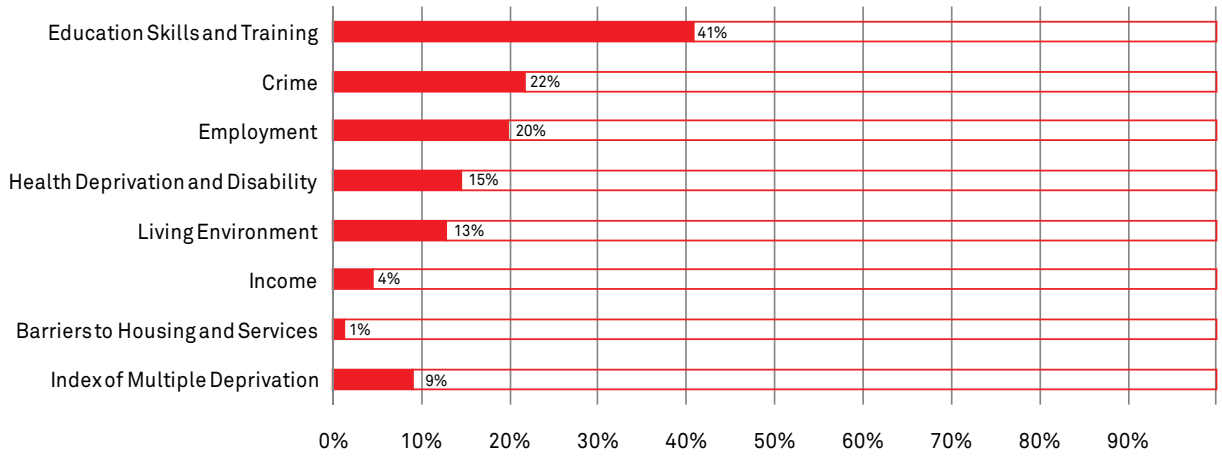
Spirit of Stratford

The Athena

Holiday Inn

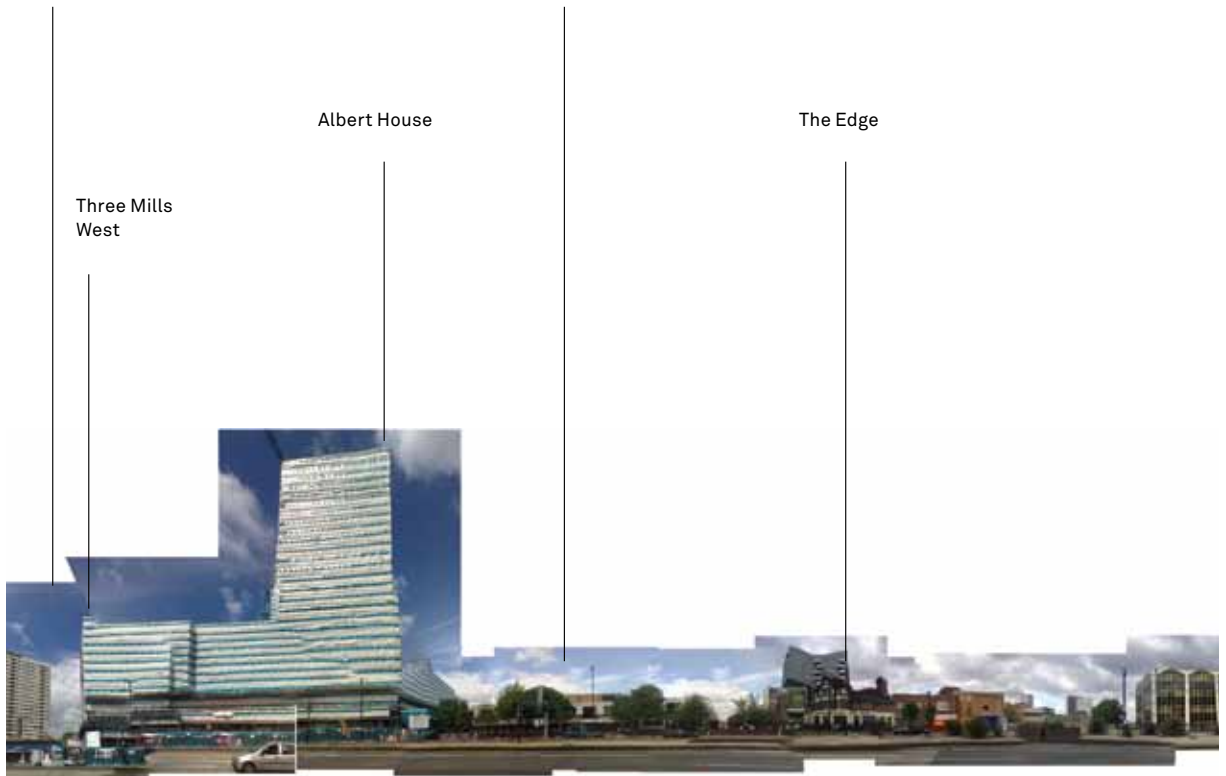


Percentile ranking for each domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation among all English Lower Super Output Areas for Newham 013D, which includes the Carpenters Estate



James Riley Point

Duncan House (UEL)



### Decant and Demolition of the Tower Blocks

The future of the estate has been significantly influenced by the deteriorating condition of the tower blocks. By the 2000s, the three poorly maintained towers were becoming major concerns as many residents suffered from water ingress through roofs and balconies, and engineers raised questions about the towers' structural integrity. In 2004 the council decided that the tower in the worst condition, James Riley Point, could not be brought to decent homes standards at reasonable cost and was to be demolished. Since then, nearly all of the residents have been decanted, and the tower is expected to be demolished before 2012. In the following years, discussions about the other two towers continued. The council had initially hoped to retain and refurbish them. However, engineering surveys estimated the cost of refurbishment at £40 million, which amounts to over £127,000 per flat. The council has no such funds available, and alternative financing opportunities seemed unlikely. In addition, any refurbishment would require all residents to move temporarily while works are carried out. During consultation, 59% of residents said they would rather move permanently. Under these circumstances, the council decided in July 2009 that the remaining two towers, Dennison Point and Lund Point, would be decanted and demolished as well as the decant of 30 units in low-rise three story apartment blocks in the centre of the estate on Doran Walk. Once the three towers and Doran Walk units have been demolished, the estate will have fewer than 80 council housing units, compared to over 500 before decanting began.

### New Residential Developments

In recent years, the periphery of the estate has been changed dramatically by the introduction of new residential towers. Large developers and property companies have bought abandoned or underused industrial property along Stratford High Street and Warton Road and created schemes for large towers unlike anything else in the area. Meanwhile, a number of often overlapping master plans and planning frameworks outlined the visions of the London Development Agency, the Olympic Park Legacy Company, the Greater London Authority and others for the area. This unprecedented level of property development and policy attention has already begun to radically alter the estate.

