

# London planning news

JANUARY 2018



## Headline news

### Draft London Plan launch

The Draft London Plan was published on-line on 29 November 2017; its formal launch for public consultation followed on 1 December. The closing date for comments is 2 March 2018. The current timetable is for the Examination in Public to take place this autumn, with the final Plan to be published in the autumn of 2019.

Lichfields' 'Draft London Plan Insight New Policy Directions for Delivering Growth', provides a briefing and analyses the document's 500+ pages. It focuses on the potential impact and implications of some of the most ambitious policies included in the Mayor's draft Plan; significantly, the analysis looks at its themes of 'Good Growth' and the optimisation of land use, alongside an enhanced commitment to Green Belt protection, and how they translate into policies for Outer London boroughs to accommodate much of the projected growth to 2041. The Insight concludes with commentary on the draft Plan's political dimension, its introduction of zoning elements into development planning and potentially of most significance, its implications for Outer London and the Wider South East.

Parts of the draft London Plan's evidence base were published on 1 December. The

evidence base now includes the London Plan Viability Study and accompanying technical report. The 35% affordable housing threshold approach – formalised in the 2017 Affordable Housing and Viability Supplementary Planning Guidance and taken forward into the

draft Plan – has been tested on Build to Rent, student accommodation, 'shared living' and market housing, using a variety of tenures in 5 'value bands' (A to E) across London (see page 2 of the Study for a summary of conclusions, to the effect that 'some types of development are more viable than others and this varies between value bands').

Overall, the conclusion on viability is that most development types can meet the policy requirements of the draft London Plan. Interestingly, and looking into the future and towards the draft Plan's end date of 2041, the indication is that some sweeping assumptions based on Plan policy outcomes have led to the generalised viability conclusions drawn (see para. 14.2.10):

'...assumptions about future change were based on a range of commentator views and it is readily acknowledged that the forecasts used are no more than 'informed opinion'. But on the basis of the forecasts, it is clear that future changes in values and costs will strengthen viability and that this is likely to assist in delivering development that meets the policies of the plan from scheme types that may currently be marginal and/or require some form of public subsidy to achieve this.'

### Mayor's vision for London to have growing and inclusive economy

On 13 December 2017, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan launched his 200-page draft Economic Development Strategy, setting out his 'plans to grow London's economy, support businesses, boost innovation and create a city that works for all'. The closing date for comments is 13 March 2018.

Cross-referencing the Mayor of London's other draft strategies (already published or awaited), the consultation document also cites the economic policy elements of the emerging ►►

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH



'This new London Plan marks a break with previous London Plans, represents a step-change in our approach and serves as a blueprint for the future development and sustainable, inclusive growth of our city [...] Crucially, the plan also details how my housing, social, economic, cultural, environmental and transport policies tie together to achieve maximum impact.'

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan,  
introducing the new draft London Plan

## THE LICHFIELDS PERSPECTIVE

'The Mayor's draft spatial strategy for London includes bold new policy directions for delivering growth – particularly for affordable housing, designed site capacity and growth corridors based on strategic infrastructure priorities. Policy implementation will not only be dependent on development industry activity, and the cooperation of London Boroughs and Wider South East authorities, but also on more certainty of funding sources.'

Simon Slatford, Senior Director

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London Plan that are for 'creating the conditions for growth' i.e. ensuring that 'London has enough office, retail and industrial space to meet the needs of a growing economy, including affordable workspace'.

## Consultation launched on draft charging schedule for Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy 2

Approved to proceed on 12 December, a second round of consultation – this time on the draft charging schedule for the London 'Mayoral community infrastructure levy 2' (MCIL2) - was launched on 18 December 2017; the closing date for responses is 4 February 2018. Full details of MCIL1 and 2 are provided here.

