



28 February 2018

Dear sir/madam,

**Draft New London Plan. The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London.  
December 2017**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft new London Plan. We welcome much of what is contained in the new draft plan, particularly the emphasis on “good growth” and the need for affordable housing to be provided on site by developers. However we have some major concerns over:

- The overemphasis on growth in the South–East rather than a wider look at sustainable growth in the UK as a whole;
- The weakening of protection of our green spaces and Metropolitan Open Land, including for the river Thames;
- The protection of the World Heritage status of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew;
- The need to identify funding, particularly for the necessary infrastructures to support housing growth, and
- An erosion of localism with insufficient flexibility left to Boroughs to achieve agreed overall aims.

Our comments on each Chapter reflect these concerns.

**Chapter 1 Planning London’s Future (Good Growth Policies)**

We welcome much of what is said here but there is no mention of the need to rebalance growth across the UK, beyond London and the South East. An over concentration of economic growth in the South East impacts housing costs, transport infrastructure costs, and inequalities in health associated with poorer areas across the UK. Amongst the many sound reasons for opposing the expansion of Heathrow is the effect that would have on taking away growth from elsewhere in the UK, further concentrating growth in the South East. This has been demonstrated in the analyses undertaken by the Richmond Heathrow Campaign (see <http://www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org/>) and should be reflected in this new Plan for London. The Plan should make specific reference to this reason to oppose Heathrow expansion.

Policy GG2 Making the best use of land

The Kew Society supports the concept of a National Park City for London. Intensification of land use should not be at the expense of green spaces, including back gardens which contribute to biodiversity and other environmental benefits as recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in Chapter 6, paragraph 53, which says that “Local planning authorities



should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area”.

The adverse effect of back garden development on areas where the back gardens in a street or neighbourhood together create a larger haven for wildlife and other biodiversity, as well as affording some mitigation for poor air quality and benefitting the quality of life of the residents, should be protected in considering applications, particularly where such development is cumulative.

The Plan should also make clear that higher densities do not equate to higher rise. We support the aims of the Skyline Campaign which makes clear that good architectural design can achieve high densities without building high rise. Lower rise development can help create more vibrant, inclusive, healthier communities.

We welcome the aim that 80% of all journeys should be sustainable, leading to car-free lifestyles, but the realisation depends on the infrastructure being available and the necessary funding which the Plan acknowledges is a difficulty. Funding should be addressed more clearly in the Plan to demonstrate the aim is realistic.

#### Policy GG3 Creating a healthy city

The Kew Society welcomes the emphasis on health and the use of planning to reduce health inequalities, focusing on the environmental effects on health. We support the Environmental Audit Select Committee report in December 2014 which recommended that health/air quality should be an important planning consideration and recommended that no new schools or health facilities should be built near heavily polluting roads. This restriction should be included in the London Plan.

#### Policy GG4 Delivering the homes Londoners need

We support the aim to provide more affordable housing and efforts to make this a requirement for on-site provision rather than a financial contribution wherever this is feasible. In high cost housing areas such as Kew, developers have often argued that on site provision is not viable. Local communities have not been able to see the evidence of viability but where a viability assessment is required in future, there should also be a requirement for this to be published so that the community can see the evidence and comment on it. Stronger “overage” provisions (an uplift in the financial contribution when development units are sold should the profit estimated in the original viability calculation be exceeded on sale) should be included where financial contributions are appropriate

## **Chapter 2 Spatial Development Patterns**

### Policy SD1 Opportunity Areas

#### *Paragraph 2.1.62 Heathrow/Elizabeth Line West*



Heathrow expansion should be opposed on economic grounds as well as noise and air pollution grounds. As above, expansion would result in a further concentration of growth in the South East, taking away existing capacity in the rest of the UK. A more balanced UK growth of transport infrastructures, including aviation, would alleviate pressures on London and make the whole of the UK “open for business”.

