**FAQ Public Realm Framework & Design Guides**

**What is the Public Realm Framework?**

The Royal Docks Public Realm Framework sets out the overarching narrative and design personality for the Royal Docks open spaces, supporting the delivery of a coherent design character for the area and its connections to wider Newham and London, and overcoming physical and perceived barriers.

You can find more information on the Royal Docks website [here](https://www.royaldocks.london/articles/turning-infrastructure-into-city-introducing-our-public-realm-programme) and read the full document [here](https://www.royaldocks.london/media/200305-Royal-Docks-Public-Realm-Framework-lowres.pdf).

**What does the Public Realm in the Royal Docks include?**

Public Realm in the Royal Docks refers to all the external spaces around the Royal Docks that are publicly accessible. Public Realm is made up of the everyday spaces - big and small - used by people to socialise, play, work, shop, get around, exercise. This includes roads, streets, parks, paths, cycleways, squares, green spaces, bridges and importantly to the Royal Docks, the water.

**What are the Design Guides, what is their purpose, and who are they for?**

The Royal Docks Design Guides will be used as reference documents detailing specific design approaches and interventions to enhance the area, making it feel a welcoming and distinctive place. The design guides will include information on the suggested locations of wayfinding, lighting and landscaping interventions and provide details of the types of interventions, such as the type of signage; temporary, landmark.

The Design Guides can be used by everyone working within the public realm, including; the Royal Docks Team for all future public realm works. Developers and landowners to guide the approach to design and layout of the boundaries of their sites to link into the wider public realm, and community groups/organisations and businesses, in the development of new community spaces/gardens.

**Are the Design Guides a statutory planning document?**

The Design Guides are not a statutory planning document, nevertheless they set out guidance to developers and developers will be encouraged to take on the principles within the Design Guides where possible.

**What is an example of how community input changes or creates something in the Design Guides?**

During the first phase of engagement for the Design Guides, communities were asked about their local environments and how these can be improved or changed. We were told there was a need for a Cycle lane around dock edge, with distance markers to aid dock edge users. The idea of distance markers around Royal Victoria Dock has now been incorporated into the Wayfinding Design Guide, this will support exercise and encourage active lifestyles through using the distance markers for running, walking and cycling.

A second example is the strong desire for more colour to be seen around the docks, as its thought of being a very grey place dominated by concrete. This has fed into all three of the Design guides to help lift and brighten the Royal Docks and will be used to enhance signage, lighting and landscaping across the area.

**How will my input help shape and improve the accessibility and safety of the Royal Docks?**

The feedback from the consultation sessions will support the development of the Royal Docks Design Guides. The Design Guides will help to shape the character of the Royal Docks with specific details on wayfinding, lighting and landscaping types. The Design Guides will be a reference for the implementation of future public realm works in the area.

The feedback will also help to identify where the interventions are needed and will inform a Cycling & Walking Action Plan to improve specific local connections in the next years.

An accessibility and inclusive design expert will support the work, so that community feedback around those themes can be effectively incorporated and to ensure the Design Guides are in line with the highest industry standards around Inclusion and Accessibility.

**The development and public realm improvement works around the Royal Docks seem to be moving at a real pace. When and how will the community be able to input into the plans?**

The Royal Docks Public Realm Framework, produced in 2019, has identified six focus areas for improvement and the fundamental principles to guide future public realm projects.

The designs in the Public Realm Framework are concept designs only, and there will be opportunities to feed into future projects as they are developed.

Design proposals and implementation of works for these areas will take place over several years, and the community will have the opportunity to inform on the proposals as they are developed. However, some works are progressing faster than others, and this is because they’re enabling works which are less transformative and require less community input. Enabling works need to be done first to pave the way for more creative transformative interventions.

A project-specific engagement plan will be developed on a case by case basis as projects are established. Levels of involvement will vary and will range from information sessions, review of design options, co-design opportunities and community-led projects.

An indicative timeline is provided on the Royal Docks website, covering delivery until 2021-22.

The development of the Royal Docks Design Guides is the first step to set the design standards for future projects. Over the summer, we will be holding additional focus groups to shape the details of the design palettes.

