

MAYOR OF LONDON

London Plan Guidance

Support for Housebuilding

March 2026

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Greater London Authority

March 2026

Published by:

Greater London Authority

City Hall

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1. About this document

- 1.1.1 In October 2025 the government and Mayor announced a series of measures to support housebuilding in London. This responds to the current challenging macro-economic circumstances and the changing national regulatory landscape which have led to a reduction in housebuilding in the capital.
- 1.1.2 This London Plan Guidance (LPG) sets out time-limited changes to cycle parking requirements and changes to housing design guidance, together with a new time-limited planning route for the delivery of affordable housing. It provides updated guidance for the implementation of London Plan 2021 policies T5 related to cycle parking standards, D6 on housing design standards which includes replacing and withdrawing relevant standards in the Large-Scale Purpose-Built Shared Living LPG and the Housing Design Standards LPG. In respect of affordable housing policy, it creates an additional time-limited emergency route which departs from policy H5 of the London Plan.
- 1.1.3 The government has separately set out a time-limited approach to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) relief and additional planning powers for the Mayor.

2. Cycle parking

2.1 Time-limited guidance

2.1.1 This guidance on cycle parking applies until 31 March 2028 by which time the new London Plan is expected to have been adopted.

2.2 Minimum cycle parking standards

2.2.1 For dwellings, purpose-built student accommodation and large-scale purpose-built shared living, the minimum long-stay standards in Table 10.2 of the London Plan and the cycle storage benchmark in Table 3.2 of the ‘Large-Scale Purpose-Built Shared Living’ LPG¹ should not apply. Instead, the minimum standards in Table 1 should apply, with reference to the bands in Figure 1. (The bands in Figure 1 are also listed in Table 2.)

2.2.2 Where boroughs have compelling evidence that applying Table 1 could result in under-provision compared to local demand for cycle parking, higher provision may be appropriate – but the considerations set out in section 2.3.4 should be applied. Where local planning authority boundaries cross borough boundaries, such as with Mayoral Development Corporations, the local planning authority should determine which of the relevant bands should be applied.

Table 1 Minimum long-stay cycle parking standards

Use	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
Dwelling: Studio or one bedroom	1.0	0.9	0.7
Dwelling: Two bedroom	1.5	1.3	1.2
Dwelling: Three or more bedroom	1.9	1.6	1.5
Large-scale purpose-built shared living room	0.7	0.6	0.5
Purpose-built student accommodation bedroom	0.7	0.6	0.5

¹ Greater London Authority, [London Plan Guidance: Large-Scale Purpose-Built Shared Living](#) (February 2024).

Figure 1 Cycle parking bands

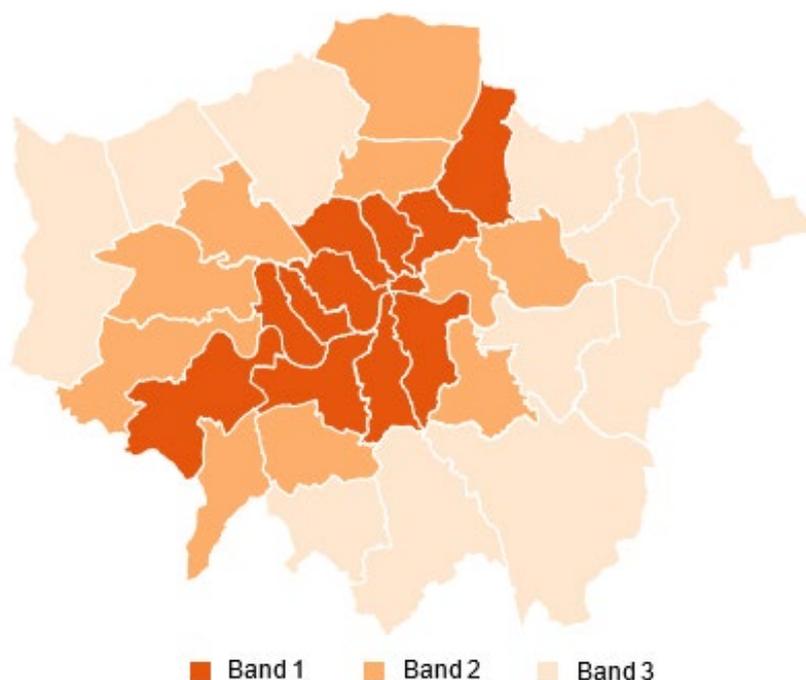


Table 2 Cycle parking bands

Borough	Band
Barking & Dagenham	3
Barnet	3
Bexley	3
Brent	2
Bromley	3
Camden	1
City of London	1
Croydon	3
Ealing	2
Enfield	2

