

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 February 2015 16:08  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** City Fringe OAPF- Questions/ Information

[REDACTED]

Thank you for taking the time to provide comments for the draft City Fringe OAPF- you should by now have received an acknowledgment. In addition to the comments you also asked some follow-up questions and requested a list of everyone we consulted prior to inviting comments from the public. We have treat this as a request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and attached is our formal response. In order to ensure a thorough response we have gone through our records going back to October 2012, which is why this has taken a little while. I hope, however, that you find this a satisfactory response.

Your other questions were more around clarification of the purpose, weight and intent of the draft document, sent on several emails. The following are each of your questions, in turn, along with my answers:

**1. The main question we have is how exactly will the OAPF operate, what are its capabilities in the planning application process as well as outside the process?**

As Opportunity Areas and OAPF documents are unique to London we often get asked questions like this, which is understandable. As a result we have produced the following document to explain more about this and Opportunity Areas in general:

<http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/archives/opportunity-areas-2011.pdf>

**2. We are in favour of the protection of employment space i.e. affordable viable space for small independent artisan businesses. However would you agree that the OAPF has one overriding concern, that of the Tech City agenda?**

We know from our research and supporting work that the businesses of the City Fringe are a varied mix and that this mix of sectors as well as business sizes is a factor in the areas success. We also know that technology businesses are currently a minority, but that this sector has significant potential for growth. A key purpose of the OAPF document is to explain how London-wide policies in the London Plan can be specifically applied within the City Fringe. London Plan policies 4.1 "*Developing London's economy*", 4.2 "*Offices*" and 4.10 "*New and emerging economic sectors*" are all considered in the draft City Fringe OAPF as there is a growing issue with the availability and cost of business space in the City Fringe that can be addressed by the planning system. Part of addressing this is ensuring enough business space to accommodate all business growth in the City Fringe, and another part of this is understanding the implications for Tech City as a new and emerging sector. Strategies 1-5 of the draft City Fringe OAPF seek to provide a basis for addressing this, using existing London Plan policy as well as the planning policies of the London Boroughs of Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Islington.

**3. Did you consider whether small independent artisan businesses are a material part of Hackney and Tower Hamlets' Local Plans?**

It is understood that the London Boroughs of Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets all have policies and supporting documents that deal with small businesses and independent traders. Officers from

each of these boroughs were involved in the drafting of the document and each borough has been consulted several times regarding the draft City Fringe OAPF and the supporting documentation.

#### **4. What guidelines is the OAPF process following and what in law must it contain?**

OAPFs are a material consideration in the planning system but are non-statutory documents, therefore no formal guidelines exist. The London Plan policies apply to the whole of London and application of the London Plan's policies will therefore vary according to local distinctiveness. As there will likely be much development in Opportunity Areas, the OAPF documents allow the GLA and the local borough councils to work collaboratively and agree how London Plan policy should be applied within each Opportunity Area, rather than do this on a case by case basis. Each area is different and the above report (relating to question 1) explains a little more about Opportunity Areas, their material weight and how the City Fringe fits within the bigger picture.

#### **5. What is the purpose of Para 1.3?**

This paragraph explains that the framework has been influenced by the supporting work, particularly the Property Appraisal Study, and by meetings and discussions with the individuals and organisations in the list I have attached. It also explains that applications for strategic development proposals (as set out in *PSI Applications and categories of development, Schedule to The Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008*) that at that point had been submitted or consented were also considered. In each project that involves public consultation, a decision has to be made as to when to do this. The public's input is obviously important but at the same time we need to put together something that the public can read and form an opinion on before providing comments. The point of this paragraph is to inform the reader that this draft has been the subject of a process that included consideration of these things prior to inviting input from the public.

I hope that this answers your questions regarding the draft City Fringe OAPF. Your comments are now being considered and details of how we have considered them, along with changes that may be reflected in the final document will be made public in due course via the GLA website at [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)

Many thanks

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