

**Draft Replacement London Plan
London First Response
08/01/10**

1. INTRODUCTION

1. London First welcomes the opportunity to respond to the draft Replacement London Plan and will also be responding to the Mayor's transport, and economic development strategies.
2. London First is a business membership group whose aim is to make London the best city in the world in which to do business. We do this by mobilising the experience, expertise and enthusiasm of the private sector to develop practical solutions to the challenges London faces and to lobby government for the investment that London needs in its infrastructure. London First delivers its activities with the support of around 250 of the capital's major businesses in key sectors such as finance, professional services, property, creative industries, hospitality and retail. Our members represent around a quarter of London's GDP.
3. The draft replacement plan is being prepared at a critical time. Whilst it sets the policy framework to 2031, for the initial plan period the economy should be recovering from a deep recession. After six consecutive quarters of negative growth development viability is extremely fragile which, alongside weak occupier demand and poor availability of development finance will mean the development market remains extremely weak. Public finances are extremely constrained with little funding available for infrastructure investment for the foreseeable future. At the same time London continues to experience population growth and demographic change. The private sector accounts for 70% of the London economy and will be responsible for delivering much of the London Plan. It is therefore critical that policy is couched and applied in a sensitive way that encourages and does not restrain development and investment.
4. The Mayor should, in his decisions and in dealing with boroughs, stress the importance of facilitating development and encourage flexibility and realism in the level of obligations development can sustain. Clearer prioritisation is needed of the many obligations and requirements. This is particularly important as planning policy has changed from setting requirements that applications can reasonably be expected to meet, to raising the bar with consequent extensive negotiation, and a requirement to demonstrate why development cannot meet requirements.
5. Given the severe constraints on public sector funding and the inability of development to provide the level of s106 communities and planning authorities have been used to (and which policies seek), where there is insufficient funding (from development or public grant) for infrastructure difficult decisions will need to be made. In many instances development should still be allowed to proceed as it is needed in its own right, to deliver regeneration and investment, and will provide the case for future infrastructure funding. Whilst this might not be ideal, it is preferable to a moratorium on development which would be extremely damaging to London and the UK.

Accommodating London's Growth

6. London's population is forecast to grow to 8.89 million by 2031, an increase of 1.3 million or 17%. In the same period the number of households is forecast to increase by 79,000 or 25%. This is significant growth but must be accommodated if the poor affordability of housing in London is not to be worsened.
7. It is forecast that there will be an increase of 750,000 jobs in the plan period, 325,000 of which will be office based (2011-31), 58% in the CAZ and Isle of Dogs. 38% will be in financial and business services, about 20% in hotels and restaurants; and 5% in retail. Given the importance of London's economy nationally (accounting for 20% of national output and contributing up to £19 billion in taxes), and the rate of population growth forecast for London, it is vital that this growth is supported and accommodated.
8. It is therefore critical and welcome that the Plan retains, as its fundamental objective, the need to accommodate this growth. However, we are concerned that whilst the vision might be to "meet the challenges of economic and population growth" policies within the plan undermine this and will make it extremely difficult to do so. We do not consider that that the draft Plan as proposed is a Plan that will accommodate London's growth. This will have severe ramifications for the London and national economy as well as housing in the capital.
9. London's growth can be accommodated in a way that protects green space and respects the city's character and heritage. However, this does not have to be done through replicating what is already there and prohibiting development in areas which are perceived to be sensitive.
10. London First welcomes:
 - Support for rejuvenation of the town centre network, especially through mixed use redevelopment and pro-active management;
 - A positive and proactive approach to development in outer London;
 - Sensitive application of mixed use policy in the CAZ and use of land use swaps;
 - Support for rejuvenation of the West End and the preparation of a planning framework to support it;
 - Promotion of decentralised energy networks on a district basis and provision to allow developers to make off-site contributions;
 - Promotion of energy from waste and a pragmatic approach to addressing waste; and
 - A balanced approach to development near hazardous installations.

11. London First considers that:
- Clearer prioritisation of planning obligations and requirements is required. At a time of fragile viability, when Crossrail is the stated priority alongside affordable housing, the draft introduces new requirements such as affordable retail and workspace and urban greening in the CAZ;
 - The restrictive approach to development in the CAZ risks undermining London's competitiveness and attractiveness;
 - Use of land use swaps in outer London to facilitate office redevelopment is inappropriate and will frustrate development;
 - Policy should ensure that surplus industrial and employment land should be brought forward for mixed use and residential development;
 - The introduction of space standards will reduce development viability, housing delivery and affordability;
 - Overage is inappropriate in planning and risks preventing development and housing delivery;
 - Hotel development in the CAZ should not be restricted to Opportunity Areas, intensification should not be resisted and 'strategic loss' should not be prevented;
 - Retail diversity will not be achieved through s106 requirements to provide units for small and independent retailers. The requirement adds undue cost and complexity and could prevent development; and
 - Undue weight is given to protection of local character which could frustrate development and with it opportunities for environmental and public realm improvements.

For further information contact:
Judith Salomon
Director of Planning and Development
jsalomon@londonfirst.co.uk

CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT AND STRATEGY

12. We agree that there is a clear link between deprivation and housing (paragraph 1.28) which is why it is critical to proactively support estate regeneration and increased housing delivery. We welcome recognition that the cost of housing in London is a concern; the implications of policies in the Plan (such as minimum space standards) must be carefully considered to ensure they do not exacerbate the issue.
13. London First has established an infrastructure commission which will investigate London's long term infrastructure requirements in the context of population growth and drivers such climate change which will change the way we approach infrastructure design and delivery. It will report in autumn 2010.
14. London First welcomes the Mayor's focus on delivering high quality homes for London (paragraph 1.42). However, we have serious concerns about the introduction of space standards and design requirements in the draft London Housing Design Guide (LHDG). Well-designed housing does not necessarily mean larger homes; higher costs will seriously compromise viability, affordability and housing delivery in London.
15. We agree that accommodating London's growth presents opportunities as well as challenges. Paragraph 1.48 could be misinterpreted to be concerned about the latter without fully appreciating the former. It would be helpful to explain the opportunities:

THE DIRECTION OF PACE AND CHANGE OFFERS MANY OPPORTUNITIES, AS WELL AS CHALLENGES, SUCH AS PUBLIC REALM AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT; HIGH QUALITY FLOORSPACE FOR COMMERCE, RETAIL, LEISURE AS WELL AS NEW HOMES ENSURING A COMPETITIVE AND ATTRACTIVE CITY; EMPLOYMENT THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AS WELL AS FROM NEW OCCUPIERS; AND PROVISION OF NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES AS WELL AS FUNDING FOR TRANSPORT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE.

Policy 1.1 Delivering the strategic vision and objectives for London

16. We support the Mayor's vision for London. We are however concerned that the wording in policy 1.1, in particular "managed" could be misinterpreted as discouraging to development. We propose that the wording is amended to:

"Growth and change in London will be ACHIEVED IN A WAY THAT REALISES the Mayor's vision..."

CHAPTER 2: LONDON'S PLACES

Policy 2.1 London in its global, European and United Kingdom Context

17. We support policy 2.1 in particular that London should retain and extend its global role. As the driver of the UK economy, London has a crucial relationship with other UK cities which benefit from London's success, and suffer from London's decline. Accommodating economic growth is therefore critical to them as well as to London.
18. We agree that population and economic growth must be supported by appropriate investment in transport and social infrastructure as well as utility provision.

Policy 2.4 The 2012 Games and their legacy

19. We welcome the focus on delivering a legacy from the Olympic Games, and the ambition to close the deprivation gap between the host boroughs and the rest of London. The Olympics provide a critical opportunity to bring about much needed regeneration across the Lower Lea Valley; much wider than the Olympic park.
20. There will be significant growth in housing demand in the Olympic area; we welcome support for its delivery (B). The make-up of new housing should be based on robust evidence of need.
21. A sound economic future for the Olympic park is important (E), but we query whether it is appropriate to include site specific policy of this nature in a regional spatial strategy.

Policy 2.5 Sub regions

22. We note the changes to sub regional boundaries and welcome the re-creation of a central sub region. The sub regions should form a useful basis to plan for London's growth, and critically to ensure co-ordinated infrastructure planning and delivery. It is vital that infrastructure providers, including utilities, and business are involved in this.

Policy 2.7 Outer London Economy

23. Whilst economic performance in outer London may not be the same as for inner and central London, with 40% of London's jobs (paragraph 2.24) it cannot be considered to be a dormitory area (paragraph 2.25). We agree that as outer London is heterogeneous, a single policy approach is not appropriate.
24. As highlighted by the Outer London Commission, the employment situation is complex with residents commuting to central London and to areas outside the capital. As well as supporting business in outer London, it is also important to ensure that its residents are able to access jobs physically and through having the appropriate skills. We support a joined up approach to place-shaping and a focus on improving quality of life and of the environment. To achieve this, development should be encouraged and facilitated.
25. Development will also be important for outer London to 'rise above its long term economic trends' as sought in paragraph A. It is critical, as set out in the policy, to balance economic with environmental and other objectives, and use the opportunity from development to improve the environment.

26. We support improved accessibility to competitive business locations (c). Decisions on public transport investment must be on the basis of rigorous cost benefit analysis and consequent value for money and prioritisation.
27. We welcome encouragement for mixed use intensification in town centres (e) as well as active management through business improvement districts or other schemes. This was a key finding of London First's Retail Commission¹ as a means to encourage retail diversity and support retailers. It may be necessary for the retail capacity of some centres to be increased to achieve the objectives of this policy. The following should be added:
- “enhancing the vibrancy of town centres through higher density, INCREASED RETAIL CAPACITY (SUBJECT TO POLICY 4.7)...”
28. Proactive development, including use of compulsory purchase to assemble sites (h), will be important to revitalise many centres as will office consolidation (g). Where there is no longer demand for offices redevelopment for mixed uses including housing will bring vitality as well as environmental and public realm improvements.
29. We do not support the concept of land use swaps in outer London (g) as part of office redevelopment. Where offices are surplus they should be redeveloped to bring vitality and make the best use of land. It should not be necessary to re-provide offices elsewhere.
30. The use of land use swaps in central London operates in very different circumstances, in a much smaller area and with fewer, larger developers who can use their extensive holdings to meet policy requirements. Expecting re-provision of offices in outer London is likely to require the purchase of additional sites. This is onerous and adds undue complexity to the development process. This may lead to developers to decide not to redevelop which will undermine objectives to revitalise town centres and deliver housing. No justification is provided to support the policy and it is not clear whether any such re-provision is expected on a borough, sub-regional or pan-outer London basis, or even within central London.
31. Industrial land (i) should only be retained where there is evidence of clear demand. Boroughs should investigate opportunities for consolidation in light of reduced demand and reduced land take stemming from modern practices. In accordance with PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, December 2009) boroughs should assess employment land designations (for offices and industry) against the objectives of the PPS, especially if they are for single or restrictive uses (policy EC1.3 d).
32. We welcome co-ordination of public sector investment in tandem with that of the private sector (j). This should include ensuring that facilities provided through s106 such as community centres and doctors' surgeries have identified end users and are occupied upon completion.
33. We support effective co-ordination of outer London visitor attractions (k). This will be particularly important during and after the Olympic Games, to take full advantage of increased tourism.

¹ “Reinvigorating the High Street; encouraging retail diversity and supporting town centres in London” London First Retail Commission, October 2009

34. We support the hub and spoke approach to transport focused on town centres and agree that high speed public orbital transport is not deliverable, especially in light of the severe funding constraints for the foreseeable future.
35. We support the policy direction for inner London. We note the reference to the need for family housing (paragraph 2.38). Any requirements should be on the basis of clear evidence.

