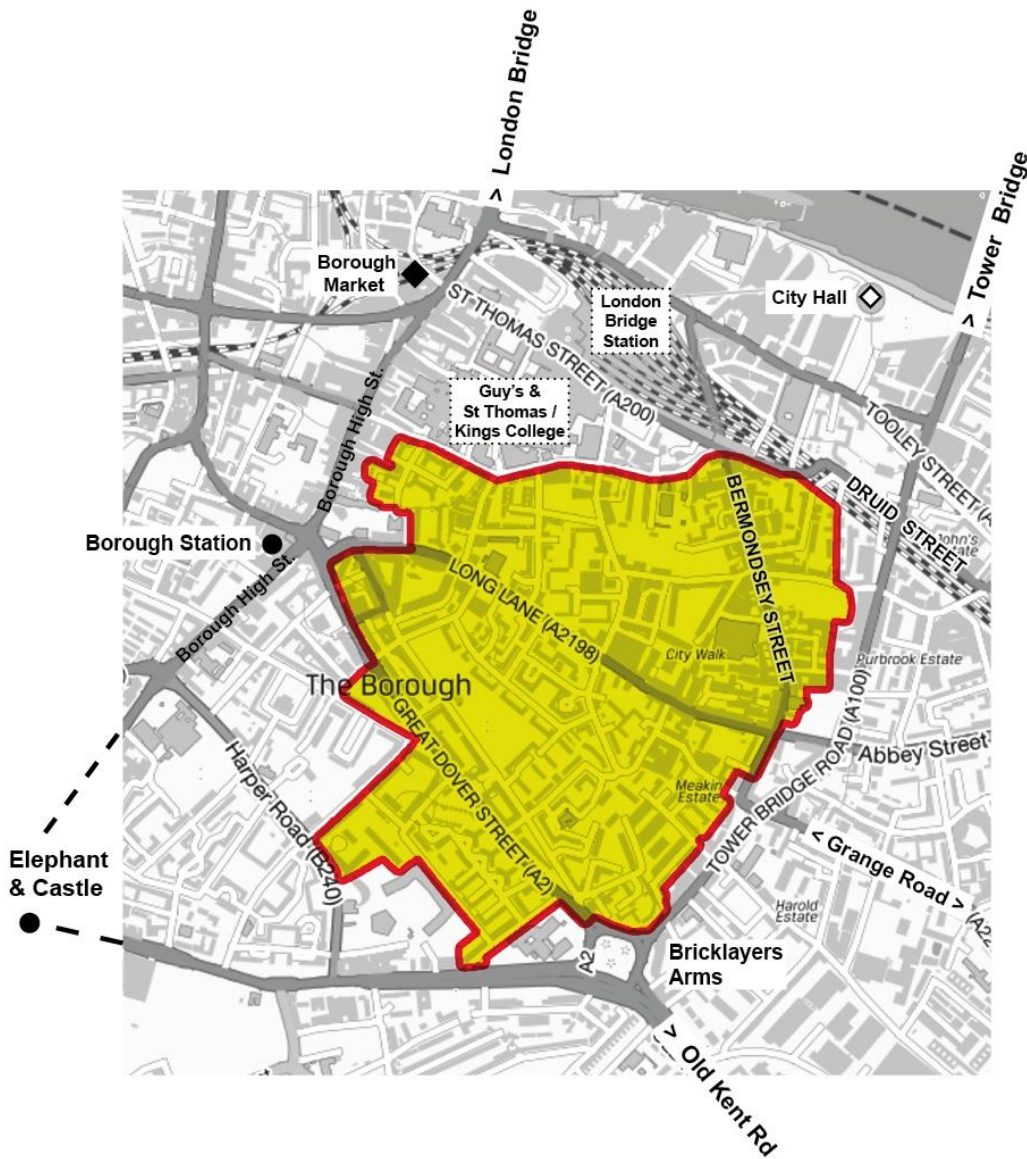


OBNF

Old Bermondsey Neighbourhood Forum

Draft Neighbourhood Plan

“Promoting and improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Old Bermondsey Neighbourhood Area”



Introduction

The Old Bermondsey Neighbourhood Forum (OBNF) aims to generate planning policies with the involvement of local people that build on their existing identities, ensuring that new developments do not turn their backs on the areas' history, architectural wealth or previous generations of residents.

By producing a Neighbourhood Plan the Forum aims to highlight the importance of the built environment in our designated area and promote its preservation and enhancement. The Group is dedicated to achieving this objective, whilst actively seeking to ensure that local people gain a real voice in the planning process.

