

Case Study: Canning Town, Newham

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Introduction

This report is part of a wider set of documents that form the baseline for the evaluation of the mixed communities initiative, namely:

- The baseline report of the evaluation
- Annex A to the baseline report , which sets out the evaluation approach
- Reports like this one for each of the case study areas
- A set of data files for each case study area.

The report is intended to provide a descriptive account of the Canning Town demonstration project at the start of the mixed communities initiative, and to identify key issues and questions for the evaluation of the mixed communities approach in this area. It does not contain detailed quantitative data. These can be found in the accompanying data files.

The structure of the report is guided by the theory of change approach adopted as the basis for the evaluation of the mixed communities initiative. A theory of change is a linked set of propositions leading from problem to outcome, indicating how, in theory, problems can be remedied by interventions, through what change processes and with what outcomes. The evaluation team has set out a theory of change for the mixed communities initiative (see Baseline report, Annex A), and used this to generate a series of research questions about the problems faced by the areas, the remedies adopted and the changes that occur. Clearly at the baseline stage, we are not in a position to report on change processes and outcomes. The report is organized around a set of research questions on the problems faced in the area and the remedies being adopted.

The final section of the report identifies some key questions for the evaluation in this demonstration project area and sets out the bespoke evaluation strategy that will be followed for the remainder of the evaluation, to summer 2009.

The Area

The MCI area labelled Canning Town covers part of the Canning Town and Custom neighbourhoods in the borough of Newham, in east London. The area lies north, east and south of the Canning Town Underground station, and north of Custom House DLR station. Canning Town is one of LB Newham's nine neighbourhoods with their own management and consultation structures (community forums, established in 2000), and includes about twice as much land as 'Canning Town'. Canning Town is also one of five more recently designated town centres in the borough, reflecting the hub of shops and a market near the A13 road.

It was traditionally a working-class neighbourhood, originally developed alongside major dock employment in the late 19th century, but which saw heavy war bombing and large-scale redevelopment by the local authority after the Second World War. Loss of employment in the docks and associated industries since the late 1960s set in train a long period of economic decline and the area has suffered from high worklessness, low educational attainment, poor health, and high crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as a decayed physical environment. It has, however, retained a core of its long-standing community, whose strong identity and loyalty to the area is seen both as an asset and as a liability by different actors in the area and it is one of four growth areas designated in for the Thames Gateway in the government's Sustainable Communities Plan.

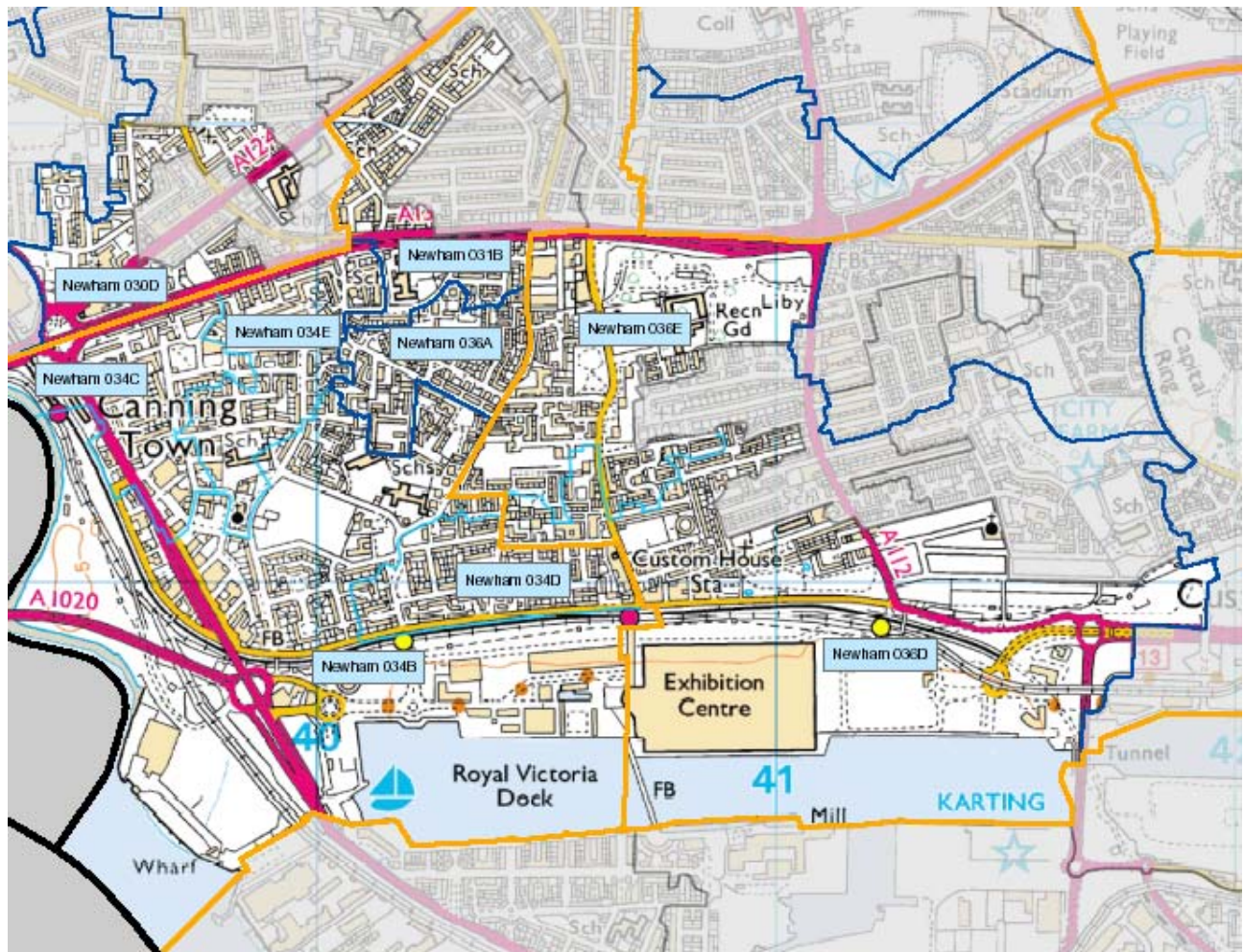
As of the 2001 Census the population of Canning Town was 12,614 residents, in a total of 5,223 households. The ethnic mix in 2001 was 58% white, 30% black and 6% Asian (for a full census breakdown of ethnic groups see spreadsheet 1, table 1.4). It is widely agreed that there is rapid population turnover in Canning Town, and that the population composition has continued to change since the Census, bringing in greater numbers of black residents. Due to the area's being heavily bombed during WW2 almost all the present homes are post-war council housing. They are a mix of houses, low-rise flats and maisonettes, with a couple of high-rise blocks.