Perspective view of the site before and after completion of permitted developments. The developments (blue) will create a physical curtain round the existing Carpenters Estate (orange)





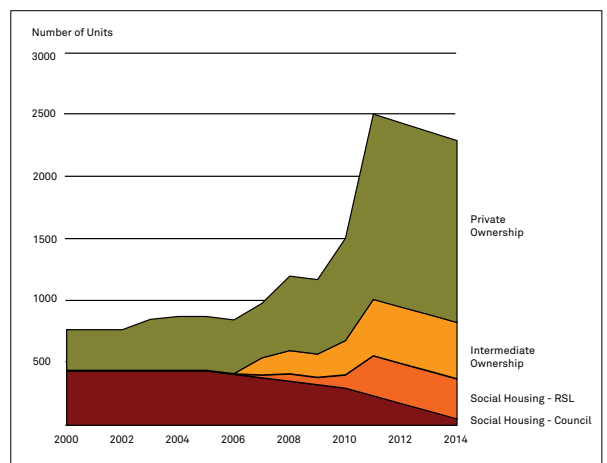
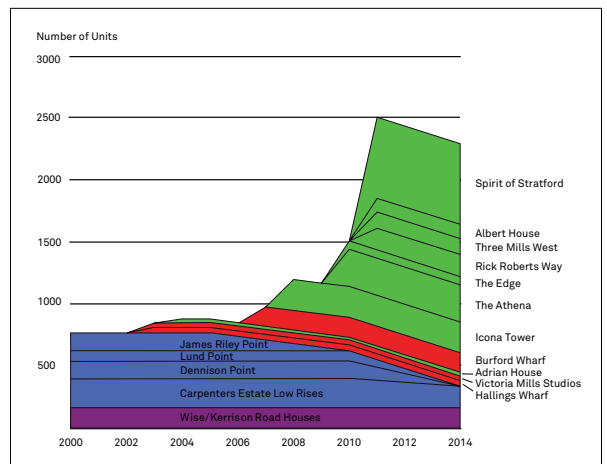
## Development Concerns

The process by which these projects have come to the area has been largely developer-led, and despite the various planning frameworks for the area neither Newham nor the Greater London Authority (GLA) has exercised much control in coordinating the developers' independent efforts. Planning reports for high street proposals document many concerns regarding the architecture and design for the public realm as well as the unit mix and provision of affordable housing. However, besides some moderate concessions, developers have for the most part proceeded according to their own plans.

Meanwhile, both the GLA and the Council for Architecture and the Built Environment have raised concerns about several of the proposed towers in design terms. One recurring issue is the lack of functional public spaces that will be commonly accessible. Projects also tend to connect poorly to their immediate surroundings, including other developments, resulting in individual buildings isolated within their neighbourhood context. Finally, design authorities have expressed disappointment with a mediocre, generic architectural style that has more in common with office buildings than with surrounding residences.

In total, the 11 developments planned to be completed by 2012 will provide just under 35% affordable housing. The London Plan, however, sets a target of 50% affordable housing for new developments. Moreover, the London Plan target is for 70% of this affordable housing to be socially rented and 30% intermediate housing, while this site's developments will be approximately 40% social and 40% intermediate, primarily shared ownership. The shift from social housing provided by the council to social housing provided by an RSL will be an especially significant change for this area. It remains to be seen if the decanted residents of the estate towers will indeed return to the area to live in social housing provided by these new developments. If so, they would certainly have an improved quality of housing. However, it is unlikely that the shared community presently found on the estate will be reproduced in separately managed developments, and the role of the TMO as an organising force would be lost.

The expected increase in the number of housing units on the site is mainly focused on the high street (top). The tenure mix of the area will change significantly when much of the council housing is demolished and many privately owned units are introduced (bottom). The site population is expected to triple by 2014



# STRATEGY

## The Role of the Site

The location of the site presents an opportunity to connect a range of surrounding areas, and to become a dense residential neighbourhood as a counterweight to the incoming commercial activities nearby. The people of the present and future Carpenters Estate have an opportunity to create a mixed neighbourhood in which the benefits of the Olympic and development attention is shared by all.

## A Connecting Space

The Carpenters Estate is currently limited in its connectivity across its strong physical boundaries, and is therefore effectively isolated from its surroundings. However, with the addition of the Olympic Park and Stratford City as well as the new residents in the area, the location of the site is becoming much more central. It will be a place that people may pass through, perhaps to go to Stratford Station, or to the Olympic aquatic centre.

## A High-Density Residential Neighbourhood

The Carpenters Estate also has a role to serve as one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods in all of London. Because of its proximity to excellent transport connections to jobs in central London as well as the shopping, services, and employment resources of Stratford Town Centre and the future Stratford City, the area is very well suited for a primarily residential neighbourhood. Once these new developments are completed, this population is expected to triple, and will be at the maximum density currently found in greater London, appropriate for the scale of growth focused in the Lower Lea Valley.

## A Diverse, Mixed Tenure Neighbourhood

The new housing developments offer units of mixed tenure, including private and intermediate ownership as well as social tenancy. These will introduce a new, diverse population to the former council housing estate. Studies on mixed tenure in neighbourhoods that were previously all social housing have shown that the model can be effective at improving the lives of all residents. The mixed tenure model can further sustain a greater investment made in local services and the local economy because of the increase of average income in the area. Young families and first-time buyers tend to be the first demographic groups that move in to such areas, and a similar profile can be expected in the Carpenters Estate developments. The combination of a strong, rooted population and new external interests can help a wide range of people both economically by providing a new assets to the site and socially through the benefits people enjoy from sharing a home in diverse, urban neighbourhood.

## Threats

The inherent assets that contribute to the role of the site offer as many threats as they do opportunities. There are several ways to benefit from the geographic connections, residential density, and social diversity the Carpenters Estate can offer, but such interventions may benefit only a select few. The primary threats to the site, which are simultaneously spatial and social, are polarisation, privatisation and fragmentation.

## Polarisation

Polarisation is a threat at two scales. At the larger scale, the new developments may create two separate worlds within the neighbourhood. The interior of the site will still be home to the existing population of the, both freeholders and council tenants in the remaining low rises. Surrounding them will be a curtain of new developments with new, mostly wealthier residents. Not only could this arrangement block off the estate, creating a stigmatised interior, it could also in effect create two separate neighbourhoods in which people do not interact, despite their proximity.

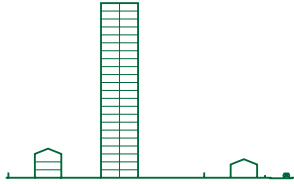
A similar effect could take place at the smaller scale. The mixed tenure model of most of the new developments mimics this polarised arrangement of private owners and social tenants, where for example, private owners occupy one tower block while the social tenants are in another block. The benefits of a diverse population in a dense urban environment will be difficult to realise with such polarisation.

