THE CANNING TOWN ESTATES REGENERATION IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE CURRENT CURRENT APPROACH TO LOCAL AUTHORITY SELF-DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN LONDON. SINCE 2022, A MULTIDISCIPLINARY DESIGN TEAM LED BY JESTICO + WHILES HAS BEEN WORKING WITH THE LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM TO DEVELOP A HIGH QUALITY, SUSTAINABLE MASTERPLAN DELIVERING UP TO 1,600 NEW HOMES, 50% OF WHICH ARE SET TO BE AFFORDABLE.





THE EXISTING ESTATES

The existing estates extend across 14 hectares and were built during the post-war reconstruction of east London, replacing a network of bomb-damaged Victorian terraces. Constructed at the same time, the busy A13 trunk road carves through the neighbourhood, separating north from south.

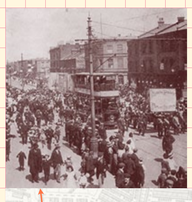
The estates, a mix of houses and stacked maisonettes, are home to 326 households. Their residents reflect the diversity of East London and Newham, with a broad range of cultural backgrounds, living arrangements, accessibility needs, and tenures.



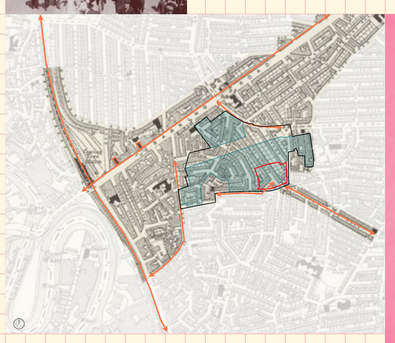
COUNCIL-LED REGENERATION

The deteriorating estate buildings had been earmarked for regeneration for over 25 years; previous attempts relied on public-private funding models, but did not progress. In 2018, the removal of the HRA borrowing cap, combined with successive GLA affordable housing programmes, gave councils new scope to self-deliver regeneration at scale.

Under new leadership, LB Newham established Affordable Homes for Newham to build on its own land and retain a long-term stake in the outcome, acting as landowner, developer, landlord and steward. Plans for Canning Town were revived, now with a commitment to deliver 50% affordable housing for local people.



Barking Road, 1915



Key
- Strategic Site boundary
- Indicative Masterplan Site boundary
- Application Site boundary
- Heritage assets
- Remaining listed buildings
- Remaining streets



Existing site

Key
- Canning Town Estates Regeneration boundary
- Wider strategic regeneration site boundar



