

Mr Frank Anatole comments

Page: [Policy H2 Small sites](#)

Section: [N/A](#)

Mr Mayor,

As an Architect with over 30 years experience practising in London, but having worked in several cities in Europe, I've watched sub-standard housing encroaching on the green belt and our green spaces with a growing sense of dread. These green spaces, make no mistake about it, include our back gardens. And it is these gardens which are under threat by the policy to develop 'small sites'.

London is an attractive city to live in precisely because it is gifted with green spaces (parks, commons, trees and front/back gardens galore). We are envied by many in Europe for this, and if we start to erode and concrete-over this gift we will make the capital an unattractive place to live. It's almost impossible for housing standards to be policed if these are not properly designed and monitored by real building professionals and councils. Often they are simply not. Councils do not have the time and there is no obligation to go to a professional for advice.

Developing small sites such as gardens and other green areas will have potentially disasterous effects on water and sewage management, with not properly assessed demand resulting in services not being able to cope. We are already seeing large scale flooding in certain areas of the capital.

The solution is not small piece-meal development which quite inevitably be abused by unscrupulous house owners seeking to make a quick fortune with shoddy boxes shoe-horned into their gardens.

Mr Mayor, the solution is to build more **low to medium rise developments, particularly well crafted mansion blocks, which are properly assessed for PTAL, waste services and utilities, access and housing standards**. We must be clever in our urban planning, not allowing the unchecked sprawl of jerry built extensions and substandard temporary accommodation (likely if anything to further inflate prices for properties with "developable" gardens). We must unlock and remediate our brownfield sites and industrial estates as a priority.

We must learn the lessons of places like Paris and Barcelona where medium rise mansion blocks provide meaningful densification, while preserving green space and sustainable developments. Please don't open the door to backland development that will be hidden away and never properly assessed. We will only succeed in creating a legacy of poor quality housing that cannot be properly accessed. It is a highly risky direction in which to go.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Frank Anatole RIBA ARB