

MAYOR OF LONDON



THE LONDON PLAN

**THE SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR LONDON
CONSOLIDATED WITH ALTERATIONS SINCE 2011**

MARCH 2015

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CONSOLIDATED WITH ALTERATIONS SINCE 2011**

THE LONDON PLAN 2011 CONSOLIDATED WITH:

- **REVISED EARLY MINOR ALTERATIONS TO THE LONDON PLAN**

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 2013

- **FURTHER ALTERATIONS TO THE LONDON PLAN**

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OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

- 0.1 This introduction explains the status of the London Plan, what it covers and the process it went through before it has been formally published.

What is the London Plan?

- 0.2 Strategic planning in London is the shared responsibility of the Mayor of London, 32 London boroughs and the Corporation of the City of London. Under the legislation establishing the Greater London Authority (GLA), the Mayor has to produce a spatial development strategy (SDS) – which has become known as ‘the London Plan’ – and to keep it under review. Boroughs’ local development documents have to be ‘in general conformity’ with the London Plan, which is also legally part of the development plan that has to be taken into account when planning decisions are taken in any part of London unless there are planning reasons why it should not.
- 0.2A The Localism Act 2011 empowers communities to prepare neighbourhood plans for their area. In London, these plans are also required to be in general conformity with the policies in the London Plan. The Mayor intends this document to be a useful resource for those preparing neighbourhood plans, and is preparing guidance on how it can be used for this purpose.
- 0.3 The general objectives for the London Plan, and the process for drawing it up, altering and replacing it, are currently set out in the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended) and supporting detailed regulations.

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 document that brings together the geographic and locational (although not site specific) aspects of the Mayor’s other strategies – including those dealing with:
 - o Transport
 - o Economic Development
 - o Housing
 - o Culture
 - o a range of social issues such as children and young people, health inequalities and food
 - o a range of environmental issues such as climate change (adaptation and mitigation), air quality, noise and waste
- the framework for the development and use of land in London, linking in improvements to infrastructure (especially transport); setting out proposals for implementation, coordination and resourcing; and helping to ensure joined-up policy delivery by the GLA Group of organisations (including Transport for London)
- the strategic, London-wide policy context within which boroughs should set their detailed local planning policies
- the policy framework for the Mayor’s own decisions on the strategic planning applications

referred to him

- an essential part of achieving sustainable development, a healthy economy and a more inclusive society in London

0.4 Under the legislation setting up the GLA, the London Plan should only deal with things of strategic importance to Greater London¹. The legislation also requires that the London Plan should take account of three cross-cutting themes²:

- economic development and wealth creation
- social development; and
- improvement of the environment.

0.5 The Mayor has also had regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people, and to:

- reducing health inequality and promoting Londoners' health
- climate change and the consequences of climate change
- achieving sustainable development in the United Kingdom
- the desirability of promoting and encouraging use of the Thames, particularly for passenger and freight transportation
- the need to ensure consistency between the strategies prepared by the Mayor
- the need to ensure consistency with national policies and international treaty obligations notified to the Mayor by Government, and

- the resources available to implement the Mayor's strategies.

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the GLA also has to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder.

0.6 In drawing up the new London Plan, the Mayor has also had regard to relevant European Union legislation and policy instruments like the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)³.

0.7 The Mayor is legally required to keep the London Plan under review⁴. Government guidance also sets out the procedure to be followed when he decides that the Plan should be amended (or 'altered' under planning law), or when he decides there should be a completely new (or 'replacement') Plan.

Previous versions of the London Plan

0.8 The first London Plan was published in 2004. Subsequently, two sets of alterations were made to it, and an updated version, bringing these alterations together, was published in February 2008.

0.9 London elected a new Mayor in May 2008. Shortly after his election, he consulted on 'Planning for a Better London' (July 2008), which outlined his intended approach to planning.