**Do the projects align with the aims and objectives of the Mayors Community Wealth Building initiative?**

Newham Council's [Community Wealth Building Strategy](https://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/536/communitywealthbuilding) was launched by Newham Mayor, Rokhsana Fiaz in January 2020. It demonstrates Newham's commitment to pursuing economic, social and environmental justice so that long-term prosperity, wellbeing and fairness for all Newham residents may be achieved, and its response to the Climate Emergency is progressed.

The Public Realm Framework priorities and critical areas of work are informed by the Community Wealth Building Strategy, as well as other key strategies. In light of this, we are working with Newham Council colleagues, communities and other stakeholders and partners to establish a joint vision to create a well-connected, well designed and accessible place for residents, businesses and visitors.

As part of this process, we are developing a community engagement programme to ensure that local communities can make a meaningful and sustained contribution to the development of the Royal Docks Public Realm. This will ensure that the needs and aspirations of local communities inform our approach, helping create greater equality in access to public spaces, and ensuring site-specific interventions support the economic and social ambitions of the Royal Docks Enterprise Zone Delivery Plan.

**How are stakeholders and landowners being involved in the process of developing the Public Realm Framework and the Design Guides?**

The Public Realm Framework was informed by the public engagement programme held by the Royal Docks Team between July and October 2019. This included events and conversations with local communities, businesses and landowners. In addition to [number?] pop-up events across the area and four thematic workshops, two sessions specifically dedicated to businesses and landowners were held.

The Royal Docks Team have hosted several information sessions and workshops with stakeholders, landowners and businesses across the area, to get their input on wayfinding, lighting and landscaping strategies.

Over the summer, we'll be holding additional focus groups to shape the details of the design palettes.

**How does the Public Realm Framework link to the Transport strategy?**

The Public Realm Strategy is closely connected to transport and connectivity through design and environment. The Royal Docks Team are investing in transport infrastructure to improve and create new walking and cycling routes as well as the upgrades of DLR stations. These upgrades will have close interfaces with public realm and open spaces to create an identity for the area and an integrated approach for delivery; taking into account surroundings and ensuring that transport infrastructure does not become a barrier or feel disconnected. Areas around stations and thoroughfares will be key to linking together both strategies and this will be aided through feedback and input from a variety of stakeholders including LB Newham, local businesses and residents and community groups.

**What areas in the Royal Docks are you developing and engaging on? What are the geographical boundaries at a street and neighbourhood level?**

The project boundary includes all the areas and neighbourhoods immediately surrounding the Royal Docks Enterprise Zone. It will also look at improving connections beyond these immediate areas when appropriate, as [highlighted in the Public Realm Framework](https://royaldocks.london/media/opportunity/200305-Royal-Docks-Public-Realm-Framework-lowres.pdf#page=8).

**Are there targets for sustainability, biodiversity and air quality?**

The Design Guides do not set out specific targets on sustainability, biodiversity and air quality, however, the principles aim to align with these policies in order to set standards across the area and with stakeholders. Two of the key principles in the Landscape Design Guide are to create a greener and bluer Royal Docks that stitches together a network of green spaces, waterways and suds features, creating a circular system for movement, growing food, flood management, ecology and recreation, and a long term landscape with a consideration for maintenance and the impacts it has on climate change. The Public Realm Framework is informed by crucial City Hall and Newham policies and strategic documents, including biodiversity. Included in this is Newham Council's [Community Wealth Building Strategy](https://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/536/communitywealthbuilding) which has a particular focus on addressing the Climate Emergency.

Multiple aspects of the Design Guides support and enable active travel. The Landscape design guide will address sustainability and support biodiversity, especially by choosing suitable planting to link to the landscape character areas, and by incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems and green corridors into the landscape. The Royal Docks Tree Planting Programme 2020-21 will further help to support biodiversity, with a range of tree species to create new habitats. Implementation of Public Realm projects, particularly greening initiatives (see below) will integrate public education and community action on sustainability, ecology and biodiversity which will be developed and delivered with communities, including by involving young people and schools.

**Will there be opportunities for community growing areas and for communities to get involved in greening projects?**

There will be various opportunities for the community to get involved in greening projects within the public realm programme, for example in the Tree Planting Programme 2020-21 and the Royal Victoria Dock floating gardens.

We are open to reviewing additional community proposals around greening and growing spaces where suitable.