#### Policy SD3 Growth locations in the Wider South East and beyond

The Plan aims to accommodate all of London’s growth within its boundaries without intruding on Green Belt or other protected open spaces. This protection is welcome but the Plan should look beyond London, particularly if it is not possible to meet, for example, housing targets, without loss of green and open space. The M25 would be a suitable boundary – in outer areas, there may be suitable low quality Green Belt land and brownfield sites which could accommodate housing with suitable supporting infrastructure investment.

The Plan speaks of cooperation and partnership with the Wider South East (WSE). It would make sense to look beyond the 32 Boroughs, which, based on historic evidence, will have difficulty in meeting small site targets for housing.

We are also concerned that there is over-emphasis on the South East rather than seeking to facilitate or encourage growth throughout the UK.

#### Policy SD4 The Central Activities Zone (CAZ)

*Paragraph 2.4.8.* We support efforts to improve air quality as a matter of urgency. We have commented on Transport for London (TfL)’s consultation on changes to the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) and Low Emission Zone (LEZ), asking for a more ambitious approach (i) in the timing proposed for introducing new emissions standards for heavy vehicles in the existing LEZ and (ii) in the size of the area proposed for the ULEZ for light vehicles and cars and for its start date.

All Londoners should have the same entitlement to clean air and the regulations which aim to achieve it, whether they live in Central, Inner or Outer London. The text of our letter to TfL with detailed comments is attached at **Annex A**.

#### Policy SD6 Town centres

The policies for building housing within and on the edges of town centres are very prescriptive. It seems that Boroughs have not been allowed to define these areas. The area of 800 metres from the edge of a town centre or train or tube station covers a very large area in any London Borough. It is in these areas that the Plan states that new housing should be realised through higher density mixed use or residential development.



This could adversely affect the special characteristics of the Kew area and the World Heritage Site of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. More flexibility should be incorporated in the London Plan to allow Boroughs to identify the best approach to growth in their area which they will know in detail best. Protection of valued local character should be a prime consideration so that development is undertaken in a way that preserves what is most valued by those who live and work in the area, both now and for future generations.

*Policy SD6 D* posits the particular suitability of town centres for smaller households (build to rent, old people's housing and student accommodation). One and two bedroom flats are suggested as a priority. There is a danger that this policy will create a less mixed community with a form of ghetto/enclave for young and old, leaving out families. In a town centre area, in particular, there should be an inclusive and diverse range of young, old and families planned for in order to sustain and encourage a centre which is lively throughout week days, evenings and weekends. Without this there is a risk of catering for short term need and so detracting from rather than revitalising town centres.

*Policy SD6 E* supports redevelopment of surplus office space to other uses including housing, while taking into account the impact of office to residential change of use under permitted development rights. This must be very carefully applied as in some areas like Richmond Borough there has been substantial loss of office and retail space under those permitted development rights. Article 4 Directions are helpful to protect existing space where applicable but where the Plan policies emphasise provision of housing in town centre areas, then pressure to prioritise such housing (and especially where this provides current greater return for developers than commercial use/development) could override consideration of commercial need. Retention of commercial space also promotes employment. Once housing takes the place of commercial space, that commercial space is gone. Building of tall developments on top of commercial space, which this policy could promote, must also be considered very carefully (see our comments on tall buildings under Policy D8 below).

#### Policy SD8 Town centres: development principles and Development Plan Documents

*Paragraph 2.8.3* encourages redevelopment of existing edge-of-centre (defined in the draft Plan as areas within 800 m from town centre boundaries) retail and leisure parks which are often low density and car dependent, to deliver housing intensification as set out in Policy H1 on Increasing housing supply. This could lead to overdevelopment of such sites. It is a very prescriptive policy which we do not support. As in earlier comments, this should be left to Boroughs to consider based on their local knowledge and there should be a firm emphasis on the need to ensure the full infrastructure requirements (roads and public transport, schools, medical and dental provision etc.) for such large developments are identified, including the cumulative impact of nearby developments. Phased development, as considered by the Plan, where infrastructure is not in place, would seem to be commercially unattractive – will developers who wish to redevelop, say, a large supermarket with car park, want or be able commercially to phase



development while infrastructure catches up? Funding of infrastructure is again the issue.

