Bromley by Bow South
Townscape, visual impact and built heritage report

September 2016
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This townscape, visual impact and built heritage report has been prepared by Peter Stewart Consultancy as one of the environment topic papers in support of the Bromley by Bow South (‘the Site’) masterplan (the ‘Illustrative Masterplan’). The Site sits within the wider Bromley by Bow area for which the London Legacy Development Corporation (‘LLDC’) is preparing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The environment topic papers, including this townscape, visual impact and built heritage report, will inform the masterplan for Bromley by Bow South, which in turn will inform the SPD for the Bromley by Bow area.

1.2 The report describes the methodology followed in identifying the viewpoints and the sensitive receptors relevant to the Site.

1.3 The report sets out the national and local policy and guidance context relevant to the consideration of townscape, design and heritage matters. It goes on to consider the physical context of the Site and its surroundings, and the Illustrative Masterplan in the light of this context. It sets out an assessment of the quality of the design in terms of architecture and urban design, and the effect of the Illustrative Masterplan on townscape, views and the historic environment. The report does not consider below ground archaeology.

1.4 The report should be read in conjunction with the other environment topic papers and other supporting information for the SPD.

Methodology

1.5 AECOM submitted a Scoping Opinion request to the LLDC PPDT setting out the proposed approach, methodology and scope of the Environmental Impact Topic Reports, including this townscape, visual impact and heritage Topic Report, on 10th March 2016. The Scoping Opinion request also set out the committed developments to be included within the assessment of cumulative effects for each environmental impact topic report. The LLDC PPDT did not request any changes to the approach set out in the Scoping Opinion Request.

1.6 Subsequent to the submission of the Scoping Opinion Request, and a further review of the committed developments in the area, those currently under construction are taken to be in the baseline scenario (rather than assessed cumulatively) as these developments are likely to be completed and occupied prior to any works for the redevelopment of the Site getting underway. Table 1 and Figure 1 below set out the list of committed developments and where these are considered within this report.

1.7 The next step of the methodology is to identify any buildings, open spaces, townscape, views and heritage assets that could potentially be affected to a significant degree by the Illustrative Masterplan.

1.8 In order to identify the buildings, open spaces, townscape, views and heritage assets that could be affected by the Illustrative Masterplan, the Site is assessed. The Site analysis considers the physical characteristics of the Site, the character of the townscape and any relevant heritage assets, identified from the National Heritage List for England and from local authority Conservation Area maps and appraisals.

1.9 The potential effects of the Illustrative Masterplan on the identified buildings, open spaces, townscape, views and built heritage are considered as part of the design development. This process includes computer-based modelling so that the visual impact can be tested.

1.10 The process is an iterative one that informs the design of the Illustrative Masterplan. Any potential for adverse effects on any of the identified buildings, open spaces, townscape, views and heritage can be considered as an integral aspect of the development of the design.

1.11 The final masterplan version of the Illustrative Masterplan is assessed in respect of potential effects on the buildings, open spaces, townscape, views and heritage that have been identified. This assessment is informed by computer generated images showing ‘as existing’ and ‘as proposed’ views from selected viewpoints. Images showing the effect of the Illustrative Masterplan in combination with relevant ‘cumulative’ schemes are also provided in some cases. The assessment in respect of architectural, urban...
design and historic environment considerations is based on professional judgement and best practice applied in the light of relevant national and local planning policy and guidance. A number of meetings between Karakusevic Carson Architects and Peter Stewart Consultancy with Historic England and the LLDC also helped identify important elements of the existing townscape and heritage environment and informed the design of the Illustrative Masterplan accordingly.

Selection of viewpoints

1.12 The location of viewpoints is considered by identifying a study area centred on the Site and limited to locations from which the Site can be seen or from which new buildings on the Site could be seen at the height proposed. Within this study area, candidate viewpoint locations are identified based on an examination of maps and aerial photographs, maps of conservation areas, and maps and lists of listed buildings.

1.13 The sensitivity to change of the Site’s surroundings varies greatly. Many parts of the Site’s surroundings are not particularly sensitive to change in respect of townscape and visual consideration. The choice of viewpoints in this document is not comprehensive; it is focused on the sensitive aspects of the Site’s surroundings, principally to the east and northeast of the Site.

1.14 The final selection of viewpoints is made following site visits and with the aim of including a range of visually sensitive locations from which the Illustrative Masterplan would be visible, and from which the effect on other points nearby can be deduced. It includes viewpoints to and from local conservation areas.

1.15 The view locations and type have been discussed with the LLDC and with Historic England.

1.16 For each of the identified views illustrated in Section 5, there are images of the view as existing and as proposed. The Illustrative Masterplan is shown as a ‘wireline’ outline in the three verified views. In the unverified sketch views, the Illustrative Masterplan is shown as sketches.