To date developments in the wider Docklands have failed to bring significant benefits to the area, but interviewees feel that the area has a lot of latent potential for higher prices for homes and land, and greater attention from commercial property investors. This is due to its location, relatively close to Docklands and the City, and its good road and rail links. Regeneration efforts in the area since the mid 1990s have aimed at trying to release this potential through investment in new or improved built form, additional facilities, and economic development. Diversifying and modernising the housing stock is also now seen as central.

Expand?

The statistics referred to here are from the best-fit approximation of the regeneration area, covering parts of Canning Town South and Custom House wards. (for a full census breakdown of all the population data see spreadsheet 1.) It is widely agreed that there is rapid population turnover in Canning Town, and the population composition has continued to change since the Census. There is less certainty about the outcome of the change and the present situation. It is thought that the proportion of Black African residents has risen, whilst the area has also begun to house increasing numbers of migrants from central and eastern Europe.

As of 2001 Canning Town had above average levels of residents aged 0-19: 33% compared with an England average of 25% and a below average level of residents aged over 60 (15%, England average of 21%). In 2001 54% of Canning Town residents were White British, compared with an England average of 87% - although the non-White British population proportion is smaller than in other parts of Newham.



Canning Town proposed LSOA's

There is an agreed approximation the Demonstration Project area for the purposes of data monitoring; this is shown above. This roughly follows the outline of the estate and the commercial facilities along the A13. Given the existence of major private-sector developments outside the official ambit of the project on the periphery of the area, near the Royal Victoria Dock, some indicators will also be followed using Output Area geography, which offers a more limited range of statistics at a finer geographic resolution.

Problems in the area

Housing

The tenure mix for Canning Town which makes up much of the area was, in 2001, 67% Council rented and 8% RSL whereas the average social rented proportion for England is 19%. Owner occupiers made up 23%, the large part of these being living in ex-council properties purchased by sitting tenants. The area has no low demand social rented homes and in 2001 0.2% of properties were vacant, well below the England average.

The housing is in a wide and inconsistent variety of styles, and some is poorly built, though nonetheless recognisably social rented housing. The layout of housing blocks and streets is confusing and hard to navigate. The design and layout of the housing stock was identified by the police as a problem for crime and policing as it is hard to access and manage the estate. Community workers also identified the housing layout as a contributing factor to residents feeling unsafe, with some narrow alleys and blind spaces.

Population

The area has a significantly higher than average percentage of dependent children living in lone parent families, 51%, whilst the average for England is 23%. Canning Town has a slightly higher than average number of single person households (36%, England average 30%) and a higher number of households with dependent children (37%, England Average 29%). Of the households with dependent children 45% are overcrowded, compared with an England average of 10%. (For further data see spreadsheets 2 and 3.)

Environment

There is a lack of green space within the Canning Town area. Whilst the area is well connected by DLR, tube, buses and main roads to other parts of London and the South East interviewees have discussed problems of access across the area, particularly for pedestrians or would-be bus users due to the complex layouts of housing and by the limited routes for crossing the A13. A community worker suggested that the under passes were seen as unsafe by many residents who were often too scared to use them to leave the area.

Crime and anti-social behaviour

Canning Town is above the borough average for crime and anti social behaviour, though levels of reporting are lower than average. The Chief Inspector suggested the main reasons for this were: a fear of services particularly among those who may have had negative experiences of the police and/or army in other countries, language and access

barriers and a sense in which Canning Town residents wanted to deal with things themselves. The main issues are identified as robbery, vehicle theft and drunken disorder such as fights and aggressive behaviour. A faith leader and minority ethnic support worker suggested that many residents were nervous and fearful of crime in the area and that the majority of people in the area, particularly elderly residents felt fearful to leave their homes after dark.