Policy 2.10 Central Activities Zone – strategic priorities

36. The role of the London Plan is to provide the strategic element of the development plan; complementing local policy. Applications are determined against the whole development plan, balancing different policy objectives and requirements. It is therefore critical that the London Plan addresses the CAZ, from a strategic perspective.
37. Proposed policy for the CAZ fails to meet the requirements of national policy in PPS4 and Circular 1/2008 nor the Plan's stated objective to accommodate the 54% of forecast office demand (2.25 million m²) identified for the CAZ (table 4.1) and paragraph 4.10 which states that:
- “The Mayor is concerned that the planning process should not compromise potential growth...”
38. National policy in PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, December, 2009) requires that regional policy (EC2.1) to plan:
- “sets out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth...”
39. And that policy:
- “supports existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identifies and plans for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area, such as those producing low carbon goods or services. However, policies should be flexible enough to accommodate sectors not anticipated in the plan and allow a quick response to changes in economic circumstances.”
40. Given its importance, GOL Circular 1/2008 sets out how the CAZ should be addressed in the London Plan (paragraph 2.27 The central area: London's capital and world city roles):
- “Many activities, institutions and facilities of national and international importance are located in the central area of London. Protecting and enhancing the economic well being, amenity and environmental quality of this core area is essential to the maintenance of London's capital and world city roles. Because of the strategic importance of this area, the SDS should:
- identify the broad extent of the central area and the national and strategic functions it serves;
 - include policies for protecting and enhancing those functions;”

41. GOL Circular 1/2008 also requires that the London Plan sets out policies:
 “Promoting economic development and wealth creation in Greater London;”
42. The importance of the CAZ, the need to plan for economic growth and the Mayor’s stated objective that the planning process should not compromise growth potential is not reflected in the restrictive approach to development in the CAZ which does not adopt a positive or proactive approach to planning for growth nor does it support the country’s most important business cluster.
43. The complexity of the application of mixed use policy in such a constrained area makes the use of land use swaps and credits essential to both support the commercial purpose of the CAZ and deliver housing, made more challenging by the increased housing target in Westminster.
44. The CAZ is unique because of the mix of commercial, cultural and tourist uses. Its designation stems from this unique and important agglomeration. Whilst there are local uses, which policy should recognise, they should not be given undue prominence as they are not unique to the CAZ or the reason for its designation. Paragraph a should therefore be amended:
 “...supporting the distinct offer of the Zone based on a rich mix of local as well as ITS strategic uses, forming the globally iconic core of one of the world’s most attractive and competitive business locations, AS WELL AS LOCAL USES.”
45. Inherent in the CAZ designation is that it is appropriate for a mix of commercial uses. Development should therefore not be restricted within the CAZ. Local sensitivities will be addressed through the planning application process. Paragraph b should be amended:
 “~~in appropriate quarters~~ Bring forward development capacity....without compromising the attractions of the PREDOMINANTLY residential neighbourhoods...”
46. Achieving a sensitive balance between housing and the CAZ’s other functions is critical. We welcome recognition (paragraph 2.54 and policy 2.12) that housing should not compromise the strategic functions of the CAZ. The need for sensitive application of mixed use policy (policy 2.12 a) “to ensure that housing does not compromise CAZ strategic functions” should be included in paragraph b of policy 2.10.
47. The inference in paragraph d is that outside appropriate parts of the CAZ and north of the Isle of Dogs ‘strategic constraint of offices’ would be appropriate. This cannot be right given the purpose of the CAZ and its designation. Paragraph d should be amended:
 “~~in appropriate parts of the CAZ and the related area in the north of the Isle of Dogs~~ ensure that provision is not strategically constrained and that provision is made for a range of occupiers...”
48. Inherent in the purpose of all development frameworks is benefit for local communities, this therefore does not need to be explicitly restated in paragraph g:
 “...bring forward and implement development frameworks for CAZ Opportunity and Intensification Areas to benefit local communities as well as providing TO PROVIDE additional high quality, strategic development capacity,”

Policy 2.11 Central Activities Zone – Strategic Functions

49. We support policy 2.11 and in particular the need to improve and increase retail capacity, the need for completion of essential transport including Crossrail and the need to realise resultant uplifts in development capacity. Critical to improving the attractiveness of the Zone will also be public realm improvements.
50. Alongside transport (Crossrail), public realm should be the priority for planning obligations in the CAZ.
51. Appropriate provision for servicing and deliveries is critical to the functioning of the CAZ. Paragraph h should be amended to reflect this:
- “secure completion of essential new transport schemes necessary to support the roles of the CAZ, including Crossrail; maintain and enhance the transport and other essential infrastructure and services INCLUDING FOR SERVICING AND DELIVERY;
- “; and enable CAZ uses to contribute to provision of these transport investments AS WELL AS PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS.”
52. We welcome the support for flexible application of mixed use policies and use of ‘swaps’ and ‘credits’ within or beyond the CAZ.

Policy 2.12 Central Activities Zone – predominantly local uses

53. We welcome recognition of the importance of ensuring that housing as part of mixed use development does not compromise strategic CAZ functions. This would fit better in paragraph b of policy 2.10.

Policy 2.13 Opportunity Areas and intensification areas

54. We support the designation of Opportunity Areas and Areas for Intensification which have acted as very useful designations to promote major development and investment in infrastructure. There is however a risk, in a climate in which both public and private sector funding for infrastructure is limited, that plans for some areas could lack deliverability and that resources are spread too thinly. Boroughs should therefore be encouraged to ensure that the boundaries of Opportunity and Intensification areas should be drawn to include private sector-led development that can act as a catalyst for regeneration of the wider area, especially as these areas will also be used to target the Mayor’s and partners’ investment (see EDS Proposals 5D and 5E). The following should be inserted under the Mayor’s actions in policy 2.13 stating that the Mayor will:
- “SEEK TO ENSURE THAT DETAILED BOUNDARIES OF OPPORTUNITY AREAS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AS WELL AS PLANNED CAPACITY, AND WORK WITH STRATEGIC AND LOCAL PARTNERS TO IDENTIFY SHORT TERM OPPORTUNITIES TO DELIVER HOMES AND JOBS, AS WELL AS LONGER TERM PROJECTS WHICH REQUIRE MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT.”

- 55. This is particularly significant in some of the larger Opportunity Areas such as the Upper Lea Valley, London Riverside, and Vauxhall Nine Elms, which have both immediate development opportunities in more accessible locations as well as large scale sites which require major transport investment, as noted in Annex 1 to the draft replacement plan.
- 56. Table A1.1 could clarify, where appropriate, short, medium and long term actions in the Opportunity Areas to achieve the housing and employment targets given the very significant role they will play in achieving overall London Plan objectives with a combined identified capacity for a minimum of 250,000 homes and 475,000 jobs. This would allow for more effective monitoring of progress in these areas.

Policy 2.15 Town Centres

- 57. We agree that town centres play a critical role across London and are critical to the quality of life of many Londoners.
- 58. Servicing and deliveries are critical to the functioning of town centres. Ensuring appropriate provision should be a priority alongside reducing conflict and negative impact on the public realm. Paragraph h should be amended:

 “IMPROVE PROVISION FOR SERVICING AND DELIVERIES WHILST reducing delivery, servicing and road user conflict, AND IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC REALM.”
- 59. Alongside planning to accommodate growth in the town centre network, and the promotion of pro-active management, it is critical that boroughs recognise and manage centres that are in decline. PPS 4 (Planning Sustainable Economic Growth, December 2009) sets out that (policy EC3.1, b iii and iv) local authorities should:

 “where existing centres are in decline, considered the scope for consolidating and strengthening these centres by seeking to focus a wider range of services there, promoting the diversification of uses and improving the environment.

 where reversing decline in existing centres is not possible, considered reclassifying the centre at a lower level within the hierarchy of centres, reflecting this revised status in the policies applied to the area. This may include allowing retail units to change to other uses, whilst aiming, wherever possible, to retain opportunities for vital local services.”
- 60. Policy 2.5 should therefore include guidance for boroughs to pro-actively address centres in decline.

Policy 2.16 Strategic Outer London Development Centres

- 61. We support designation of Outer London Development centres as foci for growth. Strategic functions should be consistent with and reflect extant planning permissions. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Mayor to ensure that the private sector is fully engaged in identifying the strategic potential of these locations.

Policy 2.17 Strategic Industrial Locations

62. In accordance with national policy in PPS4 (planning for sustainable economic growth, December 2009) and as per our comments on 2.7i, employment land should only be retained where there is clear evidence that it is needed. Unjustified retention of historic designations causes blight and frustrates the delivery of other important development, including housing. PPS3 (Housing, November 2006) states that the planning system should ensure:

“A flexible, responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land.”

63. Reduced demand and modern practices mean that less land is needed to accommodate industrial functions. The changing nature of industrial practices also means that many industrial uses can locate near sensitive uses such as housing.

64. Consideration of development proposals should have regard to the quality of existing provision (as per policy 4.4 paragraph e). The following should be added to Bd:

“QUALITY AND FITNESS FOR PURPOSE OF SITES.”

Policy 2.18 Green Infrastructure: the network of open and natural spaces

65. Enhancements to green infrastructure and provision of open space should be considered within the context of the Mayor’s other planning obligation priorities and planning requirements, the viability of development and practicality of delivery including physical site constraints. Development should only contribute to its impact on Open Space, and should not remedy existing deficiencies. The policy should be amended:

“Enhancements to London’s green infrastructure should be sought from development WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE and where a proposal falls within a regional or metropolitan park deficiency area, it should contribute to addressing this need WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE.”

“Development proposals should incorporate elements of open space WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE”.

66. The reasoned justification should explain that this should be assessed in the context of other requirements and obligations.

CHAPTER 3. LONDON'S PEOPLE

67. We welcome the Mayor's commitment to deliver more homes which is critical in light of London's population growth and demographic change. We also welcome the commitment to delivering strong communities and neighbourhoods and housing that caters for a diverse population. Achieving this will mean enabling choice and flexibility through housing type and tenure, and supporting the delivery of homes that meet demand. Given the fragile state of the housing market, policies must be sensitive to viability and the need to encourage and not restrain supply. Housing starts in London are 70% lower than 2008 and have fallen at a greater rate than nationally².
68. Whilst family housing is important, that half of household growth will be single person households³ should be reflected in new supply. The GLA Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 highlights (figure 8) that 29% of existing households are single person and a further 20% adult couples: 60% of existing households need one bedroom homes. The overall increase in single person households (2001-26) is forecast to be 49-56% (paragraph 6.27); far higher than the overall rate of growth (figure 80). This full picture needs to be reflected in the consideration of dwelling mix in new developments, as well as the profile of the existing local housing stock.
69. We agree that London is a highly complex housing market and should be treated as a single housing market area.

Policy 3.3 Increasing housing supply

70. We welcome the annual housing target of 33,400 new homes (A), which reflects the pressing need for new housing in London as a result of demographic change, population growth and to make up for past under-supply. We note that the National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit estimate that the target could be as high as 44,700 units, highlighting the urgent need to increase housing supply and demonstrating the importance that the target is a minimum to be exceeded.
71. In light of this, the housing target should be expressed simply as a minimum, and not an annual average:
- “...the Mayor will seek ANNUAL provision of at least an annual average of 33,400 additional homes across London...”
72. Achieving the target will be extremely challenging, especially in the short to medium term as the economy recovers from recession. It is therefore critical that policies encourage and do not restrain development. In particular affordable housing policy and planning obligations must be sensitive to development viability. Requirements such as minimum space standards will reduce viability, affordability and the delivery of development and must be considered carefully in this light.
73. Mixed use redevelopment of surplus commercial capacity will be important to increase housing supply (d), improve the environment, bring vitality to town centres and make the best use of land. The proposed use of 'land use swaps' in Outer London (policy 2.7g) would prevent mixed use redevelopment (see comments on policy 2.7).

² NHBC statistics, April 2009, <http://www.nhbc.co.uk/NewsandComment/Name,37649,en.html>

³ CLG, Household estimates and projections by household type and region, England, 1997-2031

74. We welcome the Mayor's announcement on 3 November⁴ that more than 30,000 new homes could be delivered through freeing up public land. The use of surplus public land should be included:
- "D DEVELOPMENT OF SURPLUS PUBLIC LAND."
75. Review of housing sites (E) should include land allocated for employment which is surplus or could be consolidated to enable mixed use redevelopment.
76. Uncertainty in delivery of individual sites (paragraph 3.21) makes it more critical that boroughs take a positive and proactive approach to housing delivery, ensuring that the level of planning permissions granted recognises that not all will be delivered.

Policy 3.4 Optimising housing potential

77. Making the best use of land is critical to increasing housing delivery. Local context should influence, not dictate, the density and form of new development. Rigorous appreciation of density should include consideration of the range of factors in the policy and the need to make the best use of land. Some of London's highest value and most popular neighbourhoods are also the highest density. Consideration of density should therefore not focus on the calculations but on the quality of the proposed environment. The objective should be to increase housing supply by providing the highest appropriate density of development compatible with (but not replicating) local character and a high quality environment.
78. National policy (PPS3, Housing, 2006) recognises that well-designed higher density new development is appropriate in sensitive areas including Conservation Areas (paragraph 49):
- "when well designed and built in the right location, it [more intensive development] can enhance the character and quality of an area. Successful intensification need not mean high rise development or low quality accommodation with inappropriate space. Similarly, in Conservation Areas and other local areas of special character where, if proper attention is paid to achieving good design, new development opportunities can be taken without adverse impacts on their character or appearance."
79. PPS3 goes on to say (paragraph 50) that:
- "The density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring replication of the existing style or form. If done well, imaginative design and layout of new development can lead to more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment." Our emphasis.

Policy 3.5 Quality and design of housing developments

80. We welcome and support the Mayor's desire to improve the quality of housing development and ensure that Londoners have a 'genuine choice of homes they can afford'.
81. Careful consideration is needed as to the reasons that the quality of new homes might not meet the Mayor's expectations and how they can best be improved, encouraging and enabling innovation and ensuring that Londoners do have a

⁴ Mayor frees up land for second stage of London's housing revolution, 3/11/09, 551

choice of homes which they can afford. Previous attempts to improve standards (such as Parker Morris) did not improve the quality of housing. Larger homes are not necessarily better homes.