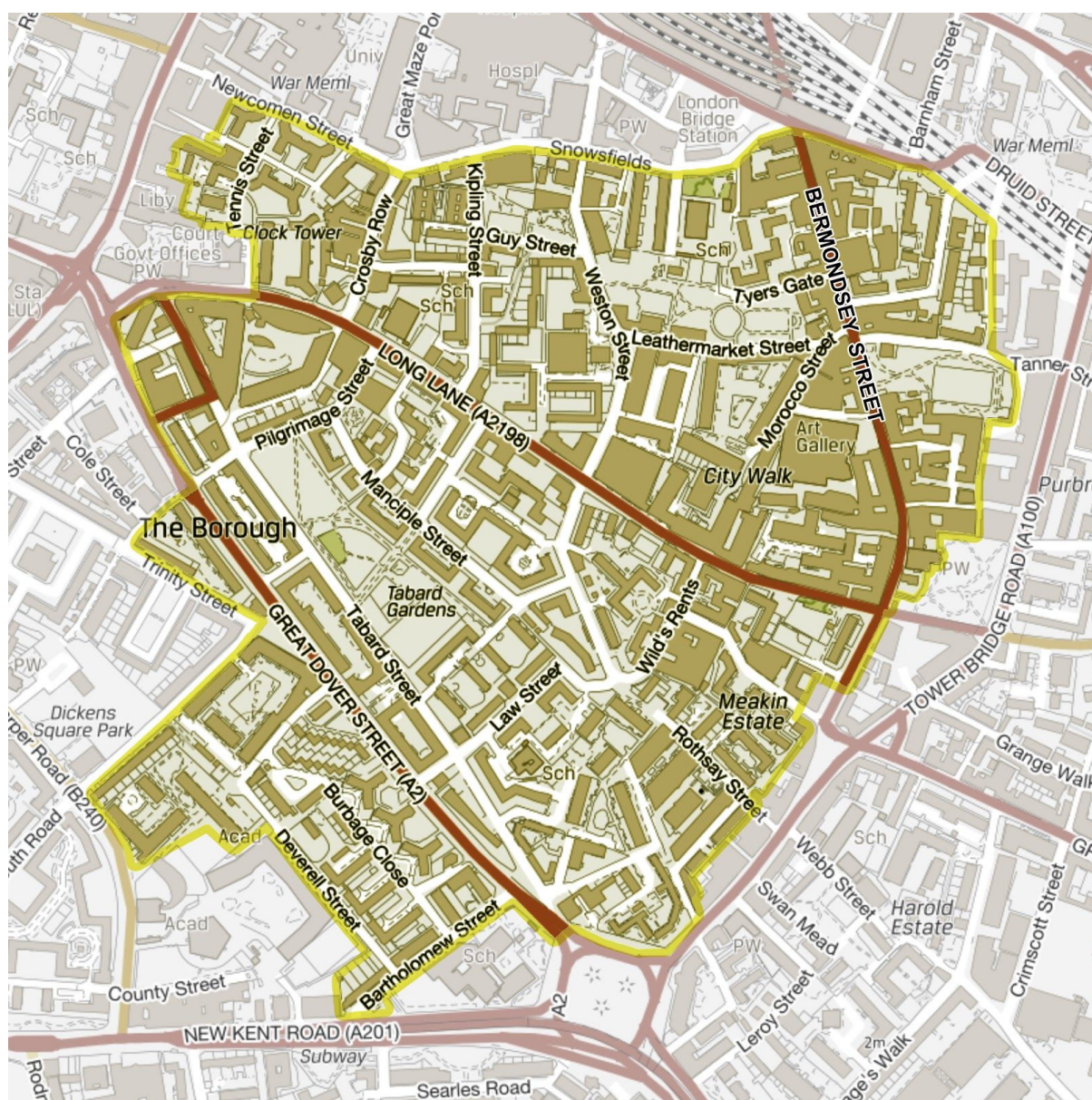


Fig. 1 Neighbourhood Area Map

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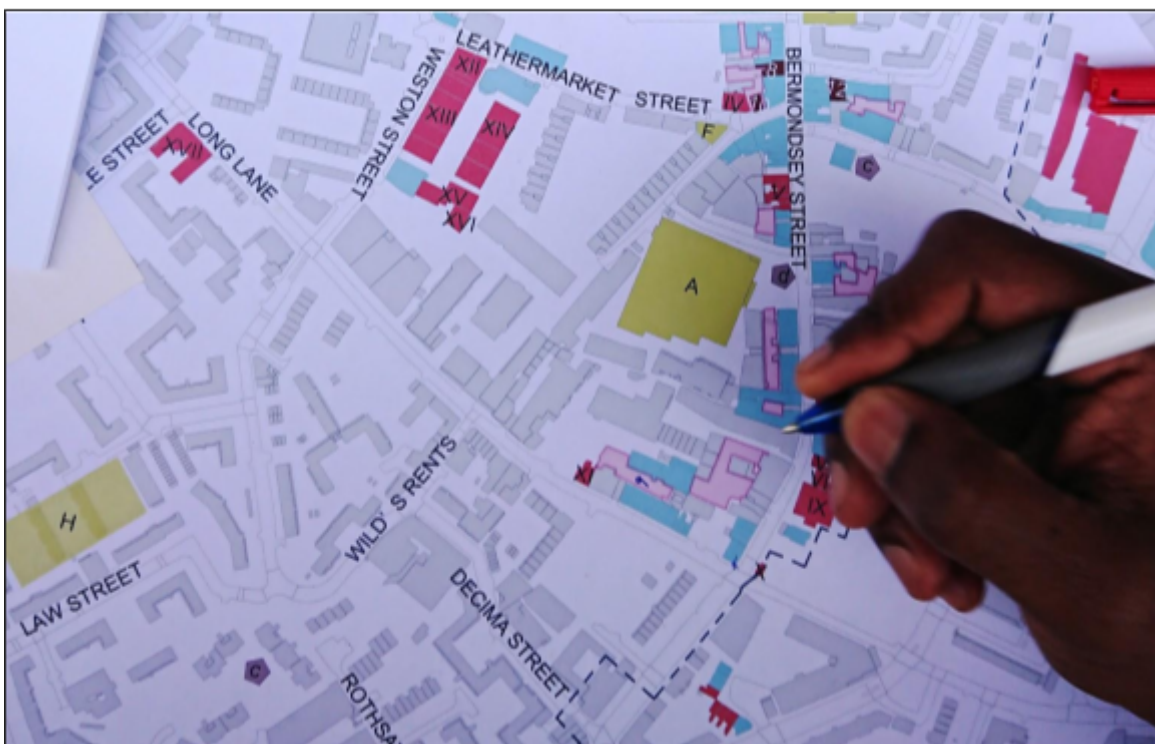


Fig. 2 Engagement at the Bermondsey Street Festival September 2019

Chapter 1 Character and Heritage

1.1 Tall Buildings

Objective: To control the height of development that may threaten the Neighbourhood Area’s significant heritage assets, townscape views and historic skyline.

Policy CH1: Development will not be permitted that exceeds the height limits as detailed in Fig. 3. Height Control Map below. This map has been developed to allow for height growth where increasing the scale does not become pressure or damaging to the street scale and character.