### Chapter 3 Design

Policies on density should cross-refer also to the need to consider social infrastructures as well as transport, covered later in Chapter 5, as well as the need to preserve open and green spaces useable by the community.

#### Policy D2 Delivering good design

There are good ideas in this policy but the policy is light on details of funding (who pays for the design reviews and the Mayor's Design Advocates?).

#### Policy D4 Housing quality and standards

The minimum space requirements for room sizes and provision of outdoor space are welcome.

In *paragraph 3.4.2* Boroughs are encouraged to resist dwellings with floor areas significantly above those in Table 3.1 as an inefficient use of land. This applies to all new self-contained dwellings including conversions and changes of use. How does this affect applications for new houses in Boroughs such as Richmond and areas like Kew, where there are many large Victorian/Edwardian homes, and some space where new family homes could be built based on local evidence of housing demand? There is a danger that this could mean such applications should be refused in favour of 1-25 unit developments meeting minimum space standards to increase density. This would potentially destroy the character of such areas where there is no Conservation Area status and not meet the local housing need.

In *paragraph 3.4.8* the requirement that housing developments should be designed to maximise tenure integration and where affordable housing units should have the same external appearance as the private units is welcome.

#### Policy D6 Optimising housing density

The policy requires making the most efficient use of land which should be developed at the optimum density and that proposed residential development that does not demonstrably optimise the housing density of the site should be refused. This has great potential for harm not only to areas of, or near, areas of special character (such as Kew) but in general.

The density matrix which previously informed planning policy has been scrapped. Thus there is no longer a maximum density. We believe a maximum density should be retained



so that good quality housing is not put at risk by the drive for greater quantity. The question of infrastructure necessary for such developments is not satisfactorily addressed. The applicants for permission and the providers (utilities) must work together but other infrastructure needs (roads, schools, doctors, etc.) cannot be created immediately. The funding needs (or lack of funding) is acknowledged, but no real plan for providing funding is set out. There is provision for phasing developments where infrastructure is not available when development starts. Evidence is needed to show this is commercially viable. The Plan also needs to show what effect phasing, if needed, would have on housing targets for Boroughs.

Transport infrastructure is a key concern. Without effective planning and provision of transport facilities (bearing in mind the target of 80% journeys to be by public transport, walking and cycling), optimising density will create overload on existing transport facilities and roads. This adds to congestion as well as air pollution.

In *Paragraph 3.6.1* the most efficient use of land will mean developing at densities above those of the surrounding area – suburbs and small sites. This should be amended so that the local character of areas, say of two storey homes, can be protected from developments which would destroy their valued character, such as from higher rise buildings.

*Paragraph 3.6.8* says that management plans for higher density proposals must include details of affordability of running costs and service charges by different types of occupiers. This prescription strays into the realm of landlord and tenant legislation which already deals with service charges and leaseholder protection. For affordable housing, this would presumably relate to social housing providers. It is not clear how planning requirements could regulate future costs of services. These aims should be considered within landlord and tenant legislation, not planning legislation.

#### Policy D7 Public realm

There are welcome policies here such as access to public toilets and free drinking water but more flexibility should be given to local Boroughs on how to deliver these aims in a sustainable way.

The policy to prioritise 1 and 2 bedroom flats in town centres (and edge of town centres etc.), as above, militates against inclusivity.

#### Policy D8 Tall buildings

We have major concerns over tall buildings, particularly those being proposed by developers, some inappropriately approved by Hounslow Council despite objections from Historic England, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and local civic societies, spoiling the



Arcadian Thames, which should be strongly protected, and impacting the World Heritage site of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Any developments along the Arcadian Thames should be severely limited in height or not permitted at all. The new Plan should include a requirement to respect the historic vistas from the Royal Botanic Gardens and its buffer zone and the Arcadian Thames.