82. Critical to the success of new guidance will be how it is couched and how it is applied. There will inevitably be trade-offs between different aspirations, and with wider policy, boroughs and applicants need to be advised on how these are best addressed with a realistic understanding that not all aspects can or will be achieved. Without this, we are concerned that the Mayor's proposals will reduce development viability and housing delivery, exacerbate poor affordability and stifle innovation.
83. Housing development is subject to substantial and onerous planning obligations and requirements including affordable housing, contributions to transport and community infrastructure, provision of open and child play space and measures to adapt to and mitigate climate change. Whilst these may all be important in their own right, the cumulative cost, alongside planning policy to increase housing output, has led to increased development density. It has become necessary to accommodate more on sites to meet the cost of these requirements. Thorough examination of the costs of housing development should result in clear prioritisation, recognising that trade-offs are needed between different requirements and objectives.
84. Minimum space standards (C) increase the cost of the delivery and financial viability by reducing what can be accommodated on sites, and reduce affordability for occupiers. Viability is reduced further when coupled with other requirements in the Mayor's draft London Housing Design Guide such as minimum ceiling heights, dual aspect and maximum units per core (although we understand that it will be clarified that this is not applicable to market housing). This is particularly concerning when the development market is so weak, yet housing need remains strong. A full viability appraisal should assess the impact of proposals on development density, cost and planning obligations.
85. Increasing the size of units increases the cost and thereby further reduces affordability. This is particularly important for those on moderate incomes and first time buyers. The average deposit required by first time buyers has risen from 10% to 25%, with the value of the average deposit now exceeding the average first time buyer's annual income⁵.
86. For market housing, consideration should be given to the relationship between size and cost, with recognition that many people would choose to purchase a smaller unit if it would allow them to get on the housing ladder. Precluding this would reduce choice and will increase pressure on the supply of social and rented housing which undermines the Mayor's commitment to promote "a real choice of homes for Londoners across the range of tenures to meet their needs at a price they can afford" (paragraph 3.38).
87. Where housing is delivered as part of mixed use policies, the floorspace for housing is determined by the uplift in commercial floorspace. As the floorspace is fixed, space standards will reduce the number of units delivered making it harder to meet housing targets, at a time when they are being increased.

⁵ GLA calculations based on CML Data, GLA London Housing Market Report, Quarter 3 2009

88. Any proposals for the introduction of minimum space standards must be on the basis of sound evidence which examines the impact of delivery and affordability, understands the impact on demand and off-sets the increase in cost to the developer against other planning obligations and requirements.
89. We oppose a ‘new vernacular’ in housing architecture that simply seeks to replicate existing character (paragraph 3.33). In many parts of London it will be important that development creates a new, better character. To meet the challenging housing targets seeking to address rising demand and poor affordability in London, density will have to increase in many places. This can, and should, be achieved through high quality design.
90. We do not consider it appropriate for developers to state the number of occupiers a home is designed to accommodate (paragraph 3.30). The level of occupation is not a matter that the developer can control.

Policy 3.6 Children and young people’s play and informal recreation facilities

91. We support the principle of providing for child play and informal recreation space in development where appropriate. We question how in some schemes, especially in central London sites and other high value land areas, provision can economically be made.
92. Provision should be considered and prioritised alongside other requirements and obligations. Consideration should be made of existing provision within the vicinity of the development. Paragraph B should be amended:
 “...based on the expected child population generated by the scheme, ~~and an~~ assessment of future needs AND EXISTING PROVISION WITHIN THE VICINITY OF THE SITE.”
93. Provision of play space should only be considered for development that includes family housing (paragraph 3.35).
94. We support contributions to improving off-site provision which serve a wider population where this is more appropriate. This will be particularly important in constrained areas such as in central London.

Policy 3.7 Large residential developments

95. Whilst planning frameworks are helpful for large developments in co-ordinating infrastructure provision, where frameworks do not exist this should not delay development as long as there is appropriate and thorough consultation with relevant stakeholders and infrastructure providers. Paragraph B should be amended:
 “Those on sites of over five hectares or capable of accommodating more than 500 dwellings should NORMALLY be subject to planning framework...”

Policy 3.8 Housing choice

96. We welcome support for the private rented sector which plays an important role in meeting housing needs in London (Ba) and the Mayor's work with the Homes and Communities Agency to encourage institutional investment in the sector. We note that the Mayor is investigating how a change in the Use Class Order might assist provision; this must examine the benefits of a specific use class against the consequent restrictions to future changes.
97. Provision of affordable family housing should be a priority where supported by strategic housing assessments and should be accompanied by initiatives to make better use of the existing housing stock (Bb).
98. Provision of accommodation for the elderly (Be) is important to meet the needs of an aging population and to free up, often larger, properties that would otherwise be under-occupied. We oppose application of affordable housing requirements to the provision of accommodation for the elderly (paragraph 3.43) as this is likely to frustrate delivery of this important accommodation.
99. We welcome support (g) for the provision of student housing. This is important to accommodate growth in student numbers including those from overseas, as highlighted by the Mayor. The HE sector is an important part of the London economy. The total income of the UK HE sector (year to July 2008) was £23.4 billion; London accounted for 21% of this or £5 billion. London HE institutions are awarded £900 million in research income⁶. London's higher education institutions generate £11 billion each year in goods and services within the UK and £1 billion in export earnings.
100. 404,000 HE students were registered in London during 2007/08, an increase from the previous academic year of 10,000 students; almost a fifth of all UK students. A quarter of London's students are from overseas, from over 200 countries, accounting for 25% of all UK international students⁷. London's international students contributed £1.5 billion to UK GDP in 2005/2006 and supported over 40,000 jobs⁸.
101. Provision of student housing is important to support the existing and growing student population, from the UK and overseas. Much of the existing stock is out dated and of poor quality and requires redevelopment to ensure institutions remain competitive. In addition, the growing number of students, including from overseas, increases demand for student housing. Increased provision of bespoke student housing will also free up larger rental properties.
102. We are concerned that support "without compromising capacity for conventional homes" will undermine the Mayor's support for student housing. In a highly constrained city where there are many competing demands for land it is inevitable that development of one land use will have an impact on another. Student accommodation is an important land use which will also free up other housing for general use. The policy should be amended:

"Strategic and local requirements for student housing meeting a demonstrable need are addressed by working closely with higher and further education agencies. ~~And without compromising capacity for conventional homes.~~

⁶ London Higher

⁷ London Higher

⁸ Oxford Economics, The Economic Impact of International Students, July 2007

103. The concentration of student accommodation in central London reflects the concentration of higher education institutions and that demand is strongest in the centre, especially from overseas students. We do not support policy on ‘dispersal’ (paragraph 3.45).
104. Consideration should be given to including student housing within affordable housing provision as part of intermediate provision, albeit recognising that it will not receive public subsidy. This will be particularly relevant on larger sites and in Opportunity Areas and will contribute to the wider housing mix.
105. We understand the Mayor is concerned that student accommodation should be used exclusively by students. Requiring that student housing contributes to affordable housing will frustrate delivery. The wording in paragraph 3.45 should be amended:
- “THE MAYOR IS CONCERNED THAT HOUSING BUILT FOR STUDENTS IS USED BY THEM AND WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THIS THROUGH PLANNING CONDITIONS. WHERE THIS IS NOT THE CASE ACCOMMODATION MAY BE SUBJECT TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENTS.”
106. We welcome the Mayor’s commitment to provide a real choice of homes for Londoners at prices they can afford (paragraph 3.38). This needs to be considered alongside policies such as minimum space standards that will reduce the affordability of housing.
107. The ‘substantial projected growth in smaller households’ which make up 50% of household growth, needs to be better reflected in policy.
108. Intermediate housing is very important to much of the workforce who earn too much to be eligible for social housing but cannot access market housing. We welcome initiatives to encourage intermediate provision, including increasing the proportion sought in the make-up of affordable housing. In areas of high public transport accessibility, near centres of employment (such as central London) and where there is a high existing concentration of social housing, a greater proportion of intermediate could be appropriate.
109. Rigid application of policies such as minimum space standards could frustrate the delivery of intermediate housing, especially that which does not require public subsidy.
110. We note that the SHMA demonstrates that there is ‘little net requirement Londonwide for larger market homes’ (paragraph 3.41). This should be better reflected in the draft Plan and is supported by DCLG survey of household data (January 2009) which shows that:
- 26% of owner occupiers are single person households and 39% are couples without children: 65% of those of owner occupiers therefore need a one bedroom unit
 - 26% of those in private rented housing are single person households and 33% are couples without children: 59% of those in private rented housing therefore need a one bedroom unit
 - 61% of the total stock is occupied by those needing one bedroom.

Policy 3.9 Gypsy and travellers (including travelling show people)

111. Given the very high demand for housing in London, competing demands for land (especially in central London) and the consequent need to make the best use of existing sites, we question the appropriateness of providing a further 538 pitches in London. The land allocated for these pitches, if used for conventional housing, would be able to accommodate more people. We note that 72% of the need identified in the GTAA is from those already living in bricks and mortar accommodation and question whether it is the best use of scarce land to seek to re-house them. Assessment of the appropriateness of provision should take account of the opportunity cost in terms of units of allocating land for pitches rather than conventional housing.
112. Paragraph 3.49 should be amended to 538 pitches, rather than 538 pitches per annum.

Policy 3.10 Mixed and balanced communities

113. We welcome promotion of mixed and balanced communities and in particular a more balanced approach where social renting predominates (B). This will be particularly important in estate renewal projects which should incorporate market and intermediate housing to provide a more balanced community.

Policy 3.11 Definition of affordable housing

114. The assertion that the greatest intermediate housing need is for larger homes should be supported by evidence (paragraph 3.56).

Policy 3.12 Affordable housing targets

115. We note that the Mayor is seeking 13,200 affordable homes a year. Whilst this represents 39% of the overall housing target it should be clear that this should not be taken to be a strategic 39% housing target as it takes account of all sources of supply including 100% affordable housing developments.
116. It will be extremely challenging to deliver the new housing target in the current market. It is critical that affordable housing requirements in LDFs and on individual sites are sensitive to development viability and the need to increase housing delivery. It is also critical, in the interests of mixed and balanced community, that housing supply is balanced and that the onus is not on affordable housing delivery.
117. We welcome the change to a 60:40 social/intermediate split. This better reflects the pressing need to provide housing for those unable to access market housing but who earn too much to qualify for social housing. Family housing should be the priority where supported by evidence of need (A and Cb).
118. Viability of development is a critical consideration (f). If development is not viable and does not happen it will reduce affordable housing supply as well as market supply. Affordable housing provision should be considered alongside other planning obligations. Paragraph f should be amended:

“The viability of future development, taking into account future ~~resources~~ PUBLIC SUBSIDY as far as possible AS WELL AS THE COST OF OTHER PLANNING OBLIGATIONS.”

119. We note that targets can be expressed in absolute terms as well as proportionately (A – which should be D). The advantage of proportionate targets is that they provide some certainty and clarity for developers and those considering selling land for housing development. It is critical that targets are reflected in clear policy to ensure that those considering buying or selling sites are able to assess the likely level of affordable housing provision that will be required. Without this the supply of land for housing could be severely diminished.

Policy 3.13 Negotiating affordable housing on individual private residential schemes

120. Maximum reasonable affordable housing provision should additionally take account of:
- “OTHER PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS.”
121. In the current development market, viability at the time of the original grant of planning permission will be marginal but should increase over the life of the project. The public sector is concerned that the development will not be able to meet planning obligation requirements at the outset but this should change.
122. Whilst phased and deferred payments of s106 can be a partial solution to addressing development viability, this should not be confused with overage (B) which is a very different issue and is an increasing concern.
123. The concept of overage stems from land deals where a land owner is rewarded in return for the holding they are disposing of. Where overage is applied this is essentially risk transfer, usually following from an original price agreed. In effect both parties agree that the overall price payable is split over time, albeit with a mechanism that has regard to market movements so to appropriately reward the land owner for the delayed payment. This is wholly different from a statutory authority with no interest in a proposed development or land seeking to benefit from subsequent value increases. Overage should also be distinguished from cascade or other such provisions which operate having regard to specific events happening or not i.e. obtaining grant funding.
124. Financial returns must recognise and reward risk. Long term or complex projects, whether or not they are phased, often involve the developer taking on significant up front risks. Overage provisions cannot take into the account the significant risk the developer is taking on in firstly implementing the scheme and secondly any financial downside, due to the market or other factors, prior to (or after) completion of the various components of the scheme. If there is an upside, above the expected levels shown in an appraisal at the outset, this is the reward that the developer is justified in receiving for the risks taken with a project.
125. This is especially concerning at a time where viability is fragile at best and developers, and crucially their banks, need as much certainty as possible. Overage is a further risk that undermines the ability to raise finance.
126. The policy and supporting text should be amended:
- B Negotiations on sites should take account of their individual circumstances including development viability, the availability of public subsidy, OTHER SCHEME REQUIREMENTS AND the implications of phased development including, ~~‘overage’ provisions~~ WHICH MAY INCLUDE, WHERE APPROPRIATE, RE-APPRAISAL OF VIABILITY PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION. ~~and other scheme requirements.~~

127. Paragraph 3.68 should be amended:

In making arrangements for ~~deferring~~ ASSESSING planning obligations, ~~or for the local authority retaining equity,~~ boroughs should consider whether it is appropriate to put 'overage' RE-APPRAISAL provisions in place, PRIOR TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHEME OR PHASE OF A PARTICULAR DEVELOPMENT. ~~Particularly in current economic circumstances, and in respect of~~ WHERE schemes ARE presently anticipated to deliver low levels of affordable housing, these provisions may be used to ensure that maximum public benefit is secured from increases in viability, DURING THE LIFETIME OF A PLANNING PERMISSION, above assumptions made at the time ~~consent~~ PLANNING PERMISSION is granted. GUIDANCE ON HOW THIS CAN BE DONE WILL BE PROVIDED IN A TECHNICAL NOTE.

128. Opportunities for development value to subsidise affordable housing delivery (paragraph 3.65) will be extremely limited, especially in the foreseeable future. Planning authorities must be realistic about development viability and the costs that schemes can bear. Cascade agreements are particularly important given the uncertainty about future grant availability.
129. We welcome recognition that in the CAZ off-site affordable housing provision represents the most effective use of land (paragraph 3.68). This should not be restricted to 'parts of' the CAZ.

