

The changing face of London

From Brent Cross to Barking Riverside, new town centres are popping up, bringing thousands of homes, new high streets and facilities. But is the capital building enough, asks **Anna White**

More than a quarter of a million new homes are in the pipeline for London, but experts say a shortage of builders and planners could hamper the speed of delivery as the housing affordability crisis continues to rage.

A new study reveals that the micro towns and regeneration schemes emerging from the planning system, or in early stages of construction, have the potential to deliver 265,000 new homes – the equivalent of eight years of construction, according to consultancy JLL.

The research, designed to identify looming and significant change to London's streets, pinpoints the capital's largest redevelopments, which have more than 1,000 units left to start.

However, the data shows that more than half of these homes are being built in just five out of 32 boroughs, rather than bringing much-needed housing stock more evenly across the capital. In addition, 48 per cent of the homes are yet to emerge from the planning stages, meaning huge uncertainty hangs over existing residents in these areas and more widely over London's tenants and

wannabe first-time buyers desperate to get on the property ladder.

"Looking at the total pipeline, the picture looks relatively healthy. The difficulty is the amount of time it will take for these sites to get through planning and to completion," says Marcus Dixon, from JLL. "The reality is there are not enough builders or planners so the fundamental undersupply will continue," he adds.

This new data follows last month's Budget, in which the Chancellor did not address the shortage of appropriately priced properties in the UK.

IS A NEW MICRO TOWN COMING TO YOUR BOROUGH?

Of the 265,000 homes, most will be in east London where there is more post-industrial, disused space, meaning land is cheaper. Newham comes out top with 35,670 units expected, followed by Tower Hamlets (29,263) and Barking and Dagenham (20,263). Residents of Richmond-upon-Thames, on the other hand, will see only 1,085 new homes in their leafy borough.

The report also highlights the 15 largest projects. These micro towns are the real game changers set to bring more than 3,000 homes along with new high

streets, leisure and sports facilities and new schools.

They include Barking Riverside (10,800 homes to be delivered in total, with 5,400 left to build), Canada Water (3,995 in total, 2,595 to come) and Convoys Wharf in Deptford (3,500 in total, 2,975 to build).

The most central scheme is the long-awaited Earls Court redevelopment. The 40-acre site has lain derelict since the exhibition centre closed in 2014. Ownership changed hands several times over controversial plans to demolish West Kensington and Gibbs Green housing estates.

These plans have been ditched and a new masterplan published in February comprises 4,500 new homes, 35 per cent of which will be affordable, built around a central park.

Progress: main image, Brent Cross Town. Above, Gus and Inez of Gussy's Ice Cream Parlour, Clarendon Park. Above right, the London Overground at Barking Riverside

A NEW 'PARK TOWN' IN ZONE 3

Argent, the developer behind the reimagining of King's Cross, has broken ground on its latest project, an £8 billion new park town over 180 acres in north London. Brent Cross Town will comprise 50 acres of parkland, 3 million sq ft of office space, 6,700 new homes, a new primary school and a high street. "The aim is to create a human city where residents, workers and visitors make micro connections every day," says Tom Goodall, partner at Argent.

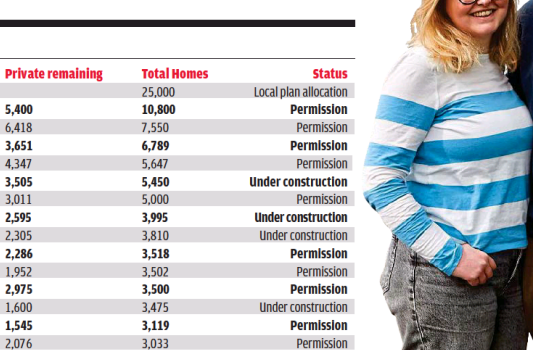
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Progress: main image, Brent Cross Town. Above, Gus and Inez of Gussy's Ice Cream Parlour, Clarendon Park. Above right, the London Overground at Barking Riverside

Here, amenities go up first to stitch the new neighbourhood into the existing one. In front of the vast construction site are two play parks. One is already planted with a pond and wooden playground. The other is temporary. After nursery, children run to the race track etched into the concrete for remote-controlled cars against a backdrop of construction.