Borough	Band
Greenwich	3
Hackney	1
Hammersmith & Fulham	1
Haringey	2
Harrow	3
Havering	3
Hillingdon	3
Hounslow	2
Islington	1
Kensington & Chelsea	1
Kingston upon Thames	2
Lambeth	1
Lewisham	2
Merton	2
Newham	2
Redbridge	3
Richmond upon Thames	1
Southwark	1
Sutton	3
Tower Hamlets	2
Waltham Forest	1
Wandsworth	1
Westminster	1

2.3 Flexibility of Implementation

Types of parking

2.3.1 Alongside on-site, enclosed cycle parking, the following types of cycle parking may be considered as counting towards the minimum long-stay cycle parking requirements in Table 1:

- 1) Provision by developments of space and infrastructure for public cycle or scooter hire, on either the development site or the carriageway;
- 2) Managed on-site shared cycles or scooters, made available in perpetuity for residents;
- 3) Additional provision of on-street parking, such as cycle hangars (as per part E of Policy T5 Cycling), while being mindful of streetscape impacts;
- 4) Storage spaces for folding cycles; and
- 5) Contributions towards off-site communal cycle parking (to be agreed with the local planning authority).

2.3.2 The proportion of different types of provision should have regard to the need to still support cycle ownership as well as considering site location, density, use and constraints.

2.3.3 Greater levels of hire or shared cycle parking at purpose-built student accommodation and large-scale purpose-built shared living than at other residential developments will be acceptable given their shorter tenures.

Design and Viability

2.3.4 Whether it would be acceptable to provide less than the minimum parking required by Table 1 should be considered in the balance of site constraints and impacts on design, such as the following:

- 1) Avoiding the need for a basement (or additional basement level) or other design requirements that materially improve viability;
- 2) A small building footprint relative to overall floorspace; or
- 3) The density or scale of development generates a very large requirement and this has a disproportionate effect on requiring what could otherwise be lettable or saleable floorspace.

2.4 Cycle parking quality

2.4.1 To ensure quality (not just quantity) of cycle parking that will encourage its use, the area required for cycling parking, its location and access to it should be considered at the initial design stage of development proposals.

2.4.2 The 0.7 to 1.4 square metres rule of thumb for the area required for a long-stay cycle parking space as set out in section 8.2.3 of the 'London Cycling Design Standards' (LCDS)² may help with early planning of site layout. Typical dimensions of cycles are set out in the Department for Transport's 'Cycle Infrastructure Design'.³

2.4.3 Further to the guidance on locating cycle parking set out in LCDS, options include the following:

- 1) **In-building stores:** Care should be taken to avoid creating blank frontages to buildings or creating very large stores which users might perceive as unsafe.
- 2) **Purpose-built shelters:** These may be less secure than parking incorporated within the main building on the site and can raise concerns over safety if directly accessible from the public realm. However, their siting and design could also allow for access or overlooking from more active areas which feel safer.
- 3) **Locating cycle stores within dwellings:** For flats, this is potentially less flexible than a general store and does not cater for larger cycles, but it may still be useful at some sites. Any space should be in addition to the minimum internal floor area, storage and private outdoor space requirements of part F of Policy D6 Housing quality and standards. Cycle storage should not be in habitable rooms.
- 4) **Resident storage outside dwellings:** Where storage cupboards are provided for resident use, these could be sized and access to them designed to accommodate cycle parking. Residents would have the choice of whether to use them for cycle parking or other storage.

2.4.4 Access, stand types and stand spacing guidance is also set out in LCDS.

² The latest version of the LCDS should be referred to. At the time of this London Plan Guidance publication, this is chapter 8, 'Cycle Parking', of: Transport for London, [London Cycling Design Standards: Version 2 \(September 2016\)](#).

³ Department for Transport, [Cycle Infrastructure Design: Local Transport Note 1/20](#) (July 2020), Section 5.4.