Policy 3.14 Affordable housing thresholds

130. Proposals to lower the threshold for affordable housing contributions below ten units, particularly where larger dwellings are being built, must be balanced against the need to increase housing delivery and other demands on development. Large units play a particular role in the London housing market, especially in central London, as do smaller windfall sites.
131. Contributions towards affordable housing on small sites should not compromise delivery, and should, as per policy 3.13, take account of individual circumstances including viability.

Policy 3.15 Existing housing

132. The Mayor should encourage proactive management of existing social housing stock, tackling under-occupation, and encouraging people to move up the housing tenure ladder where appropriate, freeing up affordable family housing. Innovative initiatives should bring empty social homes back into use and encourage and assist those who can access intermediate and market housing to do so; those that do not need or want to be located in London to relocate; and those whose families have left home to move to smaller accommodation.
133. London has a large stock of social housing: 23% of the stock compared with 17% nationally⁹: 746,000 of London's 3.2 million housing units are rented from a local authority or RSL. This is an important resource and it is critical that London makes the best use of it.

⁹ CLG Live Table 109: Tenure by region

Policy 3.17 Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure

134. We support co-ordinated and timely provision of social infrastructure. Infrastructure plans as required in PPS12 should aid this.

Policy 3.19 Education Facilities

135. Paragraph 3.100 should be amended to be consistent with earlier statements such as paragraph 3.45:

“The Mayor will support and provide a forum for higher education institutions (HEIs) and further educational establishments to work...”

CHAPTER 4. LONDON'S ECONOMY

136. The Mayor's draft Economic Development Strategy seeks to ensure a positive framework for business without 'picking winners' which is also stated in paragraph 4.5. We support this approach and consider that whilst sectors such as the green economy may provide opportunities, the Plan should focus on creating the right environment for all business.
137. The London economy is critical to national economic well being. London accounts for 20.6% of economic output (GVA, 2008) with only 12% of the population; £108 billion of imports from the rest of UK; and £124 billion of exports to the rest of the UK. Its net annual tax contribution is between £14.3 and £19.4 billion.¹⁰ London was responsible for a fifth of UK GDP growth between 1994 and 2004.¹¹
138. It is therefore of national importance that the economy is given appropriate support in the London Plan.

Policy 4.1 Developing London's Economy

139. The development of London's economy should be promoted, supported and enabled. Paragraph Aa should be amended:
"Promote, SUPPORT, and enable..."
140. The crucial role of central London should be supported and promoted. Paragraph Ad should be amended:
"Support AND PROMOTE the distinctive..."
141. Alongside the emphasis on outer London (paragraph 4.4), the importance of central London should be further emphasised. Paragraph 4.4 should be amended:
"AS WELL AS THE IMPORTANCE OF CENTRAL LONDON, particular emphasis will be placed...."
142. Important business clusters (professional and financial services) in the West End should be recognised. Paragraph 4.5 should be amended:
"...including those clusters in the WEST END, City and north of the Isle of Dogs..."
143. We strongly oppose the use of s106 agreements to secure affordable workspace, particularly in the CAZ (paragraph 4.7) which add to the cost and complexity of development which already incurs significant planning requirements and obligations.

¹⁰ LSE for the City of London, London's Place in the UK economy, 2009-10; Centre for Cities, London's links: who benefits from London's success, 2007.

¹¹ National Statistics/ Greater London Authority, "Focus on London 2007", August 2007 in table 6.3,

Policy 4.2 Offices

144. Policy should support the provision of offices through development and redevelopment. In areas of strong demand the emphasis should be on office development. In centres such as in outer London where there is weak demand, mixed use redevelopment is appropriate and should be encouraged.
145. Mixed use redevelopment diminishes the level of office provision, especially in areas where development is highly constrained such as the West End. It should only be promoted in exceptional circumstances and not just relaxed where it 'conflicts with other policies in this plan' (policy 4.3).
146. This differentiated approach is recognised in the rest of the policy but not in paragraph Aa which should be amended:

"support the management and mixed use development and redevelopment of office provision AS APPROPRIATE, to improve London's competitiveness..."
147. Surplus large offices should only be re-used for small units where viable and practical. It may be more beneficial for town centres that surplus space is redeveloped to provide appropriate modern space or alternative uses, rather than to provide what could be poor quality small space with high vacancy rates. Paragraph Bd should be amended:

"examine the scope for the re-use of otherwise surplus large office spaces for smaller units WHERE VIABLE AND PRACTICAL."

Policy 4.3 Mixed use development and offices

148. The importance of mixed use development is to provide vitality and vibrancy and to reduce the need to travel. It is not necessarily appropriate or desirable to seek mixed uses on an individual building basis, rather than mixed use areas.
149. The objective of planning policy is to ensure vitality and sustainability through mixed use areas as distinct from seeking mixed use buildings (and the vertical integration of different uses). Creating a vibrant area with a mix of uses does not necessitate that each building contains a mix of uses. PPS1 (Planning for sustainable communities, January 2005) is clear in the objective of promoting mixed use areas: in delivering sustainable developments planning authorities should (paragraph 27 ii):

"Promote mixed use developments for locations that allow the creation of linkages between different uses and can thereby create more vibrant places."
150. Mixed use policy to date has been promoted against the backdrop of a buoyant economy. The opportunity for high office values to 'generally support other uses' (paragraph 4.14) has been diminished by the recession and the other planning obligations and requirements imposed by regional and local planning policy.

151. Provision of a mix of uses is easier to achieve on a large development where uses do not have to be provided within the same building envelope. Providing uses adjacent to each other creates fewer challenges (and is more efficient in floorspace terms) than within the same building. Incorporating a mix of uses in a building is complex, can reduce viability, reduces usable area through the need for separate servicing and entrances, and can lead to sub optimal, compromised design and conflict between different users. It is particularly challenging in constrained areas, such as conservation areas, where the building envelope is severely limited.
152. It is therefore critical that mixed use policies are sensitive and applied sensitively to ensure they do not frustrate development. This is particularly important in the CAZ where much of the area is affected by heritage designations and protected views, and it is imperative to ensure the delivery of high quality, modern commercial development. In addition, high existing use values mean that decisions to redevelop are often marginal. Increased burdens on development will mean buildings are refurbished rather than redeveloped, forgoing the opportunities for public realm and other benefits as well as to provide high quality, environmentally efficient floorspace. Better quality and more housing can be achieved by provision off-site, beyond the CAZ. Land use swaps and credits are essential to facilitate housing delivery and support commercial development.
153. Mixed use policies have had a profound effect on the West End office market which is crucial to the national economy and an important location for international headquarters and financial services. It also provides an important customer base for retail.
154. West End rents are consistently amongst the highest in the world. The 2007 London Office Policy Review reported that availability fell from 6.4% to 5.4% during 2006 with headline rents increasing by 22% to £890 per m², more than twice the rate of increase in 2005. Rents have shown a clear long-term upward trend in rents over the past 20 years. This is a result of strong demand, and highly constrained supply as a result of planning policy and heritage designations.
155. In December 2009 CB Richard Ellis reported¹² that the West End remains the most expensive office location in the world, despite recent rental decline.
156. In a report commissioned by Westminster City Council¹³, Drivers Jonas concluded that Westminster's policy on mixed use and conservation is responsible for reducing office stock in one of the world's foremost office markets, which is driving up rents. The report recommends that the balance of uses and values in Westminster should be considered in the context of London as a whole.

¹² Global Office Rents, December 2009

¹³ The importance of the historic environment to the office market in Westminster, December 2007, Drivers Jonas

157. The report highlighted that office developers are restricted by conservation areas, listed buildings, high residential values, and the need to provide housing and affordable housing. It finds that:
- Prime West End rents are the highest in the world by some margin.
 - Rents in sub-markets have reached record levels in all sub markets.
 - Prime Mayfair rents are double their 1980 values in real terms.
 - Prices are not driven by demand which is running at average levels.
 - Planning policy has been driving the delivery of housing.
 - The West End has consistently produced less new office space than the City.
 - The West End is the only European central business district where the office stock has fallen.
 - Analysis of planning permissions highlights further potential for a net loss of office stock in all sub markets, bar Paddington.
 - Policy to promote housing has therefore been successful but at the expense of office availability and high rents.
158. Increasing demands on development, such as the incorporation of housing provision for relatively minor increases in floorspace, tip the balance in favour of refurbishment. This is damaging for the London and the UK economy as it means there is not the best quality real estate to attract internationally mobile occupiers. It also undermines the planning objective of intensification and extinguishes the wider opportunity to improve the public realm and produce better designed and more environmentally efficient buildings, as well as other possible planning gain benefits.
159. Key considerations in applying mixed use policy are the threshold which triggers the requirement, uses to which it is applied and whether provision is on-site. Including residential floorspace within a commercial building can compromise the use of the commercial floorspace through noise during hours of operation of the business and out of hours for servicing/deliveries; noise from plant; and the need for separate entrances. Policy must be applied sensitively to ensure that the primary use remains viable. Further challenges are raised with the inclusion of affordable housing.
160. We strongly support the use of swaps and credits as an essential mechanism to ensure that mixed use policies do not frustrate development. We do not think it is appropriate or desirable to seek to create mixed use neighbourhoods within the CAZ (paragraph 4.16), the most important part of the country economically.
161. The West End should be added as a strategically important office cluster (Bb).
162. In outer London mixed use policies should not result in requirements to provide offices where there is no demand. Not only does this reduce the viability of development, vacant space reduces vitality and safety and undermines the policy objective to make the most efficient use of land. Land use swaps should not be required to facilitate redevelopment of former offices.

Policy 4.4 Managing industrial land and premises

163. Whilst it is important to ensure an appropriate supply of industrial land, this should be supported by clear evidence of demand and taking account of the quality of sites, the land needed for modern operations and the opportunities for mixed used redevelopment. As outlined above in relation to policies 2.71 and 2.17, PPS4 seeks that employment designations are assessed against the objectives of the PPS and not simply carried forward.

Policy 4.5 Strategic visitor infrastructure

164. We welcome support for strategic visitor infrastructure including for business visitors. Tourism contributed £10 billion in overnight visitor spending in 2008, with over 80% coming from overseas¹⁴. This represented half of all spending in the UK by overseas visitors; many of whom go on to visit other parts of the UK.

165. There is no justification for seeking to restrict CAZ hotel provision to Opportunity Areas or to resist intensification in areas of existing concentrations. As the centre of the UK's economy and for tourism, hotel provision should be appropriate throughout the CAZ subject to site considerations that are addressed through the application process. Paragraph Ac should be amended:

“within the CAZ HOTEL PROVISION SHOULD BE FOCUSED IN AREAS WITH GOOD PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION. ~~Further~~ Intensification of provision in areas of existing concentrations SHOULD BE PERMITTED OTHER THAN WHERE IT WOULD COMPROMISE LOCAL AMENITY.”

166. The Hotel Demand Study¹⁵ concluded that there is no evidence to support protection against the loss of 'strategically important hotel stock.' The report states that (paragraph 4.4 p29):

“There is a great deal of uncertainty about the level of loss of hotel rooms. Not only does the level of loss fluctuate considerably from year to year but different sources contain different estimates.”

167. Paragraph Bc should therefore be deleted.

Policy 4.6 Support and enhance the provision for arts, culture and entertainment

168. Arts and culture provision should only be sought in major developments where it is appropriate to do so in the context of the wider development, is viable and when considered in the context of other planning obligations and requirements. Paragraph g should be amended:

“provision of arts and cultural facilities in major developments WHERE APPROPRIATE AND VIABLE.”

169. We welcome a co-ordinated, integrated and evidence based approach to manage the night time economy which is important to London's attractiveness and for bringing vibrancy to town centres. PPS4 (planning for sustainable economic growth, December 2009) states that policies should EC4.2:

“encourage a diverse range of complementary evening and night-time uses a. which appeal to a wide range of age and social groups, making provision, where appropriate, for leisure, cultural and tourism activities such as cinemas, theatres, restaurants, public houses, bars, nightclubs and cafes...”

170. A pro-active and co-ordinated approach between relevant agencies should address and manage the challenges of the night time economy.

¹⁴ LSE for the City of London, London's Place in the UK Economy, 2009-10

¹⁵ Hotel Demand Study, June 2006, Prepared by Grant Thornton and the Leisure & Tourism Organisation for the Greater London Authority

Football Stadia

171. London's football clubs are important culturally and economically to London, as well as making an important contribution to domestic and international tourism. Stadium development can be an important catalyst for regeneration.
172. Premier league stadia are large scale visitor attractions in their own right attracting between 800,000 and two million annual matchday visitors a year to each ground, which would put all of them in the top twenty paid-for tourist attractions in London. They also contribute strongly to London's global brand and sports tourism is a significant growth market. In addition they also contribute more broadly to London's visitor offer, both through football related activities such as stadium tours and club shops, and also as venues for conferences, other hospitality events and, in some cases on site hotels.
173. "Away from Home", published by the London Assembly in June 2003 cites research conducted by the Football Research Centre at Liverpool University¹⁶ into the impact of Liverpool's two major clubs on their local economy which found that:
- 3,000 full-time jobs, plus 1,400 part-time jobs in the Merseyside economy are dependent on the football industry;
 - for every 100 jobs in the retail sector around the two grounds, five are dependent on match days;
 - for every 100 jobs in the clubs' suppliers, nine are dependent on the trade the firm has with the clubs; and
 - for every £1 spent by the two clubs combined, 31 pence remains within the local Liverpool economy.
174. In light of this, and the complexity of stadia development/redevelopment and the need for clubs to modernise facilities and increase spectator capacity, the report recommended that the London Plan be amended to give greater weight to the importance of stadia development and require boroughs to encourage football clubs to stay in their traditional area. We support this approach and seek that it is reflected in the replacement London Plan with a new policy supporting the development and redevelopment of football stadia:

"LONDON'S PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL CLUBS ARE IMPORTANT CULTURALLY AND ECONOMICALLY AND CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITIES ACROSS LONDON. BOROUGHS SHOULD SEEK TO RETAIN FOOTBALL CLUBS WITHIN THEIR BOROUGH AND SUPPORT APPROPRIATE REDEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE FACILITIES WHERE CONSISTENT WITH OTHER PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES.

