

# Introducing the Plan

**The London Plan 2021**

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## Introducing The Plan

## Introducing The Plan

0.0.1 This section explains what the London Plan is, how to use the document and what process the draft Plan went through up to formal publication.

## What is the London Plan?

### What is the London Plan?

0.0.2 Under the legislation establishing the Greater London Authority (GLA), the Mayor is required to publish a Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) and keep it under review. The SDS is known as the London Plan. As the

overall strategic plan for London, it sets out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years.

0.0.3 The general objectives for the London Plan, and the process for drawing it up, altering it and replacing it, are set out in the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (London Spatial Development Strategy) Regulations 2000. The London Plan has been developed in line with these requirements.

0.0.4 The legislation stipulates that the London Plan should only deal with things of strategic importance to Greater London<sup>[1]</sup> taking account of the principal purposes of the Greater London Authority which are:<sup>[2]</sup>

- promoting economic development and wealth creation in Greater London
- promoting social development in Greater London and
- promoting the improvement of the environment in Greater London.

0.0.5 In developing the SDS, in accordance with the legislation<sup>[3]</sup> and associated regulations, the Mayor has had regard to:

- the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people
- reducing health inequality and promoting Londoners' health
- achieving sustainable development in the United Kingdom
- climate change and the consequences of climate change
- the desirability of promoting and encouraging the use of the Thames, particularly for passenger and freight transportation
- the resources available to implement the Mayor's strategies.

0.0.6 In drawing up the new London Plan, the Mayor has also had regard to:

- all relevant European Union obligations of the UK
- the need to ensure consistency with national policies and international treaty obligations notified to the Mayor by Government, without seeking to repeat national policy
- the Mayor's other statutory obligations including the duty for the GLA to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and the public-sector equality duty, as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, covering race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

0.0.7 The document brings together the geographical and locational aspects of the Mayor's other strategies, to ensure consistency with those strategies, including those dealing with:

- transport
- environment
- economic development
- housing
- culture
- health and health inequalities.

0.0.8 The London Plan is legally part of each of London's Local Planning Authorities' Development Plan and must be taken into account when planning decisions are taken in any part of Greater London. Planning applications should be determined in accordance with it, unless there are sound planning reasons (other material considerations) which indicate otherwise. All Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Plans have to be 'in general conformity' with the London Plan.

## **How to use the document**

### **How to use the document**

0.0.9 Planning in London is the joint responsibility of the Mayor of London and the 32 London boroughs, the City of London Corporation and the Mayoral Development Corporations (MDCs) (of which there are currently two: the London Legacy Development Corporation and the Old Oak Park Royal Development Corporation) along with neighbourhood forums designated by London's local planning authorities. When the London Plan refers to 'boroughs' it is referring to the 32 London boroughs, the City of London and the MDCs. This approach has been taken to make the document more readable.

0.0.10 The London Plan is an integrated policy framework and must be read as a whole. The placement of the topic chapters and the policies within the chapters is no reflection on their importance or weight – it does not represent a hierarchy.

0.0.11 The London Plan sets out policies and supporting text (also known as reasoned justification). These take account of:

- the legal requirements related to the development of the London Plan
- other requirements of Government planning policy and guidance (without seeking to repeat these)
- the integrated impact and habitats regulations assessment
- the evidence that underpins the Plan (without seeking to repeat it).

0.0.12 The published London Plan takes account of the comments received during the consultation process and the recommendations of the panel that conducted the Examination in Public.

0.0.13 This London Plan runs from 2019 to 2041. This date has been chosen to provide a longer-term view of London's development to inform decision making. However, some of the more detailed elements of the Plan, such as the annual housing targets, are set for only the first ten years of the Plan. This reflects the capacity of land suitable for residential development and intensification identified in the 2017 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which, due to the dynamic nature of London's land market, does not attempt to robustly identify capacity beyond 2029.

0.0.14 This London Plan relies on the 2017 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for its evidence of housing needs. The 2017 SHMA uses an established methodology that takes full account of the diversity of London's housing needs and has been found sound at Examination.