1.17 The photographs and computer generated images for views 1-3 in Section 5 have been prepared by GMJ, a specialist visualisation company. An explanation of how the computer generated images have been prepared is provided in Appendix A. The unverified views have been prepared by Karakusevic Carson Architects.
### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application No.</th>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14/00191/FUL</td>
<td>Cooks Road</td>
<td>Bellway Homes</td>
<td>L.B Newham</td>
<td>Demolition of existing buildings and erection of two blocks ranging from five (5) to eight (8) storeys above ground level with a maximum parapet height of 30m AOD to provide: 349 residential units including affordable housing (Use Class C3), 3.113 sq. m of commercial floor space (Use Class A1-A3/B1(D)/D2), together with podium level, car parking including blue badge parking, cycle parking, refuse areas, plant room, servicing, open space, landscaping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/00422/FUL</td>
<td>Marshgate</td>
<td>Workspace 14 Limited</td>
<td>Land at Marshgate Lane, Pudding Mill, Stratford, London, E15 2NH</td>
<td>Demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 8 buildings ranging from 3 to 12 storeys in height, comprising a total of 254 residential dwellings and 4,257 sq. m GIA of B1 (business) floor space, together with basement, servicing, car parking, cycle parking, cycle storage, plant, open space and landscaping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/90619 FUMODA</td>
<td>68-70 Stratford High Street</td>
<td>Lancaster PLC</td>
<td>68-70 Stratford High Street, London, E15 2NE</td>
<td>Demolition of existing buildings and erection of new development comprising linked buildings of one, five, nine and eighteen storeys to provide 731 sq. m of commercial floor space (A1, A2, A3/B1, D1&amp;D2) at ground floor and 173 residential units, with 36 car parking spaces, 213 cycle parking spaces, refuse and recycling facilities, access, landscaping and amenity areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/00111 FUMODA</td>
<td>80-92 Stratford High Street</td>
<td>Mansar Homes Ltd</td>
<td>Stratford Edge, 80-92 Stratford High Street, London, E15 2NE</td>
<td>Redevelopment of the site to provide a 27 storey tower with a 6-storey street building comprising of 2902 residential units, 792 sq. m of offices at ground floor and first floor, 218 sq. m of a café/bar (Class A3/A4) or office or leisure use at ground and first floor with 65 car parking spaces, 150 cycle spaces, 32 motorcycle spaces in a basement car park with access via the High Street and associated landscaping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/30519 FUMODA</td>
<td>14/00112/GAR</td>
<td>Capital Towers</td>
<td>Galliard Homes</td>
<td>Development comprising 15 and 35 storey building to provide 765 sq. m of commercial floor space and 191 residential units with 41 car parking spaces, 307 cycle parking spaces, gym, crèche, landscaping and riverside walkway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/90621/O FUTODA/PDZ8</td>
<td>Pudding Mill</td>
<td>LLDC</td>
<td>LB Newham</td>
<td>Pudding Mill site (Site PDZ8), received outline planning permission with a total of 158,215sqm of floorspace, delivering 118.295m residential (Class C3) (including up to 4000m² of Sheltered Housing), 5,045m² retail (Classes A1-A3), 23.791m² office (Class B1a), 12,158m² employment (Class B1b/B1c), 169m² leisure (Class D2) and 14.68m² community (Class D1). The proposals also include a drop-in health centre, nursery school and general community space. Considered in the assessment of cumulative effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA/08/1161</td>
<td>St Andrews</td>
<td>Barratt Homes</td>
<td>St Andrews Hospital, Devas Street, E3 3NT</td>
<td>Demolition of existing hospital and construction of: 27 storeys &amp; basement block D), 18 storeys (Block E), and between 4-13 storeys (Blocks A-C) for 964 dwellings, 303 sq. m of A1, A2, A3 &amp; A4 floor space, Up to 897 sq. m (D1) and/or (D2) &amp; 2,004sq. m Primary Care Trust (PCT) facility (D1). Granted planning permission in 2009. Considered in the baseline.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| PA/11/02423 | Bow River Village | Southern Housing Association | Thames Gateway (East London) | Planning permission was granted in 2012 for a Masterplan delivering over 700 units and 100,000 sq. ft. of commercial space. As a portion of this committed development sits within the Site itself, only the elements outside of the Sites are considered within the assessment of cumulative effects, comprising demolition of the existing buildings and construction of 8 blocks to provide 453 residential units, a car dealership, an additional 1,718m² GIA commercial floorspace, open space and parking. Considered in the baseline.
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/00336/LT GOUT</td>
<td>Strand East</td>
<td>Vastinct LandProp</td>
<td>Strand East</td>
<td>10 Hectare mixed-use development comprising: 1,200 new homes (40% 3 beds), 620,000 sq. ft. of business and commercial space, including local shops, cafes, restaurants and other community facilities, together with a 350-bedroom hotel. Considered in the assessment of cumulative effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA/11/0354/9/A1</td>
<td>Lock Keepers Hamlets</td>
<td>Peabody</td>
<td>Units 1, 2 &amp; 3 Riverside Industrial Estate, 18 Gillender Street, E3</td>
<td>Demolition of existing storage/warehouse buildings &amp; redevelopment to provide 1,778 sq. m mixed commercial (B1) &amp; 109 residential units (C3) within three buildings from 5/6 to 12/13 storeys, new ground level community amenity &amp; children’s playspace, disabled and car club residential parking spaces and commercial service bays. Granted planning permission in 2012 Considered in the baseline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

2.1 This section contains a brief overview of aspects of national and local planning policies and guidance that are particularly relevant to the appearance and visual impact of the Illustrative Masterplan.

National policy and guidance

National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012

2.2 The Government issued the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012. The NPPF sets out planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

2.3 The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which has three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. The NPPF states, in paragraph 14, that “at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking.” In terms of what this means for decision-taking, it states that this means “approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay” and granting permission where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date unless any adverse impacts “would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits” or “specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”

2.4 In respect of design and heritage issues, the policies are broadly consistent with previous policy and guidance. Among the core planning principles set out at paragraph 17 are that planning should “always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings” and should “conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.”

Requiring good design

2.5 Section 7 of the NPPF deals with design. At paragraph 56, the NPPF states that “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.”

2.6 Paragraph 60 states that “planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to confirm to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.”

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

2.7 Paragraph 61 states that “although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.”

2.8 Paragraph 63 states that “in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area.”

2.9 Paragraph 64 states that “permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.”

2.10 Section 12 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It applies to the heritage-related consent regimes under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, plan-making and decision-taking.
2.11 Heritage assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as a “building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”

2.12 The NPPF requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting (para 128). It goes on to say that “the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.”

2.13 The NPPF identifies a number of key factors local authorities should take into account in determining applications. These include, inter alia:

- “the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;”
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- “the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”

2.14 Para 132 states that in assessing impact, the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be given to its conservation. It notes that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

2.15 The setting of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 as “the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”

2.16 Where a development proposal will lead to ‘less than substantial’ harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (para 134).

Planning Practice Guidance, March 2014

2.17 The national Planning Practice Guidance (‘PPG’) was launched by the Government on the 6th March 2014 and provides a web-based resource in support of the NPPF.

2.18 The PPG includes a section called ‘Design’. This explains, inter alia, the importance of good design, the planning objectives that good design can help to achieve, the qualities of a well designed place, and how buildings and the spaces between them should be considered.

2.19 The planning objectives of design are stated to include promoting, inter alia, local character; safe, connected and efficient streets; a network of green spaces and public places; and cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods.

2.20 In terms of the qualities that contribute to a well designed place, the PPG states that a well designed place should:

- “Be functional;
- Support mixed uses and tenures;
- Include successful public spaces;
- Be adaptable and resilient;
- Have a distinctive character;
- Be attractive; and
- Encourage ease of movement.”

2.21 The PPG identifies the following considerations which may be relevant in terms of how buildings and the spaces between them should be considered:

- “Layout – the way in which buildings and spaces relate to each other
- Form – the shape of buildings
- Scale – the size of buildings
- Detailing – the important smaller elements of buildings and spaces
- Materials – what a building is made from”

2.22 The PPG includes a section called ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’. This considers the factors that should inform decision taking about developments that would affect heritage assets. It notes that “Heritage
assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.... The PPG notes that setting is defined in the NPPF and “is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage.” The PPG states that “A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.”

Regional policy and guidance

The London Plan - The Spatial Development Strategy for London Consolidated with alterations since 2011 (March 2015)

2.23 The London Plan is “the overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years.” The Plan has now been consolidated with alterations since 2011. The policies in this document form part of the development plan for London.

2.24 The policies most relevant to townscape, conservation and visual assessment are contained in Chapter Seven 'London's Living Spaces and Places’. One of the Mayor's objectives of the current plan is that London is a "city that delights the senses and takes care over its buildings and streets, having the best of modern architecture ...."

2.25 Policy 7.1, on 'Lifetime Neighbourhoods', states that “The design of new buildings and the spaces they create should help reinforce or enhance the character, legibility, permeability and accessibility of the neighbourhood.” Policy 7.4 expands on the theme of local character and states that “Development should have regard to the form, function, and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings.”

2.26 Policy 7.6, on Architecture, states that “Architecture should make a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context.” It goes on to set out a list of requirements of new buildings and structures including, inter alia, that they should be “of the highest architectural quality”; they should “be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm”; they should include details and materials that “complement, not necessarily replicate” local architectural character; they should not cause “unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings” which is said to be particularly important for tall buildings; and they should “optimise the potential of sites”.