Worklessness

Loss of employment in the docks and associated industries since the late 1960s has resulted in a long period of economic decline. In 2005 jobs density in the area was 0.52 compared with 0.85 for England. Unemployment is high with a JSA claimant rate in 2005 of 6% compared with 2.3% England average (Percentages given are of working-age population in Census 2001, as 2005 population estimates are not available below district level). In 2005 the Incapacity benefit claimant rate was 13%. (For further data see spreadsheet 6.) The borough is now the largest employer in Canning Town and there are some job opportunities in the developing hotel, leisure and exhibition spaces near the Royal Docks.

Some informants suggest that residents are reluctant to travel far outside of the immediate neighbourhood for work and that many residents lack basic skills or need re-skilling in order to access employment. It was suggested that there may be reluctance among ex industry workers to take different sector jobs with lower pay and that there was dissatisfaction with the low paid jobs available.

Educational attainment

The main primary schools that children in the area attend are Keir Hardie, Rosetta and Hallsville. Keir Hardie is currently in special measures and has experienced a drastic fall in pupil numbers due to ongoing regeneration. Rosetta Primary will be moving from three forms to two to fit with regeneration plans. The nearest secondary school is Cumberland Sports College, which was relocated from Barking Road but is still outside of Canning Town in Prince Regent Lane. An informant felt that not having a secondary school in Canning Town was a big disadvantage for the area and regretted the fact that Cumberland College had not been relocated to Canning Town.

Educational attainment at Key Stage Two in 2004/05 with students in Canning Town gaining an average point score of 26.6, where the England average is 27.6. Attainment at Key Stage Four is particularly low, with Canning Town lying at the bottom of indices of school attainment. In 2001 44% of adults in Canning Town had no qualifications, compared with an England average of 29%. (For further data see spreadsheet 4.)

Health

The community profile for Canning Town identifies high levels of health needs among residents. Canning Town South has high levels of cardiovascular disease and the highest rate of infant mortality and premature death across all categories. In 2001 Canning Town residents were indicated to have higher levels of 'not good health' than the England

average. (13%, England average 9%). The measure of “years of potential life lost”, shown below, is striking. This is a standardised measure of premature mortality through disease and other causes; the best-off part of the demonstration project area scores worse than the national average, whilst the average and worst parts are high placed among the worst across the country. For further data see spreadsheet 5.

Years of potential life lost (2000-2003)

	Low	Median	High
Canning Town, Newham	69.37	89.87	105.3
England	56.93 (Q1)	65.42	77.32 (Q3)

There is high use of acute health services due to late presentation for medical attention. In interviews it was suggested there is a lack of access to services for Canning Town residents and some reluctance on the part of GPs in the area to engage with the local problems and with the wider PCT. For example it was suggested that some GPs were reluctant to take part in new initiatives. It was felt that whilst there are examples of good practice among GPs in the area, there are also several examples of poor practice, and generally low morale among health care professionals working in the area. The PCTs have not been organised geographically making it difficult to address specific area issues.

Do the problems of the area affect the life chances of people in the area? In what ways?

As illustrated above the different problems identified with the area all contribute to the overall life chances of residents, poor health outcomes, fear of crime and a lack of higher paid employment prospects mean that many residents are or feel unable to become more mobile. The following comments from local professionals identify the ways in which the problems in the area affect resident's life chances through a number of mechanisms. For example, isolation and feeling marginalized that they cannot engage with the community and the wider environment, a lack of protective factors affecting health outcomes and multiple individual level barriers to employment.

“The main problem for residents here is the sense of isolation, particularly not wanting to go out in the evening and entrenched fear. In the daytime it’s like any other normal place but with a lack of amenities, particularly local shops.”

“The residents here are very marginalised, long term disabled and with mental health problems and the mentality that the only thing to do is stay at home,”

“There is low voluntary and community activity and an absence of protective factors, low social capital and passivity”

“There are multiple barriers to employment for CT residents with different combinations of barriers for different residents making it very complex and difficult to address.”

Reputation of the area?

Local community workers interviewed felt that the area had a negative reputation both from outside and within the area among some of the residents, which they felt was reflected in the numbers who felt unsafe to go out at night. Interviews with police and health officials suggested that the area was also viewed by service providers as problematic, as an area where residents often had complex and multiple needs.

What level of public expenditure is required in this area relative to others on an ongoing basis?

At this stage, we have not collected data on local service expenditure. Given high levels of social and economic problems, it is likely that expenditures on individual-level services (such as social services, education welfare) are disproportionately high.

Previous Interventions

What additional regeneration programmes has the area had and at what cost?

With Custom House, Canning Town formed one of LB Newham's three main regeneration areas from 2000. Collectively these were called 'Access to Excellence' or 'A2E', a programme launched in 2000 and intended to run to 2007, with £18.75m funding [from where?]. The overall aims combine employment, education, local business, infrastructure and sustainability. A2E was managed by Urban Futures on behalf of LB Newham and the London Development Agency (LDA). These appeared to complement the borough's plans from 2000 for a PFI (see below) to bring investment into Canning Town's housing stock. According to LA policy in 2004, the regeneration of Canning Town is central to the council's comprehensive regeneration strategy and 10-year strategy for housing. (LB Newham 2004a). These extended the housing and other regeneration plans for the area beyond the life of A2E, the PFI and the Decent Homes target. There was an SRB3 in the area run by the Canning Town partnership which improved some homes and covered the same areas as the PFI (LB Newham 2003).