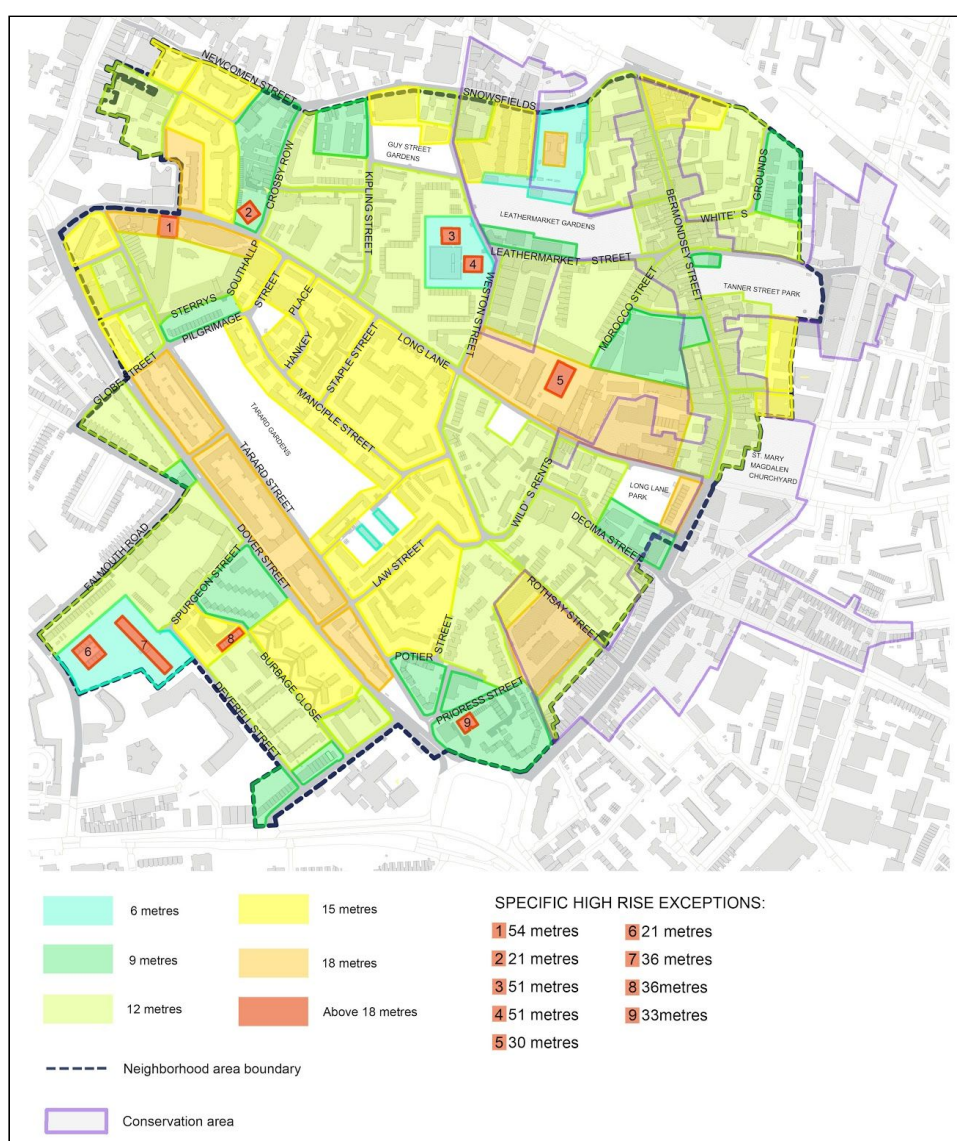


Fig. 3 Height Control Map

1.1.1 The area is notably low-rise, with building heights of mostly 11-20m. This is significantly lower than neighbouring areas Tooley Street, London Bridge and Guys and St Thomas Hospital. The Neighbourhood Area's historic, intricate and dense streets and its well built estates would be harmed by heights exceeding those given in the Height Control Plan. The height control map takes into consideration the conservation area, nationally listed and locally listed buildings, heritage assets and existing building heights and has been developed through evaluations undertaken on foot looking at the existing situation from street level.

1.2 Heritage Sensitive Design

Objective: To require developments to relate sensitively to their heritage setting

Policy CH2: In recognition of the significance of the historic environment of the Neighbourhood Area, developments will not be permitted that harm:

- Heritage assets including listed buildings or locally listed buildings/ structures/ places of merit, or their setting
- Significant or important views, including townscape views and the historic skyline
- The area's unique urban fabric

Policy CH3: Applicants must conserve the historic character of the Neighbourhood Area by demonstrating their adherence to the 8 Principles of Building In Context, published by CABI and Historic England. <http://www.building-in-context.org/the-bic-toolkit/>

1.2.2 CABI and Historic England's Buildings in Context Principles are:

1. A successful project will start with an assessment of the value of retaining what is there.
2. A successful project will relate to the geography and history of the place and lie of the land.
3. A successful project will be informed by its own significance so that its character and identity will be appropriate to its use and context.
4. A successful project will sit happily in the pattern of existing development and the routes through and around it.
5. A successful project will respect important views.
6. A successful project will respect the scale of neighbouring buildings.
7. A successful project will use materials and building methods which are as high quality as those used in existing buildings.
8. A successful project will create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.

1.3 Housing Estates

1.3.1 The housing estates in the Neighbourhood Area, particularly those near the Bermondsey Street conservation area, are of distinct identity and collectively should be regarded as heritage assets. The Estates offer a living connection to some **important historic social / political ideals**: Starting with the noble commitment of the *Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrial Classes* (founded 1841) to provide improved living conditions for the many poor of the area; later continued on a very large scale by the *Borough of Bermondsey* in the 'between wars' and 'post-war' periods.

Objective: To conserve and celebrate the social principles embodied by the Estates and to nurture their continued contribution to present/future residents and to society.

Policy CH4: To conserve and enhance the Estates, applications for redevelopment or infill development will not be permitted unless such development is sensitive to the Estates' original design.

- Original windows and brickwork must be retained. If they must be replaced, replacements should be sympathetic to the original design in appearance and material.
- If infill is proposed, development must have particular regard to materials, windows and design of the existing buildings and their landscape settings.
- Satellite dishes and other visual clutter will not be permitted on the elevations of estate buildings. TRA's and JMBs should be required to remove disused clutter and remove all in the longer term.

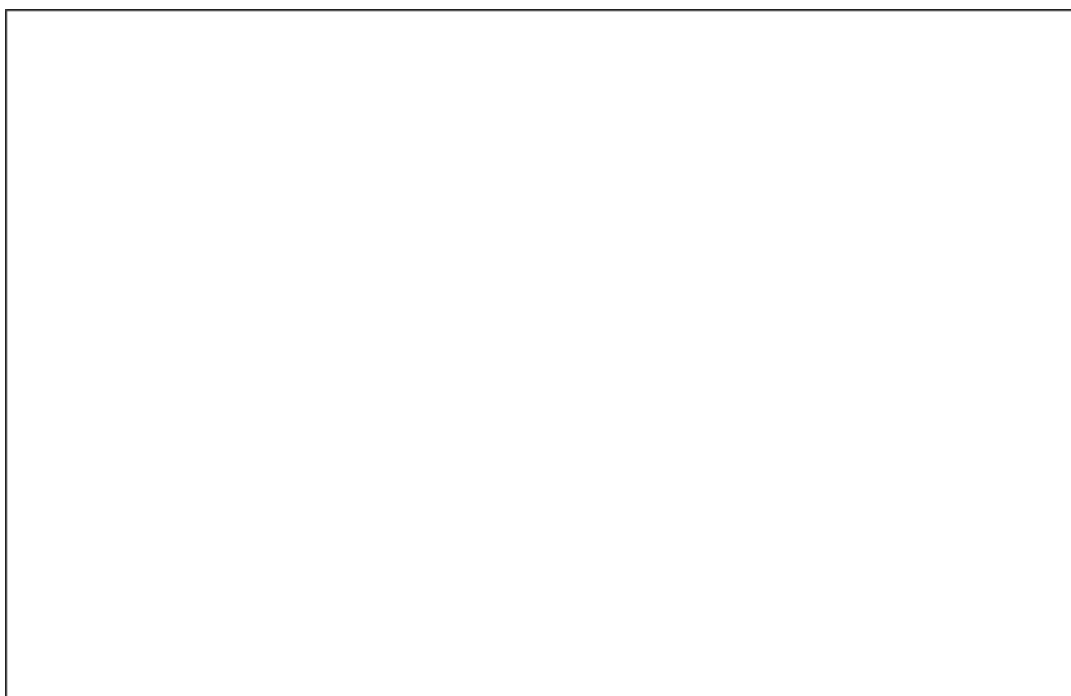


Fig. 4 Photographs of the Estates

1.4 Local List

Objective: To protect locally important buildings and places.