2.27 Policy 7.8, Heritage Assets and Archaeology states that “Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.”

Local planning policy

2.28 The London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) was created in 2012 and has the responsibility for looking after the development of buildings and outdoor spaces in and around Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. As part of this remit, they act as the planning authority for this area, carrying out all of the planning functions that a local planning authority would normally have responsibility for.

2.29 The LLDC adopted its Local Plan in July 2015. It sets out the LLDC's vision for the future of the area (2015-2031), followed by strategies and policies that will help achieve this.

London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan 2015-2031, July 2015

2.30 The Local Plan outlines the vision and policies for 'Creating a high-quality built and natural environment', which contains elements that address townscape, heritage and visual impact matters.
2.31 Strategic Policy SP.3 relates to creating a high-quality natural and built historic environment that amongst other things, gives primary consideration to the creation of ‘place’; enhances its built, historic and landscape context; and maintains and promotes local distinctiveness.

2.32 Development Management Policy BN.1 ‘Responding to place’ sets out principles new development should comply with including:

“1. Landscape and water: relate well to the local area’s defining natural and man-made landscape features, in particular the linear form of the waterways and parklands
2. Urban fabric: respect existing typologies, including those of heritage value, and draw design cues from the form of the area in terms of its layout (urban structure and grain) and scale (height and massing)
3. Architectural and historic context: enhance the architectural and historic setting within which development is proposed. Careful consideration should be given to architectural and historic style, materials, fenestration, colour, building orientation, datums and overall appearance.”

2.33 Policy BN.10 relates to proposals for tall buildings. It states proposals for tall buildings will be considered acceptable where they “preserve or enhance heritage assets and the views to/from these, and contribute positively to the setting of heritage assets, including conservation areas”. Tall buildings are defined by the LLDC as those that are higher than a sub area’s prevailing height.

2.34 Policy BN.16 ‘Preserving or enhancing heritage assets’ states development should preserve or enhance heritage assets and promote the significance of those assets by incorporating viable uses consistent with their conservation and heritage-led regeneration.

2.35 The Site falls within the site allocation SA4.1 identified as potential District Centre. Policy 4.1: A potential District Centre states that proposed developments on the site will have to demonstrate that they:

- Include an appropriate mix and balance of uses that together have the potential to function as a District Centre. This mix should include retail, employment, community uses, a primary school, open space
- Respond positively to the adjacent waterways and listed buildings at Three Mills
- Provide appropriate on-site infrastructure that will be secured through a Section 106 Agreement needed to make the development acceptable, such as appropriate access arrangements to the site for pedestrians, vehicles and transport
- Contribute to the wider aspirations for design and regeneration of the wider Bromley-by-Bow area.

- Achieve, or are part of, a comprehensive development of the Bromley-by-Bow Site Allocation area
3 THE SITE AND ITS SETTING

3.1 The Site is located in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, but is within the London Legacy Development Corporation boundary. It sits to the west of the London Borough of Newham and the river Lea, to the east of the A12 and to the north of the railway viaduct of the London Underground District Line.

3.2 The Site is adjacent to the Three Mills Conservation Area of Newham, and part of the Site lies within the small Three Mills Conservation Area of Tower Hamlets (though the designation at Tower Hamlets only seems to relate to the conservation area designation in Newham, across the river).

Historical development of the area

3.3 The area of Bromley by Bow was originally in the County of Middlesex. Until the 19th century the wider area was primarily used for farming, though along the river Lea the uses were industrial and included calico bleaching, milling grain and distilling. By the second half of the 19th century, streets had been laid out for housing. The population of Bromley by Bow peaked in 1891 to about 70,000.

3.4 Due to 20th century bomb damage and the subsequent construction of the A12, the urban grain of the area was fragmented. The construction of the Tesco store in line with the newly constructed A12 meant that the historic alignment of Three Mills Lane, the main east-west route across the Site, was lost.

Existing buildings

3.5 There are currently a number of buildings on Site, none of which are of any architectural or heritage merit. The large Tesco store is the predominant building on the Site, and with its associated car park and petrol station it occupies much of the Site area.

3.6 To the south west of the Site sits a 1960’s office building that has been left to disrepair. A large warehouse and two low rise 60’s office buildings are located to the south of Imperial Street.

3.7 To the north of the Three Mill Lane lie two warehouses, a former nightclub left to disrepair on the corner with Hancock Road and a small 60’s building to the north of it.

The Site’s surroundings

3.8 The Site, referred to as Bromley by Bow South, has been identified by the LLDC as a potential district centre for the wider area. Development is already under construction in Bromley by Bow North, north of the Site, as well as at Sugar House Lane, across the river, also north of the Site (‘Strand East’ development).

3.9 The environment immediately surrounding the Site is mixed: to the west is a main road (A12), rail tracks adjoin the site to the south and to the north is an ongoing large new development. The elements listed above give the sense of a very urban environment. However, to the east of the Site is the river Lea and the Three Mills conservation area, which give a more tranquil character to this side of the Site.

A12

3.10 The A12 adjoins the Site to the west. It is a very busy road, formed of 3 lanes in each direction. Currently there are no crossings at street level and the only way for pedestrians and cyclists to cross it near the Site is to use the underpass adjacent to Bromley by Bow station.

3.11 This road creates a rather harsh urban environment for the area. Even within the Three Mills Conservation Area, where the townscape can momentarily appear less urban, the sound of vehicular traffic from the A12 is clearly audible.

Three Mill Lane

3.12 Three Mill Lane is a long street with considerable variety in its character along its length. It runs from the north of the Site, by the A12, along its new
alignment by the Tesco store, across the bridge and along the cobbled street within the conservation area. It then runs through the Mill Studios, at which point it is not accessible to the public, and then returns back towards the west, across the bridge and joins Sugar House Lane.

3.13 Along this ‘journey’ its character changes a number of times; it begins as a fairly unwelcoming street, placed between a superstore and its car parks. Once over the bridge the immediate townscape becomes charming, as you are surrounded by listed buildings and the river. Beyond that it is inaccessible for a stretch, but it can be re-joined before crossing the second bridge towards Sugar House Lane. Here one is (at the time of writing) surrounded by a vast building site, which will in time become a residential-led development, with Three Mill Lane/Sugar House Lane running through its centre.

The River Lea

3.14 The River Lea runs north-south on the east of the Site. Though the river edge is at points rather unmaintained, it provides a charming immediate setting to the Site, especially along the stretch south of the Three Mill Lane bridge, where a number of boats are moored.

3.15 Provision for access and the enjoyment of the river is however patchy, especially on the Site, where its existing uses have no relationship to the adjoining river or its setting.

The wider setting of the Site

3.16 To the north and west of the Site, the setting is very urban. Bow extends to the west of the Site, beyond the A12. It is made up of Victorian terraces, intermingled with substantial modern housing estates and developments. Close to the Site on the other side of the A12 is the recent St Andrews development, which includes a 23 storey brick clad residential tower which is now a major landmark for this area.

