

## Brief Overview of Integrated Impact Assessment, Inspectors' Report and Panel Recommendations from an Equality point of view.

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From my analysis of the amended Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), Inspectors' Report (IR) and Panel Recommendations (PR), I believe our concerns about the Plan not fulfilling its Public Sector Equality Duty are very well founded and there may well be other soundness issues on purely planning grounds, which can be used for a challenge to the Plan. I set out a brief overview of my analysis below (see full Equalities document for more detail).

### Insufficient land for London's growth

The IR states that the Plan does not have sufficient land for London's growth, either residential or industrial. The Mayor accepts this and will, therefore, add the following text to the Plan:

0.0.23 The Plan does not meet all of London's identified development needs. Work will need to be undertaken to explore the potential options for meeting this need sustainably in London and beyond.

Despite this, the Mayor does not accept any of the panel's recommendations, PR30, PR31, PR35 or PR36 to consider Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land use. It is clear, with this spatial strategy, housing need will definitely not be met. The IR p34 para 133 states that:

"The need for 66,000 additional homes per year identified by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is justified and has been properly calculated for market and affordable housing having regard to national policy and guidance."

IR P35 para 134 also admits:

' Nevertheless, a number of general themes emerged throughout the examination along the lines that the Mayor should do more to ensure that the homes Londoners need are delivered; additional monitoring is required especially data on overcrowding; there is an over-emphasis on housing numbers which will not provide the right sort of homes for people in neighbourhood communities; there is a need for more affordable housing and provision of social rented housing in particular and insufficient attention is given to health impacts'.

It goes on to state:

'Of course, it is a major concern that the targets are so far below the assessed need' (IR P43 para 177).

(policy H2) IIA matrix is, therefore, marked down.

**Objective 1 – Equality and inclusion** The lower housing targets could mean that there are fewer homes developed across London including in areas of lower housing costs than there would have been with the higher housing target. The lower target may result in a continuation/increase of overcrowding in the existing housing stock or more people moving out of London (which may break up social and support networks). This may have a disproportionate impact on lower income, more vulnerable households, which are more likely to consist of people from BAME backgrounds, children, single parents – mainly women, the elderly and disabled people.

### High rise, high density, unsustainable housing is encouraged

IR P31 para 119 states that: 'The Mayor has suggested changes to policy SD1 parts B(4) and B(6) and reasoned justification. These make it clear that boroughs should establish the

capacity for growth in each Opportunity Area, and that the figures in Table 10.1 are purely indicative rather than minimum targets’.

This begs the question of why are these numbers there in the first place? What does indicative mean? How far from these indicative numbers can Boroughs stray? The indicative numbers are very much open to exploitation by Councils who will cite the numbers as proof that the OA can accommodate the numbers given.

The IR, p149, also states that Table 4.1 does not set specific targets for different types of housing for individual boroughs and that this is a justified approach as it allows boroughs the opportunity to set their own targets based on their assessment of local need. This begs the question of why is London treated as a single housing market for the number of housing units required but not for the type of housing required? This is leading to the predominance of 1 and 2 bed flatted developments and scarcity of family housing.

There is also the removal of the upper limit of the density matrix. No acknowledgement is given to our view that this gives carte blanche to developers and councils to increase density to completely unsustainable levels (evident in many recent planning applications).

Where development parameters for allocated sites have been set out in a Development Plan, development proposals that do not accord with the site capacity in a site allocation can be refused for this reason. This leaves open the ability for councils to set site allocations at very high levels and developers will be encouraged or even forced to meet them.

The requirement for higher density developments to provide a management plan has been removed and only requires them to consider the ongoing management and maintenance.

There is the removal of Part D of policy D1 which prescribed that applications that unjustifiably fail to optimise capacity should be refused. This gives areas with more social capital get-out clauses, which the less well connected areas are denied.

## Good Growth policies are now objectives

One of the last minutes striking changes to the Plan is that the Panel has recommended that the Good Growth policies (GG1-GG6) are amended to be objectives rather than policies, which has been accepted by the Mayor. This is deemed to cause no material change even though in PR14, which is also accepted by the Mayor, it is stated that insertion of text into a policy is necessary to ensure effectiveness (IR p50 para 216). The obvious corollary to this must be that, if text is not in a policy, it can be ineffective. It is also stated that by insertion into the policy the text is elevated (IIA policy H14 p125). Therefore, by taking text out of policy, surely it becomes demoted.