Policy CH5: The following buildings and places will be included in Southwark’s Local List

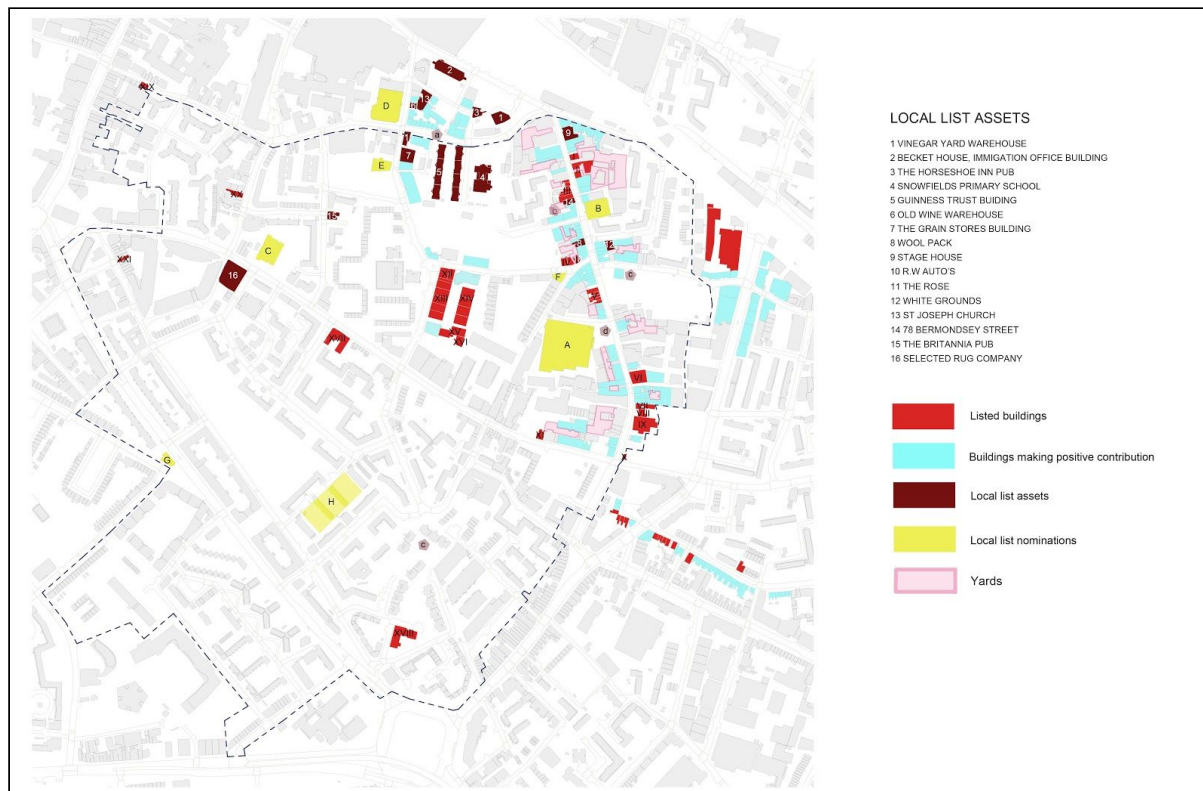


Fig. 5 Local list map

1.4.1 A local list contains elements of the built environment that are not already *designated as heritage assets** but nonetheless contribute to a sense of place, local distinctiveness and civic pride. These features/assets, help make a place special for local people; they carry history, traditions, stories and memories into the present day and add depth of meaning to a modern place.

The Forum discusses nominations at our open meetings and (following Historic England’s guidance**) look for at least two from the following selection criteria to be satisfied:

- Historical significance
- Architectural / aesthetic significance
- Townscape value
- Landmark status
- Social / community significance

* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment#designated>

** Historic England Advice Note 7 *Local Heritage Listing* explains the relationship between selection criteria and the weight of protection potentially afforded.

1.5 Signage

Objective: To protect the Bermondsey Street Conservation Area from a proliferation of signage that detracts from the aesthetics of the streetscape and hinders movement on the public highway.

Policy CH6: Policy to be developed

1.6 Historic Shop Fronts and style guide

Objective: To retain and improve historic shop fronts, particularly within the Bermondsey Conservation Area

Policy CH7: Alterations to historic shop fronts will only be permitted in line with a local style guide (tbd). For example external security shutters will not be permitted and internal shutters should be of lattice construction so as to permit views into shops when closed.

1.6.1 Example extract from the *Design Guide 17: Shop Front Design* by West Oxfordshire District Council: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1420236/WODG-2016_section17.pdf



Fig. 6 Historic Shop Fronts Guide

1.7 Conservation Area Boundary

Objective: To extend the Bermondsey Street Conservation Area to better reflect and protect the character of the historic local area.

Policy CH8: The Bermondsey Street Conservation Area Boundary will be extended to the north to include St Thomas Street and Crucifix Lane. The whole Neighbourhood Area will also be included in the Conservation Area so as to extend protection to the Estates.

1.7.1 Proposed maps of extensions will be developed - see placeholders below:

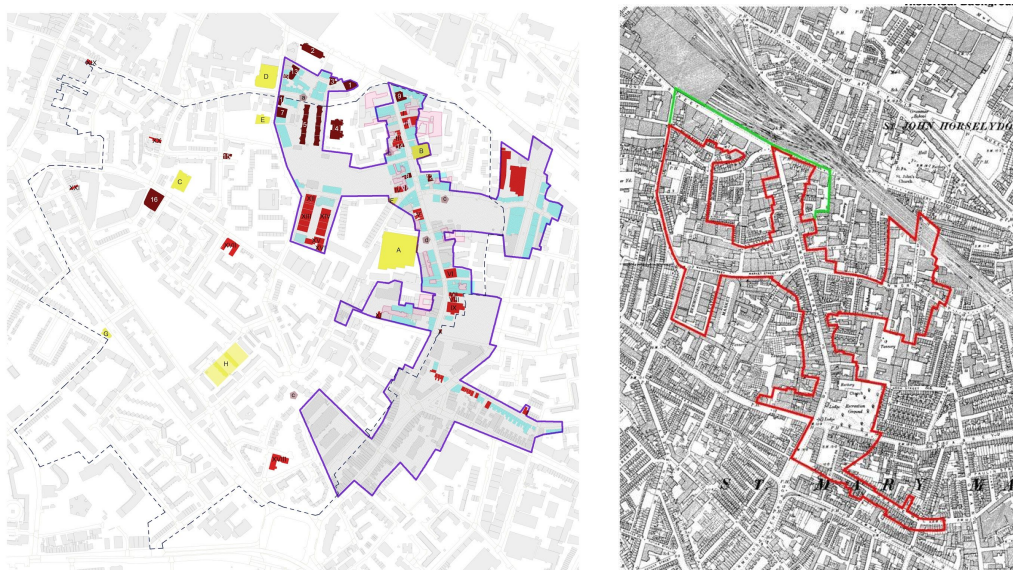


Fig. 7 Conservation Area Boundary Map

1. The listing of the St Thomas St/Crucifix Lane arches in July 2011 supports the extension of the conservation area by acknowledging the street's historic importance.
2. In the Bankside Borough and London Bridge Characterisation Study commissioned by Southwark Council in 2013, St Thomas St is recognised as part of the Bermondsey character area, based on the area's:
 - “historical development, movement - including physical boundaries such as railway viaducts, roads and the River Thames and gateways, nodes and linkages, urban structure and built development
 - density and building height, enclosure, architectural style and detailing; land use and levels of activity, public realm and open space
 - planning policy and statutory protection, and how this relates to buildings and spaces; and views and their contribution to an understanding of character, including the identification of landmarks.”
3. As mentioned in the Neighbourhood Area vision, the Estates symbolise Bermondsey's historic and internationally recognised commitment to social housing. To enable this commitment to endure, the Estates should be protected by a new conservation area. The following conservation areas set a precedent for protecting similarly important estates; The Alberta Estate and The Brandon Estate (LB Southwark) The Somerford Estate (LB Hackney) Myatts Field South, Cressingham.