Canning Town was one of the eight first-wave Housing PFI schemes, and the PFI affects and defines part of Canning Town and Custom House wards. Planning started in 2001, and by 2003, the borough had confirmed it would use a PFI for Canning Town in order to meet the Decent Homes standard. This involved the refurbishment of the majority of these homes, with a small number of demolitions and clearance of non-housing sites. The contract commenced in 2005 and at present the partnership is engaged in refurbishment of the blocks and some demolition; key informants feel that the scheme is making good progress. PFI took on around 1,400 of the less problematic council homes in Canning Town. In searching for the right number and condition of homes to make PFI work, the council intentionally left out some patches across the site. These included some more 1960s and 1970s maisonette blocks and some 1970s redbrick felt-roofed houses.

Canning Town is also participating in the Under-served Markets Project; launched by CLG and Business in the Community to promote the use of retail as a catalyst for broader regeneration and investment in some of England's most deprived communities. The Under-Served Markets team is also working to provide a food store proximate to the rail station. Discussions are being held with Sainsburys and Tesco.

Canning Town also receives CLG's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) to support local regeneration and contributions from the Safer Stronger Communities Fund will help target crime and anti-social behaviour (NRU, 2006). Newham is currently using all of its borough-wide SSCF allocation within Canning Town to address anti-social behaviour and crime. The West Ham and Plaistow NDC area lies close to the east edge of the DP project area.

Other Service Improvements

The police in Canning Town are engaged at a strategic and operational level. This includes identifying problem 'hotspots' in the neighbourhoods, developing a long term strategy to address ways to maintain and improve the area during the disruption caused

by regeneration, a preventative strategy focussing on small scale specific issues (eg removing abandoned vehicles quickly), and consulting on secure design for the new housing to make the new areas secure and more easily policed. The PCT are also looking at ways to invest in the area and to engage with residents but have issues surrounding PCT funding. There have been several initiatives in Canning Town in relation to training and employment. New Keys, concerned with adult education and vocational aspects, and A2E which had 20-30 different local interventions. Through the action team fund there is an employment zone in the borough with small pots of funding for training and they are developing a mechanism for a main organisation with a shop front as first point of contact, one branded approach which is visible and will link council, job centre, LDA, LSC, colleges and so on.

Drivers of Deprivation

What are the drivers of area deprivation?

A weak economic base, poor quality housing and lack of access to public services are all drivers of deprivation in the area and interact with one another. In the 2001 census 44% of adults had no formal qualifications compared with an England average of 29% which affected their ability to gain better-paid employment. Interviews with community workers suggested that a lack of suitable employment is a key problem along with the complex multiple needs of individual residents which makes accessing employment and public services more difficult, together with possibly poorer levels of public services within the area to start with. A lack of funding and under investment in the area in relation to health services was identified along with a need to invest in good quality services where both staff and users feel more valued.

What are the drivers of deprivation that the DP is explicitly trying to address?

Poorly planned, ill-designed and badly built housing is a central problem in the area, and the development of a rigorous plan and design code formed an early part of the regeneration work. Whilst the wider area has undergone regeneration and economic development, this has not necessarily benefitted residents. Whilst the council's officers are realistic about the prospect of attracting many families with children to live in the open-market housing in the early phases of the programme, the mix of dwelling types across tenures is being designed to enable a mix of both household types and income levels across the site in the longer term.

Is a more mixed population needed?

It is hard to be certain about the extent to which the area's problems arise from the existing mix of people, aside from those households' own circumstances and the shortcomings of the physical environment. It seems likely that a population more mixed in terms of income, at least, could support a more extensive and varied range of private sector services.

Demonstration Project overview

The MCI project is a co-ordinated approach to the area, to follow up previous activities, funding, and partnership work. These have included an SRB programme and the ongoing

PFI scheme. Overall, the council-led scheme combines an ambitious housing regeneration scheme with an unusually ambitious local authority-led commercial redevelopment scheme. Canning Town was one of the first round of demonstration projects announced in 2005, although masterplanning for the activities described substantially predates the MCI.

(LB Newham 2003). Between 2001 and 2004 the LA worked to decant and clear seven sites, and in 2004 an eighth (Vandom Close) that still had tenanted homes which it intended to dispose of. Overall this meant demolition of about 1,800 homes (LB Newham 2001). The sites totalled 4.8 hectares and the plan was that they would be redeveloped with social rented, intermediate and open market sale homes and a commercial unit. The Local Authority would receive a capital receipt for the land and redevelopment would take place using Social Housing Grant (LB Newham 2003). These sites are now going to be dealt with under MCI.

The other key MCI site is around the retail area, a potential retail, office and some housing to the north of the A13 around the station and adjoining Silvertown way (FV). By 2002 a new national organization called the English Cities Fund, a partnership of English Partnerships, Legal and General and AMEC, was established, and amongst a handful of projects nationwide it was working with the LDA on the retail projects at Canning Town (LB Newham 2004b). In 2002 a 'Canning Town Action Plan' brought the 2 sets of projects together. In 2004 this was replaced by a joint masterplan and supplementary planning guidance. By this stage they involved 200 hectares and 4,000 homes, with plans for 4,000 more. The goal was "to create an expanded and vibrant town centre surrounded by prosperous and sustainable communities where people will chose to live, work and invest" (LB Newham 2004b p1). The Masterplan pledged to accommodate those existing residents who wished to stay. It combined new improved and more mixed tenure homes and new and improved and more mixed building uses generally., with some pledges on better services (LB Newham 2004b).