THE MAYOR WILL AND BOROUGH AND OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES SHOULD ENCOURAGE PARTNERS TO IDENTIFY WHERE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR NEW OR EXTENDED STADIA CAN INTEGRATE WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF WIDER OBJECTIVES SUCH AS AREAS FOR REGENERATION, STRATEGIC OUTER LONDON DEVELOPMENT CENTRES, TOWN CENTRES AND AREAS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND REGENERATION."

Policy 4.7 Retail and town centre development

175. We support a proactive and partnership approach to sustaining and enhancing the diversity of London's town centres. In light of the number of centres in London,

¹⁶ Johnstone, Southern & Taylor, The Economic Benefits of Football in the City of Liverpool, Football Industry Group 1999

their close proximity and high levels of accessibility, use of the sequential test will not always be appropriate.

176. As per our comments on policy 2.15, there will be instances where boroughs should take a proactive approach to managing declining centres, as well as those that are growing.
177. We note the forecast increased consumer expenditure and need to proactively plan for the consequent new floorspace.

Policy 4.8 Supporting a successful and diverse retail sector

178. Explicit consideration is needed of new retail capacity in Opportunity Areas where new communities will need a range of facilities.

Policy 4.9 Small shops

179. We welcome the Mayor's desire to support a dynamic, competitive and diverse retail sector. Many developers actively pursue this as part of their strategies to create vibrant new places; ensuring that there is a mix of types of provision within developments. This is often achieved through targeting retailers and offering flexible lease terms and licenses.
180. Supporting vitality and diversity is particularly important given the effect of the recession on many high streets. The Local Data Company reported on 27 October 2009, based on a survey of 700 town centres that 10% of high street shops have closed in the past few months. This is a huge challenge for the vitality of town centres. It also means that there is a large supply of the sorts of units that the Mayor is seeking through s106: it is not the availability of space that is impacting on small and independent retailers.
181. London First established a Retail Commission, overseen by an expert steering group chaired by Jeremy Newsum of Grosvenor, to investigate how to reinvigorate London's high streets. Recommendations were made on the basis of individual conversations with experts from over 30 organisations, six expert round-table discussions, a seminar attended by 60 people from the public and private sectors and five detailed case studies. Whilst centres need an individual approach, one size does not fit all; the report recommended an approach based on greater understanding of centres, proactive management, long term planning and active marketing. The recommendations are included in appendix one. The full report can be found at:
http://www.londonfirst.co.uk/documents/LF_retail_comm_report_final.pdf
182. Measures to support town centres include public realm improvements, enhancements to servicing and deliveries including retail consolidation, encouraging mixed use development and supporting change of use from retail in centres/parts of centres that are declining.
183. In light of the Commission's investigations and findings we do not consider that a policy to seek space in new developments for small and independent retailers would address retail diversity in London. Most important is to address the challenges facing high streets and as part of that seek to support all retailers, including small and independent ones. A policy to seek such provision would only help small retailers seeking new space and would only apply in areas where there is new development. It would fail to address the vast majority of centres and retailers, including small and independent retailers in existing premises. No evidence base is provided to support policy 4.9 or to demonstrate how it would help diversity.
184. We strongly oppose measures to impose requirements on developers to provide small and affordable retail units which would create additional cost and complexity, may breach EU regulations on state aid by requiring cross-subsidy between businesses and through favouring occupiers of new stock over those in existing premises; and create uncertainty and complexity as to how small and affordable will be defined and reviewed.
185. Requirement would fail to meet the tests of Circular 05/05: what impact would the provision of small shops mitigate? If implemented, such a policy could result in empty units as the leasing transaction costs and tenant risk would outweigh rental income. This could lead to poor public realm and could increase risk of crime.

- 186. Lease structure and terms are more of an impediment to small retailers than planning policy.
- 187. We also oppose the suggestion that this policy may be more applicable to central London where there is already a diverse range of centres and retail provision including small, independent shops and those serving the needs of residents.
- 188. Policy 4.9 should be deleted.

Policy 4.10 New and emerging economic sectors

- 189. Whilst we agree that the Bloomsbury/Euston and Strand university precincts are important to London’s higher education offer, we do not consider that they are exclusive in this regard. Ab should be amended:

“...~~particularly~~ INCLUDING the Bloomsbury/Euston and Strand university precincts”
- 190. Clarification is required of what is meant by (paragraph 4.51) use of the planning system, including use of planning obligations, to support biomedical research and development. Greater prioritisation is needed of planning obligations, rather than additional and undefined uses.

Policy 4.11 encouraging a connected economy

- 191. We support policy 4.11. The infrastructure the economy and London needs goes beyond just that of ICT. The Plan should set the context for an infrastructure strategy with detail on its delivery (including through sub regional partnerships) outlined in the implementation report. Business including infrastructure providers should be involved in its inception and delivery.

Policy 4.12 Improving opportunities for all

- 192. It will not always be possible to provide an adequate mix of businesses and public services (and therefore employment opportunities) close to those local communities with the greatest need. The London labour market must have an effective transport system that enables them to get to work on time.
- 193. The following should therefore be added to paragraph 4.61:

“ALONGSIDE THIS, LONDON’S TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION SHOULD ENSURE THAT LONDON’S WORKFORCE CAN ACCESS JOBS ACROSS THE CAPITAL.”

CHAPTER 5: LONDON'S RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

194. London First recognises the importance of adapting to and mitigating climate change. Whilst it is important that development contributes to this, the majority of emissions come from the existing stock which makes up most of the built environment and is less efficient than new development. Climate change policies should focus on maximising aggregate reduction of carbon, rather than adherence to all elements of policy.

Policy 5.2 Minimising carbon emissions

195. Whilst development should seek to minimise carbon emissions, this may not always be practical or viable, and will need to be considered in the context of other planning obligations and requirements. In particular efficient supply of energy (decentralised energy) and incorporation of renewable energy may not be achievable on site. Paragraph A should be amended:

“Be clean: supply energy efficiently WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE
Be green: use renewable energy WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE”

196. Paragraph B should be amended:

“as a minimum, all major development proposals should SEEK TO meet the following targets for carbon dioxide emissions reduction in buildings WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE.”

197. We are concerned by proposals for energy assessments to cover all energy uses in the building and support a simple target emissions rate (TER)/ Building Emissions Rate (BER) submission for major developments. Most commercial developments are speculative making it very difficult to predict who the tenant may be, how they will use the space and what the consequent energy use will be. Whilst use might not vary significantly between office uses, there is considerable diversity between retail users.
198. The carbon emissions reduction targets in Paragraph B do not accord with those proposed by Government and upon which it has consulted and is currently considering responses¹⁷. If the Mayor is to pursue different policy from national policy this should be fully justified on the basis of robust evidence.
199. The Government has proposed that energy efficiency standards for new homes be improved by 25% in 2010 and 44% in 2013 relative to current 2006 standards (not 44% in 2010 and 55% in 2013).
200. Government has similarly proposed a phased improvement for non-domestic buildings beginning with 25% in 2010 (not 44% in 2010 and 55% in 2013), and is consulting on the further trajectory towards zero carbon. It is not appropriate for the London Plan to pre-empt the Government's application of these targets in Building Regulations across England and Wales.
201. The Government is similarly considering responses to its proposals for the application of the Aggregate 25% and Flat 25% building specifications after recent consultation (and only on options for 2010)¹⁸. The Aggregate 25% and Flat 25% calculations in Paragraph B should therefore be removed.

¹⁷ Proposals for amending Part L and Part F of the Building Regulations – Consultation, June 2009

¹⁸ Ibid.

202. Paragraph D should be amended:

“Proposals to further reduce carbon dioxide emissions through the use of onsite renewable energy technologies WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE.”

203. We welcome recognition (E) that it will not always be possible to meet targets on site and that short falls can be provided off site provision by ring fenced cash contributions. It is vital that policy focuses on optimum ways to reduce carbon, rather than site specific requirements. Consideration should therefore also take account of what is most effective in carbon reduction terms. Paragraph E should be amended:

“The carbon reduction targets should be met on site WHERE PRACTICAL AND VAIBLE AND WHERE DOING SO REPRESENTS THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS.....

Where it is clearly demonstrated that the specific targets cannot be fully achieved on site, OR MORE CARBON COULD BE SAVED THROUGH CONNECTION TO A DECENTRALISED ENERGY NETWORK, any shortfall may be provided off-site...”

204. We look forward to further details on the London-wide funding scheme and the types of acceptable projects.

Policy 5.3 Sustainable design and construction

205. Consideration of sustainable design measures must have regard to site circumstances which may limit options, especially on constrained sites in built up areas. The costs must be considered alongside other requirements and obligations, development viability and the need to encourage, not restrain development.

Policy 5.4 Retrofitting

206. We agree that the existing building stock is a major contributor to carbon emissions and that retrofitting will be important to mitigating climate change. However, planning policy within a Regional Spatial Strategy can only apply to activities which are deemed to be development and therefore require planning permission. Section 55 (1) of the 1990 Planning Act defines development as:

- (a) Demolition of buildings;
- (b) Rebuilding;
- (c) Structural alterations of or additions to buildings; and
- (d) Other operations normally undertaken by a person carrying on business as a builder.

207. Policy 5.4 should therefore be deleted.

Policy 5.5 Decentralised energy networks

208. Decentralised energy can play a role in mitigating climate change but only as part of a wider strategy. London First's report, 'Cutting the Capital's Carbon footprint: delivering decentralised energy in London', published in October 2008, examined how the objective to decentralise a quarter of London's energy by 2025 could be delivered. The report, which drew on the experience of more than 90 experts from the public and private sectors as well as national and international case studies, made a number of recommendations including on the importance of scale for new decentralised energy infrastructure (to maximise carbon reduction as well as financial and land use efficiency) and the importance of the existing built stock to achieve carbon reductions (the existing stock accounts for 73% of carbon emissions) given the energy efficiency (and low demand) in new buildings and substantial phasing risk in new developments, and to act as anchor loads to underpin infrastructure.
209. Following work to implement the recommendations of London First's report, the Mayor published in October 2009 the prospectus, 'Powering ahead - delivering low carbon energy for London,' describing the regulatory, policy and funding context for investment in decentralised energy networks, and setting out the opportunity and a pipeline of potential projects¹⁹. It was accompanied by the instigation of a heat mapping programme to support boroughs' energy masterplanning.
210. We support the development of decentralised energy networks rather than provision on a site by site basis. This is the best approach to maximise carbon reduction, address the existing stock and ensure an appropriate scale and mix of uses. The promotion of decentralised heating, cooling and power networks on an individual site basis should only be pursued where there is sufficient scale (circa 1,500 units) and where there is not an area based network which it would be more efficient to contribute and connect to.
211. Policy on decentralised energy should focus on carbon reduction, be flexible and responsive and be realistic about the carbon savings from renewable energy and enable the use of traditional fuel supply in the short to medium term whilst viable renewable technologies are developed. Boroughs should undertake energy masterplanning as part of their infrastructure plans required by PPS12; this should include identifying sites for energy infrastructure. In particular, boroughs should identify opportunities from estate renewal projects.
212. The following should be added to b:
"SITES FOR ENERGY CENTRES ON PUBLICLY OWNED LAND."
213. We agree that developers should prioritise connections to existing energy networks. However, as these are monopoly suppliers regard must be had to the cost of doing so. Paragraph d should be amended:
"Require developers to prioritise connection to existing or planned decentralised energy networks where feasible AND VIABLE."

¹⁹ http://www.londonfirst.co.uk/documents/Powering_ahead_DE_report.pdf

Policy 5.6 Decentralised energy in development proposals

214. Extension of CHP systems beyond existing sites will be contingent on occupiers wanting to link up, or development being undertaken at the same time. It will therefore only be possible where viable and feasible. Paragraph A should be amended:
- “...examine opportunities to extend the system beyond the site boundary to adjacent sites WHERE FEASIBLE AND VIABLE.”
215. When the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is introduced it should cover decentralised and renewable energy. The following should therefore be added:
216. “INCLUDE DECENTRALISED AND RENEWABLE ENERGY PROVISION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY.”
217. Where it is not practical, viable or efficient to connect to an existing system or provide decentralised energy on site, development should contribute to the development of off-site networks and ensure it is capable of connecting as per policy 5.2. This should be added to the hierarchy as 2a:
- “CONTRIBUTING TO DEVELOPMENT OF OFF-SITE NETWORKS AND ENSURING DESIGN TO ENABLE CONNECTION.”