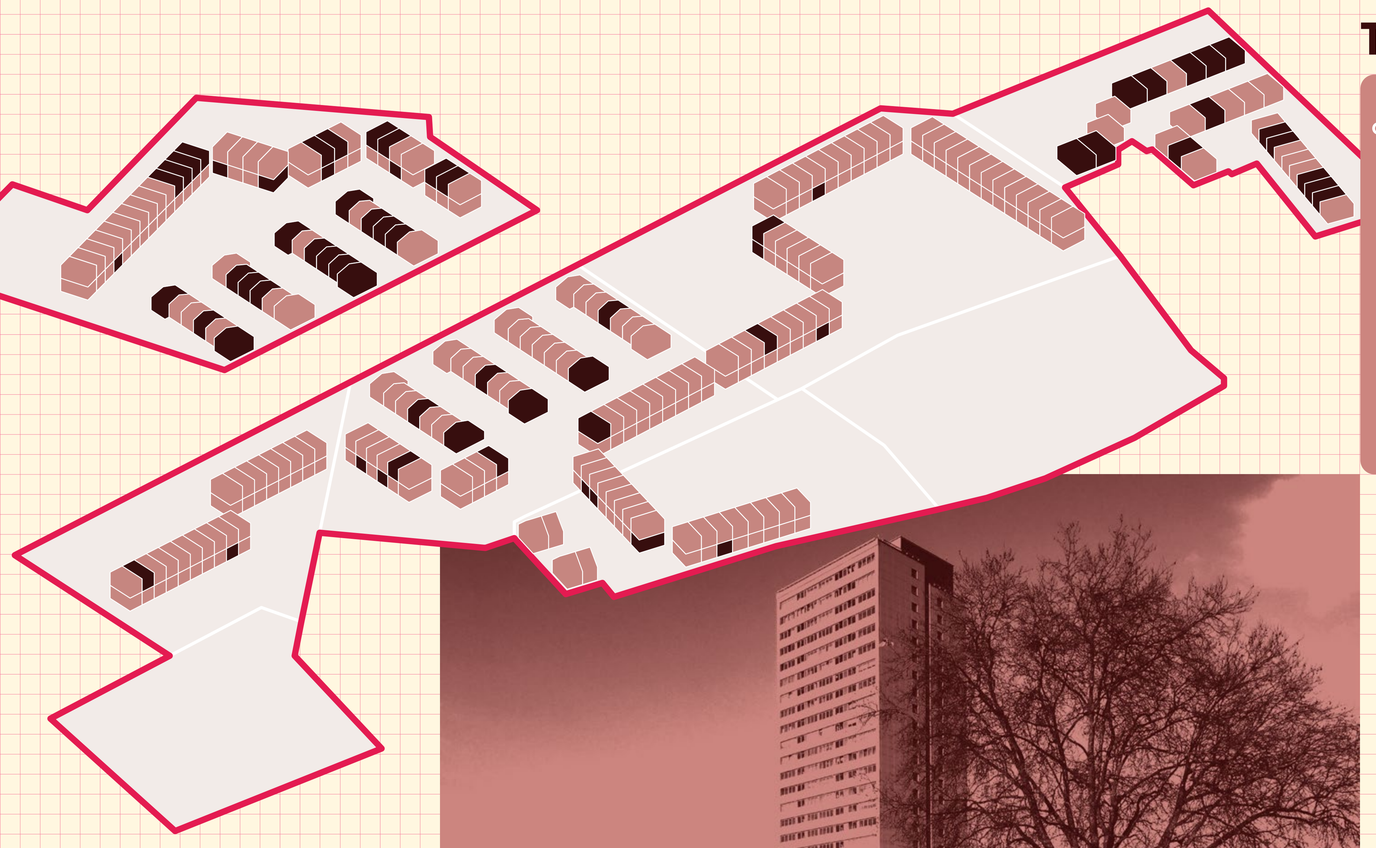


THE LEGACY OF RIGHT TO BUY

Right to Buy has fragmented ownership across the estates. With many homes passing into private hands, land assembly becomes time-consuming and costly.

In the east of the masterplan, where levels of home ownership are highest, resident opposition almost jeopardised the regeneration. The decision was taken to exclude these buildings from redevelopment, representing the loss of 150 new homes.

The government has proposed a 35-year Right to Buy exemption, but this applies only to newly built social homes. Does this go far enough, when holdouts can halt progress? Could a targeted acquisition power help councils consolidate ownership earlier and streamline regeneration?



TYPE OF TENURE

162
COUNCIL-OWNED HOMES

64
PRIVATELY OWNED RIGHT TO BUY HOMES

THE VIENNA & COPENHAGEN MODELS

Vienna owns or influences around 60% of its housing. Its land fund, **wohnfonds_wien**, acquires sites ahead of demand and releases them below market value through quality-based tendering. Rents in the limited-profit sector are cost-based, not market-linked.

Denmark's **almene boliger** sector houses around a fifth of the population. The National Building Fund is self-financing; maturing mortgage paymentson older stock are recycled into new development and renovation. Tenants elect the boards that govern their estates.

Neither system asks an individual project to cross-subsidise its own affordable housing from market sale. Which parts of this are transferable, and which depend on institutions England does not have?