0.10 The Mayor also believed that it was very important to set a clear spatial

1 Greater London Authority Act 1999, section 334(5)

2 Greater London Authority Act 1999, section 30

3 The ESDP sets out a framework of planning policies to operate across the EU, in particular implementing the principles of sustainable development and balanced urban systems

4 Greater London Authority Act 1999, section 339(1)

framework reflecting his policies and priorities as early as possible.

- 0.11 On its formal publication, the July 2011 London Plan replaced the version (consolidated with alterations since 2004) published in February 2008.
- 0.12 London planning does not stop with publication of a new London Plan. As explained later, the assumptions on which Plan policies are based, and the effectiveness of those policies, have been monitored – this process has helped inform the alterations made to the Plan since 2011. As circumstances change (a major change to the economy, for example), the Plan will be altered or, if necessary, replaced. This approach is known as ‘plan, monitor and manage’ and is explained in more detail in Chapter 8.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 0.13 In March 2012, the Government published its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This document replaces the Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Statements issued since 1991. It provides guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications.
- 0.14 The Mayor carefully considered the extent to which the policies in this Plan are consistent with those in the NPPF. On the basis of this review, he is satisfied that the Plan reflected the intent of the Framework, and in particular the presumption in favour

of sustainable development, and that the detailed policies in the two documents are consistent with each other. Given this consistency, he considers that the London Plan can be seen as the expression of national policy for London, tailored to meet local circumstances and to respond to the opportunities to achieve sustainable development here. These views informed the early alterations referred to in paragraph 0.16B, and they were upheld through their associated engagement and formal testing processes.

- 0.15 The Mayor will consider publishing supplementary guidance about the application of the policies in this Plan in the light of the relationship between the London Plan and the NPPF, in conjunction with the Government and London stakeholders.

Alterations to the London Plan since 2011

- 0.16A Two sets of alterations have been made to the 2011 London Plan to ensure it is as up-to-date as possible, in particular regarding references to Government guidance and national legislation enacted since July 2011.
- 0.16B Revised early minor alterations (REMA) were made to the Plan to ensure it reflected the NPPF and the Government’s approach to affordable housing. These were formally published on 11 October 2013⁵.
- 0.16C Draft further alterations to the London Plan (FALP) were published for public

5 Mayor of London. The London Plan. Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. Revised Early Minor Alterations. Consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework. GLA, 2013

consultation in January 2014 to reflect Mayoral priorities set out in his *2020 Vision: The Greatest City on Earth – Ambitions for London*⁶, particularly the need to plan for the housing and economic capacity, needed for London's sustainable development against the background of the growth trends revealed by the 2011 Census. These alterations were considered at an Examination in Public held in September 2014.

The London Plan (consolidated with alterations since 2011)

0.16D This document, published in March 2015, is consolidated with all the alterations to the London Plan since 2011. It is the policies in this document (and any subsequent Alterations to it) that form part of the development plan for Greater London, and which should be taken into account in taking relevant planning decisions, such as determining planning applications.

0.16E The London Plan (consolidated with alterations since 2011) sets out policies and explanatory supporting material (or what the planning system calls 'reasoned justification'). These take account of:

- the legal requirements set out in paragraphs 0.2–0.7 above and the various issues that European and national legislation requires to be considered
- other requirements of planning law and Government planning policy and guidance

- Integrated Impact and Habitats Regulations Assessments (see below)
- comments received during the consultation and engagement process the recommendations of the Panel that conducted the Examination in Public.

0.16F The London Plan now takes the year 2036 as its formal end date (the 2011 version of the London Plan looked forward to 2031). This date has been chosen both because Government advice suggests a twenty year planning period should be used, and because the Mayor believes a longer-term view of London's development should be taken to inform decision-making, development and investment.

0.16G Revisions consolidated in this Plan have been driven partly by the realisation that the population of London has grown much faster than was anticipated in the 2011 London Plan. However, the extent to which this unexpected level of growth is structural or cyclical is unknown as is the ability of the Plan's existing strategies and philosophy to successfully accommodate the envisaged level of growth. In light of this a full review of the Plan will commence in 2015.

