

London Plan update - note for Development Control Committee **18/03/2020**

The report to Development Control Committee dated 28th January 2020 provided an update on the draft new London Plan¹. At this time, the Mayor was awaiting a response from the Secretary of State (SoS), including any directed changes; and the draft new London Plan had not yet been considered by the London Assembly.

The London Assembly subsequently considered the plan at their plenary meeting on 6 February 2020, and did not exercise their power to veto the draft plan.

The SoS wrote to the Mayor on 13 March 2020² (following the deadline for papers for DCC) and set out a number of directed changes³. The Mayor cannot publish the London Plan until these changes have been incorporated; the SoS has indicated that he may consider alternative changes to policy to address his concerns, but it is unlikely that any alternatives would be substantially different to those proposed by the SoS. The Mayor could also decide not to publish the London Plan at all.

Mayoral purdah would have prevented the Mayor from publishing the draft new London Plan until early May at the earliest, but the postponement of the Mayoral election potentially means that adoption could be earlier. However, given the potential for further discussions between the Mayor and SoS on final wording, and possible resourcing issues due to Covid-19, it is considered very unlikely that the London Plan will be adopted before May 2020 anyway.

Headline implications of directed changes

The key headline from the SoS directed changes is that there are no further changes to Bromley's proposed new housing target as set out in the 'Intend to Publish' version of the London Plan. This means that Bromley's housing target will be 774 homes per annum upon adoption of the London Plan.

There are changes to Green Belt policy, in order to bring the London Plan into alignment with national planning policy; the draft new London Plan had originally proposed a more restrictive approach which would not have allowed proposals in the Green Belt, even where very special circumstances were identified.

The SoS has also directed changes to maximum parking standards, although the resultant changes would still result in lower maximum standards than those set out in the Local Plan.

¹ Intend to publish version of the new London Plan with track changes available here:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/intend_to_publish_-_tracked.pdf

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/872456/Letter_to_the_Mayor_of_London.pdf

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/872472/Letter_to_the_Mayor_of_London_Annex.pdf

Next steps

When adopted, the new Draft London Plan will replace the current London Plan (2016) and will form part of Bromley's Development Plan. It will therefore be used for decision making on planning applications alongside the Local Plan (2019) and the Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan.

The new London Plan will also influence any new planning policy documents produced by Bromley (such as a revised Local Plan) as these are required to be "in general conformity" with it.

Once adopted, a detailed assessment of the London Plan, particularly the implications for policies in the Bromley Local Plan and for planning decisions, will be brought to a future meeting of Development Control Committee for consideration.