3.17 To the north of the Site, the Bromley by Bow North and Strand East projects are both currently under construction. Beyond those lie Stratford High Street and the Olympic Park, with many substantial tall buildings prominent when looking from the Site towards this direction.

3.18 To the east of the Site lies the River Lea and the buildings and spaces of the Three Mills Conservation Area, including its heritage assets (see below), the Three Mills Green open space, the 3 Mills Studios and the Island House residential development. There are currently a variety of uses within the CA, the predominant one being the 3 Mills Studios.

3.19 The railway viaduct lies immediately to the south of the Site. Beyond that is the Maltings Close residential development and Bow school. The listed gasworks (see below) are situated to the southeast of the Site, and beyond that is a large industrial area in West Ham.

3.20 Overall, the wider setting of the Site is a combination of residential-led developments and industrial uses, with some greening along the main waterways of the area.
Heritage assets

Figure 2 - Map of heritage assets

Notes:
Approximate site boundary marked in red for indicative purposes only.
Conservation areas are marked out in pink, identified in the key below.
Borough boundaries are marked with blue dotted lines.

Conservation areas:
1. Three Mills Conservation Area (LB Newham / LB Tower Hamlets)
2. Sugar House Lane Conservation Area (LB Newham)
3. Limehouse Cut Conservation Area (LB Tower Hamlets)

Listed buildings:
- Grade I listed building
- Grade II listed building
Conservation areas

3.21 Part of the Site lies within the Three Mills Conservation Area (LBTH), and the Site is within proximity of three further Conservation Areas; Three Mills Conservation Area (LBN), Sugar House Lane Conservation Area (LBN) and Limehouse Cut Conservation Area (LBTH).

Three Mills Conservation Area (LBTH)

3.22 The Three Mills Conservation Area that is designated by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets runs along the River Lea and only occupies a small sliver of land within the borough and the Site. This designation only seems to relate to the Three Mills Conservation Area designation on the other side of the river, in the London Borough of Newham.

Three Mills Conservation Area (LBN)

3.23 The Three Mills Conservation Area is located immediately to the east of the Site, across from the River Lea. The Three Mills Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals document was adopted in 2006.

3.24 The Appraisal identifies two character areas: the Three Mills Character Area, and the Abbey Mills Pumping Stations Character Area. The former is located to the east of the site and the latter is located to the north-east of the site. There are listed buildings within each of these two areas.

3.25 On page 17 of the Three Mills Conservation Area Appraisal, 16 views are identified as ‘key views’. Of those, three views would potentially be affected by the Illustrative Masterplan. These are:

- the view from the bridge to the north of House Mill looking south towards the mill, with the Site in the background
- the view from the Three Mills Green looking southwest
- the view from the bridge in front of the House Mill looking south along the river

3.26 Arguably the most important view, though illustrated in the document, has not been identified as a ‘key view’: the view from Three Mills Lane (west of the River Lea) over the bridge and towards the conservation area (Figure 3). This view is currently unsatisfactory due to the visual clutter and general public realm treatment, as well as the kink in the Three Mill Lane street alignment. There are other noteworthy views of the listed buildings from the south and southwest, also illustrated in the appraisal but not identified as ‘key views’. These are the views that a visitor would be likely to choose to photograph.

Figure 3

3.27 The Conservation Area feels a little fragmented due to the restricted access in some areas belonging to either the 3 Mills Studios, the Pump Station or the Island House residential development. There is no clear legibility for the public to understand how to access or exit the area and where each route will lead them.

3.28 The general feel of the CA remains fairly industrial, due both to the listed buildings and their original industrial use, and to the large modern warehouses in use by the 3 Mills Studios.
3.29 The aspects of setting that are of significance for this CA, and more specifically the Three Mills area, closest to the Site, are the rivers and the group of listed buildings themselves. The Site does not contribute anything positive to the setting of the CA, as discussed in more detail below.

Sugar House Lane Conservation Area (LBN)

3.30 The Sugar House Lane Conservation Area is located 225m to the north-east of the Site. The Sugar House Lane Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals document was adopted in 2010.

3.31 On p13 of the document the key views to and from the CA are identified. The Site is in the background of only one of the views, which is also identified in the Three Mills Conservation Area Appraisal and is located on the footbridge by Three Mill Lane, looking south towards the Three Mills group of listed buildings.

3.32 Two locations are identified as important looking back from within or through the Site towards the Sugar House Lane Conservation Area. These are located:

- on Three Mill Lane, by the Tesco car park entrances, looking north towards Chimney One and Chimney Two
- from the A12, adjacent to the site, looking north towards Chimney One.

3.33 The important elements of the Sugar House Lane CA are identified in the appraisal as being at the north end of the CA, away from the Site. The Site does not contribute anything positive to the setting of the CA.

Limehouse Cut Conservation Area (LBTH)

3.34 The Limehouse Cut Conservation Area is located approximately 300m south of the Site. Only a small part of the north-eastern corner of the conservation area is considered potentially relevant to the Site. The Limehouse Cut Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines document was adopted in 2011.

3.35 On p18-19 of the document, key views are identified, one of which is potentially relevant to the Site; the view from Bow Locks looking north at the Twelvetrees Crescent Bridge (Grade II Listed).

3.36 The setting of this CA is the built form and space immediately adjoining the canal; the wider area and the Site do not contribute anything positive to the setting of the CA.

Listed buildings

3.37 There are no listed buildings on the Site; however, there are a number in the area around the Site.

Three Mills group

3.38 The Three Mills group comprises three listed buildings and a listed roadway.

3.39 Tide Mill (also known as the House Mill) is located 50m east of the Site. It was listed on the 30th of March 1955 at Grade I. It was built in 1776 and from the 18th century was used as a distillery. It was last used as a distillery in 1942. According to its designation ‘it has considerable merit as part of a picturesque group comprising the Clock Mill, the former offices, the paved and flagged roadway joining these and the wide expanse of the river with its embanking stone walls in front’.

3.40 Clock Mill is located 50m east of the Site. The Clock Mill was listed on the 30th of March 1955 at Grade II. The Clock Tower was built in 1753 and the mill adjoining to the east in 1817.

3.41 The offices opposite Clock Mill (Custom House) are also located 50m east of the Site. They were listed on the 25th of September 1967 at Grade II. They were built in the early 19th century for domestic use.

3.42 Between the listed House Mill and the listed offices opposite Clock Mill (Custom House) is the unlisted Miller’s House, which is used as a café and
facilities for the House Mill. Miller’s House has a modern extension to the back, adjacent to the House Mill.

3.43 The Paved Roadway extending from the west side of House Mill to wall and gate on east side of Clock Mill and is also located 50m east of the Site. It was listed on the 30th of August 1972 at Grade II. Built in the 19th Century, the roadway is important as part of the landscape associated with the listed buildings.

3.44 All four assets together form the Three Mills group. The setting of the Three Mills group of listed buildings is discussed below.

Other listed buildings

3.45 The Seven Gasholders are Grade II Listed. This group covers a large site southeast of the Site. These are circular cast iron gasholders built in 1872 to the designs of engineers Clark & Kirkham.