Reference should also be made to the Skyline Campaign, encouraging developers to consider how high density can be achieved without high rise. In particular, we support the Campaign's "call for a more structured policy for tall buildings, with transparency for the public and clarity for developers". The use of CAD software to make visualisation meaningful should be a requirement where tall buildings are proposed. We view this as particularly relevant to developments in the Brentford area, for example the new Brentford stadium enabling developments and the "Chiswick Curve", the latter currently being appealed. Lower rise development with high density is a desirable aim, not only for encouraging vibrancy and community inclusivity. We should look to the long-term future of London and not risk the future in quick solutions to current housing need. The present generations are trustees of London for future generations in making London a great city to live and work in for all.

#### Policy D9 Basement development

It would be helpful if the London Plan were to say something to support the best of the new restrictions on basement development now incorporated in several Borough policies, including Richmond's, as a result of widespread and legitimate public concern. This includes both building risks and changes to the nature of the housing mix in localities.

#### Policy D13 Noise

London should adopt the World Health Organisation guidelines on noise levels, not least relating to Heathrow. These are detailed in the RHC response to the National Policy Statement: <http://www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org/>.

### **Chapter 4 Housing**

#### Policy H1 Increasing housing supply

*Para 4.1.2* treats London as a single housing market area with complex interlinked submarkets. As the Mayor did not consult with the Boroughs on the small sites policy, we question whether the nature of the submarkets has been adequately considered.

#### Policy H2 Small sites



The target for Richmond of 811 new housing units each year for 10 years with 634 of these to be on small sites is very challenging. Full dialogue with Boroughs on deliverability should be undertaken. In particular, the small sites policy and its methodology have been developed without reference to the Boroughs, who know their own areas best. This is a major departure from previous sensible practice and runs the risk of being undeliverable. It is the change in methodology that has led to the huge increase in the targets for Boroughs to meet on small sites. Such a fundamental change must be considered with the input of the Boroughs on whom the onus to implement the change is placed. Previous practice has been to consult with the Boroughs on large sites and Richmond Council has already stated that it could meet housing targets on such sites while it will have great difficulty in meeting targets on small sites. The new policy focusing on small sites and on the outer Boroughs risks being undeliverable and needs full local engagement so that practical ways of achieving “good growth” can be identified taking account of the character of the local area.

Small site development will lead to loss of green and open space, even if it is private. Provision of green roofs does not compensate for the amenity lost by loss of the space, although it may mitigate poor air quality. Full consideration needs to be given to loss of amenity space in weighing up planning applications.

We have commented on the emphasis on 1 and 2 bedroom flats in town centres etc. elsewhere.

Council land and other public sector owned land should not be considered just for housing – social infrastructure needs should be considered first to ensure there is not a proliferation of housing growth without the supporting infrastructure. This is particularly important in areas such as Kew where land and property prices are high. It has led, for example, to the commercial purchase by the Education Funding Agency of a property for conversion to a school in a totally inappropriate location on a busy road with insufficient outdoor play space. Fortunately the proposal did not proceed, but it is an example of how social infrastructure is taking second place in competition with commercial development.

Policy H2D prescribes that the Boroughs are to apply a presumption in favour of 1-25 unit schemes in the areas within 800 metres of a Tube or train station or the edge of the town centre boundary. The implications for a “green” area like Kew and much of Richmond Borough are potentially very adverse. This is even more so when *paragraph 4.2.5* states that the characters of some neighbourhoods will have to change to meet incremental intensification of existing residential areas within PTALs 3-6 and within the 800 metres distance. More flexibility should be given for Boroughs to determine the most appropriate locations for achieving targets.

*Paragraph 4.2.7 on Conservation Areas:* While the Plan mentions the need to ensure that increased housing provision is accommodated in such a way that it also “complements and enhances” a Conservation Area, the wording echoes but distorts and dilutes the



wording in planning law that the character of Conservation Areas should be “preserved and enhanced” (which does not mean preserved in aspic).

