

From Professor Michael Hebbert

Draft London Plan consultation 2018

Comment on Policy D6

I am concerned at the omission of the Density Matrix from Policy D6 of the Draft New London Plan. The matrix is the most recent of a very long sequence of London-wide density policies that have shaped the city's fabric under the aegis of the Mayor and GLA, LPAC, GLC and LCC. Though deficient in many respects the matrix has continued to inform the property market and provided a dampener on land speculation. Setting density parameters is a vital responsibility of metropolitan government in all large cities and experience shows it can't be done ad hoc on a site-by-site basis. Providing a London-wide framework is perfectly compatible with encouraging high design values that respond to site context, connectivity and infrastructure capacity: in fact design-led development is more likely to succeed when underpinned by clear, equitable, predictable density regulation. Conversely, deregulation will encourage speculative over-bidding for sites, with consequences already all too evident around London in diminished social/affordable housing contributions and smaller units with reduced levels of sunlight, daylight, storage and play-space. So Policy D6 of the Draft New London Plan proposes a step in the wrong direction: please don't remove the Density Matrix, improve it.

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