

Mr. Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London
The Greater London Council
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London
SE1 2AA

Re: Objection - Draft New London Plan

Dear Mr. Sadiq Khan,

I am writing to object to the Draft New London Plan.

The plan weakens the planning protection given to Hampstead, and as a resident for many years and with intention to remain many more, I have no choice but to make my position known. With its historic conservation areas, open spaces (including Hampstead Heath) and unique character, Hampstead needs to be protected.

There are three policies to which I am specifically objecting; so doing on the basis that they are inconsistent with national planning policy.

I. Policy H2. This imposes a new “presumption in favour” of small scale development of between 1 and 25 homes. This includes demolition and rebuild schemes, the upwards extension of flats and residential extensions.

This policy indeed should not apply to Conservation Areas.

Over recent years we have, in Hampstead and surrounds, suffered from numerous planning applications where developers have tried to demolish existing properties and rebuild them with inappropriate new housing within the conservation area. These include, but are not limited to, 29 New End, 28 Redington Road, 192 Haverstock Hill, 266-270 Finchley Road.

Weakening the protection given to conservation areas leads to more of these aforementioned sort of applications being approved. This will impact the area – its special character – and is counter conservation protection itself.

II. Policy D8. This policy weakens existing policy on tall buildings. Tall buildings are not appropriate for Hampstead, nor the surrounding area. Planning permission has recently been granted for a 24 storey tower at 100 Avenue Road. This development is completely out of keeping with the area. It is a property which will now loom over what are conservation areas. It is out of place, it impacts the character of the area. It will also result in an increase in construction traffic on our streets.

The London Plan should not be supporting more tall towers. Tall towers create more issues with construction traffic and, ongoing, traffic (full stop); they cause a marked change in light; they cause wind tunnels (which I know well, from my having lived in New York City many years, are not pleasant!).

Research has illustrated that mid-rise, rather than high-rise development can deliver the same housing density as high-rise development. As such, the London Plan should not be supporting tall buildings.

III. Policy G3. This applies to Hampstead Heath and enables the boundaries of Metropolitan Open Land to be amended via "land swaps." Hampstead Heath is one of the most important open areas in London, a natural, green space, filled with beauty, and at the heart of our community. I walk the Heath often, and not only myself have pleasure from this 'green lung' of London but also, moreso, see the joy it gives younger people, older people, single people, groups of friends, families and animals (pets and the wildlife, itself, on the Heath). The London Plan should not allow Hampstead Heath's boundaries to be altered in any way; indeed, they shouldn't be amended in any fashion.

In summary, the London Plan is inconsistent with national planning policy. It is not a Plan which should be approved.

I disagree strongly with a departure from national policy. Although the Mayor won by a strong margin, he hasn't a right, in my view, to depart from national policy. Indeed, just as important as the Mayor's mandate for his coming years – if not more important, as our roles in neighbourhoods long continue beyond a Mayoral tenure – is the role which local communities have to shape their own communities (for example, through Neighbourhood Plans). This must not be disrespected. Moreover, the London Plan lasts until 2041, and it would be heresy to create a Plan based on the events of one election.

Yours sincerely,



Nina Glass