3. Changes to housing design standards

3.1 Dual aspect and dwellings per core

- 3.1.1 To avoid the inflexible application of particular standards in the [Housing Design Standards London Plan Guidance 2023](#), the following standards are withdrawn: **Standard C4.1** and **Standard B2.5**. London Plan Policy D6 Housing quality and standards will continue to apply.
- 3.1.2 **Standard C4.1** required new homes to be dual aspect unless exceptional circumstances make it impractical or undesirable. This standard linked to London Plan Policy D6 part C, which continues to apply. When applying this policy, flexibility should be afforded to the provision of dual and single aspect dwellings by decision makers. Where single aspect dwellings are proposed, it should be demonstrated by the applicant that they will have adequate passive ventilation, daylight and privacy, and avoid overheating
- 3.1.3 **Standard B2.5** required that the number of homes accessed by a core should not exceed eight per floor. With the removal of this standard decision makers should be supportive of designs that allow for additional dwellings but exceed eight dwellings per core per floor. Developments will need to meet the requirements of the Building Regulations, which for fire safety limit the distance of flat entrances to a core exit on each floor.

3.2 Cycle parking

- 3.2.1 **Standard B3.1** is being withdrawn as it repeated cycle parking requirements from the London Plan, see section 2 of this LPG for cycle parking requirements.

4. Affordable housing

4.1 Threshold approach to applications

4.1.1 The current London plan threshold approach will remain in place, in parallel with the new time-limited approach being introduced at 4.2 below. Development proposals for housing that meet or exceed any of the following levels of affordable housing by habitable room (and other relevant criteria) can follow the Fast Track Route (FTR):

- a minimum of 35 per cent
- 50 per cent for public-sector land where there is no portfolio agreement with the Mayor
- 50 per cent for Strategic Industrial Locations, Locally Significant Industrial Sites and Non-Designated Industrial Sites appropriate for residential uses in accordance with Policy E7 (Industrial intensification, co-location and substitution) where the scheme would result in a net loss of industrial capacity

4.1.2 The FTR is available for build for sale residential development (Policy H5), Build to Rent, (Policy H11), specialist older persons' housing (Policy H13) and purpose-built student accommodation (Policy H15).

4.1.3 The threshold approach provides greater certainty to the land market; has helped to speed up decision-making; and increased the level of affordable housing secured through the planning process.

4.1.4 As set out in London Plan Policy H5, schemes that do not meet these thresholds and follow the Viability Tested Route (VTR) are required to provide viability information to determine the maximum viable level of affordable housing at application stage. These are subject to viability reviews at different stages of the development process to assess whether additional affordable housing can be provided over the lifetime of the development.

4.2 Time-limited planning route

4.2.1 The Mayor is introducing a new time-limited planning route, which will operate in parallel to the existing Threshold Approach to planning applications set out in Policy H5 of the London Plan. The new time-limited planning route is a departure from Policy H4 Part A, Policy H5 and Policy H6 of the London Plan and has been introduced as an emergency measure to help address the current significant downturn in housing delivery in London.

4.2.2 Since its introduction in 2017, the threshold approach has supported the delivery of significantly higher levels of affordable housing as set out in monitoring by the GLA. However, as noted above, there have been significant changes to market conditions, and some recent applications have been

granted with very low levels of affordable housing, including at appeal, which may not effectively meet housing need. Delivery of these schemes may also be delayed and subject to slow build out rates, due to the high proportion of market housing. The time-limited planning route is being introduced in this context to encourage schemes to come forward, and existing schemes to progress, in the near-term, while providing a higher level of affordable housing and more timely build out than may otherwise have been the case.

4.3 Proposed approach

- 4.3.1 The time-limited planning route will allow residential schemes on private land (including industrial land where industrial floorspace capacity is re-provided) that can provide at least 20 per cent affordable housing (by habitable room) to proceed without an upfront viability assessment where they meet the eligibility criteria in section 4.4, and to access grant funding for affordable homes (excluding the first 10 per cent of homes which must be provided as affordable housing without grant), provided they meet the conditions of the relevant GLA funding programme.
- 4.3.2 An Early-Stage review mechanism, triggered if an agreed level of progress on implementation is not made within 30 months of the permission being granted (or a period agreed by the borough or the Mayor for referable applications) will be applicable for all schemes following the time-limited planning route. If this is triggered, it would allow for a review of scheme viability to determine whether any additional affordable housing can be provided if viability improves. While the new route may be used as an alternative to the London Plan 2021 FTR during the period it is open, the Mayor remains committed to the principles underpinning the FTR and to maintaining a higher threshold in the medium to long term.
- 4.3.3 Residential developments, including schemes with existing planning consents, which provide higher levels of affordable housing will be eligible for grant funding allocated to new affordable homes on a per unit basis above the initial 10 per cent of affordable homes. The Mayor will make grant funding available at the benchmark rates set out in this guidance and updated Accelerated Funding Guidance, subject to checks to ensure compliance with subsidy control rules and value for money.