Left Comparison of building typologies of Carpenters Estate in 2001 and 2014 with other London areas of comparable density. Barking has an average London density; that of Shepherd's Bush is amongst the highest in London

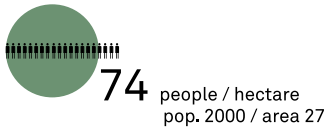
Carpenters Estate 2001



500m

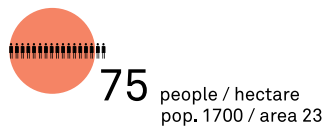


20m



74 people / hectare  
pop. 2000 / area 27

Barking

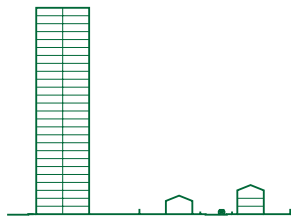


75 people / hectare  
pop. 1700 / area 23

Carpenters Estate 2014



500m



20m



222 people / hectare  
pop. 6000 / area 27

Shepherd's Bush



220 people / hectare  
pop. 6500 / area 29

### Privatisation

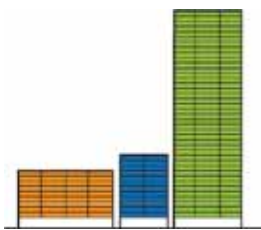
Public spaces are the shared environment where people can formally or informally interact, and private spaces are the homes or offices that allow a retreat to a more personal environment. The new developments have focused almost entirely on providing private spaces, omitting an essential component of a neighbourhood.

### Fragmentation

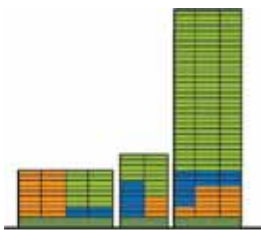
The decant of most of the Carpenters Estate tenants threatens to be yet another fragmentation of the community. The current residents of the estate will most likely live in many separate places, making the maintenance of the relationships that make up their community extremely difficult.

### Our Goal: Neighbourhood

A good neighbourhood is flexible, and can survive years of change. It can be home to both long-time residents and newcomers as it changes, and it can accommodate people from a wide range of backgrounds. These elements need not be big, or formal, or carefully planned. Instead, they can be the small and even overlooked parts of everyday experiences that add to the qualities of a place. It is these banalities of everyday experience of a neighbourhood, currently either lacking or threatened on the Carpenters Estate, that we wish to accentuate, improve and expand in our proposals for the estate. These can facilitate the evolution of a sense of neighbourhood for a changing population and a changing physical environment.



Polarisation takes place at two scales, between the existing council housing estate and the new developments (left), and also within the new developments, where each type of tenure is located in a different part of the development (right)

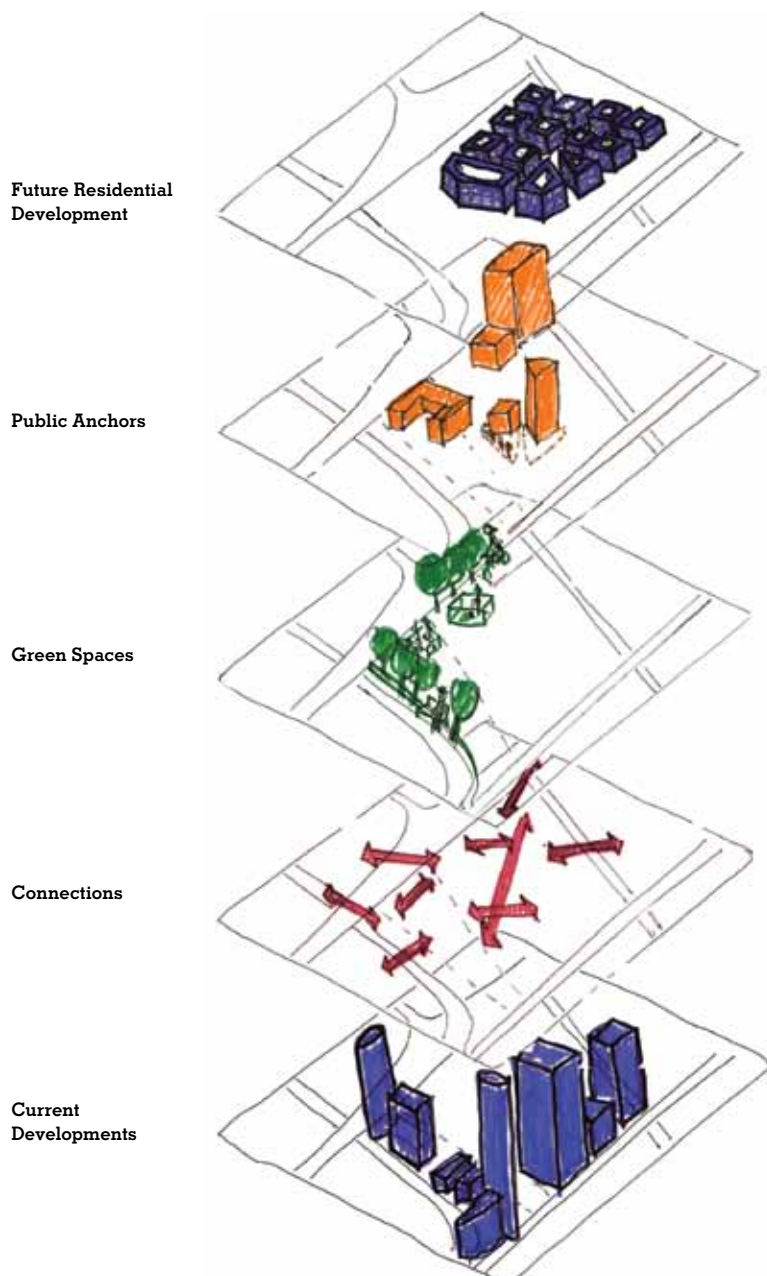


The proposed common ground provides a platform for existing and new residents to interact informally so that the effects of polarisation and privatisation are limited. The same applies within the building, where we propose to mix different types of tenure within the same part of the development. Especially important is that the ground floor and entrances need to be open to all residents of the complex

**Our Solution: Common Ground**

On the Carpenters Estate, common ground or the public elements that hold together private spaces are lacking. Our proposals are focused on improving existing and creating new spaces where current residents can continue their routines and where new residents can create their own through the many simple experiences that make a neighbourhood.

Fundamental to our proposal is the possibility of improving spaces even before the council towers are demolished or the developers' towers are completed. We have begun by highlighting the importance of common grounds on a small scale. Our next strategic approach involves an assessment of the internal and external connections that could be improved. The potential for creating public green spaces is also central to our proposal, particularly along the edges of the site. The canal waterfront should be made accessible to all residents, and the edge bordering the Olympic Park would be an ideal location for a linear park in place of the currently underused warehouses. The final layer of our proposal consists of improving existing institutions and introducing new ones.