3.46 The significance of the gasholders is in their form of construction and material detailing, and in the history of this use on the site; their wider setting does not contribute anything to their significance.

3.47 Twelvetrees Crescent Bridge is located 200m south of the Site and was listed in 1996 at Grade II. It is a brick and wrought iron bridge with two arches, spanning the River Lea and Bow Creek, completed in 1872 by engineer Peter William Barlow. The list description notes that the bridge ‘forms a group with the nearby gasholders’.

3.48 The important aspects of the bridge are its construction and detailing. The aspect of setting that is of significance to the bridge is the river itself. The wider setting does not contribute anything to its significance.

3.49 The Arch Against the North Wall of Bromley recreation Ground is located 175m west of the Site. It was listed in July 1950 at Grade II. It dates from the 17th century.

3.50 The arch is a small remnant of a historical building that is now surrounded by modern development. Its significance is therefore mainly historic and does not relate to the immediate or the wider setting.

3.51 There are further listed buildings in the Abbey Mills Pumping Station Character Area of the CA. These are 500m or so from the Site at their closest and there is less potential for development on the Site to affect their setting than in respect of the listed buildings noted above; they are not considered further in this assessment.

Settings of designated heritage assets

3.52 The designated heritage assets (DHAs) that have the potential to be affected to the greatest extent by the development proposed in the masterplan, in respect of effect on their settings, are:

- The Three Mills Conservation Area (LB Newham)
- Listed buildings in the Three Mills Island character area, within the above CA
- The Three Mills Conservation Area (LB Tower Hamlets)

3.53 The immediate setting of the Three Mills group of listed buildings, which is the most important aspect of its setting and the aspect of its setting that is most closely related to its heritage significance, is the Three Mills Island character area, within the CA, together with the immediate riverscape, and the LBTH CA.

3.54 It is within this area, at relatively close range, that the group of buildings, their interrelationships and historic associations, their details and materials, and their relationship with the river channels, can best be appreciated.

3.55 This area now also includes a recent block of flats within the CA, north-west of the listed buildings, which rises to 8-9 storeys, its height stepping up away from the listed buildings.

3.56 For the purposes of this study, in respect of the potential of the Site to affect the setting of the DHAs, the CA and the Three Mills group of listed buildings present essentially the same issues in respect of the setting of the CA and
the wider setting of the listed buildings, and so this is treated here as a single consideration. ‘Setting’ below therefore refers generally to wider setting outside the CA.

In general terms, the setting of the CA today is remarkably varied, and poor in places. The riverscape is picturesque in places, with some tree planting close to the water on either side which contributes to its pleasant aspect, but very rapidly, in almost any direction, one comes to townscape that does not contribute positively to setting – the Tesco on Site and its car parks being a case in point. The wider townscape is dominated in many directions by very large scale housing development, with little coherence or legibility to its form, and much of it not of good quality. The St Andrews development next to Bromley by Bow station is better than most, a coherent scheme of good quality, with a tall residential tower, which provides a clear marker of the station in a confused and fractured wider townscape.

In the past, as maps and photos in the masterplan documents show, as well as Figure 3, the Site and adjoining areas on the west side of the river were densely developed, with some large scale canal-related industry, and with dense terraced housing. All of this has gone. The most noticeable aspect of setting that has been lost, apart from the older buildings, is the straight historic street alignment that led to the river crossing. This was realigned as part of the Tesco development and it now reads as a car park service road, with little legibility of the continuation to the bridge.

In respect of the contribution of setting to heritage significance, as set out in HE’s guidance ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets’, the principal aspect of setting that contributes to significance is the presence of the various water channels, which are the reason the listed buildings of the Three Mills group are where they are.

The openness of the setting, in some directions, is a notable and surprising aspect of the setting, although it has positive aspects only in certain regards. The openness of Three Mills Green is a pleasant aspect of setting, but not historically significant. The openness of the water body and the linear island, from south to west of the listed buildings, is attractive and of some significance – in particular it affords the best views of the group, from the south / south-west. In the past the Site was more built up than today, and has been subject to considerable change over the years; the openness of the Tesco car park, and the single storey scale of the Tesco shed, represent an essentially suburban form of development that detracts from the area. In this respect, the openness of the Site is not an aspect of the setting of the CA that contributes positively to its significance.

Nor does the existing form of development on Site contribute anything else to the heritage significance of the DHAs; and in visual terms it detracts from them. The present alignment of the road to the bridge has undermined legibility.

There is clearly scope to enhance the setting of the DHAs through redevelopment of the Site. The present uses of the Site turn their back on the river and the CA; the connection to the bridge is poor; the riverside is accessible but not somewhere you would choose to linger.
Existing townscape: conclusions

3.63 The existing townscape of the Site is varied and fragmented. The existing buildings on the Site contribute to the overall negative impression one gets from the Site; they offer nothing in terms of architecture and create a negative public realm, due to their positioning and lack of legibility and active frontages.

3.64 The Site’s immediate surroundings are mostly urban; large developments to the north of the Site; the unpleasant environment of the A12 to the west; and the railway line to the south. The river, the associated greenery and the listed buildings east of the Site offer a remarkable contrast with the Site and the remainder of its setting.

3.65 There is currently very little perception of the Three Mills CA on the other side of the river Lea, the predominant feature of the Site being the Tesco store and its adjoining car parks. The kink in the Three Mill Lane by Tesco and the barrier and visual clutter on the west side of the bridge contribute to the reduced legibility of the CA and the listed buildings within it, as they obscure any through views towards it.

3.66 There is significant potential to improve the existing townscape at Bromley by Bow South, including: better permeability to and from and within the Site, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists; better legibility towards the Three Mills Conservation Area; improved public realm within and immediately surrounding the Site; improved access to the river front within the Site; and the provision of active frontages along any significant routes.
4 THE ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

The Illustrative Masterplan

4.1 The Illustrative Masterplan is a comprehensive masterplan which comprises new homes, a primary school, retail uses, public spaces and parks, improved public realm and better access to the canal and the surrounding area.

4.2 This masterplan has been developed by Karakusevic Carson Architects in consultation with the landowners and the LLDC. It will form part of the SPD for the Bromley by Bow area being produced by the LLDC.

4.3 The masterplan aims to improve the overall environment of the Site and in particular the pedestrian experience to, from and within the Site. More information on the details of the design can be found in the Masterplan document by Karakusevic Carson Architects.
Principles of the Illustrative Masterplan

1. A centre of gravity around the canal
   Create a focus of the neighbourhood centre around the canal edge, integrating emerging development in Strand East, Three Mills Green and Three Mills Basin. A mixture of complimentary commercial, social and employment uses will contribute to a functionally dense and strong community.

2. Re-establishing Three Mills Lane
   Re-establish the historic alignment of Three Mills Lane to deliver a bicycle and pedestrian connection and improve access to the park. Integration with new crossings and wider public realm improvements will unlock a feasible route through the site from Wrenbury Lane to Strand East and Streeton High Street.