0.16H In the interim, as a result of changes proposed in the Government's Housing Standards Review, the Mayor will bring forward additional alterations to the London Plan in early 2015 to reflect Government housing standards. He will also give active consideration to addressing changes to national policy on car parking should Government bring these forward. The Mayor recognises the flexible approach in the National

⁶ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020_vision_web.pdf

Planning Policy Framework on parking standards, and the abolition of maximum parking standards in national policy. National planning guidance published in 2014 also recommends that planning policies should consider how parking provision can be enhanced to encourage the vitality of town centres. Whilst the Mayor considers that there are sound reasons for retaining residential parking standards in core and inner London, he recognises the opportunity to adopt a more flexible approach in parts of outer London, especially where public transport accessibility levels are lower. He therefore intends to bring forward an early review of parking standards in Outer London in advance of the general review of the Plan. In doing so he will give active consideration to any changes to national policy on car parking should Government bring these forward.

Integrated Impact Assessment

0.17 The development of this plan and the alterations made to it have been subject to full Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs). The IIA approach addresses all of the Mayor's legal duties to carry out comprehensive assessments of the plan and its proposed policies within one integrated process. The IIAs covered the legal requirements to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (including a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).

0.18 The IIAs also included Health Impact Assessments (HIA) and Equalities Impact Assessments (EqIA) to meet

the Mayor's duties under the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended) and equal opportunities legislation – see paragraphs 0.4-5. Finally, the IIAs covered relevant aspects of a Community Safety Impact Assessment (CSI/A) to ensure that the statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and the newly enacted Police and Justice Act 2006 are also met.

0.19 The IIAs⁷ and the Habitats Regulation Assessments have helped shape the preparation of the London Plan and of the alterations made to it since 2011, ensuring a wide range of sustainability issues and the importance of protecting specific habitats were taken into account at each stage of the process.

The structure of this document

0.20 The Mayor intended that the new London Plan should be different from the previous version – shorter, more clearly strategic and user-friendly, and arranged in topic-based chapters intended to make policies on particular issues easier to find. It is arranged as follows:

- a chapter outlining the context for the Plan and its policies
- a clear spatial vision in a chapter on 'Places'
- topic-based chapters on London's:

⁷ Mayor of London. Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening. Further Alterations to the London Plan Consultation. GLA, 2013. Amec, Integrated Impact Assessment. Further Alterations to the London Plan Consultation. GLA, 2013

- o People (including housing and social infrastructure)
- o Economy
- o Response to climate change
- o Transport
- o Living places and spaces
- o Implementation, monitoring and review.

0.20A For consistency the paragraph numbering reflects that of the 2011 London Plan. Where paragraphs have been added through plan alterations, they are identified with a letter after the paragraph number, and where paragraphs have been removed that paragraph number has also been removed from the document.

- c design should encourage a level of human activity that is appropriate to the location, incorporating a mix of uses where appropriate, to maximize activity throughout the day and night, creating a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times
- d places should be designed to promote an appropriate sense of ownership over communal spaces
- e places, buildings and structures should incorporate appropriately designed security features
- f schemes should be designed to minimise on-going management and future maintenance costs of the particular safety and security measures proposed

The above measures should be incorporated at the design stage to ensure that overall design quality is not compromised.

- 7.10 Measures to design out crime should be integral to development proposals and be considered early in the design process, taking into account the principles-contained in Government guidance on 'Safer Places'²¹¹ and other guidance such as Secured by Design²¹² published by the Police. Development should reduce the opportunities for criminal and anti-social behaviour and contribute to a sense of security without being overbearing or intimidating. Places and buildings should incorporate well-designed security features as appropriate to their location and

use, which maximise the security of people and property without compromising the quality of the local environment. All spaces should have clear ownership and be managed in a way that states that the space is cared for. Future maintenance of the space or building should be considered at the design stage.