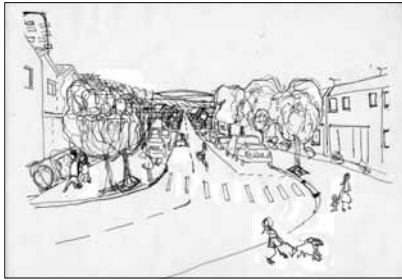


# PROPOSALS

## Common Ground in Private Spaces

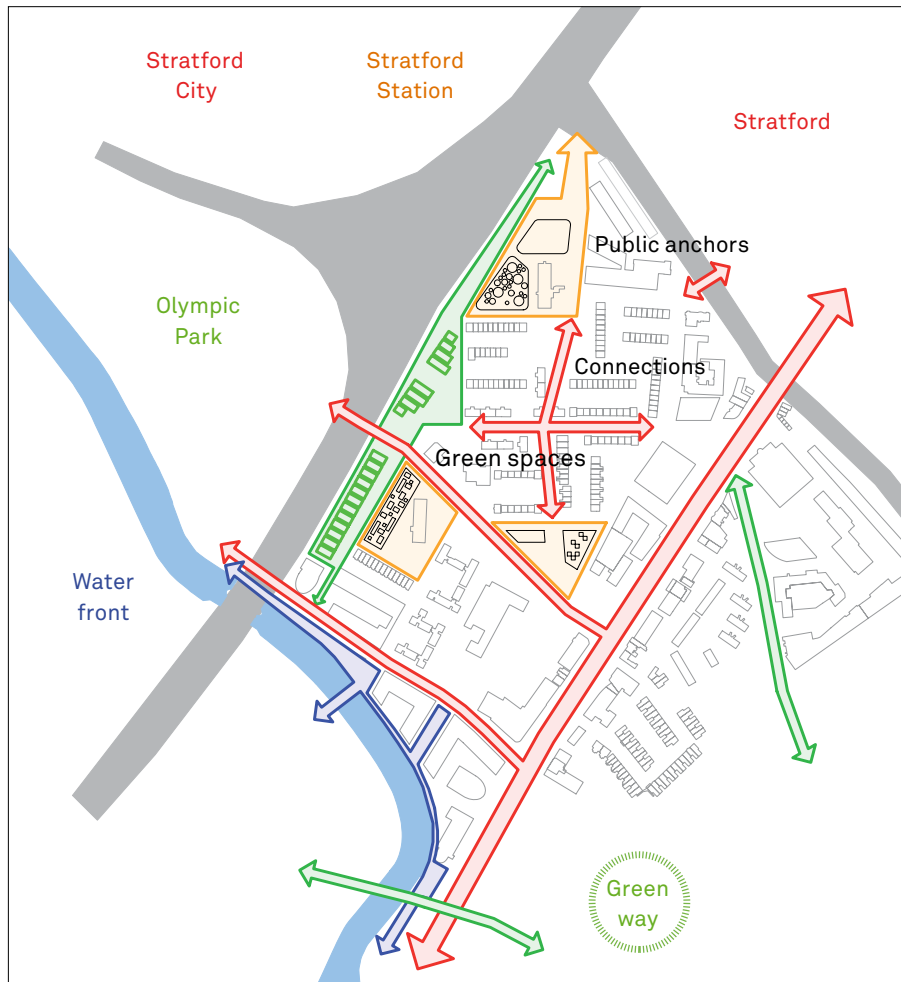
In addressing several layers and scales of public space, we emphasise the smaller common grounds found within the private sphere. Spaces that constitute more private public places, such as lobbies, gyms, building-specific green areas, or even spaces as simple as balconies looking onto the street, offer potential for social interaction. These in-between mixing spaces, even within private buildings, are the first scale of public space and should be an important and deliberate component of each new residential development.

We also propose that tenures not be divided into separate spaces within developments, but instead be able to share their small-scale common spaces. Because of the building typologies under construction on the Carpenters Estate, lobbies and courtyards will perform many of the same functions as city streets.



The current street layout on the Carpenter's Estate features dead ends, closed routes, claustrophobic footpaths, and poor connections. Small, low-impact adjustments to some of the streets will effect significant changes

A map showing the existing site with a visual summary of the spatial components of the proposal



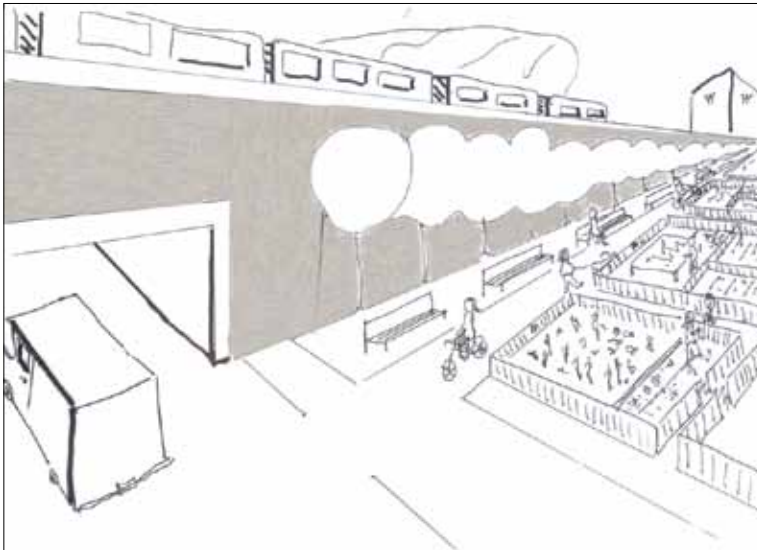
## Connections

Streets, pavements or footpaths are an important scale of common ground. These connections improve and activate the streets within the neighbourhood, creating new internal connections that encourage pedestrian activity. Opening external connections involves cracking edges that currently act as boundaries into and out of the site. The Carpenters Estate is in an increasingly strategic location; however the poor connections prevent it from fully using these adjacent assets. There are already proposals for opening several of the connections on the site to surrounding areas, for example, for an additional direct station entrance at the northern edge of the site, and on the Carpenters Road under the viaduct to lead into the Olympic Park. We strongly encourage the opening of these two entrances, as well as an open canal front, with connections to the park to the west and to the High Street to the south. There is only one entrance to the canal front from Warton Road, which follows the bridge over the canal leading to the southernmost tip of the Olympic Park. We propose to introduce additional access points to the canal from Warton Road.

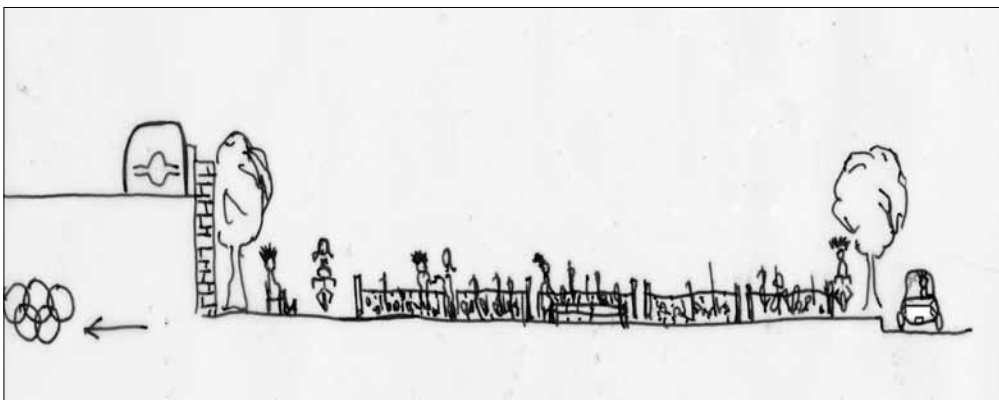
## Green Spaces and Waterfront

We propose green spaces that act both as routes and destinations. The warehouses along the western edge of the site are mostly abandoned, and this area adjacent to the viaduct would be a practical location for introducing a green space consisting of a linear park and garden allotments. We propose a linear park stretching from the station to Carpenters Road, and from Carpenters Road to the waterfront by way of the Icona tower. According to London standards for garden allotments (the average plot measures 5 poles [eq. is 125 sqm]), approximately 31 plots could accompany a linear park in the area where the warehouses presently stand.