Chapter 2 Housing and Development

2.1 Social Housing

Objective: To ensure that the area retains a mix of residents, housing must be provided at a full range of cost levels.

Policy H1: New residential developments should provide 50% of housing to be available at social rents. Social rent is defined at a level where housing costs take no more than 30% of household income of those being paid the London Living Wage.

Policy H2: Developers' financial viability assessments of residential development schemes should be available for public scrutiny as soon as they are received by the Council.

Policy H3 : Social and intermediate housing should be onsite of new developments in most cases and exceptional off-site provision of new houses should be within a 300 metres radius of the site.

Policy H4: New build social housing should continue to integrate with the surrounding area in terms of amenity, height, character and identity rather than being seen as separate.

2.1.1 Since all new homes should be affordable, the neighbourhood plan does not use the term affordable housing. Lower income households find housing costs taking up an ever bigger share of their income (Joseph Rowntree Trust). The aim is for housing costs to take no more than 25% of the income of lower income households,

2.1.2 There must be a reasonable period for public scrutiny and comment on the terms of viability assessments before planning decisions are made. All too often, viability assessments are not provided at planning committee meetings. When they are provided, it is only 5 days before the meeting which does not give time to assess the document.

2.2 Design Principles

Objective: To ensure that the design of new residential schemes delivers the kind of housing that local residents want to live in.

Policy H5: Local residents' preferences for places they want to live in should be shown to dominate architecture and design choice

Policy H6: Local variation of design standards to suit Bermondsey styles and needs is essential in all new housing.

Policy H7: Street-based house building should be the presumption with towers only where they can demonstrate overwhelming local support.

2.2.1 The form and layout, quality and character of buildings must be led by local resident experience. A design code for the area will provide clear guidance, based on what **residents value as good design** and this will be used by a local design review panel to assess all major development proposals.

2.2.2 Local variation of design standards can include lifts, sheltered front doors, “lifetime home” standards, bathrooms on same floors as bedrooms, etc, in a different form and layout to mansion blocks and other narrow housing forms.

2.2.3 High rise should be avoided in the area. Increased density can be achieved with a combination of mid-rise 7-8 story buildings and lower 2-4 story terraced homes. Bermondsey must maintain its open sky view and open atmosphere.

2.3 Council Land or Property

Objective: Favour community-led housing developments, including self- build projects

Policy H8 When Council-owned land or property becomes available for redevelopment for housing, this will be supported provided that:

- There is no reduction in council housing on the site
- There is no reduction of amenity space or facilities within 400 metres of the site
- The height of the proposed redevelopment is six stories or less or within the envelope prescribed by the Character and Heritage section.
- Community-led housing development is the preferred approach.

2.4 Noise

Objective: To reduce, manage and mitigate noise in order to improve health and quality of life

Policy H9: Development must ensure all new homes have good acoustic design to prevent low noise escape between dwellings and minimise all noise. Windows must be at least double glazed (and triple glazed if adjacent to noisy activity).

Policy H10: Development must avoid any adverse noise impact on Quiet Areas

Policy H11: Developers are expected to use digital sound maps to build a database of sounds in different places within and adjacent to the area that is proposed for development.

2.4.1 Previous developments have provided inadequate noise insulation between dwellings. Not only must new developments have much higher standards, but investment is needed to bring existing buildings to a good standard.

2.4.2 The neighbourhood area enjoys areas of tranquillity like Leathermarket Gardens. A list of other existing and potential future tranquil spaces should be developed.

2.4.3 Sound maps must be recorded with public collaboration. They will be used to preserve positive soundscape in the existing environment as well as to mitigate noise.

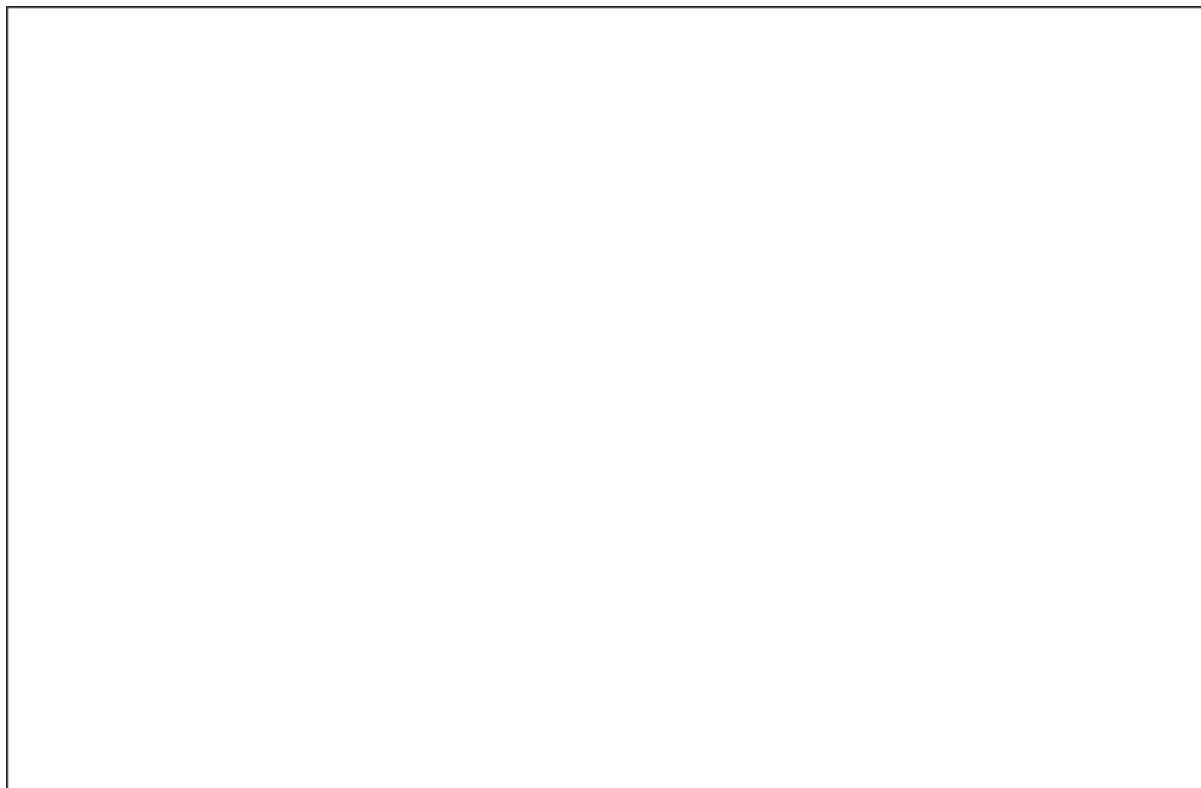


Fig. 8 Positive Soundscape Map

2.5 Energy Efficiency in New Housing

Objective: To ensure new housing developments are zero carbon and to support large scale energy refurbishment of existing buildings.