- 7.11 Buildings and spaces should be designed in a way that clearly defines whether they are public, semi-public or private, and provides opportunities for activity and passive surveillance of publicly accessible spaces from ground and lower floors of buildings. Pedestrian, cycle and vehicular routes should be well defined, and limit opportunities for concealment.
- 7.12 An integrated mix of land uses throughout a neighbourhood will add to its vitality and security but should be carefully designed to minimise conflict between incompatible activities. Day time and night time uses should be incorporated into development where appropriate to ensure that public spaces are active and overlooked.

POLICY 7.4 LOCAL CHARACTER

Strategic

- A 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. It should improve an area's visual or physical connection with natural features. In areas of poor or ill-defined character, development should build on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future

211 Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), *Safer Places: the Planning System and Crime Prevention*, Thomas Telford Ltd, April 2004 (or any subsequent replacement guidance)

212 Association of Chief Police Officers Project and Design Group, *Secure By Design*, 2004

function of the area.

Planning decisions

- B Buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high quality design response that:
- a has regard to the pattern and grain of the existing spaces and streets in orientation, scale, proportion and mass
 - b contributes to a positive relationship between the urban structure and natural landscape features, including the underlying landform and topography of an area
 - c is human in scale, ensuring buildings create a positive relationship with street level activity and people feel comfortable with their surroundings
 - d allows existing buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character of a place to influence the future character of the area
 - e is informed by the surrounding historic environment.

LDF preparation

- C Boroughs should consider the different characters of their areas to identify landscapes, buildings and places, including on the Blue Ribbon Network, where that character should be sustained, protected and enhanced through managed change. Characterisation studies can help in this process.

7.13 The social, cultural, environmental and economic relationships between people and their communities are reinforced by the physical character of a place. Based on an understanding of the character of a

place, new development should help residents and visitors understand where a place has come from, where it is now and where it is going. It should reflect the function of the place both locally and as part of a complex urban city region, and the physical, economic, environmental and social forces that have shaped it over time and are likely to influence it in the future. Local character does not necessarily recognise borough boundaries. The Mayor therefore encourages cross-borough working to ensure a consistent approach to understanding and enhancing a sense of character. The Mayor has developed supplementary guidance to help Boroughs with this work.

7.14 The physical character of a place can help reinforce a sense of meaning and civility – through the layout of buildings and streets, the natural and man-made landscape, the density of development and the mix of land uses. In some cases, the character is well preserved and clear. In others, it is undefined or compromised by unsympathetic development. Through characterisation studies, existing character can be identified and valued, and used to inform a strategy for improving the place. This should help ensure the place evolves to meet the economic and social needs of the community and enhances its relationship with the natural and built landscape. The community should be involved in setting these goals for the future of the area (Policy 7.1).

7.15 The Blue Ribbon Network has significant cultural, historic, economic and environmental value to local character. Later in this chapter a range of policies require buildings

to help ensure these buildings are delivered in ways that maximise their benefits and minimise negative impacts locally and across borough boundaries as appropriate. It is intended that Mayoral supplementary guidance on characterisation could help set the context for this. In balancing these impacts, unacceptable harm may include criteria in parts D and E of Policy 7.7. Opportunity area planning frameworks can provide a useful opportunity for carrying out such joint work.

Historic environment and landscapes

POLICY 7.8 HERITAGE ASSETS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Strategic

- A London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.
- B Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.

Planning decisions

- C Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and

incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

- D Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.
- E New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset.

LDF preparation

- F Boroughs should, in LDF policies, seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage to London's environmental quality, cultural identity and economy as part of managing London's ability to accommodate change and regeneration.
- G Boroughs, in consultation with English Heritage, Natural England and other relevant statutory organisations, should include appropriate policies in their LDFs for identifying, protecting, enhancing and improving access to the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings where appropriate, and to archaeological assets, memorials and historic and natural landscape character within their area.