The canal waterfront will act in a similar way. We propose that this be an entirely open waterfront, as it, too, will act as a route and a destination. It will provide a scenic route between the Olympic Park and the High Street, and will also be a pleasant setting for simple leisure pastimes. This walkway will also activate this border and will also prove useful to non-Estate residents as a route to the Olympic Park from the High Street.



Activating the current boundary along the viaduct will provide a pleasant path and destination, for travelling from one end of the site to another, or for engaging in recreational activities



## Public Anchors

The most formal elements of the common ground are three public anchors. We call these 'anchors' because they form a stable starting point for the community, but allow for a wide range of leeway in the way that people actually choose to use them. Each of the three anchors serves a different purpose. The Library and Education Centre is a place for information and learning. The Youth and Recreation Centre is focused on health and fitness activities. The Community Centre provides space for institutions, services, and management functions. The activities at these anchors range from those of a formally structured programme to entirely casual, drop-in spaces.

The Youth and Recreation Centre is intended to be a continuation of the existing Carpenters' & Dockland Centre, which already serves many of the same purposes. Similarly, the Community Centre should continue many of the social and political functions of the Carpenters TMO as the changing housing situation of the estate makes the specific role of the TMO less relevant to the much of the site's population. The locations for these proposed common grounds are also proximate to existing community assets, including the Building Crafts College, a future campus of Birkbeck College in a building presently occupied by the University of East London, and the Carpenters Primary School. Each anchor is proposed on the site of one of the tower blocks to be demolished. They are located at the ends of existing axes whose traffic is expected to increase greatly with the opening of Carpenters Road into the Olympic Park, the creation of an entrance to the Stratford station, and the significant increase in population on the site. The construction of these anchors can proceed immediately, even before the towers are demolished.

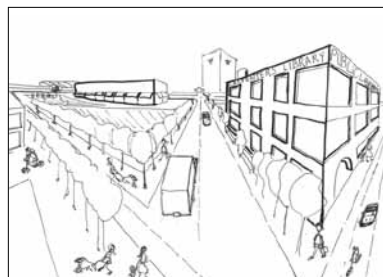
These anchors require more than physical interventions. Each depends on a social structure for its management and operation. While some aspects, the library for example, may depend on formal management from the local authority, others could be more informally operated by residents themselves. Still other components of these common grounds will be organised first as businesses, without the explicit intention to deliver social benefits.



The proposed public anchors are on the sites of existing tower blocks, adjacent to existing institutional assets (yellow)



1 Community Centre



2 Library and Education Centre



3 Youth and Recreation Centre



### Library and Education Centre

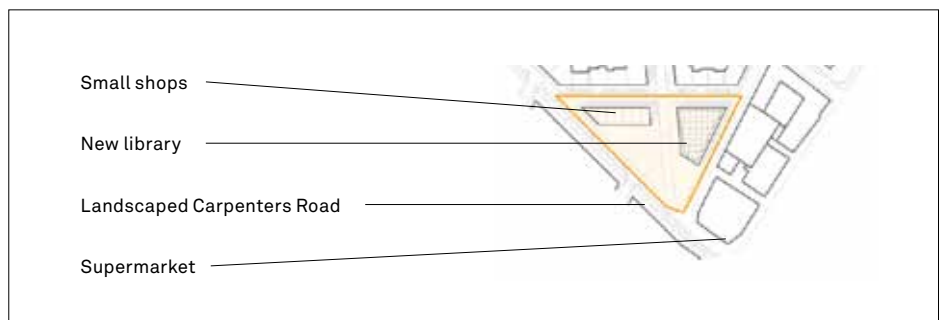
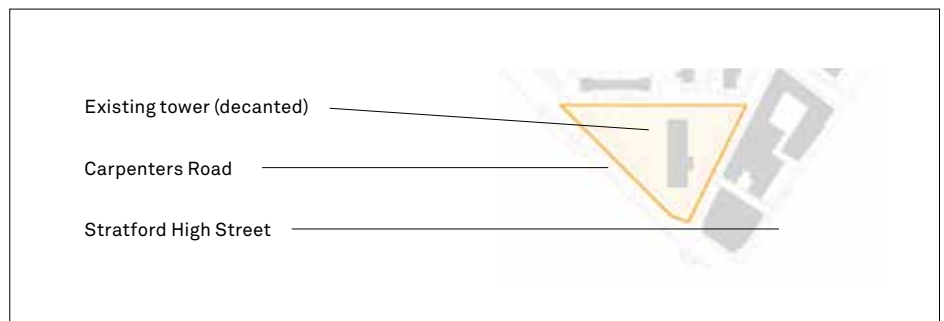
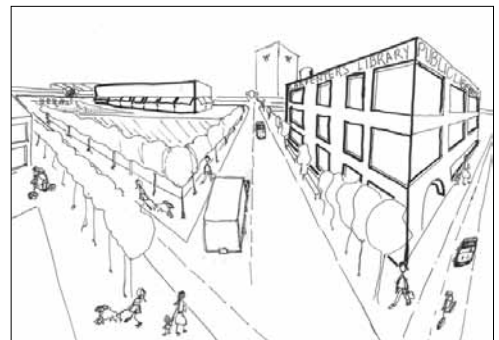
The Library is a public space for learning and communicating. A local history exhibit, for example, would be a small way of documenting and sharing the memories of the estate through its rich history in a way that is easily and informally accessible. The present community should also have space available to communicate news and events, and an art gallery would enable residents to showcase their talents. Classroom space would be available for community use. The education centre hosts homework help programmes for youth, computer skills classes, and adult education and training classes according to local demand. This range of structured activities and informal uses should bring together a range of the local communities for various purposes.

The centre itself could be funded and operated with the efforts of Newham Council, which currently operates 11 libraries in the borough, and a local community college. Newham College already has a Stratford campus, and Birkbeck College is planning to move to a nearby building in the near future. The local demand for adult education services is strong, and these institutions may find interest in some services on the estate.

As the anchor which attracts the widest range of the community, the library is proposed on the site which is closest to the high street and most easily accessible.

The current location of James Riley Point, the first tower block proposed for demolition, is on Carpenters Road, with close proximity to Stratford High Street and currently rising development sites at an intersection that will be busy with vehicle and pedestrian traffic