*Paragraph 4.2.8* states that small schemes (because they will be in close proximity to existing homes) need careful and creative design to avoid an “unacceptable level of harm” to the privacy of the surrounding properties. “Unacceptable” is open to wide interpretation and where conflicting needs (housing versus amenity of residents) occur, then it seems the small sites presumption may take priority. This should be amended to ensure the amenity of residents is given due weight.

*Paragraph 4.2.9* acknowledges that green, open space will be lost and so proposes green roofs to mitigate loss of biodiversity or green space. This will only partly mitigate as a green roof is not accessible to humans whereas green open space is, even if only visually.

#### Policy H5 Delivering affordable housing

As above, we agree that affordable housing should be provided on site (paragraph 4.5.5 of the plan), with cash in lieu the exception. Viability assessments where required should be published for public view and comment.

#### Policy H11 Ensuring the best use of stock

We support efforts to ensure that housing stock is occupied.

### **Chapter 5 Social Infrastructure**

We support the emphasis on social infrastructure which the pressure to increase housing capacity seems to be squeezing out. Developers should be required to demonstrate how the cumulative impact of their proposal alongside nearby planned developments would be supported by social infrastructure growth.

### **Chapter 6 Economy**

We support the use of Article 4 Directions to remove permitted development rights where appropriate so that Boroughs can achieve the right balance between housing, employment and social infrastructure.

### **Chapter 7 Heritage and Culture**

We support the aim to embed heritage, including archaeological sites, in planning and welcome the emphasis given to the role for Historic England.



The protection of the setting of the World Heritage site of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew is of particular importance to us and has been under threat from regenerative change in Hounslow. We support the regeneration of areas in Hounslow but greater sensitivity to the impact on the historic vistas from Kew and other historic assets in Hounslow needs more emphasis as well as the protection of the relationship of the Royal Botanic Gardens to the River Thames and the Arcadian landscape.

Proposals for high rise building such as the Chiswick Curve, turned down by Hounslow Council but now in appeal, should never be countenanced. Nor should other high and medium rise developments be approved, as has happened in recent years with, for example, approval of high rise enabling developments associated with the relocation and redevelopment of Brentford Football stadium and, more recently the Watermans Arts Centre on the river front.

Specific reference should be included in the new London Plan to the need to fully protect the Royal Botanic Gardens' Outstanding Universal Values (OUVs) as a World Heritage Site: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>.

Councils should be required to take full account of the Royal Botanic Gardens new World Heritage Management Plan, currently being drafted, in their Heritage Impact Assessments. The Buffer Zone to the North of the site should also be extended in order to protect this World Heritage asset. Insufficient attention to the OUVs puts at risk the World Heritage status of this major London tourist attraction.

On the references in this Chapter to the night time economy, we agree it is not suitable everywhere – it can radically alter the nature of communities and needs to be carefully considered with decisions taken locally by Boroughs.

## **Chapter 8 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment**

We support the emphasis on preserving the Green Belt and green open spaces and the ideas for more urban greening. The protection of green areas, for all the reasons set out in this Chapter, is important for both public and privately owned spaces. Intensification of housing should not put the preservation of green areas under threat, including their important role as habitats for wildlife and to increase biodiversity.

A concern is that the loss of open spaces which may well result from high density development would not be mitigated by green roofs and other similar devices – it would partially mitigate air quality but they are not a substitute for public open space. Table 8.1 sets out categories of Public Open Space: one category is green and open spaces which is important at a neighbourhood level.



### Policy G5 Urban Greening

This contains welcome policies to support, with targets, urban greening in new developments. Again, though, provision of green roofs does not equate to provision of accessible open space.

### Policy G7 Trees and Woodlands

The policy on protecting trees and increasing tree cover by 10% by 2050 is welcome. We wonder if this could not be increased and brought forward if practical.

## **Chapter 9 Sustainable Infrastructure**

In general the Kew Society supports the focus on improving air quality, and quickly.