There is also a precinct with a bakery (Karma Bread Bakehouse) and a coffee shop, Cricklewood Coffee Roasters, run by locals James and Laura Colbourne.



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TOP 15 NEW MICRO TOWNS ACROSS LONDON

Details	Developer	Location	Private remaining	Total Homes	Status
Old Oak and Park Royal	OPDC	Hammersmith and Fulham/Ealing		25,000	Local plan allocation
Barking Riverside	L&Q	Barking and Dagenham	5,400	10,800	Permission
Brent Cross Town	Argent Related	Barnet	6,418	7,550	Permission
Greenwich Peninsula	Knight Dragon Developments	Greenwich	3,651	6,789	Permission
Earls Court Hammersmith	Earls Court Development Company	Hammersmith and Fulham	4,347	5,647	Permission
Grand Union	Berkeley St George	Brent	3,505	5,450	Under construction
Thameside West (Carlsberg Tetley + Thames Wharf)	Keystone Company/Keystone London	Newham	3,011	5,000	Permission
British Land Canada Water – Parent Consent + Phase 1 – The Founding	British Land	Southwark	2,595	3,995	Under construction
Twelve Trees Park	Berkeley Homes Capital	Newham	2,305	3,810	Under construction
New Bermondsey (Surrey Canal Triangle)	Renewal	Lewisham	2,286	3,518	Permission
Dagenham Green (Ford Stamping + Tooling Plant)	Peabody	Barking and Dagenham	1,952	3,502	Permission
Convoys Wharf – Parent Consent	Hutchison Property Group	Lewisham	2,975	3,500	Permission
The Green Quarter – Parent Consent (Southall Waterside)	Berkeley Homes West Thames	Ealing	1,600	3,475	Under construction
Beam Park – Phases B/C/D/E/F/G	Countryside/L&Q	Barking and Dagenham	1,545	3,119	Permission
Silvertown Quays	Lendlease	Newham	2,076	3,033	Permission



Breaking bread: above
Tami Isaac
Pearce at Karma
Bakehouse in
Brent Cross Town

We have been too focused on building for investors and not for normal buyers and tenants

JULIE MURPHY, JOHN STURROCK

Community sport is key, according to Goodall, with a 110,000 sq ft indoor leisure facility on the way. The first set of homes will be ready to move into early next year, with prices from £400,000. The first phase of housing will include 1,000 homes, of which 20 per cent will be classified as 'affordable'. Outline planning for the scheme requires a threshold of only 15 per cent (signed off by Barnet council). This flouts Sadiq Khan's London-wide target of 35 per cent affordable housing at new schemes. The Mayor's office wants the Government to overturn "national loopholes"

that allow developers to lessen their affordable homes contribution if they build infrastructure, such as schools or transport improvements.

WAR OVER HISTORIC NAVAL SITE IN DEPTFORD

Deptford Dockyard is a site of historic significance. Founded by Henry VIII in 1513, by the 1770s it had become the fourth largest of the royal dockyards in Britain manufacturing wooden warships. In 1869 the dockyard closed.

In 2015 outline planning permission was granted for a new waterfront village by then mayor Boris Johnson to the Hong Kong developer Hutchison. The 41-acre Convoys Wharf along 550 metres of river frontage will bring 3,500 new homes, 2,000 full-time jobs and a new two-form entry primary school to Deptford, according to the developers.

But plans have met with resistance from locals, despite token efforts to engage with the community through initiatives such as naming the new streets and buildings.

"There is too much luxury housing, not enough affordable homes and not enough is being made of the history of the dockyard," one local tells H&P. She is also concerned about lorries cutting down the quiet residential streets and a lack of emphasis on biodiversity.