**Below** The phased development of the Library anchor site



### Youth and Recreation Centre

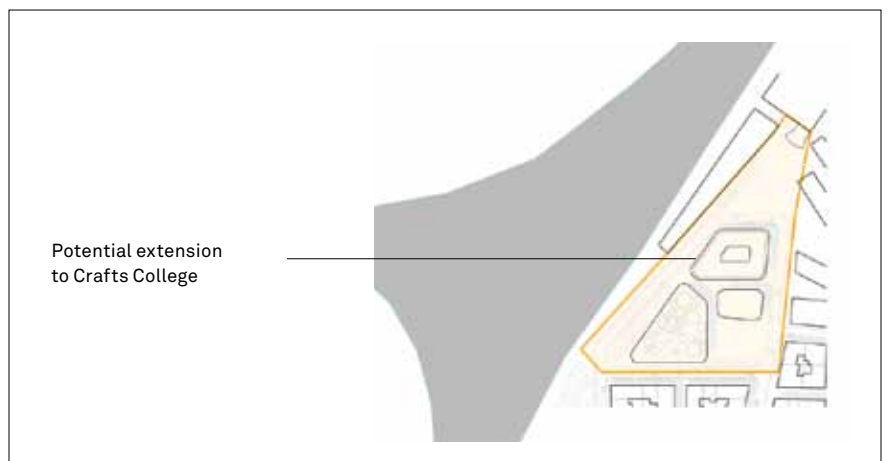
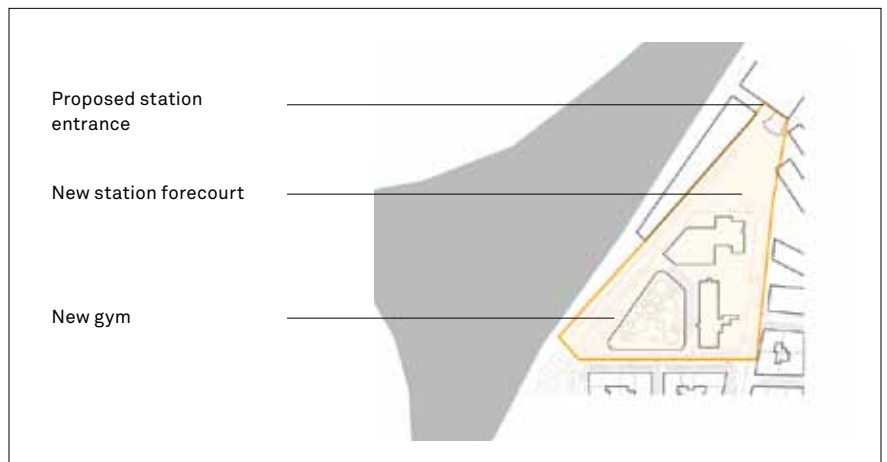
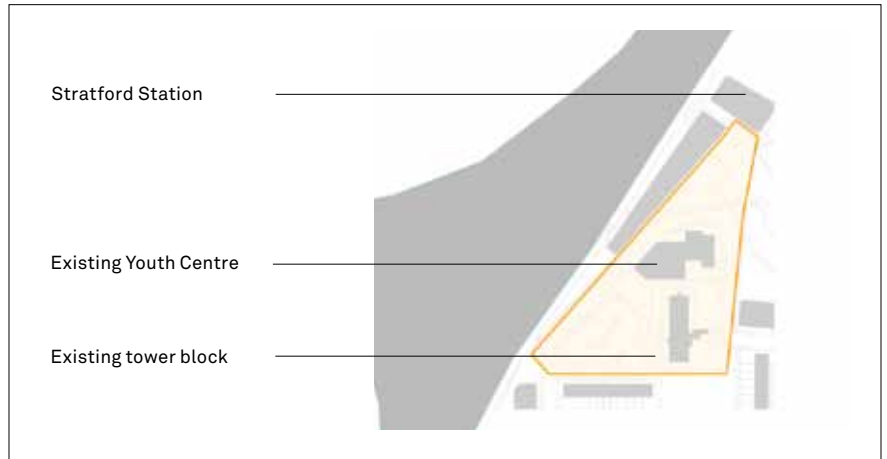
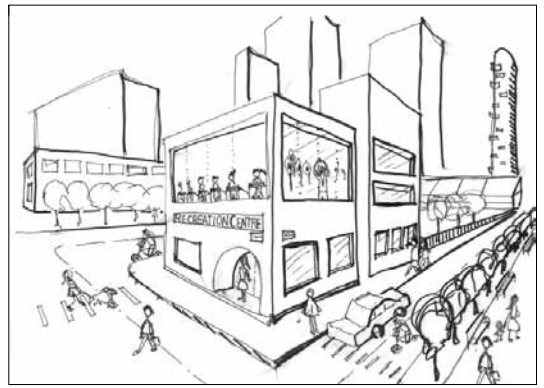
The Youth and Recreation Centre builds on the activities already at the Carpenters & Docklands Centre to make a community asset that many people will use daily, providing facilities to the population and fostering informal interactions between neighbours. London has many examples of such centres becoming unofficial community centres. The site would include a fitness centre, facilities for racquet sports, and studio space for yoga, dance, judo, karate, and other such activities. It could incorporate a football pitch or other outdoor space as well. The centre would provide fitness activities for seniors, facilities for youth organisations and teams, and children’s play spaces. Perhaps in partnership with a for-profit gym, the centre should embrace the new residents of the area, and should cater to adults as well as youth.

### Community Centre

We propose a space for various institutions and services, such as a GP surgery, police station, and ‘one stop shop’ for council services. In addition, a nursery here would offer a needed service to local parents and provide a level of daily activity. This anchor is proposed for the site presently occupied by Lund Point, a tower block to be demolished within approximately five years. In the meantime, the community centre can be built at its base. The site will be at the entrance to the Olympic Park on Carpenters Road, adjacent to the railway viaduct and proposed garden allotments. It is close to the Carpenters Primary School and to the existing TMO facilities. When the tower is demolished, the site can be further developed with retail or residential uses or simply landscaped as open space, depending on the needs of the neighbourhood.



The three phases of development for the Youth Centre site, which could begin before Dennison Point is demolished