Policy H12 New-build housing developments and refurbishments will be encouraged to achieve Passive- or Active-house levels of energy efficiency, demonstrated by a Whole Life Cycle Assessment

Policy H13 Building materials with a low carbon footprint will be preferred.

Policy H14 Not fully achieving zero-carbon on site should be exceptional. Carbon off-set payments must be fully transparent and used for fuel poverty reduction.

Chapter 3 Local Services

Objective: Support and encourage new schools and nurseries and increase after school programmes, protect or expand existing library provision, provide additional leisure facilities and increase community space, including facilities for young and older people.

3.1 Schools

Policy S1 Proposals for new schools will be supported, provided that they increase local provision and meet the following criteria for design and amenity space:

- The school buildings must be fully accessible and inclusive
- The design of entrances is important in encouraging children to walk and cycle to the school gate
- Outdoor play space, including a multi-use games area, must be at ground level
- Encourage shared use of the facilities after school
- Meeting facilities capable of use by the wider community
- Trees, green walls and spaces for planting and food growing to be incorporated into the school site
- Fully involve parents, carers and the wider community in the design process

Policy S2 Existing school buildings should be improved or expanded in preference to demolition and re-building, using the criteria in Policy S1.

Policy S3 Support will be given to development proposals which include an increase in after-school programmes.

Policy S4 Conversion of existing school buildings for other uses will not be supported except where overall provision of spaces is preserved.

3.1.1 The neighbourhood area contains Snowfields and Beormund primary schools. There is also the fee paying London Christian School on Tabard Street. Adjacent to the area are Tower Bridge primary school (Fair Street), Globe Arc Academy (Harper Road) and St Saviour's and St Olave's (New Kent Road) which are attended by children from the area.

3.1.2 New schools must meet the criteria for design and amenity space. The provision of playgrounds and playing fields cannot be met solely by rooftop space. Proposals that do not provide green play space within the perimeter of the school must demonstrate easy access to local parks or green spaces sufficient to meet the needs of all children.

3.1.3 Schools need to be healthy places for children. Measures to improve air quality within the school and in the immediate vicinity and to provide green routes to walk and cycle to school are included in Chapter 5 Open Spaces.

3.1.4 Achieving a significant increase in after school programmes, requires school buildings to have a shared use policy. Proposals for new schools must assess the need for after school child care, sports facilities, youth facilities, and space for use by local groups and supplementary schools.

3.2 Nurseries

Policy S5 Major developments are required to provide high quality, affordable and accessible nursery places.

3.2.1 Nurseries in the neighbourhood area are Leo's Den (Law Street), Bright Horizons (Tabard Street) and Arc Nursery (Crosby Row). Smart Start Nursery (51 Tower Bridge Road) is adjacent. These existing nurseries have waiting lists, with parents having to find provision outside the area.

3.2.2 A variety of nursery provision is required – council run, social enterprise and private – to meet the needs of local residents with young families. 50% of nursery places will be affordable to local residents on low incomes. The terms quality, affordable and accessible nursery places will be defined.

3.2.3 Nurseries should provide both indoor and outdoor play facilities.

3.3 Libraries / Leisure facilities

Policy S6 Proposals will be supported that protect or expand existing library provision in the area. Additional leisure facilities, such as a swimming pool or council run gym will be supported.

3.3.1 Evidence on existing provision across the whole area and in specific neighbourhoods. Evidence on the need for a swimming pool and a council run gym.

3.3.2 The facilities must be affordable, accessible and of high quality. To be defined.

3.4 Community spaces

Policy S7 Development proposals must start from a fact based audit of community spaces so that there is a full understanding of existing uses.

Policy S8 Increased community space is required and will be supported. This should include provision for play space, community centres, places of worship and provision for cultural groups. Creative uses such as art, dance, food growing, and community cafe will also be supported.

Policy S9 Community floorspace must be genuinely affordable for renting by community groups and its future secured by long term lease arrangements.

Policy S10 Schools, Colleges and Universities are expected to provide community space.

Policy S11 Vacant space within a redevelopment programme should be offered for community use.

Policy S12 Proposals for new community spaces should consider providing local employment opportunities and how they contribute positively to the existing built environment.

3.4.1 There is a strong need for community spaces which play an important role in bringing people together and supporting an empowered community. Local residents place a high value on existing community facilities, including ...(to be listed).

3.4.2 Development proposals will specify the total amount of new community floorspace, investment in existing underused community facilities and the meanwhile use of empty spaces. Incentives for the use of empty space could include business rates discretionary relief.

3.4.3 Community facilities in specific areas should link up across the neighbourhood and across the neighbourhood boundary.

3.5 Youth facilities

Policy S13 Development proposals must contribute to an increase in youth facilities; both formal youth clubs and support services and informal provision are required.

3.5.1 Research by Social Life shows the need to create opportunities for young people. There are no youth centres in the area, though Downside Fisher and the Salmon Centre are nearby.

3.5.2 There is a need to invest in existing and new facilities for young people, supporting schools to hold after school activities and making the White's Grounds skate park on Crucifix Lane more welcoming and open after 5 pm.

3.5.3 The new cultural facilities in the area and adjacent, should have innovative outreach programmes to reach young people.

3.6 Older People

Policy S14 Development proposals must contribute to an increase in facilities and services for older people.

3.6.1 A number of agencies provide services to older people in the area, such as the Council's handyperson repair service, British Red Cross hospital discharge service, Age Concern services and the Leathermarket JMB older person's project. However, these projects lack the resources to meet the demand for their services. More investment is needed, together with a joined up approach to the services in this area.

Chapter 4 Delivery

This Chapter lays out how the Old Bermondsey Neighbourhood's Vision will be delivered through Planning Policy.

Parts of the Vision will need to be developed outside of the implementation of Planning Policy. These parts will need to be delivered by the forum, working in partnership with Southwark Council and other agencies - see 4.1.1 below.

4.1 CIL Spending

Objective: To direct Community Infrastructure Levy to where it is most needed

Policy D1: Every two years, four priority themes for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) spending will be agreed to strategically guide the spending of CIL in the local area. The priority themes will be agreed by a group of key stakeholders in the Neighbourhood Area.

4.1.1 An initial *CIL Project List* and a set of nomination criteria will be developed.

4.2 Local Community Consultation

Objective: To enable a Local Development Review Panel to fully brief Planning Committee on the impacts of large and major developments

Policy D2: A Local Development Review Panel including OBNF representatives will inform the Planning Committee on how development will impact the Neighbourhood Area.

1. The Local Development Review Panel should be granted the opportunity to brief Planning Committee before large and major developments in or affecting the Neighbourhood Area are brought before Committee.
2. Earliest stage consultation of Large and Major applications within or affecting the Neighbourhood Area must be made available to Local Development Review Panel at pre-planning stage to scrutinise against neighbourhood policy and make recommendations to Committee, including S106 mitigations and CIL. This would apply to applications undergoing Southwark's Pre-Application service. Timelines will be written into Planning Performance Agreements and Review Panel will adhere to strict deadlines so as not to delay the planning process.