4.4 Eligibility

4.4.1 In order to be eligible for the new planning route, residential developments must meet or exceed the following time-limited adjusted affordable housing thresholds:

- 20 per cent affordable housing by habitable room for residential schemes on private land
- 35 per cent affordable housing by habitable room for residential schemes on public land⁴
- 35 per cent affordable housing by habitable room for residential schemes on industrial land where industrial floorspace capacity has not been re-provided⁵
- 20 per cent affordable housing by habitable room for residential schemes on industrial land where industrial floorspace capacity has been re-provided
- 20 per cent affordable housing by habitable room for residential schemes on utilities sites where evidence of substantial decontamination, enabling and remediation costs is provided.

4.4.2 Where the relevant adjusted affordable housing threshold is met or exceeded, a minimum of 60 per cent Social Rent must be provided with the remaining 40 per cent of affordable housing provided as intermediate tenures in line with London Plan policy H6 and relevant guidance.⁶

4.4.3 Build to Rent schemes which meet the criteria in London Plan Policy H11 can provide affordable housing that is intermediate rent, with at least 30 per cent at or below London Living Rent levels or Key Worker Living Rent and the remaining 70 per cent at a range of genuinely affordable rents. Housing costs should be affordable for households with a range of incomes below the maximum income threshold and set in line with the approach published by the Mayor.

4.4.4 Local Planning Authorities are strongly encouraged to support applications that meet these minimum levels and conform to the eligibility criteria.

⁴ Further details on the approach to public land and application of the public land threshold are set out in London Plan policy H5, and the supporting text, together with the Mayor's Threshold Approach to Affordable Housing on Public Land Practice Note (2018).

⁵ Further details on the approach to industrial land are set out in London Plan policies H5 and E7, and the supporting text.

⁶ This includes the provision of Key Worker Living Rent homes in line with the Practice Note that will be published by the Mayor, as well as London Living Rent, intermediate rent and shared ownership.

4.4.5 The time-limited planning route will not apply to the following:

- Sites on or released from Grey or Green Belt⁷
- Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) or Large-scale Purpose-built Shared Living (LSPBSL) (also known as co-living) development, or schemes where either of these (or together) comprise of 50 per cent or more of total scheme residential Gross Internal Area (GIA) floorspace⁸
- Where a scheme involves the demolition of existing affordable housing, including estate regeneration schemes.⁹

4.4.6 The time-limited planning route will be available for planning applications which have been validated by a local planning authority by 31 March 2028, by which time the new London Plan is expected to have been adopted. Further guidance will be provided for decision making on those applications included in this eligibility window in order to deal with the overlap between this LPG and the next London Plan. This guidance will be issued during the progress of the next London Plan. To promote early delivery, councils may also wish to consider granting permissions that must be implemented in less than three years from the date of consent. All grant allocations will be subject to grant recipients meeting delivery milestones and other contractual conditions set out in the GLA's grant funding agreements.

4.5 Grant funding

4.5.1 Schemes that commit to providing affordable housing at or above the relevant affordable housing thresholds under the new time-limited planning route will be eligible for grant funding. Further details about the bidding process and other requirements to access grant are set out in updated Accelerated Funding Guidance published by the GLA's Housing and Land Directorate and

⁷ These sites are subject to the NPPF Golden Rules. However, in line with NPPF footnote 58, the Golden Rules do not apply to: (i) developments brought forward on land released from the Green Belt through plans that were adopted prior to the publication of this Framework; and (ii) developments that were granted planning permission on Green Belt land prior to the publication of the NPPF (December 2024).

⁸ The relevant London Plan thresholds and requirements for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (policy H15) and Large-scale Purpose-built Shared Living (policy H16) will continue to apply. For mixed tenure schemes the C3/C4 residential component may benefit from the time-limited thresholds where the PBSA and LSPBSL floorspace (combined) comprises less than 50 per cent of total scheme residential GIA, and where the relevant London Plan PBSA threshold and LSPBSL requirements are met. For outline schemes, this will be assessed based on the maximum parameter Gross External Area for PBSA and LSPBSL and whether this is less than 50 per cent of the maximum scheme residential floorspace.