## Development policy

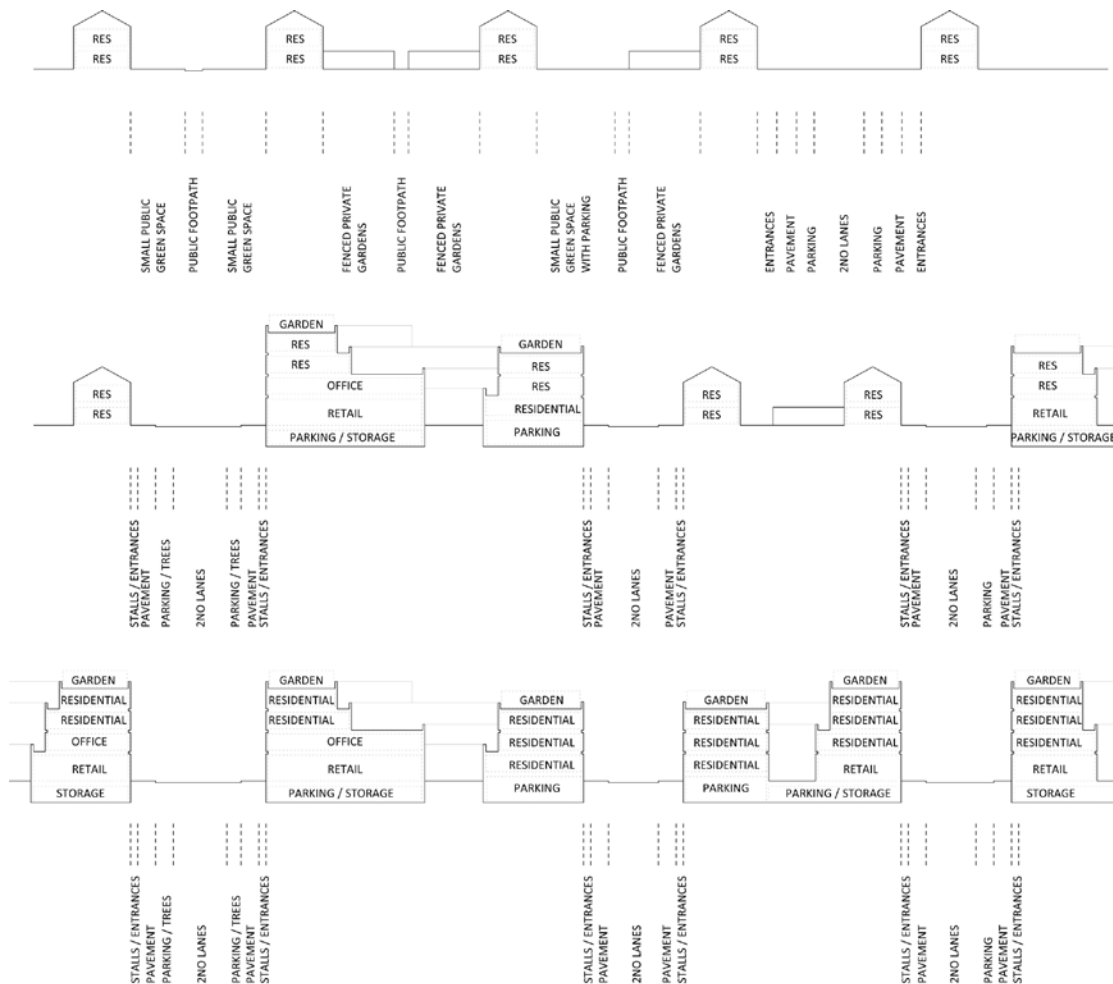
- The London Plan shows a target of 50% of affordable housing for all developments over ten residential units. The GLA has developed the Three Dragons financial appraisal model which bases the percentage of affordable housing on the development viability. We propose that 20% of all units in each block be affordable.
- The ground floors of the blocks should be designed for flexible use. It is likely that a greater need for shops, restaurants, etcetera (use classes A1, A2, A3, but also D) will evolve as people inhabit the ongoing developments on site. First floors can house offices (B1), whilst upper floors should exclusively be residential units (C3).
- Each block should provide off-street parking at a ratio of one car per residential unit.
- Limiting the number of cars on the streets frees up space for a semi-public 1.5m zone in front of the perimeter blocks. This zone can be used for stalls or tables in commercial contexts or small front gardens or courtyards in residential settings.
- In addition to the front gardens, each residential unit should have access to private outside space. The area of the outside space should be not smaller than 5%, but not bigger than 10% of the internal net use area of the relevant residential unit.

## Phasing

The structures of the primary interventions are spatially and socially designed to sustain a phased process. The existing and the new internal connections divide the site into smaller plots, which can be developed very efficiently as required or available. The relatively small plot sizes are a means of protecting the current land proprietors, especially the freeholders of the former Council housing, as no demolition or compulsory purchase orders are required to realise large-scale developments.

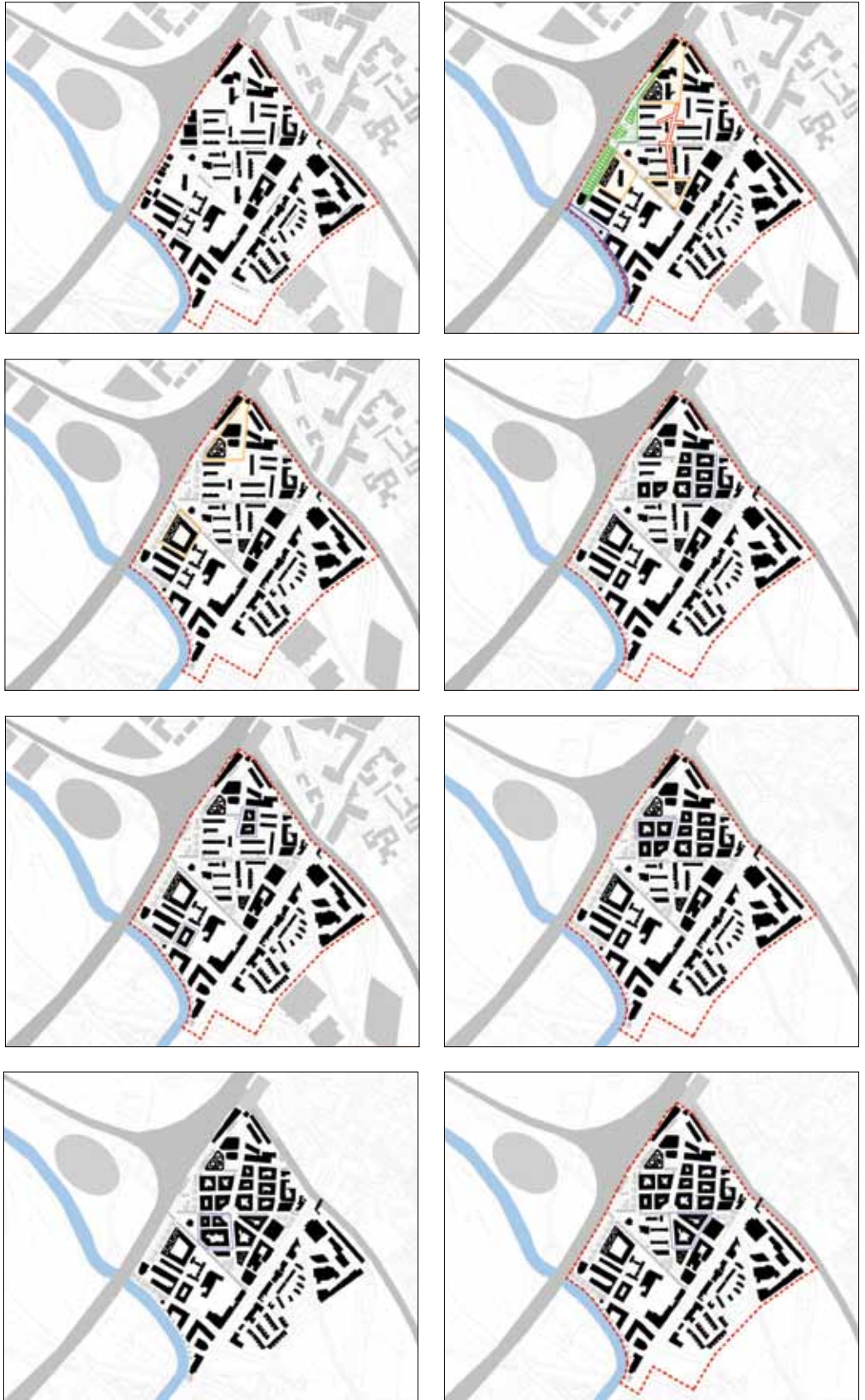
Despite the proposed height restriction of four storeys, an overall high density can be achieved with relatively narrow streets and the use of a perimeter block typology.

The proposed urban configuration is an example of how different building typologies with similar densities can achieve completely different urban feels. The space between the blocks adds gradually to the common ground developed by the earlier interventions. The blocks in the centre of the site become the perceived heart of the quarter for all on-site residents, both in low-rise and high-rise, old and new buildings.