The most vocal community group, Voice4Deptford, has created its own heritage-led plan with a new Centre for Innovation, Education and Research. Among other things, this facility would research methods of greener construction. A spokesman for Hutchison says the council has approved a new culture strategy and says it has a heritage team working with Lewisham Council, too.



Future vision: an aerial rendering of the Barking Riverside development

Currently only 15 per cent of the homes delivered at Convoys Wharf would be affordable and even this is under negotiation.

COMMUTER VILLAGE LINKS BARKING TO 40,000 JOBS

In comparison, half of the homes at Barking Riverside have been designated as affordable. This is one of Europe's largest brownfield regeneration projects, which will see a disused power station transformed into a Thameside town, delivering 10,000 homes for 30,000 people. The 443-acre district runs along 2km of the river. Four schools have already been built, there's a new pier for a water bus and a new Overground station. This should open up 40,000 new jobs within a 45-minute commute, according to L&Q.

The housing association-cum-developer is in partnership with the Mayor of London and has just allocated another 167 homes as affordable.

LIVING IN AN AREA OF CHANGE

TIERNEY SMITH IN DEPTFORD



MATT WRITTLE

Communications specialist Tierney Smith has lived in Deptford for five years and loves her neighbourhood. She describes it as warm and friendly. "It is full of people who have lived here for decades, which feels rare for London," Tierney says.

She spends most of her time locally, walking her dog and favourite haunts include the Waiting Room (a vegan cafe) and Shark & Swim (a fish restaurant). But she also sees the

friction that change can cause in the area, where gentrification has seen the old railway arches and food market repurposed. "A lot more of my friends come to Deptford. It's vibrant and busy. But it's sad to see local businesses forced to close as upmarket chains take over."

Tierney is in the process of selling her one-bedroom flat in Deptford to relocate further out of London, through Mr & Mrs Clarke.

regeneration given the potential growth premium available," says Julien Mills, director at CBRE.

But are price rises the best measure of success? "Too often big housing projects are judged retrospectively by metrics set for us by marketers," says Sian Berry, former leader of the Green Party and member of the London Assembly.

"For example, we associate King's Cross with public realm — tourists and children can now dip their feet in the canal," she explains. Battersea Power Station has been praised for the restoration of the crumbling structure, and Brent Cross Town will be assessed on outside space, having branded itself a "new park town".

But there are other vital metrics, such as healthcare provision, a reduction in crime rates and how existing social housing residents are rehoused and consulted with, Berry continues.

For Paula Higgins, chief executive of HomeOwners Alliance, affordability is key to these new town centres. "Otherwise, they become daytime hubs," she explains. "People travel to Westfield or the O2 for the day and go home again but they can't afford to live in the new [mixed use] scheme, so surrounding local businesses don't benefit."

However, hurriedly throwing up row-upon-row of poor-quality housing is not the answer either. Badly conceived and poorly maintained housing estates associated with anti-social behaviour and dangerous cladding are testament to that.

"We have been too focused on building for investors and not for normal buyers and tenants," Higgins says. She wants to see quality homes at a variety of prices, including affordable rent, for Londoners to live in.

Prices for a two-bedroom, shared ownership home start at £86,250 for a 25 per cent share and £425,000 for a three-bedroom maisonette at normal market rate.

IS CHANGE ALWAYS GOOD?

Research by CBRE found that the price of residential property within a 10-minute walk of one of the major regeneration sites rose 2.2 per cent each year from the beginning of a project. For the terraced cottages that sit on the edge of the Brent Cross Town construction site, this means an uplift of more than 30 per cent over the course of the redevelopment.

The report analysed 11 major projects and reveals that homeowners near Canary Wharf saw an increase in their property price of £454,000 versus a rise of £296,000 across the borough of Tower Hamlets.

"Buyers looking to enter the London market or to relocate would benefit from considering these key zones or areas which are earmarked for future



JULIE MURPHY

It's all in the beans: Cricklewood Coffee Roasters' Laura and James Colbourne