Chapter 5 Environment and Open spaces

5.1 Green spaces

Policy E1: Major development is required to provide a net increase of well designed publicly accessible green space with a clear management plan for its future maintenance.

5.1.1 This will address existing deficiencies in the amount of green space and improve the quality of green space.

5.1.2 Details of local deficiency (and how this is measured) and case studies of different approaches (including green roofs, green walls and vertical gardens) are to be added.

5.2 Biodiversity

Policy E2: Major development must recognise and protect existing habitats of pollinators and create new habitats in which pollinators can thrive. Green routes for nature and raised beds at street level are examples of what can be provided.

5.2.1 New habitats can include creating wildflower rich areas which will provide pollen and nectar for bees, butterflies, moths and beetles.

5.2.2 Bermondsey Street (see Sustrans report) and Long Lane have been identified. Details of other locations will be added.

5.3 Trees

Policy E3: Major development will contribute to a doubling of tree cover across the neighbourhood plan area. All existing trees will be properly protected in order to store carbon, support nature, improve soils and water quality, and aid flood protection and urban design. No trees will be felled without full transparent consultation with local residents in the immediate area.

5.4 Water

Policy E4: Development must contribute to sustainable drainage and rainwater harvesting. The provision of drinking fountains in every park and water butts in schools and housing developments will be required.

5.4.1 This will improve the existing poor drainage in many parts of the neighbourhood.

Chapter 6 Transport

Objective: To Improve health and reduce emissions by encouraging walking, cycling and public transport.

All new development must enhance safety, attractiveness and amenity of walking, cycling and public transport.

6.1 Pedestrian Priority

Policy T1: To keep pedestrian safety as the priority

Development must ensure pedestrians are given first priority, then cyclists, then public transport, then all other motor vehicles unless shared facilities with pedestrians and cyclists are clearly specified and signposted.

Policy T2: To improve pedestrian infrastructure

Development that includes pedestrian footways must widen and/or make improvements to the surfaces of pedestrian routes and footways;

Policy T3: To retain and improve pedestrian connections to green spaces and local assets

Development must retain and improve pedestrian permeability routes and explore new routes that connect green spaces and local assets as identified in this Neighbourhood Plan's local list.

Policy T4: To minimise pedestrian and cyclist conflict

1. Development should assist in the provision of dedicated cycleways.
A defined cycleway to connect Q1 with Q14 would be welcomed to consolidate cyclist movement and protect from pedestrian to cyclist conflict
2. Where new cycle paths are proposed adjacent to residential properties, measures to protect amenity and safety of residents and pedestrians must first be implemented.

6.2 Servicing

Policy T5: To reduce through-traffic associated with deliveries or servicing

1. Development proposals must contain servicing plans which provide off road space for large service vehicles.
2. Large developments must propose a defined time range for the arrival and departure of servicing vehicles outside of the morning and afternoon peak
3. Development proposals must install infrastructure required for servicing with electric vehicles
4. Development proposals must consolidate deliveries and implement local delivery hubs.

6.3 Parking

Policy T6: To provide electric charging infrastructure.

Where developments provide parking, each space must have an electric charging point.

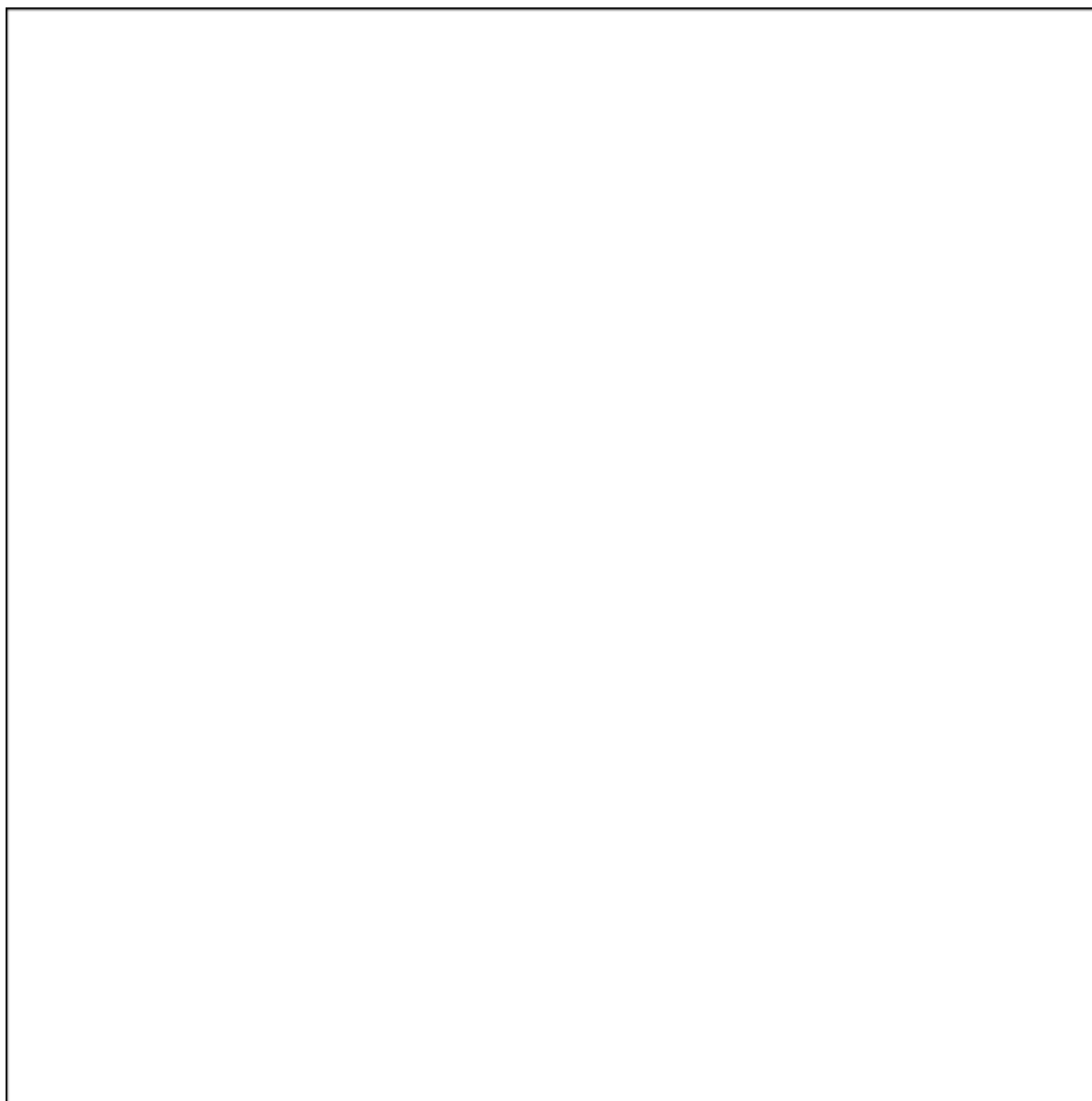


Fig. 9 Transport Policies Map

Chapter 7 Local Economy

7.1 Mixed Use High Streets

Objective: To maintain a suitable mix of uses on Bermondsey Street.