Good growth is, therefore, now merely a hopeful wish. There are no good growth policies that can be used to prohibit poor growth. Despite this huge change to the structure of the Plan, it is deemed to produce no material change. In fact the impact matrix for GG1 has been made more positive rather than more negative.

## Lack of social infrastructure

The Inspectors’ report points out that there is a funding gap of £3.1 billion a year 2016 to 2050 for the infrastructure London needs. The Inspectors accepted that Chapter 11 of the Plan outlines the potential sources of funding but comment that “There is no certainty that these will materialise”. This leaves the door wide open for infrastructure not to be provided. There is no reference to any independent analysis of infrastructure needs; no quantitative stipulations about what infrastructure provision will be deemed adequate for a given

population density. It leaves infrastructure provision completely open to council judgement and interpretation.

The density of development proposals should consider and be linked to the provision of future planned levels of infrastructure rather than existing levels. There is no consideration that the infrastructure may never materialize or, in time, be hugely reduced in quantity and quality and provides no mitigating measures on how to ensure this does not happen.

PTAL and accessibility are still used to target town centres for the growth in housing without consideration of the current saturation level of many transport links. Transport infrastructure has been inadequately modelled and gives a false appearance of sustainability – eg Crossrail.

(policy S4) There is an increased positive value for the IIA matrix because of requiring new residential developments to design play space that is accessible to all children regardless of the housing tenure. However, there is no acknowledgement that the data used to calculate child yield may be wildly inaccurate in London's present situation. The yield is not realistic at all with many families occupying flatted developments, which is not accounted for.

IR P79 para 362 states: 'For residential development it sets out criteria to help deliver safe and stimulating play provision, including a standard requirement per child. This standard has its origins in previous Plans, having been developed initially by Fields in Trust for outdoor play space. It was reassessed in 2012 and is based on robust evidence and extensive consultation'.

The IR p104 para 494 states that the waste apportionments indicate how much household and commercial and industrial waste each borough should plan for. Those apportionments include hazardous waste that originates within those waste streams. However, they do not include construction, demolition or excavation waste. The Inspectors state that: 'Given the uncertainties of data for this waste flow, the Plan's support for dealing with it at source and that it usually does not require permanent infrastructure, this is a reasonable and justified approach to assessing capacity needs'. Is this really justified when so much development is concentrated in small areas?

## Lack of Affordable Housing

The IR p45 para 191 states that: The identified need for affordable housing in London is acute, being some 65% of overall housing need. This plan will produce a fraction of the identified need.

IR p24 para 87 states that: 'boroughs to determine the weight to be given to site-specific viability assessments in all circumstances. It is expected that viability testing should normally only be undertaken on a site-specific basis where there are clear circumstances creating barriers to delivery.

There has been viability testing on **every** development in the town centres of Ilford South in the last few years. It is well known that high-rise, high-density developments always have viability issues.

Yet the IR p22/23 para 78 states that: 'There are pockets of higher value where viability will be stronger; these are likely to include the most accessible locations, such as in and around town centres, where the Plan aims to focus development'. This flies in the face of the reality on the ground.

## Consultation and engagement used to enhance matrix

(Policy S1) The Plan posits the idea that 'consulting with the community' will lead to more equality and inclusion and ignores the reality on the ground that engagement and

consultation is often a tick box exercise which does not lead to any significance being given to community views, especially where community voice does not have social capital. Even when there are representations or needs identified, there is no guarantee that anyone will listen if it goes against what has already been decided. Yet wishful thinking leads to the IIA matrix being made more positive.

The Mayor cites (policy D1) requirement to consider different development options as a positive enhancement to the matrix. This ignores the fact that consideration of different options does not guarantee that profit will not be the driving factor in the final choice in each and every case.

## Watering down of safeguards indicating high density problems

The following policies see a degradation in the safeguard afforded to Londoners:

Noise safeguards (policies D6 and D14)

Affordable workspace (policy E3)

Regulation of hot food takeaways (policy E9)

Regulation of student accommodation (H15)

Policy: SI1 Improving Air Quality

Policy T4 Assessing and mitigating transport impacts

Policy T5 Cycling

Policy T6 Car parking

Policy T7 Deliveries, servicing and construction

## Special privileges are given to Central London

Special policies SD4&5 for CAZ and SD6&7 for rest of London

## Deletion of policies which may lead to a negative effect on vulnerable groups

Policy H2A and H9

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