The MCIL2 Draft Charging Schedule is accompanied by Supporting Information and an updated Viability Evidence Base. Boundary changes are made to the proposed charging zones and otherwise, the proposed rates remain unaltered from the first round of consultation. The Supporting Information for MCIL2 has however been amended in response to submissions on the preliminary draft Charging Schedule, to reflect concerns regarding uncertainty as to how the levy would be spent, should Crossrail 2 not proceed.

## Mayor proposes to expand Ultra-Low Emission Zone

The Mayor of London has launched a public consultation on expanding the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ). It is now being proposed that ULEZ standards would be applied London-wide to buses, coaches and lorries from 26 October 2020; they would apply to cars, vans and motorbikes (with limited exemptions) within and up to the North and South Circular roads from 25 October 2021.

The Mayor recently delivered the first phase of these pollution-cutting plans by introducing a weekday £10 Toxicity Charge (the 'T-Charge') in central London for the oldest vehicles, in addition to the £11.50 Congestion Charge ('C-Charge').

From 8 April 2019, the Mayor will introduce the second phase i.e. the ULEZ itself; this will be 17 months earlier

than planned. The ULEZ will replace the T-Charge and cover the same central area, together with and in addition to the C-Charge, but will operate 24 hours a day and throughout the year.

The consultation closes on 28 February 2018.

## Brixton's new Low Emission Bus Zone – the second in London and ten more to follow

As announced on 12 December 2017 and with immediate effect, only buses meeting 'the toughest emission standards' are now permitted within the Brixton Low Emission Bus Zone on Brixton Road.

The stretch of Brixton Road running from Brixton Hill via Stockwell Road and Streatham High Road to Streatham Place was formerly one of London's most polluted areas, exceeding hourly legal levels of nitrogen dioxide on 539 occasions in 2016 and breaching annual legal pollution limits by 5 January 2017 (under EU rules, the limit should not have been exceeded more than 18 times in a year).

The new Zone is the second of twelve Low Emission Bus Zones; the next will be on the A12 Eastern Avenue, scheduled for spring this year. The first Zone was launched on Putney High Street in March 2017; the Mayor aims for the remaining zones to be in place by 2020. They are all outside the central ULEZ and will include Stratford, Harringay and Edgware.

## New commissioners for London Sustainable Development Commission

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, appointed ten new commissioners to the London Sustainable Development Commission, on 4 December 2017. They will serve alongside the newly appointed Chair, Dr Ashok Sinha, and existing commissioners.

The Commission advises the Mayor and is 'tasked with promoting sustainability and helping to embed it into London-wide strategies as a meaningful and important concept for the capital'.

## Boris Johnson to be questioned on Garden Bridge project

On 14 December 2017, the London Assembly announced that a summons had been issued; the GLA's Oversight Committee is requiring former London Mayor Boris Johnson to appear before it on 22 February 2018, to answer questions on the failed Garden Bridge project.

The London Assembly states that this is the first time it has used its powers under the Greater London Authority Act 1999, to compel a former Mayor to appear to answer questions.

## Priorities of Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission confirmed

The priorities of the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission were confirmed on 19 December 2017 by Communities Secretary Sajid Javid and the Commission's new chair, Sir John Armitt (as announced in the Autumn Budget 2017).

The Commission will now focus on the following matters in the coming months:

- 'Sectors': 'creating internationally-competitive centres of excellence that build on the corridor's sector strengths, for example in ports and logistics, and making the most of growth sectors such as the creative industries';
- 'Connectivity': 'making the most' of planned investments such as the Lower Thames Crossing, and assessing the case for other proposed investments, such as further river crossings and extending the Elizabeth Line to Ebbsfleet;
- 'Communities': ensuring that everyone across the corridor benefits from expected growth, including 'equipping them with the right skills, making sure high-quality housing is available, promoting use of the river, and enhancing the Thames Estuary's natural environment'; and
- 'Delivery': working closely with organisations and communities, and 'aligning with the Government's intention to explore ambitious housing deals in the area'.

The Commission's final report, providing recommendations to Government, will be published this spring. ■