⁹ See London Plan policy H8 and paragraphs 4.10 to 4.12 in the Mayor's Accelerating Housing Delivery Practice Note (2024), for relevant policy and guidance relating to schemes involving the loss of existing affordable housing and estate regeneration.

in the funding guidance for the Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26 and the London Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026-36.¹⁰ Bids for grant for low-cost rented homes must be made by private Registered Providers of Social Housing or local authorities. Grant recipients must hold GLA Investment Partner status before grant funding is paid.

- 4.5.2 Subject to meeting the conditions and eligibility requirements of GLA funding programmes, grant may be sought for homes by unit above the first 10 per cent which will be nil grant, without the need for an Additionality Viability Assessment (as defined in the GLA's Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide), but will still be subject to checks to ensure that any grant allocated is compliant with subsidy control rules. Grant-funded and nil-grant homes should be split proportionately between tenures with a minimum of 60 per cent social rent.
- 4.5.3 The benchmark grant rates will be:
- 1) £220,000 per home for Social Rent
 - 2) £70,000 per home for Shared Ownership
 - 3) £90,000 per home for Intermediate Rent (where rents are above London Living Rent benchmarks¹¹)
 - 4) £140,000 per home for Key Worker Living Rent homes or Intermediate Rent (where rents are at or below London Living Rent benchmarks).
- 4.5.4 Grant may be sought at or above the benchmark grant rates set out at paragraph 4.5.3 for such projects where it provides value for money to do so.
- 4.5.5 Taking into account the particular role that affordable housing plays in meeting housing need and in supporting overall delivery, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide affordable housing at levels above the relevant affordable housing thresholds under the new time-limited planning route, and at 35 per cent or more where possible, using affordable housing grant and time-limited CIL relief where available and necessary.
- 4.5.6 In the June 2025 Spending Review, the Government announced a range of measures to support the financial capacity of social landlords. Key measures included: a long-term Social and Affordable Homes Programme, a long-term rent settlement, £2.5bn of low interest loans for Private Registered Providers (60% of which will be allocated to London) and access to building safety funds. Following a consultation on rent convergence, Government has confirmed that from 1 April 2027, providers will be permitted to increase

¹⁰ See [Homes for Londoners: Affordable Homes Programme 2021–2026](#) and [London Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026-36](#)

¹¹ In line with the criteria in paragraphs 4.4.2 and 4.4.3.

weekly rents on Social Rent homes by up to an additional £1 per year over and above CPI+1%, rising to £2 each year over and above CPI+1% from 1 April 2028, until formula rent is reached.

- 4.5.7 Section 106 agreements are, and will remain, an essential mechanism for delivering social and affordable housing. A complex range of factors has led to drop off in demand for S106 units over recent years, including pressures on registered provider capacity, concerns regarding the quality and standards of homes, and RPs and developers being unable to agree on pricing. To address this, in January 2026, the government announced a comprehensive policy package to lay the foundations for a simpler, more transparent and more resilient S106 system, and deal with the legacy problem of existing unsold and uncontracted S106 units. In the longer term, government will work with housing partners to agree shared standards and improve collaboration in delivering S106 homes including better and earlier engagement between developers and social landlords. It is in the interest of developers to take steps to better meet the needs of the social landlords that purchase these homes and the residents that will live in them. The GLA welcomes the work that the G15[3] - a group of London's largest housing associations - and others have undertaken to develop collaboration principles aimed at improving how developers and social landlords work together in partnership.

4.6 Review

- 4.6.1 Schemes following the time-limited planning route are subject to an Early-Stage review mechanism in the same manner as a scheme following the London Plan's Fast Track Route.
- 4.6.2 An Early-Stage review is triggered where a defined substantial implementation milestone has not been reached within 30 months starting from the granting of planning permission, or a period agreed with the LPA or the Mayor (for referable applications).
- 4.6.3 The substantial implementation milestone should reflect a reasonable level of progress and one which can be clearly demonstrated as representing a point at which a substantial commencement of a planning permission has been achieved. This milestone should in most cases be the construction up to a first floor slab of a defined residential building in the development or within the first phase of a larger phased development. However, it is acknowledged that in some cases, site or scheme specific circumstances might mean that a different substantial implementation milestone might be appropriate.
- 4.6.4 An LPA or the Mayor (for referable applications) can exercise discretion to agree upon a different substantial implementation milestone, and also agree upon a different time period starting from the grant of consent to achieve the substantial implementation milestone where this is judged to be appropriate.
- 4.6.5 When considering a different substantial implementation milestone, and a different time period for achieving this, the judgement should be appropriate to

the circumstances of the site and reflect the imperative to incentivise starting construction and housing delivery.