Policy 5.7 Renewable energy

218. On-site renewable energy should be provided where it is the optimum solution in carbon reduction terms, taking account of the cost of carbon saved. For constrained city centre sites off-site provision, or contributions towards off-site provision, may be more appropriate where the options for on-site provision are limited and expensive.
219. Whilst the optimum renewable energy source is investigated and developed planners should adopt a pragmatic approach to requirements for the incorporation of renewable energy. At all times the objective of carbon reduction should be at the fore as well as the cost of any reduction. Energy systems should be developed at sufficient scale to enable efficient retrofit with new technology when it is established.
220. Renewable energy is a means to an end: carbon reduction. Too frequently policy and decision makers rigidly focus on the percentage of energy from renewable energy which detracts from the objective to reduce carbon emissions.
221. Challenges facing the use of renewable technologies are:
- Cost
 - Low power density
 - Reliability
 - Some are highly episodic
 - Market acceptance
 - Unsited to baseload application
 - Availability
 - Mix of uses
 - Land take
 - Transport (wider environmental footprint)

Wind Energy

222. Optimum wind speed for wind power is 10-12m/second whereas average speeds in London are 2-3m/second.
223. Small scale turbines do not supply sufficient energy. Larger turbines, which are not suited to individual developments, are required to achieve realistic economies of scale.

Size/Type	Rated Output	Typical Cost	Cost (£) per KW installed	Cost (£) per tonne CO ₂ saved
Small Battery charging	50/70W	350-500	7,143	554
Small Battery charging	600W	3,000	5,000	388
Medium Grid connect	60KW	90,000	1,500	116
Large Grid Connect	600KW	390,000	650	50
Large Grid Connect	2MW	1.4m	700	54

Source: Energy Saving Trust

Photovoltaics

224. Photovoltaics are energy intensive to manufacture (and therefore have a larger overall carbon footprint) and have a high capital cost. Crucially, they are unlikely to make a significant contribution to meeting the renewable energy requirement.

Solar Water Heating

225. Solar water heating is relatively low cost and can make an important contribution for residential buildings.

Biomass

226. Biomass CHP technology is still at the pilot stage and not yet available for widescale use.
227. Whilst the fuel might be low carbon, the means of transporting it to the point of use is unlikely to be so, increasing the overall footprint as well as contributing to congestion. There are concerns about availability and security of supply which make it less attractive on large developments.

Ground source heating and cooling

228. Open loop ground source heating and cooling is subject to a complex licensing procedure where licenses are frequently shorter than typical lease lengths. Appropriate spacing is required, which may mean that adjacent developments are unable to use it. It also impacts on the design of foundations. There is a lack of borehole drilling expertise and capacity.
229. For closed loop systems there is limited capacity and feasibility is subject to ground conditions. There is limited design and construction expertise in the UK. Closed loop borehole performance is more predictable and reliable than open loop systems but has a much lower capacity.

Fuel Cells

230. Fuel cells are efficient in producing a high proportion of electrical power to heat and have very low emissions. However, they are prohibitively expensive with a high lifecycle cost (requiring core replacement every 5-10 years) with limited availability.
231. Rather than seek incorporation of renewables, a more effective approach would be to seek funding towards local decentralised energy provision that incorporates renewable energy either now or when feasible. The approach in policy 5.2 should be cross-referenced.
232. Paragraph B should be amended:

“... major development proposals should provide a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions through the use of on-site renewable energy generation, where feasible, VIABLE AND EFFECTIVE FOR CARBON REDUCTION.”

Policy 5.9 Overheating and cooling

233. Measures to avoid overheating such as passive ventilation and orientation should have regard to site circumstances which may limit options, especially on constrained sites in built up areas.
234. Some world city uses, such as banks and data centres, consume a large amount of energy and create heat, but are critical to economic competitiveness. Policy must be applied sensitively to ensure their development is not constrained.

Policy 5.10 Urban Greening

235. Requirements for urban greening need to be considered in the context of making the best use of sites, especially constrained sites in central London, and other planning obligations and requirements.
236. We strongly oppose a target for an increase in green surface area in the CAZ (5% by 2030 and a further 5% by 2050). No evidence base is provided to justify this target which takes no account of the existing royal parks, parks, squares and open spaces in the CAZ. Development in the CAZ is highly constrained by heritage designations and protected views. It is also subject to a large number of policy requirements including to incorporate housing. All these serve to undermine viability and prevent development.

237. Paragraph B should be amended:

“The Mayor seeks to increase the amount of surface area greened in the CAZ by at least five per cent by 2030, and a further five per cent by 2050.”

238. Paragraph C should be amended:

“Major development proposals in the CAZ should CONSIDER HOW THEY CAN CONTRIBUTE TO URBAN GREENING WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE.”

Policy 5.11 Green roofs and development site environs

239. Requirements for green roofs, walls and planting should have regard to other demands for roof space such as plant and machinery.

Policy 5.13 Sustainable Drainage

240. It is not realistic or reasonable to achieve Greenfield run off rates in a densely developed city where development is overwhelmingly (96%²⁰) on previously developed land. Paragraph A should be amended:

“Development should utilise sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) unless there are practical reasons for not doing so and WHERE POSSIBLE should aim to achieve green field run off rates....”

Policy 5.14 Water quality and sewerage infrastructure

241. For clarity, references to the Blue Ribbon Network should be in a separate paragraph to the need for adequate sewerage infrastructure.

242. Proposals that have a material impact should be refused, to avoid this policy being used to resist all developments on the Blue Ribbon Network. The policy should be amended:

“Proposals that would result in a MATERIAL reduction in water quality...”

243. The Thames Tideway is a vital piece of infrastructure which should be supported, not just in principle. Paragraph D should be amended:

“The development of the Thames Tideway Sewer Tunnels to address London’s combined sewer overflows should be supported ~~in principle.~~”

244. In light of the early stage of exploring water neutrality (paragraph 5.63) and the lack of clarity on what the concept means, and more importantly how it can be delivered, it is not appropriate to refer to it in the London Plan.

²⁰ London Plan Annual Monitory Report 5, February 2009

Waste

245. Making better use of waste will be an important contributor to tackling climate change, both in reducing the need for landfill and delivering new energy infrastructure. Waste should be viewed as a resource with economic potential. Policy should seek to reduce waste as much as possible, and maximise re-use and recycling.

Policy 5.16 Waste self-sufficiency

246. As a densely developed world city with limited land and a growing economy and population, it is not realistic or prudent for London to deal with its waste in isolation and seek to be self sufficient. London should deal with as much of its waste as possible, but a pragmatic approach is required to the level of self sufficiency London can attain. A flexible approach to self sufficiency is therefore appropriate and welcome. Whilst laudable, we question the realism of an aspiration of zero waste to landfill by 2031. To achieve this London needs a significant increase in the development of waste treatment facilities.
247. Varied performance in recycling (paragraph 5.67) in part reflects the nature of the housing stock; it is more challenging to recycle from flats. Through the London Waste and Recycling Board, the Mayor should encourage greater consistency across London in the materials that can be recycled.

Policy 5.17 Waste Capacity

248. Achieving greater self sufficiency and reducing waste to landfill are contingent on developing new facilities to deal with waste.
249. We welcome the Mayor's support for fewer, larger waste sites including strategically important sites and resource/recovery parks and consolidation centres (A). Larger facilities are more efficient operationally (for most major waste operators facilities processing less than 50,000 tonnes p.a. are considered inefficient), financially and in land take, can reduce planning risk, maximise opportunities to co-locate different waste technologies which reduces CO₂ from lorry movements and aids employment creation and training opportunities through creating technology clusters, and is more deliverable.
250. Securing planning permission for waste processing is a major barrier to increasing self sufficiency and reducing waste that goes to landfill sites. It is therefore critical that waste facilities are afforded strong support in policy, site designations and planning decisions.
251. Energy from waste should be actively pursued for its benefits in BOTH reducing waste and providing energy.
252. It is unrealistic to seek 'positive carbon outcome' of waste management (Bd). More realistic would be minimal carbon impact. This should be considered in relative rather than absolute terms. The policy should therefore be amended:

~~"positive~~ MINIMAL carbon impact of waste RELATIVELY..."

253. CHP and CCHP should be sought where possible and viable; paragraph C should be amended:

“Wherever possible AND VIABLE, opportunities should be taken...”

254. We agree that the appropriate waste technology should be evaluated according to end to end carbon outcome and the Mayor should be technology neutral. Paragraph 5.81 should therefore be amended:

“THE MAYOR DOES NOT SUPPORT A PARTICULAR TYPE OF TECHNOLOGY AND IS KEEN THAT...”

Policy 5.22 Hazardous substances

255. There are 71 hazardous installations in London, 42 of which are gas holders; and 119 hazardous pipelines. There are four major hazardous sites in Poplar, Battersea, Ponders End and Sutton. Given their prevalence, a balanced approach to developing near them is required if London is to accommodate economic and population growth.
256. The need for a more balanced approach to risk is highlighted by the recent decision on the proposed Oval Cricket ground development²¹. Following the application’s call in, the SOS has allowed the development, acknowledging the risk arising from proximity to the gasholders, but concluding that this was outweighed by the benefits of the development, including the economic benefits.
257. The approach of the HSE to developments proximate to hazardous installations presents a major break on housing supply in London. Mixed use and residential sites are affected across London including strategic regeneration areas of the Lower Lea Valley, Battersea and Greenwich Peninsula.
258. Up to half of London’s annual housing delivery target, and a significant quantum of major commercial development, could be at risk as a result of HSE advice on developments proximate to hazardous installations.
259. Research undertaken by the previous Mayor highlighted²² that the HSE would advise against development of 12,172 units (147 hectares) rising to 16,376 units if the proposals in the ‘Societal Risk Consultation’ are adopted. An assessment of how pre 2006 applications for commercial development would be treated under the new policies indicated that the HSE would have ‘advised against’ 32 applications, totalling 431,003 m² of industrial and office floorspace.
260. The automated PADHI system designed to assist planning authorities, takes an ‘incredible’ approach to the risk from gas holders, looking at a ‘worst case’ rather than ‘worst credible’ scenario. This has led to increased ‘consultation distances’ (from 60m to 350m), capturing more applications, and a highly conservative approach to risk.
261. The proposed change to ‘societal’ risk rather than ‘individual’ risk for major hazards (four gas holders in London) would double consultation distances and result in the loss of further residential and commercial floorspace.

²¹ SOS decision, 8 June 2009. Surrey County Cricket Club and Arora International hotels for development at the Brit Oval, Kennington oval.

²² Impact of HSE policy changes on GLA and LDA policies and projects, July 2007

262. Information on hazards and consultation zones is poor: detailed information is not available on the grounds of national security, but it is critical to have this information to prepare development plans and for individual applications.
263. A measured and realistic approach to risk is therefore critical, as is full consideration of site circumstances and mitigation measures.

Policy 5.22 Hazardous substances

264. For completeness the policy should be titled:
“Hazardous substances AND INSTALLATIONS.”
265. We support the draft policy which gives appropriate advice on the balance in decision making of risk and the benefits of development, as well as full consideration of site circumstances and proposed mitigation measures.

CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORT

266. Investment in London's transport infrastructure is crucial to support growth and catalyse regeneration. An efficient transport system in London is vital to the national economy. We agree with the Mayor that the highest priorities for investment are Crossrail and upgrade of the London Underground.
267. New technology can play an important role in increasing the capacity of the rail network as well as increasing reliability and reducing costs and should be reflected in the transport strategy and policy.

Policy 6.1 Strategic approach

268. We agree that that high trip generating development should be located in areas with high levels of public transport accessibility. However, there may be exceptional circumstances which justify a different approach. PPS13 (Transport, 2001) seeks to (paragraph 20.1)
- “focus land uses which are major generators of travel demand in city, town and district centres and near to major public transport interchanges” [our emphasis].
269. An approach which focuses trip generating development in these areas therefore enables some flexibility and recognises that there will be exceptional circumstances. 6.13Ac should be amended:
- “supporting development that generates high levels of trips ~~only~~ at locations with high levels of public accessibility, either currently or via committed, funded improvements, OTHER THAN WHEN JUSTIFIED IN VERY EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Policy 6.2 Providing public transport capacity and safeguarding land for transport

270. Whilst safeguarding is vital to ensure future delivery of new infrastructure, it creates significant blight and can frustrate regeneration and development. Safeguarding should only apply where there is a reasonable prospect of delivery. Consideration should be given to time limited safeguarding. We do not consider that schemes beyond those listed in table 6.3 should be safeguarded. Cb should be amended:
- “identifying and safeguarding in DPDs sites, land and route alignments to implement transport proposals that have a reasonable prospect provision: ~~including those identified in Table 6.3.~~”
271. In accordance with national policy, land for the third runway at Heathrow should be safeguarded and included in Table 6.3.

Policy 6.3 Assessing transport capacity

272. Ideally, new development and transport infrastructure to serve it should be planned together with infrastructure provided at an early stage. However, they are subject to different economic, financial and planning parameters. In practice therefore to try to maintain a rigid link between them is likely to be counter-productive and unrealistic.

273. Development depends on a favourable conjuncture of developer interest, market conditions and planning consent. If planning consent is refused pending an increase in transport capacity or its timing is made conditional on it, there is a risk that the development will not simply be delayed but will not happen at all. There is then a risk that the transport investment will then not be justified. There are usually more transport projects being considered for approval than funds to build them, so if the economic justification for a project is weakened by uncertainty about development, it is likely to lose priority.

