

Call to reject this London Plan

On 6 February the Assembly will consider the Mayor's draft new London Plan **before** the GLA has received the Secretary of State's formal response to the Plan. The SoS has written that he will provide his response on or by 17 February, so the 6 February debate is procedurally unfair and irrational as Assembly members should have an opportunity to study the response before deciding on the Plan. We question the logic and lawfulness of this 6 February decision and urge Assembly Members to defer their decision to the 6 March meeting.

The draft new London Plan should not be adopted. Just Space and its many member groups [challenged the draft plan](#) on many deficiencies throughout its progress, have chalked up some small gains but it remains a Plan which will further deepen inequalities in the city and fall badly short on environment.

The emperor has no clothes. We call upon the Assembly to send it back for a complete re-think.

Like its predecessors, the London Plan reinforces the dominance of property and financial interests in the development of the city, at the expense of low- and middle-income Londoners, the environment and the ordinary economy.

Specifically, the draft Plan is bad because of its...

- Deepening inequalities and poverty, particularly in the provision of cheap housing;
- Failure to discharge the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) from the outset of the planning process. If the Mayor had considered the PSED properly from the outset – and the duty to consult those groups properly - he would have had some chance of achieving the 'Good Growth' he favours.
- Failure adequately to consider alternative strategies, notably the Just Space community-led plan of 2016. (LSE London made a similar challenge, arguing the need for an explicit evaluation of alternative strategies beyond the London built-up area.)
- A mistaken approach to housing based on maximising total housing numbers, rather than protecting and growing the stock of council and low-rent housing which is London's overwhelming need. This mistake will lead to the backlog of unmet housing need getting even worse in the coming years, families being sent miles from home if they become homeless and to those who do find housing spending so much on rent that they can neither save nor enjoy London.
- Failure adequately to protect the jobs and services in London's industrial areas, in and behind high streets and in town centres as land is switched to produce yet more expensive homes. This failing makes the economy less robust, increases the need to travel and would have regressive effects on many protected equalities groups.
- Weak approaches to climate change and bio-diversity, lacking urgency, tangible measures and timelines of target outcomes.
- The absence of convincing ways of paying for social and physical infrastructure without cutting the provision of low-rent housing; contributing to unsupportable increases in housing density and land price inflation, especially in Opportunity Areas which are supposed to contribute so much of the housing we need.
- Continuing failure to devise and require transparent and democratic mechanisms for the designation, planning and implementation of Opportunity Areas.

From JustSpace.org.uk to the London Assembly 3 February 2020

Supplementary notes:

Just Space is a network of neighbourhood and London-wide community organisations and campaigns which came together a decade ago to support each other in participating in the London planning process.

Its participant groups have taken part in every one of the consultations on successive London Plans and many of the Mayor's other strategies.

In 2015, with a new Mayor and a new Plan imminent it started a long process of devising its own plan and about 100 very diverse groups and organisations contributed to the document Towards a Community-led Plan for London which was delivered to the new Mayor and new Assembly in 2016.

Since then Just Space and its member groups have taken every opportunity to engage constructively with City Hall, as well as responding to City Hall initiatives and then participating by invitation in almost every one of the sessions of the Examination in Public with written and oral evidence. Over 80 community groups took part, facing developers, land owners and councils.

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Towards a Community-led Plan for London is a free download at <https://justspacelondon.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/just-space-a4-community-led-london-plan.pdf>

EiP evidence from Just Space <https://justspace.org.uk/hearings-eip-2019>