**Below** The phased physical implementation of our proposals, beginning with common grounds in connections, green spaces, and public anchors, and continuing with the accomodation of additional development according to specific guidelines

**Left** Any new residential developments in the estate area should follow a set of architectural guidelines that enable density without towers. A thin residential neighbourhood (top) can become a dense, mixed-use piece of city (bottom) with appropriate policies

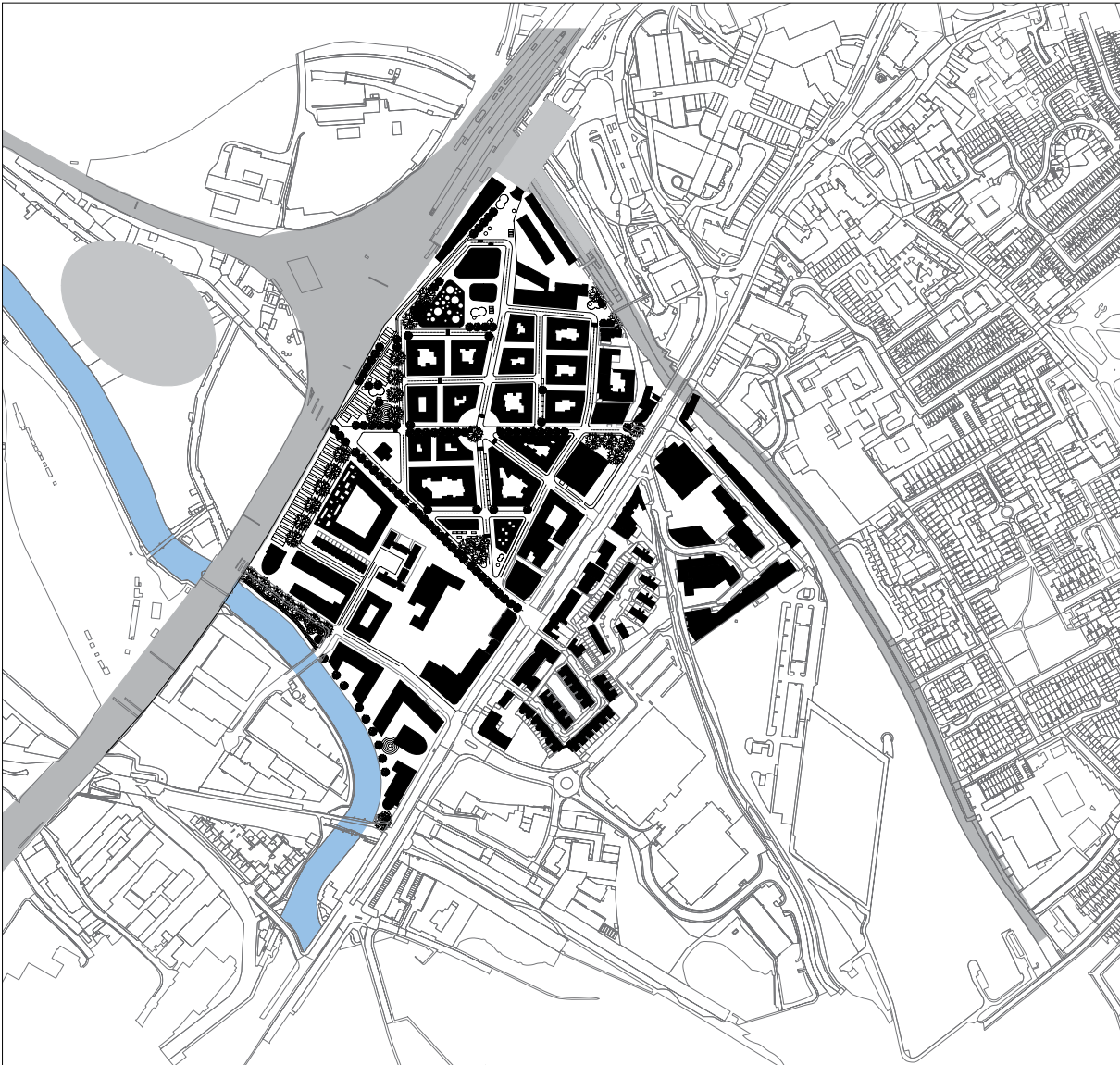


## Conclusion

Our multi-layered development of common grounds tackles the three main identified threats to the estate – polarisation, privatisation, and fragmentation. In light of the major developments for the Olympic Games 2012 on the way, affecting areas surrounding the site and causing market pressures for significant development on site, we are proposing spatial and social strategies, to provide suitable platforms for the diversifying population to interact. We propose a five-step intervention strategy, with a main objective of creating social spaces and public places which will allow the tripled population of on-site residents to integrate over time. A core part of this strategy is the

provision of societal institutions for the population of the future densest area in London, alongside the spatial interventions, mainly related to improving connections within and beyond the site. Fundamental to this component of the proposal, is the notion that further important pieces of common ground also develop within, around and beyond the proposed spatial projects. Our proposal has outlined a vision for the future with spatial and social interventions, but with a clear determination to address existing needs, opportunities, and threats, to accommodate current residents and to lay the foundation for a better neighbourhood of today and tomorrow.

### The final phase of physical implementation of our proposals



## References

The Worshipful Company of Carpenters,  
<http://www.thecarpenterscompany.co.uk>

Carpenters Connect,  
<http://www.Home2home.tv>

The Carpenters Estate Tenant  
Management Organisation,  
<http://www.carpenterstmo.org.uk>

Chartered Institute of Housing and Joseph  
Rowntree Foundation (2006), *Creating and  
Sustaining Mixed Income Communities:  
A Good Practice Guide*

The Commission for Architecture and the  
Built Environment, <http://www.cabe.org.uk>

Communities and Local Governments,  
[http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/  
decenthomes/whatis](http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/<br/>decenthomes/whatis)

E-Architect, Online architecture news,  
<http://www.e-architect.com>

Galster, G. (2007), 'Neighbourhood  
Social Mix as a Goal of Housing Policy:  
A Theoretical Analysis', *International  
Journal of Housing Policy*, vol. 7, no.1

The Greater London Authority,  
<http://www.london.gov.uk>

The Greater London Authority and Three  
Dragons Ltd. (2009), *Affordable Housing  
Control Toolkit*

The Greater London Authority (2008),  
The London Plan

The Housing Corporation (2007), *Shared  
Places: Community Cohesion Strategies*

Krier, L. (1980), *Architecture:  
Choice or Fate*, London: Papadakis

LB of Newham (2002), *Lower Lea Valley:  
Stratford to Thameside*

Life on a London Allotment,  
<http://www.downtheplot.com>

London Thames Gateway Development  
Corporation, <http://www.ltgdc.org.uk>

Lynch, K. (1960), *The Image of the  
City*. Cambridge: MIT Press

Newham Council,  
<http://www.newham.gov.uk>

Office for National Statistics (2007),  
*Index of Multiple Deprivation*

Olympic Delivery Authority,  
<http://www.london2012.com>

Olympic Park Legacy Company,  
<http://www.legacycompany.org.uk>

SkyscraperCity, Online urban  
development forum,  
<http://www.skyscrapercity.com>

SkyscraperNews, Online urban  
development forum,  
<http://www.skyscrapernews.com>