There is a defined 'regeneration' area which has been agreed by the council and CLG, covering parts of Canning Town South and Custom House wards. [The Canning Town and Custom House Masterplan and supplementary planning guidance covers three wards, Canning Town North, Canning Town South and Custom House (LB Newham 2004).

Alongside the development of the PFI (see section below on housing changes to date) Newham was planning for the future of some of the Canning Town homes that had been left out of the PFI, the non-residential area along the A13, and for the area around Custom House tube station. Initially, independent plans were developed, but by 2003 they were joined together in a Canning Town and Custom House Masterplan, which in 2004 was formalised as Supplementary Planning Guidance (LB Newham 2004b). This combination of plans and the partnerships and initiatives to deliver them can be termed the MCI DP. At the time of writing, aspects of the masterplan are being reviewed in the light of the Thames Gateway and successful Olympic bid. It is felt that the aspirations for the Town Centre were not high enough in relation to the Olympic developments which gave Canning Town the potential to be a more significant centre. Further, the original masterplan which specified seven development areas did not address the linkages between them, or urban

form. The main revisions in the new masterplan are likely to be increased emphasis on road plans and green routes, increased housing densities across the area, and reshaping of the town centre.

There has been a consultation process on the new masterplan which has involved workshops with key stakeholders such as council services and with the LDA, TG and others. There has also been one-on-one discussions with people affected by new demolitions in the revised SPG. There are about 40 additional dwellings proposed to be demolished in the revised masterplan. In addition there have been fixed exhibitions and community workshops with further ones in the summer 2007.

The revised masterplan is nearing completion and the aim is for it to go to Cabinet for approval in the late summer and to be approved by the end of 2007. Due to work on the Local Development Framework the new masterplans will not be formally incorporated into the SPG until a later date.

2004 Masterplan Sites



Detail of Demonstration Project Plans

Housing and tenure mix

As part of the regeneration plans 1,700 further homes will be demolished (LB Newham 2006). According to LB Newham in 2003, all the demolition sites would receive new homes for sale and shared ownership as well as re-providing all social housing. This is being achieved by increasing the currently low housing density. The total number of new homes is likely to be between 6,000 and 8,000. Given the poor layouts and perceived stigmatising appearance of the existing housing there is a strong emphasis in public documents and informants' descriptions on high quality tenure-neutral design.

According to the Local Authorities strategy on Canning Town, "one of our main goals is to ensure genuine mixed tenure and to offer residents the opportunity to make choices about their housing" in the areas outside the PFI (LB Newham 2003 p22). The overall strategy "envisages a major diversification of tenure with the transfer of many council homes to other sectors for redevelopment or refurbishment" (LB Newham 2004a p58). The broad intention over a thirty year period is to reach approximately 50% social rented in the project area. On sites currently being brought forward, 35% of the dwellings are "affordable housing", this being split evenly between social rented (housing association) housing and intermediate (shared equity). However the GLA want 50% affordable homes as the East London area is viewed as a place with the potential to meet housing need across London.

One area of particular emphasis in the demonstration project's housing plans is "pepper-potting" – that is, the mixing of different housing tenures at a small spatial scale. Area three of the plans has been considered and designed in relation to tenures such that social rented, intermediate and private homes are integrated within flat blocks and across streets and courtyards. However pepper-potting of tenures raises issues for developers considering the potential price impacts which it may have and management issues for RSL's when there is within block mixed tenure. The council is supportive of the pepper-potting aspect of the designs with strong expectations concerning comparable quality of properties across tenures but also see the need to take a pragmatic approach. Tenure integration was specified in the brief to which interested developers responded.

To date Newham is considering shared equity schemes where the equity will be shared with the borough itself. This may potentially be used in the first phases of the development. They identify affordability of stock as a 'pressing concern'.

Housing changes to date and to what extent are they attributable to MCI

A number of housing changes are already underway in the area as the result of a housing PFI. From 2000, LB Newham started pursuing a PFI, and by 2003, the borough had confirmed it would use a PFI for Canning Town in order to meet the Decent Homes standard, putting it in the first round of such schemes nationally. This meant demolition of some council housing with refurbishment of the majority in the Canning Town South and Custom House areas.

The PFI financial deal was completed June 2005 and work began. The PFI contractors are a partnership called Regenter. This is a joint venture owned by Pinnacle and John Laing (through a wholly owned subsidiary, Equion). Dexia Bank is the senior debt provider. Regenter has an office in Central London and an on-site management office for London City East Partnership (LCEP) to deliver the project and manage the area for thirty years. At present the partnership is engaged in refurbishment of the blocks and some demolition and re-provision of social rented housing, with London and Quadrant as the social landlord of the new homes. The Local Authority contributed some of its own funding to the PFI; for example in 2002 it allocated £3.5m from *future* expected land sales, with an agreement on sharing and value uplift (LB Newham 2004a). To date, the PFI is seen by other participants as making good progress on both the redevelopment and management aspects of its contract.

PFI took on around 1,200 of the *less* problematic homes. In Canning Town currently there are many low-rise 50s and 60s maisonette blocks, some thoroughly clad and re-roofed, and some 1950's brick-built houses. In searching for the right number and condition of homes to make PFI work, the Local Authority intentionally left out some patches across the site. These were some more 1960's and 1970's maisonette blocks and some 1970's redbrick felt-roofed houses.

