

Mr Anthony Wheeler comments

Page: [Chapter 1 Planning London's Future \(Good Growth Policies\)](#)

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It states "Every individual decision to provide affordable housing helps make the the housing market fairer". It would be nice if the term "affordable housing" could be defined, it's currently the political buzz phrase that has no practical meaning. To whom is it affordable , a single person on a basic wage or a couple, on the London living wage even? We have numerical values for basic and living wages, but none for so called "affordable housing". Why is that? Is in beyond the wit of our planners and politicians or just something to hide behind? The need is for affordable housing to be given a financial value that can be judged by the public as affordable and the majority of new builds to be in the defined value. Then you may be able to claim "helps makes the housing market fairer".

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"Every decision to make a new development car-free helps Londoners to depend less on cars and to live healthier lives."

What a patronising statement that is. How do you know what one's dependency on a car is? The disabled, the elderly, you obviously don't want them in new developments. Electric cars are zero polluting at the point of use, but they still need to park. The sale of all new diesel and petrol cars is to end by 2040, it needs to be taken into account. Making new developments car-free is a backward step and limits the individual choice of Londoners. Not accounting for the lack of public transport links, especially south of the river. Owning a car does not preclude the use public transport or walking. Appropriate transport for the situation should be the objective.

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"A failure to consider the wider implications of London's growth has increased car dependency, leading to low levels of physical activity, significant congestion, poor air quality and other environmental problems."

A rather sweeping statement to hone in and blame all these ills on the car, I sense an agenda here.

The blame might just be: TV and other electronics on the low levels of physical activity; awful traffic management and planning for congestion; local industry alongside dirty diesel buses and black cabs for poor air quality and other environmental problems. The evidence of my causes in very bit as valid as those listed in the planning statement.

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"Planning for the right number of homes and higher levels of affordable housing will take advantage of London's growth to re-balance the housing market."

Again that undefined buzz phrase "affordable housing" and at higher levels. I read "London mayor sets 35% affordable homes target in deal with developers", put another way 65% build will be un-affordable. How is that going to re-balance the housing market, add to that who going to decide the value of affordable. The developers or the Mayor, or just a cosy deal so they both come out smelling of roses, where's the input from the London public?

"Planning new developments to reduce car dependency will improve Londoners' health and make the city a better place to live."

An insidious use of the term "car dependency". Has the car no virtues, even with zero pollution? Goodbye, taxis then.

Page: [Policy GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities](#)

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"Traffic dominates too many streets across the city, dividing communities and limiting the interactions that take place in neighbourhoods and town centres."

If you have evidence of that statement please provide it. This is currently gibberish, just to input some more anti-car rhetoric. Traffic does not stop anyone from interacting.

Page: [Policy GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities](#)

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"Delivering good quality, affordable homes"

Without a financial definition of affordable this is just a meaningless catch phrase for politicians and developers. A financial definition is required so the public may judge for themselves that they are actually affordable. The terms "Minimum Wage" and "Living Wage" would be just as pointless if they never had a stated financial value.

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Section: [1.1.5](#)

"Early engagement with local people leads to better planning proposals,"

Couldn't agree more, unfortunately no sign of it happening.

Just the odd so called "consultation" that has a fixed agenda. We received a Consultation Questionnaire regarding a "Your Road Area 20mph Zone" from Greenwich Council.

An accompanying letter stated "Your views are important to us please take the time to read the consultation document and respond to the questionnaire".

The document wanted one opinion on a 20mph zone and speed humps, the whole kit and caboodle.

It implied the full works or none. As there are two adults in our household with differing views, I rang to request an additional questionnaire. I was informed it was only one questionnaire per household and we should therefore come to an agreement. I emailed the letter sender and suggested there was a fatal flaw in the consultation and it needs to be re-thought, because if "Your views are important to us" was a true statement then each adult should have been able to reply. I never did receive a reply, or a comment from the 3 councillors I copied in. I wouldn't call it consultation, just a "done deal".

Page: [Policy GG3 Creating a healthy city](#)

Section: [1.3.3](#)

"The causes of London's health problems are wide-ranging."

The above is the only true statement in this paragraph the rest is pure speculation and waffle.

Page: [Policy GG3 Creating a healthy city](#)

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"It will tackle London's inactivity crisis, improve air quality and reduce the other health impacts of living in a car-dominated city"

This document continues with it's anti-car agenda. With such a fixed agenda it will lead to very poor planning to the detriment of London.

Page: [Policy GG4 Delivering the homes Londoners need](#)

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The fact that terms "affordable homes/houses" and "genuinely affordable" are used, with no financial parameters invalidates the whole section for verification by Londoners.

Page: [Policy GG4 Delivering the homes Londoners need](#)

Section: [1.4.2](#)

Again the use of that unsubstantiated phrase "affordable housing", affordable to whom is the question? Affordable to those on high salaries only? Without financial parameters, Londoners are unable to judge if there is an actual delivery of said housing. Saying it, doesn't make it so.

Page: [Policy GG4 Delivering the homes Londoners need](#)

Section: [1.4.3](#)

At last numerical figures be used in this paragraph on homes and a new term "genuinely affordable", is this an admission that some of the "affordable home" so far built are not "genuinely affordable". A target of 50% is mentioned, so the other 50% is therefore unaffordable and no one can buy or rent it.

Page: [Introduction to Chapter 2](#)

Section: [2.0.7](#)

"genuinely affordable housing"

Here we go again. Strict financial parameters please, so we're all singing from the same song sheet.

Page: [Policy D8 Tall buildings](#)

Section: [N/A](#)

This section keeps referencing tall building and I agree they have a place. What worries me is this going to be a return to the 1950's tower disaster. Initially, tower blocks were welcomed, flats quickly thrown together and that just as quickly deteriorate causing neighbour isolation and rising crime rates.