0.0.15 To help the reader navigate through the London Plan, paragraphs include key words in bold. The bold font does not signify extra weight or suggest that the paragraph is the only place that the specific issue is discussed.

0.0.16 A glossary has also been included to provide a definition of words or phrases where necessary.

## **A new Plan**

### **A new Plan**

0.0.17 This is a new London Plan (also known as a Replacement Plan). This means it is not an alteration or update to previous London Plans. This new London Plan is the third London Plan, the previous ones being the 2004 London Plan produced by former Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, and the 2011 London Plan produced by former Mayor of London Boris Johnson. All of the other iterations of the London Plan from 2004-2016 have been alterations. This London Plan replaces all previous versions.

0.0.18 This London Plan is different to those that have gone before it. It is more ambitious and focused than any previous London Plans. The concept of Good Growth – growth that is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable – underpins the London Plan and ensures that it is focused on sustainable development.

0.0.19 As well as taking account of the relevant legislation, and Government policy, this London Plan also seeks to deliver the Mayor’s manifesto commitments and – alongside the Mayor’s other strategies – set the framework for how these commitments can be achieved in spatial development terms.

0.0.20 The policies in the London Plan are supported by a proportionate evidence base.<sup>[4]</sup> The Plan seeks to develop an approach tailored for London to reflect the particular circumstances in the capital, and will act as the key document shaping planning decisions across Greater London.

0.0.21 The Plan provides an appropriate spatial strategy that plans for London’s growth in a sustainable way.<sup>?</sup> The housing targets set out for each London Borough are the basis for planning for housing in London. Therefore, boroughs do not need to revisit these figures as part of their Local Plan development unless they have additional evidence that suggests they can achieve delivery of housing above these figures whilst remaining in line with the strategic policies established in this Plan.

0.0.22 The Plan does not meet all of London’s identified development needs.<sup>?</sup> Work will need to be undertaken to explore the potential options for meeting this need sustainably in London and beyond.<sup>?</sup> This is a matter for a future Plan, and requires close collaboration with local and strategic authorities and partners. Clear commitment from the Government is essential to support the consideration of these options and the significant strategic infrastructure investment requirements associated with them.

0.0.23 The London Plan is part of the Development Plan. The policies have been drafted in a way that allows London to implement this ambitious London Plan as soon as possible. There is no requirement for the policies to be repeated at the local level. However, in some instances a local approach is required within the context of the overall policy. The London Plan clearly sets out where this is the case.

0.0.24 The London Plan does not preclude boroughs and neighbourhood forums from bringing forward policies in their Development Plan Documents or Neighbourhood Plans that vary from the detail of the policies in this Plan where locally-specific circumstances and evidence suggests this would better achieve the objectives of the London Plan and where such an approach can be considered to be in general conformity with the London Plan.

0.0.25 The Plan provides the framework to address the key planning issues facing London, allowing boroughs to spend time and resources on those issues that have a distinctly local dimension and on measures that will help deliver the growth London needs. This includes: area-based frameworks, action plans and Supplementary Planning Documents, site allocations, brownfield registers and design codes, as well as supporting neighbourhood planning.

0.0.26 It is crucial that all those involved in planning and development in London understand how London's three-tier planning system works (including regional, local and neighbourhood planning) and do not seek to duplicate policy or evidence unnecessarily.

0.0.27 The Mayor is legally required to keep the London Plan under review.<sup>[\[5\]](#)</sup> The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and approach to monitoring set out in the final chapter of the Plan provide a basis for this ongoing review, allowing an assessment of the effectiveness of the Plan to be made over time. Alongside this, key assumptions which underpin the Plan will also be monitored, in particular population and household growth and employment growth. Significant demographic or employment changes which are likely to persist would trigger a partial or full review of the Plan, as would significant persistent divergence from the performance measures of the KPIs.