3. Normalising the A12
   Adopt a coordinated approach to the A12 to deliver two new surface crossings as well as an upgraded underneath to significantly improve connectivity between existing and emerging surrounding communities. Improved public realm along the road edge will create a pedestrian environment and support a range of active ground floor uses.

4. An active Canal Edge
   Deliver a new high-quality canal side path as part of a wider plan for improving public realm along the canal to enhance its visual appeal and contribute to the landscape.

5. A great place to live
   The site is a mixture of residential qualities and offers unique potential for the future housing and living needs. A combination of small scale and community settings provide formal and informal opportunities for play.

6. Responding to the Heritage Context
   Enhance the setting of the Three Mills Conservation area and listed buildings through a sensitive approach to design, raising and blending form along the canal edge.

Figure 6
4.4 The Illustrative Masterplan has been designed with six spatial principles in mind:
- Creating a focus around the canal
- Re-instating the historic alignment of Three Mill Lane
- Improving crossings on the A12
- Creating an active canal edge
- Creating a successful mixed use neighbourhood
- Responding to the heritage context

Massing and heights

4.5 The heights and massing of the buildings in the masterplan have been determined through consideration of the context and surroundings of the Site. One tall building is proposed in the south west of the Site, near the Bromley by Bow station and the tower in the St Andrew’s development.

4.6 A further 7 buildings of moderate height (12-16 storeys) are proposed on the Site. These are not concentrated in one area, but are strategically placed to provide markers for wayfinding around the Site.

4.7 The heights of the buildings on Site have been designed to minimise overshadowing of open spaces and communal courtyards. The resulting variety in building height also adds visual interest to the proposed townscape.

4.8 Consideration has also been given to the surrounding historic environment, and in particular to the listed Three Mills group across the river. The proposed buildings that are closest to the heritage assets are envisaged to be of a smaller scale and to be designed in an architectural language that responds to the heritage setting.

Character

4.9 The Illustrative Masterplan will be delivered across multiple phases over a period of time. It is envisaged that the developers will involve a variety of different architects and designers during these phases. There is also a Site-wide public realm strategy being prepared by one design team.

4.10 This approach will help avoid monotony and create a more organic townscape and public realm, through a variety in built form, architectural styles and materials.

Public realm

4.11 The public realm for this scheme is seen as an important and integral part of the masterplan that will contribute significantly to the success, legibility and vitality of the neighbourhood centre.

4.12 Formal and informal public open spaces and pocket parks will be distributed around the development, as well as a park along the River Lea. A much improved public realm, along with pedestrian crossings, is proposed along the A12.

4.13 A generous amount of land along the river Lea is allocated as open space that will be available to the public; to the north of Three Mill Lane the space is identified as a towpath environment and to the south of Three Mill Lane will be a park. These spaces will provide better public access to the river edge, but this approach will also create a buffer between the Three Mills heritage group and the built form on the Site. They will also create a place where the heritage assets can be clearly seen and appreciated.
5 TOWNSCAPE VIEWS

5.1 Three verified views are provided, which show the most sensitive locations considered, which are shown as existing and as proposed. A series of further sketch views from other less sensitive locations are also provided; these are unverified and produced on a digital model created by KCA.

5.2 Viewpoint locations were identified in consultation with Historic England and the LLDC.

5.3 The three verified views relate to the setting of the Three Mills group, as this is considered the area where there is the most potential for significant visual and heritage effects:

- View 1 – Three Mills Green west, by the weir, looking south
- View 2 – Three Mill Lane footbridge, looking south
- View 3 – Three Mill Lane, in front of the 3 Mills Studios, looking west

5.4 The sketch views are located to the west of Three Mills Green and form a series of views of the approach towards the Three Mills group from the north.

Figure 7 - Viewpoint map
View 1 – Three Mills Green west, by the weir, looking south

Existing View

5.5 This view is located to the west of Three Mills Green, along the pathway, by the weir. To the centre of this view one can see the bridge over the canal and beyond it, partly obscured by the bridge, the upper parts of the House Mill and the Miller’s House modern extension are visible. To the left of this, a large tree blocks views of the Clock Mill, and Canary Wharf in the background. To the right, St Andrew’s tower is prominent; then Island House is seen rising in height away from the Three Mills group, and to its right a warehouse on the Site, a tower block in the distance, and the almost complete development at Bromley by Bow North.
View 1 – Three Mills Green west, by the weir, looking south

Proposed View

5.6 The bridge over the canal and the roof of the House Mill will remain central to this view. The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan are seen behind the Three Mills group of buildings and to their right, creating a varied skyline across the whole of this view.
View 1 – Three Mills Green west, by the weir, looking south

*Proposed View with cumulatives*

5.7 The bridge over the canal and the roof of the House Mill will remain central to this view. The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan are seen rising behind the Three Mills group of buildings and to their right. A building from the Strand East development (shown as a white line) is seen to the far right of the view, blocking any views beyond it.
View 2 – Three Mill Lane bridge

Existing View

5.8 This viewpoint is located on the footbridge to the north of the Three Mills group and looks south towards the listed buildings. The group of the Three Mills listed buildings seen above the canal is the central feature of this view. The composition of the roofline of the grouping, including the clock tower and conical roofs of the Clock Mill are important to this view. Equally important is the reflection of the buildings and the roofline in the canal, seen to better effect at high tide. The Three Mills group are framed by the 3 Mills Studio to the left and the Tesco store and St Andrew’s tower to the right.
View 2 – Three Mill Lane bridge

Proposed View

5.9 The Three Mills group remain the main focal point of this view. The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan are seen to the right of the view, partly obscuring St Andrew’s tower. The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan do not break the ridgeline of the Three Mills group.
5.10 This viewpoint is located within the CA, on Three Mill Lane, in front of the 3 Mills Studios’ entrance, looking west between the listed buildings and towards the bridge beyond. This view is framed by listed buildings; to the left is the Clock Mill; to the right is the House Mill and the listed offices opposite the Clock Mill; between them, the listed paved roadway. Centrally in the distance one can see a rather cluttered urban environment, including one of the warehouses on the Site, the building on the corner of Three Mill Lane and Hancock Road, and tall residential developments in the background.
5.11 The view is framed by the listed buildings to the right and the left and the listed roadway. Centrally in the background sit the buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan. The apparent heights of the new buildings are varied but they all lie below the heights of the listed buildings in the foreground.
5.12 These views have been produced by Karakusevic Carson Architects using a digital model of the Illustrative Masterplan and sketching over it. They are indicative and should not be seen as precise representations of the Illustrative Masterplan within its context.

5.13 The first five sketch views represent the approach from the north of the Three Mills Green towards the Three Mill buildings.