What is now the Mixed Communities Demonstration Project is therefore working on sites in the same area but not covered under the PFI. Developers were invited to submit expressions of interest in 2005, and a competition to select qualified and suitable developers was subsequently held. Consortium tenders were received August 2005 (LB Newham 2005). By 2006 Countryside Homes had been selected by the Mayor and Cabinet as the developers for the first phase of 600 new homes to be built, with a mix of sale, intermediate ownership and social rent. Countryside entered the pre-qualification stage with an existing preferred RSL William Sutton. Additional, Bovis Lend Lease have also been approved as contractors and are likely to take up development opportunities further on in the project.

At present, therefore, there are a number of simultaneous activities underway. The PFI is refurbishing existing properties; a number of smaller sites are either at planning or under construction, for re-provision of social housing by London and Quadrant; the first phase of the MCI, a larger development, is also at planning, with the first units expected on the market in Autumn 2009; and there are also sales of existing council housing bringing in receipts.

Are there any specific mechanisms other than house price and design, designed to control mix in the short of long term e.g. lettings policies, price caps, retention of equity by public sector?

There are a number of measures in place. Firstly, the shared equity model for the intermediate component of the new affordable housing will mean that a stake is retained. Interestingly, the developer and the council have also agreed measures to try to restrict the amount of buy-to-let in the open-market part of phase I. These include screening of enquiries, and restrictions preventing of bulk sales and rapid purchase and selling on.

Whilst these measures reduce the potential market – according to the developer’s sources 70% of new-build property sales in London are to investors – the developer feels there is an understanding on the council’s part of the implications this may have for the speed of sales and hence receipts.

Does mix require any displacement of existing residents? Who? By what mechanisms are their interests safeguarded (eg relocation packages, choice of alternative home)

Canning Town has a commitment to no forced displacement of residents and there have been no CPO’s to date. There are a total of 1,600 total decants to be achieved as part of the whole CT/MCI regeneration. In the current Area I phase 40% of these are to be completed in a one year period from now. There have been no permanent lets since 2001, and this has led to higher natural turnover.

What effect is population change in the DP area expected to have on population mix in adjacent areas?

Informants did not identify any likely deleterious effects upon neighbouring areas.

How is it intended that the design of new developments will contribute to mixed community objectives for example, social networks between owners and renters?

As discussed above, there is a commitment within Canning Town to the pepper-potting of housing tenures within new build developments and consistency of design standards and built quality across the tenures. This may have the potential to encourage ease of communication between people living in the different tenures and potentially to develop more integrated communities. However some community workers fear that new residents will work and spend their leisure time outside of Canning Town and may not contribute to the community.

The council’s officers also note the importance of “rebranding” the place in order to address the negative reputation of the area, partly as a way of encouraging new private tenure residents to the area. They have engaged a consultancy called “Thinking Place” to do a presentation on branding places. They see a need to create a new identity and affection for the area in a similar way to other areas of London such as Brick Lane markets. However, changing the reputation is a particularly large challenge for the project’s team.

Service improvements

The DP plans include a range of improvements to public and private sector services and facilities. These include:

Plans to improve health

Newham are looking to merge Canning Town and West Ham Health Forums as a vehicle to transfer good practice. The Health Forum approach was developed in West Ham NDC where they brought together local health providers, the PCT, and NDC board members to

address health issues. They aim to set up a similar themed health group in Canning Town which may be combined with the West Ham Forum. The Forum approach is being developed as a potential way to actively engage local health professionals. The Canning Town Community Forum also has a programme of health events.

The PCT are looking at the possibility of a large one stop health centre in Canning Town retail development although there are funding issues at present. The council and PCT are also working to develop a holistic neighbourhood approach to health. Canning Town South is part of a cardiovascular disease pilot developing community based action with the aim to reduce cardio vascular deaths by 2012 and to reach the borough average by 2020. The healthy urban development unit based at GLA is funded to support NHS involvement in the planning process at Canning Town.

Crime

The police are developing a long term strategy for Canning Town which involves working with the joint resources centre and their crime prevention design advisor is consulting with architects on the plans.

Education

The existing Keir Hardie school is being rebuilt, although the existing site is being used partly to provide new housing and the new school will be two storey taking up about half the footprint of the old site. There is a youth strategy group for Canning Town and a Youth Forum, and plans are being explored for developing a high quality youth facility for Canning Town, possibly in the new town centre development.

Plans to improve public open spaces include the transport interchanges and crossings of the A13, and to the A13 flyover and interchange, improved access to the River Lea and ecology park (NRU, 2006) and new or improved schools, health, leisure and other community facilities

Plans for area management

The current interim strategy for Area I is a three-way partnership between Countryside, William Sutton Housing Association and Newham. The plan is that the management arrangements eventually become resident-led. There is a draft charter in place to enable this. Cross-tenure management is a central part of approach to Canning Town.

How is it intended that service improvements support mixed communities objectives eg a better school.

Some respondents felt that relocating the secondary school outside of Canning Town was a potential problem for attracting future residents, also a need was identified to improve the status of the local primary schools in order to attract and retain new families. The rebuilding of Keir Hardie Primary School on the existing site may help with this. At council level it was felt that there had not been the funding or policy steer to adequately address employment, health and worklessness elements of the MCI.

