

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT and the LONDON PLAN

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1. WHAT THE LONDON PLAN SAYS

<http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/london-plan/further-alterations-to-the-london-plan>

A. CHAPTER 1: Context and Strategy

[London Plan March 2015 \(FALP\) – Frontispiece and Ch1 Context and strategy](#)

(i)

0.4 Under the legislation setting up the GLA, the London Plan should only deal with things of strategic importance to Greater London¹. The legislation also requires that the London Plan should take account of three cross-cutting themes²:

- economic development and wealth creation
- social development; and
- improvement of the environment.

0.5 The Mayor has also had regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people, and to:

- reducing health inequality and promoting Londoners' health
- climate change and the consequences of climate change
- achieving sustainable development in the United Kingdom
- the desirability of promoting and encouraging use of the Thames, particularly for passenger and freight transportation
- the need to ensure consistency between the strategies prepared by the Mayor
- the need to ensure consistency with national policies and international treaty obligations notified to the Mayor by Government, and
- the resources available to implement the Mayor's strategies.

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the GLA also has to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder.

1 Greater London Authority Act 1999, section 334(5)

2 Greater London Authority Act 1999, section 30

(<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/29/section/30>)

(ii)

1.49The approach taken in this Plan is to welcome and support growth and development, but to ensure that it contributes to London’s sustained and sustainable development. Economic success; making the kind of step change needed in environmental issues; and improving the health, wealth and quality of life of Londoners are all inextricably linked. It is impossible over the long term to succeed in any one in isolation.

(iii)

Strategy: The Mayor’s vision and objectives

1.52 Against the context set out in this chapter, the Mayor has put forward a vision for the sustainable development of London over the period covered by this Plan:

Over the years to 2036 – and beyond, London should:

excel among global cities – expanding opportunities for all its people and enterprises, **achieving the highest environmental standards and quality of life** and **leading the world** in its approach to tackling the urban challenges of the 21st century, particularly that of climate change.

Achieving this vision will mean making sure London makes the most of the benefits of the energy, dynamism and diversity that characterise the city and its people; embraces change while promoting its heritage, neighbourhoods and identity; and values responsibility, compassion and citizenship.

1.53 This high level, over-arching vision is supported by six detailed objectives. These embody the concept of sustainable development. They give more detail about how the vision should be implemented, and link it to the detailed policies in the following chapters:

(objectives follow)

(iv)

POLICY 1.1 DELIVERING THE STRATEGIC VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR LONDON

Strategic

A Growth and change in London will be managed in order to realise the Mayor’s vision for London’s sustainable development to 2036 set out in paragraph 1.48 and his commitment to ensuring all Londoners enjoy a good, and improving quality of life sustainable over the life of this Plan and into the future.

(other sections follow)

B. GLOSSARY (Annex 6)

<http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/London%20Plan%20March%202015%20%28FALP%29%20-%20Annexes.pdf>

Sustainable development

This covers development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Government has set out five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development: living within the planet’s environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly. The Mayor’s approach to these principles and their application in London is explained in Chapter One of the Plan.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Achieving sustainable development

International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy *Securing the Future* set out five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development: living within the planet’s environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

B. Securing the future: delivering UK sustainable development strategy (Sustainable Development Strategy) – March 2005

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-the-future-delivering-uk-sustainable-development-strategy>

3. A common purpose

To set the United Kingdom on a more sustainable track, we must know what we are aiming for. The 1999 strategy set out clearly that sustainable development means “a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come”, and used the widely used international definition “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”²

(² From ‘Our Common Future (The Brundtland Report)’ – Report of the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development.)

The four central aims of the 1999 strategy were:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- effective protection of the environment
- prudent use of natural resources, and
- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

These aims effectively captured the simple priority areas at the heart of sustainable development. However, although the 1999 strategy stressed that these objectives had to be pursued at the same time, in practice, different agencies focused on those one or two most relevant to them. So a new purpose is needed to show how government will integrate these aims and evolve sustainable development policy – to develop the earlier Strategy, not depart from it. It needs to paint a picture of what things should look like if we achieve sustainable development, while maintaining continuity with the aims of the 1999 Strategy.

The following ‘purpose’, which has been agreed by the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations, has now been adopted as the new framework goal for sustainable development:

The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

For the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations, that goal will be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment; and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal wellbeing. This will be done in ways that protect and enhance the physical and natural environment, and use resources and energy as efficiently as possible.

Government must promote a clear understanding of, and commitment to, sustainable development so that all people can contribute to the overall goal through their individual decisions.

Similar objectives will inform all our international endeavours, with the UK actively promoting multilateral and sustainable solutions to today’s most pressing environmental, economic and social problems. There is a clear obligation on more prosperous nations both to put their own house in order, and to support other countries in the transition towards a more equitable and sustainable world.

4. Guiding principles

The following is the set of shared UK principles that we will use to achieve our sustainable development purpose. These have been agreed by the UK Government, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government and the Northern Ireland Administration. They bring together and build on the various previously existing UK principles to set out an overarching approach, which the four separate strategies can share.

Living Within Environmental Limits

Respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity – to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.

Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society

Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal wellbeing, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity for all.

(then)

Achieving a Sustainable Economy

Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity and opportunities for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (polluter pays), and efficient resource use is incentivised.

Using Sound Science Responsibly

Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the precautionary principle) as well as public attitudes and values.

Promoting Good Governance

Actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people's creativity, energy, and diversity.

These principles will form the basis for policy in the UK. For a policy to be sustainable, it must respect all five of these principles, though we recognise that some policies, while underpinned by all five, will place more emphasis on certain principles than others. Any trade-offs should be made in an explicit and transparent way. We want to achieve our goals of living within environmental limits and a just society, and we will do it by means of a sustainable economy, good governance, and sound science.

(ENDS)