5.14 During the consultation stages of the Illustrative Masterplan an additional view was requested by the LLDC. This was located on Sugar House Lane, facing south. After testing this view, it was established that none of the buildings from Illustrative Masterplan would be visible from this viewpoint, as it would be completely concealed by the Strand East development. It has therefore been omitted from this final report.
Sketch View A, Three Mills Green north

Existing View

5.15 The predominant aspect of this view is the canal edge and the boats. Centrally to the view are the Three Mill buildings, partly obstructed by trees. They are not prominent from this viewpoint and neither their inherent interest nor their waterside location are very apparent. Beyond them, the towers of Canary Wharf are partly visible in the background. To the right of the view are the St Andrew's tower and the development site at Strand East, and to the left is the Three Mills Green.
Sketch View A, Three Mills Green north

Proposed View

5.16 The canal and boats will remain the main aspects of this view. Beyond the canal, the new development at Strand East will line the edge of the canal. The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan will be seen in the distance in the backdrop of Strand East, the Mill buildings and the Island House development. Three Mills Green is to the left of this view.
5.17 The river and weir are the focal points of this view. The built form of the Three Mill buildings, which are not prominent from this distance, along with St Andrew’s tower and the Island House development, create the backdrop for this view. Canary Wharf is visible above the ridgeline of the House Mill and Miller’s House.

**Sketch View B, north of the weir**

**Existing View**
Sketch View B, north of the weir

*Proposed View*

5.18 The canal, the pathway and the vegetation remain the predominant aspects in this view. The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan are seen as an addition to the existing backdrop, behind the Strand East buildings and the Three Mills buildings.
Sketch View C, by the weir

Existing View

5.19 The canal and the bridge are the focal points of this view. The trees to the left of the image soften the view and obscure some of the Three Mill buildings. The Mill buildings are not particularly prominent from this viewpoint, especially in summer, nor is their relationship with the water clear. St Andrew’s Tower is visible behind the House Mill. To the centre right of the image is the Island House development.
Sketch View C, by the weir

Proposed View

5.20 The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan become more prominent on the approach towards them. The bridge and the canal will remain the main aspects of this view; the Illustrative Masterplan buildings will create a more urban backdrop.
Sketch View D, north of the bridge

Existing View

5.21 The bridge and the soft and hard landscaping of the Three Mill Green are the predominant features from this viewpoint. The Three Mill buildings are partly obstructed by the trees to the centre and left of the image. St Andrew’s tower rises up behind the House Mill and other developments are visible beyond the bridge.
Sketch View D, north of the bridge

Proposed View

5.22 The bridge and the landscaping remain the main aspects of this view, though the buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan become more prominent and will create a more urban backdrop. The Three Mill group can be seen beyond the bridge, through the trees.
Sketch View E, south of the bridge

Existing View

5.23 This viewpoint is located at the final approach towards the Three Mills group. The modern extension of the unlisted Miller’s House is the most prominent element in this view, though the listed buildings are also visible, including the clock tower from the Clock Mill.
Sketch View E, south of the bridge

Proposed View

5.24 The modern extension to the Miller's House and the adjacent listed buildings remain the focal points of this view. Buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan are seen to the right of the House Mill.
6 ASSESSMENT

Urban design

6.1 The Illustrative Masterplan is a well thought out masterplan on a Site with many constraints, as well as significant opportunities. The proposal aims to create a successful and diverse neighbourhood with a mix of uses and amenity provisions.

6.2 The masterplan addresses the very poor pedestrian connectivity across the A12 through the provision of two at-grade crossings and the improvement of the underpass next to Bromley by Bow station.

6.3 It will also improve connectivity to and from the Site through the introduction of two bus routes passing through the Site. Connectivity and permeability to surrounding developments, including St Andrew’s, Strand East and Bromley by Bow north, will also be improved.

6.4 The existing lack of permeability and legibility within the Site are also addressed through the re-alignment of the Three Mills Lane and the provision of additional direct streets and routes within the Site. This will not only improve the legibility of the Illustrative Masterplan itself, but also of the adjacent Three Mills Conservation Area.

6.5 The Illustrative Masterplan will also significantly improve the river edge conditions, through the provision of open space along the river Lea in the form of a park and an improved towpath environment.

Townscape

6.6 The tallest element of the Illustrative Masterplan, which stands at 26 storeys, is located on the southwest part of the Site, near Bromley by Bow station, where there is already a precedent for taller buildings (St Andrew’s tower).

6.7 The height of the buildings closest to the Three Mills group will be lower than the rest of the masterplan, which predominantly stands at six storeys in height, in order to respect the listed buildings and create a townscape environment that works harmoniously with them.

6.8 Any additional taller elements, which vary from 8 storeys to 16 storeys, have been positioned strategically around the Site, creating markers and aiding legibility and wayfinding around the Site. Two taller elements, for example, are proposed on the opposing corners of the A12 and the Three Mill Lane, marking the entrance into the development from the west.

6.9 The reduced height and sensitive treatment of the buildings closest to the Three Mills group will also help to reinforce the character of the Three Mills group.

6.10 The streets and public spaces are clearly defined by the building frontages along them, reinforcing the legibility of the Illustrative Masterplan. Private spaces, including the school playground, are also clearly defined, enclosed within the perimeter blocks.

6.11 The ground floor residential units are provided with a compact defensible space, which maximises the provision of the public realm, while still creating a clear boundary between public and private space.

6.12 The positioning of the public spaces along the building frontages provides natural surveillance over the spaces and increases their safety and security, both of which are integral in the spaces being used successfully.

6.13 Good quality architectural treatment, detailing and materials will be fundamental for the success of the Illustrative Masterplan, as they will form the final character of the scheme. This information has not been provided at this early stage and will be required during the planning application stage for each of the applications on the Site.

Views

6.14 Three verified views are illustrated and assessed above. The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan will be visible from all three viewpoint locations.
The presence of the Illustrative Masterplan in views 1 and 3 does not have a negative effect on either of them or the setting of the listed buildings, as the existing context is already perceived as being urban from these two viewpoints.

View 2 has been identified as the more sensitive view by HE. None of the buildings from the Illustrative Masterplan break the roof ridgeline of the Three Mills group, and the picturesque quality of this ‘postcard’ view is retained.

The remainder of the views shown in this document are sketch, unverified views. The five sketch views (A, B, C, D, E) form a sequence as the viewer approaches the Three Mills group from the northwest of the Three Mills Green towards the group. The buildings of the Illustrative Masterplan are visible in all five views.

This series of views show the change in the character of the setting as one approaches the listed buildings. In the first four views one is less aware of the presence of the listed buildings and much more aware of the river and the wider urban context. The presence of the Illustrative Masterplan buildings does not have a negative impact on these views.

In view E the listed buildings come into a clear view. This view has been taken as the final of a series of ‘dynamic’ views on the approach to the listed buildings. The glimpses of the Illustrative Masterplan in view E do not come as a surprise to the viewer nor do they dominate the view, the focal point of which remain the listed buildings group.

**Impact on Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings**

**Conservation Areas**

Three Mills Conservation Area (LBTH)

As stated in the CAA, this Conservation Area was designated to complement the Three Mills Conservation Area in the London Borough of Newham. Any impact of the Illustrative Masterplan will therefore be considered in regards to the Three Mills Conservation Area of Newham.

Three Mills Conservation Area (LBN)

The Illustrative Masterplan is across the river from the Three Mills Conservation Area of Newham. The three viewpoints for the verified views were chosen to review the possible impact on the more sensitive receptors around the Site. The views all relate to the Three Mills listed buildings group, which are located on the western edge of the conservation area.