Measures to attract jobs into the area or connect residents to job opportunities in the wider labour market

One problem identified was a lack of connection between employment and training interventions and the lack of an overall strategy on employment. This is currently being developed. Previously, there have been multiple small schemes relating to training and employment. Currently Newham Business and Employment is developing a mechanism for one main organization with a shop front in Canning Town as the first point of contact, a singular branded approach which is visible and which will link the council, job centre, Connexions, LDA, LSC and colleges. The shop is due to open in September 2007. They are also trying to develop a flexible training account so as to be able to offer employer focused short training courses to skill up people for regeneration jobs.

They are also hoping for a local labour mechanism through which developers will bring jobs to the council who will then find employees through the job shop. This may take the form of employment commitments from construction companies and the employment team in Newham, are hoping for Section 106 agreements to include a local labour agreement. There is the possibility of attracting designer outlets to Canning Town as a distinct retail offer creating local employment, but currently this is only a draft plan.

In addition, there will be 500,000 new square metres of floor-space in a revitalised town centre. The current market, Rathbone Market, is also to be redeveloped; this involves the temporary decanting of stall-holders and small shop owners. Due to the scale of development across the borough, particularly that related to the Olympics centred at Stratford, it is thought likely that there will be demand for borough-wide supply of commercial space in the short to medium term [does this imply that temporary loss of space is a problem or that re- and extra supply won't be a problem??].

Time line

2005 : Competition to select potential developer partners

2005 : PFI agreement concluded

Summer 2007 : Phase I agreement concluded between Countryside and Newham

Autumn 2007 : Phase I sites to Planning

Autumn 2008 : Start on-site on Phase I

Autumn 2009 : First sales of new homes

Process Issues

Governance Structure

As the major landowner and manager of housing stock, via an ALMO, the Council is the lead partner along with the Thames Gateway and GLA. English Partnerships is involved in the English Cities Fund and Pinnacle is involved via the PFI. The partners may be divided into three distinct types with different types of engagement:

1. The **strategic** partners: Thames Gateway, the London Development Agency
2. The **development** partners: currently Countryside, potentially Bovis LendLease in the future
3. The **neighbourhood renewal** partners: the PFI, as well as relevant functions within Newham council (eg Education) and the Police.

Governance for the Canning Town project is currently under discussion at council cabinet level.

In terms of the planning and development control system, the situation in this DP is unusually complex. Statutory planning responsibility is split across the DP area between the Thames Gateway and the Borough; additionally, the GLA has powers to examine planning proposals.

Masterplan

Initially, independent plans were developed, but by 2003 they were joined together in a Canning Town and Custom House Masterplan, which in 2004 was formalized in Supplementary Planning Guidance. By this stage they involved 200 hectares and 4000 homes, with plans for 4000 more. The goal was “to create an expanded and vibrant town centre surrounded by prosperous and sustainable communities where people will choose to live, work and invest”. The Masterplan pledged to accommodate those existing residents who wished to stay. It combined new improved and more mixed tenure homes and new and improved and more mixed building uses generally, with some pledges on better services.

Funding

Public sector sources of capital and revenue funding. Are these secured?

The overall cost of the project is £1.7billion. The Council is committed to meeting the revenue costs of running the project over its anticipated lifetime. English Partnerships is meeting capital costs for environmental improvements. The cost of council staff working on the regeneration project is being met from NRF funding, and from the HRA for those working on the decanting. There are discussions about meeting the project running costs from mainstream funds, but no agreement has yet been reached.

Canning Town has been described as a “funding cocktail” with different pots of money for different aspects to date:

- Money from SSCF is being used to address liveability issues – this provides not only revenue but capital funding for investment in CT.
- The CT project team is 14 people altogether. The costs of much of this team is being met by NRF funding, but there are “discussions on mainstreaming” – but nothing has been agreed as yet.
- The part of the CT team that works on decants is funding from the HRA [Housing Revenue Account]
- The HRA has also met the costs of decanting tenants (amounting to around £8k per unit)
- The CPO and demolitions costs were originally met through the Housing Capital Programme. Increasingly grants from Thames Gateway are meeting the costs of site assembly instead. Currently Countryside are forward funding the demolitions for the next phase, with their costs guaranteed by the council should the project not go ahead.

With regard to **overage and sharing future rises in value**, there is no standard arrangement. For the ECF [English Cities Fund] deal on the Town Centre, there is a simple 50/50 split of future rises in value. The current Countryside deal is based on “guaranteed development value”. So there is no standard overage arrangement. In Ferrier Point Newham are currently selling off flats which is bringing in around £8m.

Challenges to Developers

Integrated mixed-tenure (“tenure-blind”) development was a distinctive aspect of the project and initial design briefs. Newham note that at the expression of interest stage, ‘a surprising number of developers did not meet this requirement and were disqualified’.

Resident involvement and Consultations

Some professionals feel that the voluntary and community sector is not strong or engaged in the area. Community Links is a large, long-established local charity based in and running projects across Canning Town and the wider east London area. It has projects for young people (care schemes, education) and for adults (eg training). There is a youth house on the estate, a youth club at St. Luke’s church and a youth worker twice a week at Keir Hardie church. There are also various community activities based at Keir Hardie church.