## **Integrated Impact Assessment**

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

0.0.28 A key part of reviewing the London Plan is undertaking a full Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The IIA approach addresses the Mayor's legal duties to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the Plan and its proposed policies with one integrated process. The IIA incorporates the statutory requirements of:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Health Impact Assessment
- Community Safety Impact Assessment

0.0.29 The HRA assesses any aspects of the Plan that would cause a likely significant effect on any European Habitats Sites. The IIA and HRA have helped shape the preparation of the London Plan ensuring that these key issues have been taken into account throughout the development process.

## **Structure of the Plan**

### **Structure of the Plan**

0.0.30 Chapter one, together with the Foreword, sets out the Mayor's vision and explains what Good Growth is. Chapter one contains six core 'good growth' objectives which should be taken into account for all planning and development in London. Each sets out a high-level objective, which is a more detailed expression of the Mayor's vision, with clauses underneath setting out the strategic approach to development in London. The subsequent chapters provide the topic-specific and spatially-specific policies that are required to deliver the Good Growth objectives.

0.0.31 Chapter two sets out the overall spatial development pattern for London, focusing on the growth strategies for specific places in London and how they connect with the Wider South East.

0.0.32 Chapters three to twelve cover topic-based policies and implementation:

- Chapter 3 Design
- Chapter 4 Housing
- Chapter 5 Social Infrastructure
- Chapter 6 Economy
- Chapter 7 Heritage and Culture
- Chapter 8 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment
- Chapter 9 Sustainable Infrastructure
- Chapter 10 Transport
- Chapter 11 Funding the London Plan
- Chapter 12 Monitoring

## **How the London Plan has been produced**

### **How the London Plan has been produced**

0.0.33 In October 2016, the Mayor published 'A City for All Londoners'. This document set the tone for all of the Mayor's strategies and the direction of travel for the Mayoralty. It discussed the high-level responses to the big challenges that London faces: the pressure that a fast-growing population exerts on the city; the increasing diversity of Londoners; rising inequality; the changing nature of the economy; the uncertainty caused by the EU referendum result; and the effects of climate change.

0.0.34 The document was put out to consultation and the feedback from it helped shape all the Mayoral strategies. In addition, to inform the development of the London Plan, a number of workshops were held which provided an opportunity for a range of stakeholders to come together and discuss the challenges and opportunities the city faces.

0.0.35 In December 2017 the Mayor launched the draft new London Plan. Three months of consultation were carried out, with Mayoral representatives appearing at over 100 separate consultation events and receiving thousands of consultation responses. These responses informed the Minor Suggested Changes published in August 2018. This version of the Plan, along with the consultation responses, was submitted for public examination.

0.0.36 The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government appointed a panel of three Planning Inspectors who conducted the Examination in Public (EiP) of the London Plan. The EiP was held in the Chamber at City Hall between 15 January 2019 and 22 May 2019, and involved over 300 organisations and individuals contributing to the discussion of 94 matters in 51 hearing sessions. In response to statements submitted by participants and to the discussions at the hearing sessions, a number of Further Suggested Changes to the Plan were suggested and a consolidated version, including all these suggested changes, was sent to the Inspectors in July 2019.

0.0.37 The Panel published its report in October 2019. The report concluded that the Plan provides an appropriate basis for the strategic planning of Greater London, subject to the recommendations set out. The Mayor considered these recommendations and modified the Plan accordingly. The Mayor did not accept all the Panel's recommendations and produced a statement giving reasons for why some recommendations were not accepted. This statement and a copy of the Plan were submitted to the Secretary of State in December 2019, and was laid before the London Assembly on 6 February 2020.

0.0.38 The Secretary of State issued formal directions to the Mayor to modify the Plan on 13 March 2020 and 10 December 2020. The Mayor made modifications to the Plan, taking account of the directions, and sent this version to the Secretary of State on 21 December 2020. The Secretary of State wrote to the Mayor on 29 January 2021 to confirm that this version contains the modifications necessary to conform with the directions. The London Plan was published on 2 March 2021.

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[1] GLA Act 1999, section 334(5)

[2] GLA Act 1999, section 30

[3] GLA Act 1999, Section 41

[4] <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/examination-public-draft-new-london-plan/eip-library>

[\[5\]](#) GLA Act 1999, section 339(1)

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