



NEWS

# London planning news, September 2018

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## Headline news

### **Mayor publishes draft new London Plan with minor suggested changes reflecting consultation responses**

On 13 August, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan released the 'Draft London Plan showing Minor Suggested Changes'.

The changes within the document have been prepared following a review of representations made to the Mayor in response to the draft Plan consultation that ran between 1 December 2017 and 2 March 2018.

The 'minor suggested changes' consist of corrections, clarifications and factual updates, and will help inform the Examination in Public (EiP), which is expected to begin early next year.

The changes cover a wide range of policies and supporting text within the Plan; whilst mostly minor, there are several areas where policy has been strengthened, whilst other areas appear to better reflect current market conditions.

There is now greater emphasis on inclusion and diversity within the Good Growth policies, whilst policy GG3 'Creating a healthy city' has been broadened to include mental, as well as physical health. Interestingly, there is also now a direct reference to a link between the under-delivery of homes, and the impact this has on various social, economic and environmental consequences.

Chapter 2, 'Spatial Development Patterns', now includes a table indicating the number of new homes and jobs that the designated Opportunity Areas are suggested to provide. There is greater emphasis on the historic value of places, whilst the need for town centre adaptation and diversification is now explicitly recognised.

Design guidance has been strengthened, with policy now stating that design 'should be thoroughly scrutinised by borough planning, urban design, and conservation officers'. Inclusivity is to be 'embedded into a project from initial conception through to completion' There is also a new paragraph which states that design teams should be retained throughout conditions' discharge, to better monitor the quality of a development.

There is greater clarity over affordable housing and tenure, particularly in terms of definitions, and there is now explicit reference to Social



Rent. There is also more detail regarding Build to Rent, in relation to the provision of affordable housing and the fast track route.

In certain areas, more flexibility is now proposed. There is less prescription regarding policies relating to the provision of low-cost business space, as well as affordable work-space, which now includes a wider range of potential occupiers.

Policy GG2 which covers making the best use of land, now refers to 'enabling' the development of brownfield land, rather than prioritising it. Also of significance, the draft Plan now aims to accommodate 'the vast majority' of London's growth within its boundaries – rather than 'all' of it.

Alongside this document, the Panel has issued its first 'Panel Note', providing preliminary information on the EiP, and also a timetable of provisional milestones:

- End of August 2018 – EiP Panel to consult the Mayor on a draft list of matters and participants
- Mid-September - Publication of draft list of matters and participants
- Mid-October – Deadline for comments on draft list of matters and participants
- Early November - Technical seminars (if necessary)
- Early November - Publication of final list of matters and participants (at least 6 weeks before EIP starts)
- Early December – first deadline for written statements in response to EIP matters
- Mid-January to May 2019 - EIP hearing sessions
- Summer 2019 - Panel report

The panel members who will carry out the examination are Roisin Barrett, William Fieldhouse and David Smith.

The EiP library is now live on the GLA website; it contains all the key documents relating to the draft new London Plan, including the evidence base, consultation responses and examination details.

[Mayor of London, Draft new London Plan showing Minor Suggested Changes](#)

[Mayor of London, Examination in Public for the draft new London Plan](#)

[Mayor of London, Examination in Public Library](#)

[Mayor of London, Consultation responses to the draft new London Plan](#)

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## Quote of the month



**Does the Plan deal only with matters which are of strategic importance to Greater London? Please provide a schedule of all policies in the Plan explaining briefly why each of them deals with matters of strategic importance.**

[...]

**Given the legal requirement for the Mayor to have regard to the need to ensure that the London Plan is consistent with national policies, what is the justification for each of the policies deviating from national policy and guidance?**

London Plan EIP Panel, samples of the preliminary questions asked of the Mayor on the role and preparation of the London Plan, and on national policy (August, 2018)

### **Mayor's call to protect London's creative workspaces**

On 9 August, Sadiq Khan appealed to developers and councils across London to help support London's creative sector.

The Mayor has warned that the loss - and under-delivery - of affordable workspace threatens the whole eco-system of spaces for artists and creatives, placing the capital's claim as the world's most creative city at risk.

The Mayor commented:

'London is the world's creative capital and the workspaces spread across our city are the engine room of this growing economy. It's vital that there are affordable spaces for artists to flourish, and that's why I'm working to protect existing sites and support the opening of new spaces.'

Alongside his warning, the Mayor offered some positive news. Figures published by the GLA suggest that the loss of creative spaces in the capital has begun to stabilise. The number of artists workspaces 'at risk' of closing in the next five years has now fallen from 28% to 17% over a three-year period.

However, demand for studio space remains high, with 95% of spaces occupied and nearly 14,000 people on the waiting lists of 27 workspace providers.

[Mayor of London, Mayor calls for continued effort to keep artists in London](#)

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## **40,000 new trees to be planted across London**

As part of the Mayor's plans to make London the world's first National Park city, City Hall has announced funding to deliver 40,000 trees across 21 boroughs in the capital.

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan commented:

'Our much-loved green spaces boost our environment and enhance our quality of life and I'm committed to planting thousands of new trees. City Hall want our new woodland funding to help improve our Green Belt and I've written to all London boroughs asking them to nominate suitable sites.'

The initiative will be supported by the new £1.5million woodland fund, which will be available for boroughs, charities and public-sector land owners, to help add to the capital's eight million trees.

[Mayor of London, Mayor delivers 40,000 new trees to parks & playgrounds](#)

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## The Lichfields perspective



**The publication of Minor Suggested Changes to the draft new London Plan takes us one step closer to having a new plan in place for London. Whilst the majority of the changes consist of clarifications, minor corrections and factual updates, if they are read in conjunction with the consultation responses, we can begin to have a picture of what key issues and topics could arise on examination. Whilst policies concerning design, health and inclusivity have been bolstered, pressure is mounting on the Mayor to loosen his grip on non-strategic policies, and be consistent with national policy. All in all, preparing for the examination is not easy, when the emerging Plan is being examined against the previous National Planning Policy Framework but needs to be as up to date as it can be.**

Tom Davies, Planning Researcher

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