Policy LE1: Planning applications for Bermondsey Street retail frontage and its associated yards will be required to:

- a) Retain an appropriate mix of retail units, taking particular note of the following:
 - i) Planning applications involving the loss of an A1 unit will not be supported unless the overall percentage of A1 units remains above **60%** following its loss.
 - ii) Planning applications involving the loss of an A3 unit will not be supported unless the overall percentage of A3 units remains above **20%** following its loss.
 - iii) Applications which incorporate an indoor sports facility will be supported which would act as an anchor to draw people to the street.

- b) Retain and enhance the retail use of the frontages, taking particular note of the following:
 - i) Frontages must include night time lighting
 - ii) Conversion from retail to residential on these streets will not be permitted; and
 - iii) Applications to convert ground floor residential units to A1 will be supported

7.2 Control of night time economy uses

Objective: To control night-time economy uses so they do not adversely impact on resident's amenity.

Policy LE2: Permission will not be granted for night-time economy uses which would cause increased numbers of people or vehicles to move around the the Bermondsey Street area between 11pm and 6am. This includes "Meanwhile" uses.

7.3 Council-owned ancillary to residential land

Objective: To establish a mix of uses on previously poorly used Council-owned land that is ancillary to residential.

Policy LE3: For applications on previously poorly used Council owned land that is ancillary to residential, changes of use from C3 or C4 (residential) to B1c (office studio, light industrial) will be encouraged on the ground floor to provide workshops and affordable business space.

7.4 Independent retail

Objective: Encourage independent retail in the Neighbourhood/Conservation Area.

Policy LE4: Permission will not be given to proposals to create new, combine or extend small retail units on Bermondsey St where the resulting unit would be more than 80 sqm.

7.4.1 The Bermondsey Street conservation area is characterised by its small unit sizes which in turn attract independent retailers. Such independent retailers must be protected if the area is to retain its character.

7.5 Small businesses and start-ups

Objective: To provide space for small businesses and start-ups to be established

Policy LE5: The neighbourhood will encourage schemes which provide office or workspace in appropriate parts of the area with the following characteristics :

- a. Are able to be subdivided to encourage flexible use and co-working and / or
- b. Include a range of unit sizes including offices of under 80 sqm and / or
- c. Are able to provide accommodation for a range of jobs which are accessible to local people and / or
- d. Commit to working with third party employment support providers and local schools to provide work placements, apprenticeships and training support for unemployed people.

7.6 Affordable business space

Objective: Ensure a continued supply of affordable business space for small businesses and start-ups.

Policy LE6: Applications providing business units must provide 20% at 70% market rent and 30% at 80% market rent in perpetuity.

The following types of businesses will take priority in securing affordable workspace:

- a. Disadvantaged groups starting up in any sector
- b. Local charities, voluntary and community organisations or social enterprises
- c. Creative and artists' workspace, rehearsal and performance space and makerspace

7.4.1 These types will be further identified and defined through consultation.

7.7 Meanwhile Use

Objective: Support temporary use for community/cultural/educational purposes in space which would otherwise be left empty by development.

Policy LE7: Meanwhile use should prioritise community, cultural or educational purposes.

Meanwhile use for outdoor drinking establishments should be resisted to protect local residents' amenity.

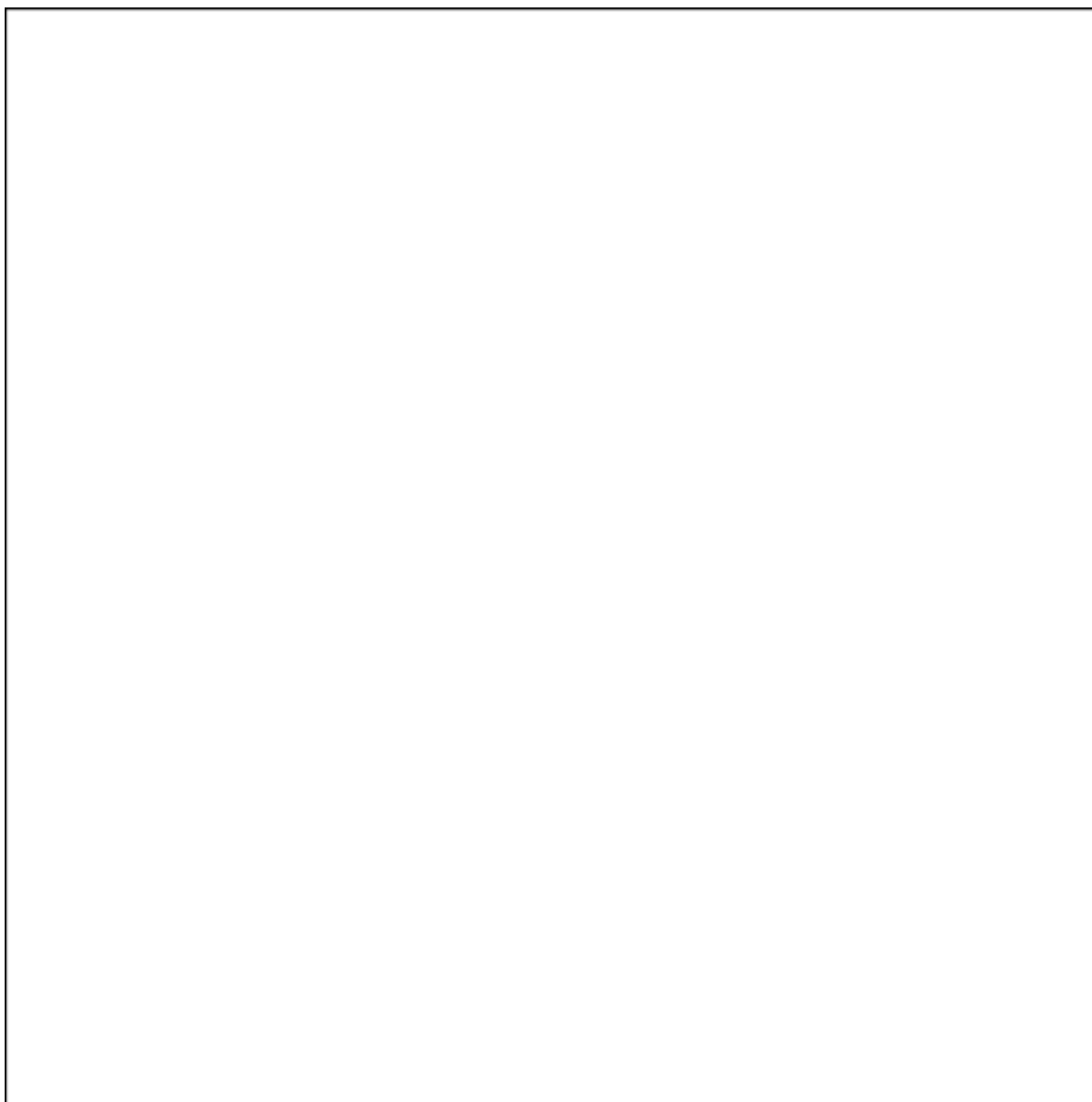


Fig. 10 Local Economy Policies Map