- 4.6.6 Decision-makers should undertake consideration of phasing plans, development programmes and analysis of site-specific issues to help inform their judgement.
- 4.6.7 Scheme or site circumstances which may warrant a consideration of alternatively defined substantial implementation milestones and time period may include cases where a site requires the completion of significant enabling works or site remediation works before a substantial implementation can be achieved, or where a re-provision of an existing use forms a large component within the new development. Timescales for securing a decision from the Building Safety Regulator in relation to the Gateway process can also be considered where evidenced.
- 4.6.8 A 'long stop date' of five years, commencing from the grant of planning permission to achieve the substantial implementation milestone, will apply to all schemes following the time-limited planning route. The purpose of the 'long stop date' is to provide an endpoint at which a substantial implementation must be achieved under the time-limited planning route. Where the substantial milestone has not been achieved before the 'long stop date', an Early-Stage review will be triggered.
- 4.6.9 Early-Stage reviews should be undertaken in accordance with Mayoral guidance. Where an Early-Stage review is triggered, and a surplus is identified through undertaking the review, 100 per cent of the surplus should be provided to the LPA.
- 4.6.10 Where a review identifies a sufficient level of surplus to support additional on-site affordable housing provision, this should be provided on-site prior to occupation of a specified proportion of market units. Information that identifies which homes will be provided as additional affordable accommodation should be submitted to the LPA for approval.
- 4.6.11 Where a review identifies a surplus that is insufficient to support on-site affordable housing, this should be paid to the LPA as a financial contribution following the review, and prior to the occupation of specified proportion of market units.
- 4.6.12 In the same manner as the London Plan's Fast Track Route, there is no requirement for Mid Stage or Late-Stage review mechanisms for schemes following the new planning route.

4.7 Viability Tested Route

- 4.7.1 These terms do not apply for schemes following the Viability Tested Route that do not meet the eligibility criteria above, which will be assessed in line with the London Plan and relevant guidance. These should be assessed to

determine the maximum viable level of affordable housing, including whether 20 per cent or more affordable housing could be provided, with the availability of CIL relief and grant where appropriate. These schemes are subject to review mechanisms as set out in London Plan policies H4 and H5 and relevant guidance.

4.8 Maximising affordable housing including on existing schemes

- 4.8.1 The new planning route is open to be followed by developments with existing planning permissions. In view of the important role that affordable housing plays in meeting housing need and in supporting overall delivery, the GLA encourages partners to deliver affordable housing in excess of 20 per cent wherever possible, especially where planning consents are already in place. Subject to meeting the conditions and eligibility requirements of GLA funding programmes, grant may be sought at or above the benchmark grant rates set out at paragraph 4.5.3 for such projects where it provides value for money to do so. Partners with projects consented at 35 per cent or more affordable housing, that are currently stalled due to viability reasons, are encouraged to assess the availability of grant where this is needed to support delivery.
- 4.8.2 Applicants will be expected to seek grant and the availability of CIL relief to maintain the level of affordable housing in existing section 106 agreements or increase levels where it supports delivery. Where that has been fully explored and has been demonstrated not to be possible, any amendments to the affordable housing level or tenure should be renegotiated and agreed via the submission of a s73 application alongside a deed of variation, where changes to conditions are required, with the aim of delivering at least the relevant level of affordable housing established in the new planning route, and on the basis of the same terms.

4.9 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 4.9.1 In order to further support viability, government is implementing time-limited relief for CIL. Where a scheme provides at least 20 per cent affordable housing (of which at least 60 per cent is social rent), amendments to the CIL regime will allow a 50 per cent Borough CIL relief to apply to residential floorspace (excluding student and co-living accommodation) in schemes, or phases of schemes, that commence after the relief is in place and before 31 March 2030. Increased levels of Borough CIL relief can be applied where affordable housing in excess of 20 per cent is provided by a scheme.