Page: [Policy H1 Increasing housing supply](#)

Section: [Table 4.1](#)

Overall the targets listed show a lack of ambition. These targets should be the numbers the council themselves are building for council tenants. They would then be able to make them in the words of the document "100% genuinely affordable homes". Why should councils approve developer offers of builds with a miserly percentage of "affordable homes", not defined in any monetary value. Indeed the latest news in Greenwich is the council is buying existing housing stock at a cost of £46.5 million. I hope they are not using these bought houses against their targets. Surely £46.5 million would be better spent on building new houses.

Page: [Policy H7 Affordable housing tenure](#)

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Unfortunately this whole section make me think, that for the vast majority there is no such "affordable homes" will be out of reach. London Mayors past and present have not been up to the task.

Page: [Policy H7 Affordable housing tenure](#)

Section: [4.7.3](#)

"Within the broad definition of affordable housing[48], the Mayor's preferred affordable housing tenures are:

- London Affordable Rent
- London Living Rent
- London Shared Ownership.

These are described in more detail below"

At last, some details on what the plan believes is "affordable". Should be a glossary at the front of the document, in my opinion.

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Section: [4.7.4](#)

At last some financial details of affordable rents tracked down by a pointer to another document. Why aren't the figures in this document? I will list the weekly rent figures: Bedsit and one bedroom - £144.26; Two Bedrooms - £152.73; Three Bedroom - £161.22; Four Bedroom - 169.70; Five Bedroom - £178.18; Six Bedroom or More - £186.66. These are benchmark rent figures that will be updated each April by the increase in the CPI (for the previous September) plus 1%.

It would also be nice to have the number of properties that are using these Benchmark figures. My cynical guess is that at present none, certainly not in the private sector.

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Found the following in the London Housing Strategy document on the London Living Rent - Rents for these homes will be based on a third of local average household incomes – a widely accepted measure of housing affordability. All intermediate rented homes should provide at least a 20 per cent discount on market rents.

London Living Rent terms to vague and open to interpretation and the same across all boroughs. How do you determine the "local average household"

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Shared Ownership does not equate to homes. You just get a percentage of the property at market rate. You get a leasehold property, pay rent and ground rent. You're responsible for maintenance, any improvement that bring an increase in value is shared with the other part owner and will cost you if you want to increase your stake in the property. If the London Shared Ownership is different please elucidate.

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Section: [4.7.8](#)

"should be affordable to households on incomes of up to £60,000." and "should be affordable to households on incomes of up to £90,000."

'Reported in the press April 2017 - The most recent data from HMRC shows that the median average pre-tax income is around £22,400. An income of over £70,000 a year will actually put you in the top five per cent of all UK earners. By your own figures your targets are "affordable" for the few not the many. The caps definitely need looking at. A family with 2 on the median income don't have a chance, so what hope have those on a London Living wage have?

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Section: [4.7.9](#)

Instead of "Boroughs should seek to ensure that intermediate provision provides for households with a range of incomes below the upper limit.", why not "Boroughs should ensure that intermediate provision provides for households with a range of incomes below the upper limit." Otherwise you're just giving the boroughs an easy excuse.

Page: [Policy S1 Developing London's social infrastructure](#)

Section: [5.1.3](#)

Good luck with "It is therefore important that boroughs work collaboratively with service providers and other stakeholders". Too much politicising, nepotism and self interest abides in Greenwich in my opinion. I suspect it similar in many other boroughs.

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Section: [5.1.8](#)

"Social infrastructure should be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport"

No mention of parking or electric charging points for disabled vehicles.

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Section: [5.1.9](#)

The additional use or reuse of places of worship should be considered for providing accommodation for other traditions or faiths and/or wider community functions.

As long it voluntary and no undue pressure applied to the sitting tenants.

Page: [Policy T1 Strategic approach to transport](#)

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The entire section continues to demonise the car and fails to recognise it has a valid part to play in a transport system. Also noted that it does not seem to recognise black cabs as cars. It mentions "walking, cycling and public transport" and fails to recognise that for some this is not a valid option. We are an ageing population. Is it really expected that hordes of over fifties go out and buy a bicycle for the first time and then cause chaos on the roads because they don't know how to ride safely? It emphasises the use of cycling, government figures show only 12% cycle for any purpose more than once a week and that cycling accounts for just 2% of journeys in England and 70% of the over 18s never cycle. Our mayor just like the previous two would appear to have his own agenda and will not be swayed. Seems pointless in commenting more.

Page: [Policy T1 Strategic approach to transport](#)

Section: [10.1.1](#)

"ambitious aim to reduce Londoners' dependency on cars"

Why are you shouting this (bold type)? It just illustrates the anti-car bias of this document, shouting it does not make it fact. A mixed transport policy with good planning is something that London has not had under any of its mayors.

"Without this shift away from car use, London cannot continue to grow sustainably."

Where is the proof of this statement? If there is any truth in it, London would not be growing now, but it is. In my opinion one of the current main transport problem in central London is the growth in cycling by untrained riders. Many cyclists do not obey any road rules, the majority ignore traffic lights and zebra crossings with no thought to pedestrians (Boris bikes cyclists being the worst offenders). They delay and slow any motorised vehicle, which in turn increases pollution. There is an argument to license cycles and bring them in line with other road transport. Car use in London would naturally decline if there was a fully integrated reliable public transport system. So why even consider this plan to outlaw and penalise the car without first improving public transport?

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Section: [10.1.2](#)

"A shift from car use to more space-efficient travel also provides the only long-term solution to the road congestion"

Poppycock statement and untrue. How about a strategic transport and road network plan?