274. Against the background of the need for growth and objective to accommodate it, there should not be a development control mechanism capable/likely to be used to resist development. B should therefore be amended as follows:

“Where existing transport capacity is insufficient to allow for the travel generated by proposed developments, and no firm plans exist for an increase in capacity to cater for this, BOROUGHSHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER DEVELOPMENTS MAY BE PHASED until it is known these requirements can be met, otherwise there COULD BE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THEY ARE REFUSED. The cumulative impacts of development on transport requirements must be taken into account AS WELL AS THE CONTRIBUTION DEVELOPMENT WILL MAKE TO THE FUNDING OF, AND RATIONALE FOR, TRANSPORT PROVISION.

Policy 6.4 Enhancing London's transport connectivity

275. We welcome recognition of the need to improve and expand London's international transport links (Para Bg) and that policy should support London's world city status by maintaining and improving its links with the rest of the world, including through taking a balanced and sustainable approach to additional airport capacity in south-east England (6.10).

Policy 6.5 Funding Crossrail and other strategically important infrastructure

276. London First supports the use of development contributions for Crossrail and took part in the Examination on the Alteration to discuss the detail of how policy will work.

Policy 6.6 Aviation

277. We welcome recognition that airport capacity serving the capital and the wider south east must be sufficient to sustain London's competitive position (A), and the Mayor's recognition of the need for additional runway capacity in the south east (paragraph 6.24).

278. London's competitiveness and attractiveness to international investment as a world city depend on easy and efficient connections to a wide range of business centres. The Mayor's draft Transport Strategy (October 2009) states that "adequate airport runway capacity is critical to the competitive position of London in a global economy" (page173), and that current capacity is insufficient to meet forecast demand:

“Unconstrained, demand is expected to rise to 290 million passengers each year by 2031. Current airport capacity will, however, limit trips to 180 million passengers a year. This could have the effect of limiting London's economic growth and putting its competitive position at risk.”

279. We oppose the Mayor's opposition to any further capacity increases at Heathrow. Location of aviation capacity is a matter of national policy and it is therefore inappropriate for the London Plan to seek to oppose growth at Heathrow or promote alternative locations outside London (and the Plan's jurisdiction). The London Plan should therefore be consistent with national policy and paragraph B should be deleted.
280. We agree that airport operators should take full account of the environmental impacts of operations. The Mayor's draft Transport Strategy states that:
- “the Mayor is opposed to further expansion at Heathrow unless, among others, adverse impacts on noise can be addressed” (paragraph 583).
281. Policy should state what outcomes on noise and other impacts would provide the basis for the Mayor's support for further expansion at Heathrow, and take into account the Government's proposals for an independent enforcer of noise and air pollution thresholds - with the power to bring the airport back into compliance if they are breached, as necessary conditions for a further runway at Heathrow.
282. While we support any credible evaluation of long-term potential solutions to London's air transport needs, the London Plan must be consistent with national policy and any review should proceed in parallel with the medium term expansion of Heathrow.
283. The report commissioned by the Mayor to examine the feasibility of building and operating an International Hub Airport within the Thames Estuary²³ states that "the overwhelming evidence... on passenger growth and future capacity of London's airports shows a shortfall in capacity of about 70 million passenger movements a year by 2030 even when all other potential expansion is put in place" (our emphasis) and that an Estuary Airport is not expected to be operational much before 2030.
284. We do not believe the case for future high-speed rail services obviates the need to consider increased runway capacity at Heathrow, not least because Heathrow is now running at nearly 99 per cent capacity, and that even with the recession, monthly passenger traffic in September 2009 was only 0.3 per cent down on the previous year. Only 3% of flights from Heathrow are to Manchester or Leeds - the two most likely destinations for a potential high-speed line - and all future domestic and short-haul flights combined will account for only approximately 15 per cent of the traffic to and from Heathrow²⁴.
285. A London First study (Imagine a world class Heathrow, June 2008) highlighted the reasons for poor service quality at the UK's largest business airport and made proposals to tackle them. Flight delays are a key issue. Only a capacity increase will overturn Heathrow's position as the most delayed airport of its size in Europe, a position that threatens to undermine London's standing as a world city long before 2031.

²³ Thames Estuary Airport Feasibility Review, October 2009, <http://www.testrad.co.uk/pdf/TEAFRreport.pdf>

²⁴ Rt Hon. Lord Adonis, 19 October 2009 (Lord Hansard 19 Oct 2009 : Column 438) <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/91019-0002.htm>

286. In addition to the services offered by the larger airports and carriers, high quality and readily accessible facilities are required for a small but important group of senior executives who use private aviation. Amongst those facilities in Greater London serving this niche business aviation market, Biggin Hill for example has the potential to grow within its permitted limits and is designated as a transport related Strategic Outer London Development Centre.
287. The existing heliport facility at Battersea is difficult to access from the main business centres and is already at capacity. We therefore consider that a heliport, is required in a suitable location in East London to improve the accessibility to the City and Canary Wharf, reduce the overfly of central London and to support new emergency service facilities.
288. 6.6E should be amended:
- “Development proposals for heliports should be resisted UNLESS THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF DEMAND, NET ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ARE BENEFICIAL OR ADEQUATELY MITIGATED AND FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED FOR emergency services.”

Policy 6.8 Coaches

289. We support the greater use of more sustainable transport modes and welcome examination of the increased use of coaches and the appropriateness of current provision.
290. While accessibility to central London is important, provision of coach hubs and stations in central London must be carefully assessed to minimise the land requirement in an area vital to London’s economy. There should be thorough examination of whether Victoria, as an Opportunity Area designated to accommodate substantial commercial and residential development, is an appropriate location for a coach station.
291. Coach parking in London has historically been insufficient, especially in areas adjacent to major tourist attractions.
292. 6.8B should be added:
- “THE MAYOR WILL WORK WITH ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS TO ENSURE THAT COACH PARKING PROVISION IS ADEQUATE WITHOUT UNDULY RESTRICTING LAND AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT OR INCREASING LOCAL CONGESTION.”

Policy 6.9 Cycling

293. We support the Mayor’s ‘Cycle Revolution’ and the roll out of Cycle Super Highways but stress the need that conditions for general traffic, including essential delivery and servicing vehicles, must not worsen on the major routes defined by either the Transport for London Road Network or the Strategic Road Network.

Policy 6.10 Walking

294. We fully support this policy and welcome the environmental, health and quality of life benefits it is likely to deliver, in addition to the contribution that can be expected in reduction of overcrowding levels on the public transport network.

Policy 6.11 Smoothing traffic flow and tackling congestion

295. London has over 30% of the country's congestion. It is a major concern that with ongoing utility works, the construction of Crossrail and the Thames Tideway project requiring over 30 central London sites, modelling shows that central London is facing extensive and damaging congestion.
296. Congestion costs the London economy £2 billion per annum, substantially increases carbon emissions from transport, significantly increases emissions harmful to health and substantially reduces the reliability of the road network – an issue which adversely affects business operations in nearly all business sectors.
297. Despite decreasing traffic volumes in a number of areas, congestion is continuing to rise across London and these problems are likely to increase further.
298. Paragraph Bh should be amended:

“smoothing traffic flow TO AVOID WORSENING LOCAL TRAFFIC CONDITIONS, INCLUDING ADDRESSING LOCAL CONGESTION HOT-SPOTS”
299. Paragraph Bj should be amended:

“promotion of efficient and sustainable arrangements for the transportation and delivery of freight, INCLUDING CONSOLIDATION CENTRES AND ALTERATION OF ‘OUT OF HOURS’ LOADING AND UNLOADING RESTRICTIONS”

Policy 6.12 Road network capacity

300. We fully support the need for additional road network capacity in the small number of locations where practicable.
301. We believe that assessment criteria listed, including the net benefit analysis combined with mitigation of any disbenefits outlined in 6.12B and 6.12C, generally provide a practical balance between supporting economic prosperity and due consideration of any potential environmental and social concerns.
302. However, as 6.12C provides a net benefit analysis for all impacts, net benefit analysis regarding environmental impacts in 6.12Bc provides an unnecessary level of duplication, which could lead to future confusion and as such we believe that 6.12Bc should be deleted.

Policy 6.14 Freight

303. Optimising the use of London's limited rail and road capacity is vital to improving the journey experience and reducing transport emissions.
304. Goods vehicles account for 16% of all traffic in London. 86% of vehicles are operated in fleets of 5 or under and as such are typically categorised by low laden rates (circa 30%). This is a grossly inefficient use of the road space – a critical resource on most roads which are important to business.

305. Consolidating the large volume of goods vehicle journeys (in an analogous way to public transport consolidates potential car drivers), is a proven method of improving freight sustainability.

306. 6.14Bb should be amended:

“promote the uptake of the Freight Operators Recognition Scheme, Construction Logistics Plans and Delivery & Servicing Plans AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROACHES TO CONSOLIDATE FREIGHT. These should be secured in line with the London Freight Plan and should be coordinated with Travel Plans.”

CHAPTER 7: LONDON'S LIVING PLACES AND SPACES

307. London's heritage and local character is important to its attractiveness to people and business. Development should seek to enhance it but should not be required to replicate it, or for economic and social development be prevented to protect it.
308. A careful balance is needed to ensure that the needs of London's population and economy can be met, including those of growth, while retaining London's attractiveness. We are concerned that the emphasis in chapter 7 is on preserving local character rather than enhancing it. Not only can new development improve areas, it is critical to London's progress.
309. National policy in PPS3 recognises that well designed higher density development can enhance the character of areas, including conservation areas (paragraph 49) and states that existing density should not dictate density (paragraph 50). (See chapter 3).
310. PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development, January 2005) states that (para 38):
"Design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail."

Policy 7.1 Building London's neighbourhoods and communities

311. Clarification is required on what is meant by (A) "...neighbourhoods should also provide a character that is easy to understand and relate to."
312. There are many instances where local character is poor and development should therefore seek to change and improve it rather than (D) "reinforce or enhance", this should be amended to:
"help reinforce, IMPROVE, or enhance...."

Policy 7.2 An inclusive environment

313. We support the principles of inclusive design in all development. We are unclear what is meant by (Cc) "are flexible and responsive taking account of what different people say they need and want" and (Cd) "are realistic, offering more than one solution to help balance everyone's needs, recognising that one solution may not work for all", and the implications for development. Are the people referred to tenants/purchasers or the wider community?

Policy 7.4 Local Character

314. Development should not necessarily be constrained by local character. In areas of poor character there may not be positive features to build upon and development offers the opportunity to transform the area. This is particularly important for Opportunity Areas which will change from an industrial to mixed use character. Paragraph A should be amended:
"WHERE APPROPRIATE, development should have regard....In areas of poor or ill-defined character, WHERE POSSIBLE, development should build upon..."

315. It will not always be appropriate or desirable for development to have regard to the existing street pattern and grain of existing spaces, especially in areas of regeneration and change where development will be important in creating a new character and environment. Paragraph Ba should be amended:

“WHERE APPROPRIATE, has regard

316. It is not clear what is meant by (c) “is human in scale”. This should be clarified and amended to:

“WHERE APPROPRIATE is human in scale.”

317. Existing buildings that make a positive contribution should be complemented by new development rather than replicated. Paragraph Bd should be amended:

“allows existing buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character of the place, to COMPLEMENT the future character of the area.”

Policy 7.5 Public Realm

318. High quality public realm is critical to the character and functioning of areas. We support the Mayor’s focus on this and consider that, especially in areas like the CAZ and West End, its importance should be reflected in planning gain priorities.

319. It will not always be appropriate or desirable for public realm to be informed by an area’s history. Paragraph B should be amended:

“WHERE APPROPRIATE AND DESIRABLE, treatment of the public realm should be informed by the history of the place.”

320. Where development is to provide public toilets (C) it should be clear who has responsibility for their maintenance and that this is done to a high standard to prevent anti-social behaviour that would be to the detriment of the public realm and its users.

Policy 7.6 Architecture

321. Given constraints on land, especially in central London, building design should ensure that the most efficient use is made of sites as per PPS1 (Delivering sustainable development, January 2005), paragraph 27 viii which says that planning policy should:

“Promote the more efficient use of land through higher density, mixed use development and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings.”

322. The following should therefore be added:

“MAKE THE BEST USE OF SITES, ENSURING THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF LAND.”

Policy 7.7 Location and design of tall and large buildings

323. Tall buildings can play an important role in enhancing economic performance and productivity. London First was part of the steering group for “The economic impact of high density development and tall buildings in central business districts”, published by the BPF in August 2008. Undertaken by Colin Buchanan, the report highlights the significant economic benefits derived from increased commercial density in areas of good public transport accessibility: by improving productivity and knowledge transfer.
324. Increased density leads to increased productivity in five key ways:
- increased specialisation – there may be enough business to support a general accountant or lawyer in a small town but in a large city there is enough to support business advisers who specialise in very narrow fields of work thereby improving efficiency and expertise;
 - knowledge spillovers, both between firms in the same sector and across sectors, leading to increased innovation;
 - competition – the presence of lots of firms offering similar products spurs on competition, innovation and efficiency and there are lots of buyers to compete for;
 - larger labour markets offer wide choices for employers and the opportunity to recruit staff with specialist skills;
 - economies of scale are created by serving larger markets.
325. The research found that a doubling of employment density within a given area can lead to a 12.5% additional increase in output per worker in that area. For the service sector the figure is far higher at 22%.
326. Using a methodology in line with Department for Transport guidance, the research modelled the impacts of adding 80,000 employees to locations near key transport nodes in central London. The exercise was one of changing the distribution of employment, rather than total levels of employment. The economic benefit was equivalent to the annual output for each of those 80,000 workers increasing by £2,500 a year. A second scenario redistributing those 80,000 workers to less accessible parts of central London produced a decline in output equivalent to £1,600 a year for every one of those 80,000 workers.
327. Increased output, resulting from increased density, is an external, public benefit from agglomeration. In the model, around 6% of the agglomeration benefit accrues to the 80,000 ‘added’ employees, while the remaining 94% accrues to other employees in the impacted boroughs – more generally accruing to UK plc. This benefit accrues only because of the change in the distribution of employment.
328. Whilst employment density is not only achieved through height, in a highly constrained city this is frequently the only option. Constraining the ability to do this will have a profound impact on productivity and GDP.
329. We do not agree that tall buildings should necessarily be part of a strategic approach to an area. There will be circumstances where high quality tall buildings will be justified where not supported by a strategic approach. Paragraph A should be amended:
- “GENERALLY, tall ~~and large~~ buildings should be part of a strategic approach...”
330. We do not agree that tall buildings should be limited to the areas listed in paragraph C, especially as they are defined (paragraph 7.20) as “noticeably taller

than their surroundings, have a significant impact on the skyline or are larger than the threshold sizes set for the referral of planning applications to the Mayor.”