There are residents groups, some of whom are involved in the steering group and project liaison for the PFI. The PFI has a formal structure for resident involvement through a board which includes representatives from Tenants and Residents Associations. The Canning Town regeneration office also opens to the public once a week in order to allow residents to inspect the plans and models, ask questions and make comments on the developments. However it is felt that not all groups are equally engaged by the current

consultation arrangements – in particular, some informants commented on the low participation of black residents.

Two community workers commented that many residents did not take an active part in consultations.

“There are neighbourhood meetings every couple of months, the council tries hard but there is a lot of mistrust which comes across as moaning and defensiveness. People have felt unconsulted about what they want. Most of the residents said they wanted more resources but feel that that has been seen as regeneration by the council in the form of new houses which wasn’t what people wanted. Most people feel ignored by the regeneration and they don’t trust what is happening.”

“It seems to be mostly the older white residents who attend [community meetings]. Other minority groups here appear to be grateful and accept things as they are and give thanks”

“isolation is so entrenched that it will take a long time to get people to come out and attend community activities.”

With the new masterplanning the council has been looking at new ways of engaging and working with tenants which council members have approved. A number of one to one interviews with residents have been conducted along with public presentations and displays. In the past there was a single Steering Group – ‘but this could be problematic and dominated by a small number of tenants.’ Additionally, given the large area and phased development, the concerns of different resident groups may not be aligned over time. The new consultation approach is based on a Charter, working on the basis of the seven [development] areas. It’s intended to be a more “positive” way of working, employing a “mix of consultation tools” rather than being “too reliant on a steering group”.

Monitoring

The DP has drafted a comprehensive set of small area indicators which draw upon administrative sources and surveys including the borough quality of life study. The final set of indicators has not yet been finalised. There is both a dedicated locally-based researcher working on Canning Town and strong borough-wide resources for data analysis. For example, the council has a sophisticated longitudinal study already in place for the past four years, modelled in part on the British Household Panel Study.

Commentary from Evaluation Team:

Theory of Change

The Canning Town plans are some of the most transformational of all the DPs. They recognise that the area and/or residents need to see additional change than what has occurred so far, particularly because previous initiatives have left gaps. The strength of the market for development in east London provides a great opportunity to achieve change through private sector investment and market forces, but the current make up of the stock inhibits blocks the realisation of that potential. Local authority documents specify intended tenure mix, and certainly reflect the existence of a 'neighbourhood effects' theory, but large scale demolition to achieve tenure mix is not just an end in itself, but a means to open up the area to private investment, and to secure improvements to the worst quality social housing stock, bringing it up to Decent Homes standard. There are links here between housing improvements and other intended outcomes - there will be a move from housing layout and design of Radburn layouts and towers to more traditional street layout, which may make the area less prone to crime, easier to manage and more attractive and typical looking.

There also appears to be a 'retail magnet' theory: demolition and new build of some existing retail plus addition of extra office and retail will improve shopping facilities for existing residents, change the image of area and possibly attract new residents, as well as creating new jobs which might go to existing residents. Provision of a mainstream supermarket will improve shopping facilities for existing residents and change the image of the area; and make it more attractive to current and potential residents. One of the clear risks, however, given the strength of the market in the wider area, is that land values will rise exponentially, resulting in a potentially polarised community, and few opportunities for local people or their children to stay in the area. Intermediate tenures are certainly one mechanism by which affordability concerns can be addressed.

Key Research Questions

Remedies:

- To what extent are measures developed to benefit existing residents, particularly to tackle worklessness?
- Are mechanisms put in place to protect affordability?

Change processes:

- Does the area become less ethnically diverse as it becomes more socially mixed?
- How are income mixes, ethnic mixes and age mixes changing?
- To what extent is this due to changes in housing supply, tenure mix or price and rent levels?
- What additional 'housing policy' population turnover has there been in addition to 'natural' population turnover?
- What is the relationship between changed income mixes and ethnic mixes overall, changes in youth population and changes in local school rolls?

- Does the improved and newly built housing trigger a greater uplift in house prices or demand than would otherwise occur?
- Are private sector housing and business rents increasing in line with house prices?

Outcomes:

- What are the impacts of rising housing values and improved conditions and any population changes occurring from them on social cohesion (between and within ethnic and income groups)?
- Are lower income residents or their children able to stay in the area?
- What are the impacts of any new resident populations and any higher rents on local businesses?
- Will existing residents move into improved and new homes, use new shops and facilities and will they get jobs in them?

Process Issues

Additionally, the following were highlighted during the course of the fieldwork as being areas that could generate useful learning during the implementation of the programme:

- Understanding the relationship between changes in the housing stock and its mix and in the stock of buildings for retail and employment
- Managing long-term projects and processes
- Predicting, managing the project and ensuing benefits for some existing residents and some poorer people in context of rising land and property values

The Government Office and Thames Gateway teams have a clear interest in Canning Town. The densification and capitalisation of land assets to achieve regeneration is seen as a model to be encouraged elsewhere in London. The combination of housing and economic development is also seen as one to be emulated in the Thames Gateway. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that the Housing Board will contribute funding to the project as the priority is on new provision of affordable housing but this project includes some new – albeit replacement??. The day-to-day involvement of the GO with Canning Town as a MCI Pilot has been more limited. The regeneration activities fall in part within other general scrutiny and support relationships between the GO and the boroughs, such as Local Area Agreements.

References

