

Sent: 28 February 2018 10:50

To: Londonplan

Subject: BEXLEY CIVIC SOCIETY'S RESPONSE TO THE LONDON PLAN.

A key concern in Bexley is the target for housing development (Table 6.1), at 1245 p.a. We would prefer the target to be in line with Bexley Council's Growth Strategy, as the Council knows what can be achieved locally, in reality about half the Mayor's target. We are particularly concerned at the target in Table 4.2 that 865 houses p.a should be on small scale developments in existing housing areas. Bexley is mostly typical semi-detached suburbia over large areas, and also has areas of Victorian detached houses. These all benefit from generous gardens which help create a green borough and contribute to local ecology and biodiversity. When such areas are redeveloped sites typically get covered with blocks of flats and car parks, with very little green amenity space. Therefore such development erodes the greenery and biodiversity of the Borough. This policy is therefore contrary to the Mayor's aim of maximising urban greenery (Para 3.1.4) suggesting a conflict between the elements of the Plan.

Associated with this is our concern over policy E4, to retain industrial areas and prevent their redevelopment. In Bexley most large housing developments have been on brownfield sites in line with National Policy. In case in the majority of cases these have been on former industrial sites which have declined. The need to provide more housing in the Thames Gateway is most likely to take up former industrial area such as Belvedere and Erith, so we do not support Table 6.2.

Preventing development of such areas would put more pressure on green sites in order to meet housing targets. Locally there is general public support to redevelop former industrial areas, but strong resistance to building on green spaces.

In London office employment is more significant than manufacturing industry, and should be protected, yet the Government allows offices to be converted to flats without the need of planning permission. If the Mayor is so keen to protect employment, it would be more appropriate to create an Article 4 Direction across the whole of Greater London to bring all such changes of use into named planning control, to remove that permitted development. Bexley Civic Society welcome the continuing support for protecting the Green Belt from development.

Ken Chamberlain
Chairman
Bexley Civic Society.