331. The definition of tall buildings should be consistent with that in the Government endorsed CABE and English Heritage guidance on tall buildings (July 2007) as:
“**substantially** (our emphasis) taller than their neighbours and/or which significantly change the skyline.”
332. If the definition (paragraph 7.20) is amended to “substantially”, the general focus on the areas listed would be appropriate.
333. Active ground floor uses may not always be appropriate, paragraph Bf should be amended:
“WHERE APPROPRIATE, have ground floor activities...”
334. Whilst conservation areas, the setting of listed buildings and historic parks may not be appropriate for tall buildings, it needs to be clear that they might be appropriate. We are concerned that given their prevalence in central London, this could be misinterpreted to preclude tall buildings. The areas should be listed in the reasoned justification rather than the policy with clarification that tall buildings may be appropriate.
335. The reasoned justification should state that boroughs should provide clear reasons why areas might not be suitable for tall buildings.
336. It is confusing in paragraph E to introduce the undefined concept of large buildings, large should be deleted and from paragraph 7.20 and policy 7.7 (see above).
337. As stated in paragraph 7.20, tall buildings are important in making the best use of land in areas of good public transport accessibility. This is particularly critical for the foreseeable future where there will not be significant improvements to accessibility. It is therefore critical that the best use is made of all development opportunities, especially those related to the development of Crossrail. We do not agree that tall buildings have to have a detrimental effect on local character. The need to maximise development opportunities should be a priority coupled with an emphasis on high quality design.

Policy 7.9 Heritage-led regeneration

338. For clarity and to avoid confusion, the policy should apply to designated heritage assets. Not all regeneration schemes will be able to make use of heritage assets. Paragraphs A and B should be amended:
“WHERE APPROPRIATE regeneration schemes should make use of DESIGNATED heritage assets and reinforce the qualities that make the DESIGNATED heritage asset significant....”
“WHERE APPROPRIATE AND VIABLE new development should repair, refurbish and re-use DESIGNATED heritage assets...
It should be demonstrated that the proposed development would give adequate status to the DESIGNATED heritage asset...”

London View Management Framework

339. London First has made representations on the LVMF in its own right and with the Major Developers Group. The London Plan policies and supporting text must be consistent with the emerging LVMF.

Policy 7.11 London View Management Framework

340. The following wording from the adopted London Plan and the emerging LVMF should be included within the Policy “IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO PRESERVE EVERY ASPECT OF A DESIGNATED VIEW.”

Paragraph 7.32

341. The definition of the two parts of the Protected Vista requires amendment to reflect the emerging LVMF, to include:
- Landmark Viewing Corridor
 - Consultation Area
342. The Consultation Area will encompass the Wider Setting Consultation Area and the Background Consultation Area.
343. Throughout the document Wider Setting Consultation Area should be amended to Consultation Area.

Policy 7.12 Implementing the London View Management Framework

344. Paragraph A refers to “protecting” the silhouette of WHSs but in 7.12H there is a reference to the silhouette being “preserved”. For consistency, the accepted terminology of “preserve” should be used:

“It should also, where possible, preserve the viewers’ ability to recognise and to appreciate the Strategically Important Landmark in these views, and where appropriate ~~protect~~ PRESERVE the silhouette of landmark elements of World Heritage Sites as seen from designated Viewing Places.”

345. The following amendments should be made to the policy to ensure it is consistent with the emerging LVMF:

B “Development in the foreground and middle ground of a designated view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view AS A WHOLE”.

346. The remainder of the existing wording is repetitive and unnecessary.

C This first sentence should be amended to “Development proposals in the background of a view should give context to landmarks AND SHOULD SEEK TO PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE SETTING OF STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT LANDMARKS”

D c) There should be a separate sentence for Linear Views:

“LINEAR VIEWS – SHOULD BE MANAGED SO THAT THE ABILITY TO RECOGNISE AND APPRECIATE THE LANDMARK BUILDING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT IS PRESERVED OR ENHANCED”

F a) “development that exceeds the threshold height of a Landmark Viewing Corridor should NORMALLY be refused”

b) “development in the Consultation Area should preserve or enhance the viewer’s ability to recognise and appreciate the Strategically Important Landmark”

347. It is not appropriate to address issue of local design in policy on strategic views. Paragraph G should be deleted.

348. The wording on canyon effect is unnecessary as the Consultation Area is within the Protected Vista. In any event, canyon effect is dealt with in D a)

c) should be deleted as it repeats what is in B.

Table 7.1 Designated Views

349. This table includes a new Townscape View 26 “Parliament Square to Palace of Westminster” which is not included within the emerging LVMF.

Policy 7.14 Improving air quality

350. Where emissions from a biomass boiler are not comparable to that of a conventional gas boiler planning authorities should be realistic about the achievement of requirements for on-site renewable energy (b).

351. Requirements to off-set air quality (c) should be evaluated in the context of other planning requirements and obligations and only sought where viable and feasible. Paragraph C should be amended:

“Offsetting should be used to ameliorate negative impacts associated with development proposals WHERE VIABLE AND FEASIBLE.”

Policy 7.15 Reducing noise and enhancing soundscapes

352. Whilst development may be able to reduce noise from and within it, it will not be able to do so within the vicinity. Paragraph Ba should be amended to delete “or in the vicinity:”

“Minimising the existing or potential adverse impacts of noise on, from, within, ~~or in~~ the vicinity of development proposals”.

Policy 7.16 Green Belt

353. We support protection of the Green Belt. Extensions to the Green Belt should be clearly justified. Circumstances where land being designated as green belt is no longer appropriate be recognised. Paragraph A should be amended:

“...its extension in appropriate circumstances, WHERE CLEARLY JUSTIFIED and its protection from inappropriate development.

THERE MAY BE SOME EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE LAND IS NO LONGER APPROPRIATE TO BE DESIGNATED AS GREEN BELT. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WHERE IT IS CLEARLY JUSTIFIED, THE DESIGNATION MAY BE REMOVED THROUGH THE PLAN-MAKING PROCESS.”

Policy 7.17 Metropolitan Open Land

354. We support the designation and protection of Metropolitan Open Land but do not consider it appropriate that it is afforded the same protection as the Green Belt. This should be deleted from paragraph B.

Policy 7.25 Increasing the use of the Blue Ribbon Network for passengers and tourism

355. Removal of facilities for passengers should be allowed if they are demonstrated to no longer be needed. Paragraph a should be amended:

“Applications which remove existing facilities should be refused unless suitable replacement facilities are found OR THEY ARE DEMONSTRATED TO BE NO LONGER NEEDED.”

Policy 7.26 Increasing the use of the Blue Ribbon Network for freight transport

356. Review of safeguarded wharves (Ba) should include assessment of demand, the scope for consolidation and of the land take needed to support wharf facilities.

Policy 7.27 Blue Ribbon Network: supporting infrastructure and recreational use

357. Loss of facilities for waterborne sport should be permitted where they are demonstrated to no longer be needed. Paragraph Aa should be amended:

“that result in the loss of existing facilities for waterborne sport and leisure should be refused, unless suitable replacement facilities are provided -OR THEY ARE DEMONSTRATED TO BE NO LONGER NEEDED.”

Policy 7.28 Restoration of the Blue Ribbon Network

358. Opportunities to open culverts and naturalise river channels should only be pursued where practical and viable. Paragraph Aa should be amended:

“taking opportunities to open culverts and naturalise river channels WHERE PRACTICAL AND VIABLE.”

359. Developments that reduce biodiversity should only be refused where the benefits of the development do not outweigh the loss. Paragraph Ab should be amended:

“Development which reduces biodiversity should be refused UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT OUTWEIGH THE LOSS.”

CHAPTER 8. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Policy 8.1 Implementation

360. Developers and infrastructure providers including utilities will be critical to the successful implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and should be explicitly cited in the policy which should be amended:

“The Mayor will work with boroughs and other key stakeholders INCLUDING INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDERS AND DEVELOPERS to ensure the effective development and implementation of the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy.”

Policy 8.2 Planning Obligations

361. Improvement to the public realm is critical to the environment in much of London, especially in the CAZ and West End in particular and town centres. Improvements to public realm and the pedestrian environment are important to the Mayor’s objective to reinvigorate town centres and promote retail diversity.
362. TfL data highlights that pedestrians on average spend £91 per week in town centres compared with £63 for bus passengers, £56 for cyclists, £46 for train/tube passengers and £64 for car drivers²⁵.
363. Public realm should be included as a planning gain priority. Paragraph E should be amended:
- “Importance should also be given to tackling climate change, PUBLIC REALM, learning and skills....”
364. We oppose the inclusion of small shops in paragraph E as an important area for planning obligations (see chapter 4). The proposal adds cost and complexity to development and would not address the Mayor’s objective to support retail diversity; the centres most in need of support are unlikely to benefit from development. Small shops should be deleted.
365. It is critical that planning obligation requirements do not frustrate development. The need for prioritisation and to take account of viability should be included in the policy. New paragraphs E1 and Fd should be added:

Planning Decisions, Paragraph E1:

“PRIORITISATION OF ALL PLANNING OBLIGATIONS WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT IS VIABLE AND IS ENCOURAGED, NOT RESTRAINED. THIS WILL MEAN PRIORITISATION WITHIN THE GLA FAMILY, AND BETWEEN THE REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL.”

LDF preparation, Paragraph Fd:

“LDF POLICIES SHOULD CLEARLY PRIORITISE PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND ENSURE THAT THEIR APPLICATION TAKES ACCOUNT OF THE VIABILITY OF DEVELOPMENT.”

²⁵ TfL, Building a business case for walking, Walk 21, 2007

Policy 8.3 Community Infrastructure Levy

366. In accordance with our comments on policy 8.1, explicit reference should be made to developers and infrastructure providers:

“The Mayor will work with Government and other stakeholders INCLUDING BOROUGHES, INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDERS AND DEVELOPERS to ensure the effective development and implementation of the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy.”

Key performance indicators

367. (2) It is not clear why over 95% of housing should comply with the housing density location. Justification for this figure should be provided.
368. (4) The housing target in policy 3.3 is 33,400 units per annum. The indicator should be consistent with this and should be AT LEAST 34,000 units as the target is a minimum to be exceeded.
369. (18) Employment provision in areas with high PTAL should not be limited to B1 floorspace. Other uses such as retail, hotels and leisure are significant and important employers.
370. (20) We do not consider that zero landfill by 2031 is realistic or achievable.
371. (21) The achievement of zero carbon development is supported but is technically challenging and has significant implications for the cost of development which will have to be considered against other planning requirements and obligations.

Implementation plan

372. Landowners are key stakeholders in Opportunity and Intensification Areas and will be critical to their implementation. Landowners should be listed as partners.
373. Property owners, retailers and other occupiers are critical to the establishment of BIDs and should be listed.
374. Landowners and developers will be critical to the Olympic legacy masterplan and should be listed as partners.
375. Landowners and developers will be critical to the update of the strategic housing land and housing market assessments and should be listed as partners.
376. Developers should be listed as partners in the review of all SPG and the renewable energy feasibility study to ensure they are implementable.
377. Housing providers should be listed as partners in research on affordable housing for the elderly.
378. Landowners should be listed as partners the review of safeguarded wharves.
379. Landowners should be listed as partners for increased pier provision and bringing disused wharves back into use.
380. Developers, landowners and major occupiers should be listed as partners in energy masterplanning, the heat map and for decentralised energy.

Appendix One: Reinvigorating London's High Streets - Action on town centre diversity (October 2009)

Recommendations:

Understand

- Define your centre
- Develop an evidence base
- Reform approaches to vitality
- Prioritise stress areas

Manage

- Include town centres in economic development role
- Support BIDs / Town Centre Partnerships
- Endorse and adequately resource Town Centre Managers
- Create a safe and secure environment
- Provide small business support
- Integrate markets
- Provide incubation support for new businesses

Plan for the long term

- Promote mix of retail, leisure, housing, office and civic functions
- Improve environment and public realm
- Develop a co-ordinated approach to transport management
- Release non-core retail
- Manage LA ownership for long term sustainability

Market

- Accessible information for the local community
- Encourage promotional events
- Consider implementing loyalty schemes
- Produce London Retail Directory

The full report can be found at:

http://www.londonfirst.co.uk/documents/LF_retail_comm_report_final.pdf