As noted in section 3, above, the important elements of the setting to the Three Mills group and this part of the CA are the water channels.

The Site in its present state does not contribute anything positive to the heritage significance of the listed buildings and the CA. On the contrary the Site in its existing state creates a negative setting for the CA and the listed buildings group.

The intensification of development on the Site that is represented by the Illustrative Masterplan scheme will bring about noticeable and significant change to the setting of the Three Mills group of buildings and the CA area setting around this group of buildings, which is also located closest to the Site. It will not however affect the heritage significance of the buildings or the CA.

The impact of the Illustrative Masterplan buildings on the rest of the CA will be limited; views from the rest of the CA towards the Site are limited; and the tallest building, which will be seen from parts of the CA, is appropriately located near the station, the existing St Andrew’s tower and the allocated district centre – away from the CA.

Sugar House Lane Conservation Area (LBN)

As stated in section 3, the setting of importance for the Sugar House Lane CA lies to the north of the CA, away from the Site. The Illustrative Masterplan
scheme will have no impact on significance of the Sugar House Lane Conservation Area.

_Limehouse Cut Conservation Area (LBTH)_

6.28 The setting of importance for the Limehouse Cut CA is the immediate frontages of the canal itself. The Illustrative Masterplan scheme will have no impact on significance of the Limehouse Cut Conservation Area.

_Listed buildings_

_Close to Site_

_Three Mills Group (House Mill, Clock Mill, Offices opposite Clock Mill and the associated paving)_

6.29 The immediate setting of this group of buildings is the CA, which is unaffected; and as noted, the buildings are best appreciated as a group, at close range. The effect on the wider setting is discussed above in the section on the CA.

_Wider area_

_Seven Gasholders_

6.30 The Illustrative Masterplan scheme, or parts of it, will likely be seen from the site of the Seven Gasholders. As noted in section 3, their setting does not contribute to their significance. The Illustrative Masterplan scheme will have no impact on significance of these listed structures.

_Twelvetrees Crescent Bridge_

6.31 The Illustrative Masterplan will be visible from the bridge, looking north. As noted in section 3, the important aspect of setting for the bridge is the river.

The Illustrative Masterplan scheme will have no impact on the heritage significance of the bridge.

_The Arch Against the North Wall of Bromley recreation Ground_

6.32 Elements of the Illustrative Masterplan will be visible from the location of the Arch. As noted in section 3, the setting of the Arch does not contribute to its heritage significance. The Illustrative Masterplan will have no impact on the setting of the arch.

_Effect on heritage significance and heritage setting_

6.33 The masterplan offers a coherent vision for the Site which has the potential to offer the following major benefits to heritage setting:

- Doing away with inappropriate uses and structures presently occupying the land and turning their back on the DHAs
- Reinstituting built frontage at an appropriate scale facing the watercourses
- Reinstituting the direct route to the bridge, improving permeability, legibility and connectivity.
- Providing high quality open space adjoining the river, in a presently neglected area at the edge of the Tesco car park, providing a place from which the listed buildings at Three Mills can be appreciated.

6.34 By improving access to the listed buildings at Three Mills, and by building new buildings and usable public open space that face across the river towards them, the chances of securing investment in and conserving for future generations these historic buildings, that are presently at risk, will be very greatly enhanced.

6.35 In respect of the strategy for scale and height in relation to site planning, as shown in the masterplan proposals, this is in principle appropriate to the Site and to the setting of the heritage assets. The Site has in the past been occupied by development much denser and more substantial than what is there today, and there is no reason in principle why this should not be the case again.
6.36 The generous amount of open space left next to the river in the masterplan proposals maintains, in the immediate setting of the CA, the openness and breathing space that the listed buildings enjoy today, but in a greatly enhanced form, by providing usable and pleasant open space rather than a car park. Building heights step up away from this towards the rest of the Site, including towards the tube station and the existing residential tower building next to it, which provides an appropriate townscape marker.
7 FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR DETAILED DESIGN AND FUTURE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

7.1 Future applications within the Site are intended to follow the parameters set out within the Illustrative Masterplan.

7.2 The fact that the Illustrative Masterplan is promoting the involvement of a number of different architects is encouraging, as this will create visual interest and variety in the townscape of the masterplan.

7.3 The taller elements of the Illustrative Masterplan, particularly near the A12, should be designed carefully and their heights should be considered, in order to avoid creating a ‘wall’ of tall buildings – where the buildings may be perceived as a single building from various viewpoints around the Site.

7.4 The ridgeline of the Three Mills group should not be broken, as seen in ‘verified view 2’, in order to retain the quality of this ‘postcard’ view.

7.5 In the case of any future outline application it is recommended that certain parameters are set to encourage the creation of a local character. The parameters can include; material and colour palettes, scale, ground level treatment etc.

7.6 As part of the creation of a sense of ‘place’ for the new neighbourhood it is important that the community buildings, closest to the Three Mills buildings, are of exemplary architectural quality, and also relate successfully to the surroundings. Additionally, the river-side park and public space should be high quality pieces of landscape architecture.

7.7 In respect of the form of development proposed across the Site in any future planning application, this will need to be tested carefully in detail in townscape views - the relevant views identified in this appraisal and others - as the scheme develops.
8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 In overall terms, the Illustrative Masterplan is an example of a high quality masterplan, employing the principles of good urban design and encouraging permeability, legibility, diversity and the creation of a ‘place’ in the form of a new neighbourhood and local district centre.

8.2 The Site as existing is affected by many townscape constraints, including the almost impermeable A12 to the west and the rail tracks to the south; the river and the possible risk of flooding; the broken up urban grain of the Site; and consideration of the surrounding heritage assets, and the listed Three Mill group in particular.

8.3 The Illustrative Masterplan scheme deals with each of these issues. There is a proposed strategy for pedestrian crossings along the A12 and the improvement of the underpass to Bromley by Bow underground station, as well as new bus route connections running through the Site.

8.4 Built form is set back away from the river, reducing any flood risk and allowing for public access and the creation of a good quality park by the river. The re-alignment of the Three Mill Lane creates clear, identifiable routes within the masterplan, particularly to and from the Three Mill group.

8.5 The building frontages and their interface with the public space create active frontages and make the masterplan more legible, while the use of urban blocks clearly separates the private spaces from the public spaces.

8.6 The scheme allows for a different uses and reduced heights and massing for the buildings in the closest proximity to the listed group, thus creating a carefully considered and sensitive setting for the listed buildings and a vast improvement to their existing setting.

8.7 The Illustrative Masterplan offers the opportunity to revive this underperforming Site, and its immediate and surrounding areas, including the Three Mills listed buildings group and the Three Mills Conservation Area, through a diverse scheme, which will function well and add to the overall quality of the area.

8.8 The improved visual and physical relationships created by the Illustrative Masterplan in relation to the listed buildings and the CA will emphasise the latter’s heritage significance and help reinstate the Three Mills group as an attractive focal point of the proposed new neighbourhood, rather than the underused backwater that this area appears to be today.