### Policy SI1 Improving air quality

This policy should be strengthened in A 1 to require any developments (including Heathrow expansion) to demonstrate how they will improve air quality rather than simply not make matters worse. This is picked up in A. 3, which we assume would apply to Heathrow, but could be made stronger by turning A.1 into a positive requirement.

Policy SI1, A5, requires all major developments to submit an Air Quality Assessment (AQA) “unless they can demonstrate that transport and building emissions will be less than the previous or existing use”. We propose that the latter clause is removed. *All* developments should have to provide a standard level of assessment, i.e. an AQA. The inclusion of this clause will only tempt developers to try to avoid compliance with air quality standards.

*Paragraph 9.1.9* refers to making a development which is non-compliant with AQ neutral standards acceptable through additional mitigation or offsetting payments. We are strongly opposed to this loophole for non-compliant developments. It is incompatible with the principles laid down in Policy SI1. Developments must not be allowed under any circumstances to lead to further deterioration of existing poor air quality or create new areas that exceed air quality – for the sake of the health of vulnerable people – as expressed in that policy. If developments cannot demonstrate compliance, they should not be permitted.

### Policy SI5 Water infrastructure

*Paragraph 9.5.12.* We wondered whether this should apply to all developments, not just large ones, where particular flood risk and water related constraints such as limited sewer capacity require an integrated approach to the provision of infrastructure and the management of risk.



### Policy SI7 Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy

We strongly support Policy SI17 to reduce waste by setting targets for recycling and meeting or exceeding them but see our comments on SI18 and SI19.

### Policy SI8 Waste capacity and net waste self sufficiency

We note that Policy SI8 states that existing “waste management sites” should be safeguarded, and that policy SI9 states that they should be retained. These statements should be strengthened by referring to “waste management sites and recycling centres”. We are mindful that the Richmond Borough Recycling Centre in Townmead Road, Kew, occupies a site next to the River Thames which could be seen by developers as highly desirable for expensive housing. No doubt there are other similar sites in London. They must not be allowed to disappear unless Boroughs in which they are sited are able to provide replacements with at least equivalent or better facilities.

### Policy SI9 Safeguarded waste sites

As in our comments on Policy SI18, for clarity this should refer to “waste management sites and recycling centres” rather than just waste management sites.

### Policy SI13 Sustainable drainage

*Paragraph 9.13.3* should state that any direct discharge into the watercourse “must”, rather than “should” include suitable pollution preventative measures.

### Policy SI14 Waterways-strategic role

*Paragraph 9.14.2* should also refer to the need to protect the Thames from inappropriate high or medium rise developments, preserving it as a unique backdrop to heritage assets, including the Royal Botanic Gardens, and an important corridor of biodiversity, which needs protection from light pollution, as well as preserving it as an oasis for calm recreational enjoyment. Reference should also be made here to the need to restrict the heights not only of buildings but of moored boats to protect vistas, taking account of the changing impact of tides on heights and vistas.

In *paragraph 9.14.5* on setting the boundary of Thames Policy Areas (TPAs) we suggest the wording should be changed to require consultation with neighbouring authorities, including those across the river, by changing “should” to “must” and similarly that in defining boundaries, boroughs “must” rather than “should” have regard to the listed issues, all of which are very important.



In *Paragraph 9.14.8* the removal of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) protection for the River Thames is not acceptable. The reason proposed is that this protection might restrict the use of the river for transport infrastructure related uses. The NPPF Chapter 9 “Protecting the Green Belt” (whose protections are extended to MOL) sets examples of development that might not be *inappropriate* on such land, one of which is local transport infrastructure which can “demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location”. Such infrastructure could be approved for MOL on that basis. There is therefore no need for removal of MOL protection for the reason given in the draft Plan. Furthermore, the draft London Plan wording of “related uses” is open to wide interpretation that could lead to inappropriate development on the river. Whilst the River Thames will benefit from the other policies for open spaces and waterways set out in the Plan, these are less robust protections. The fundamental importance of the Thames to London (and indeed to the UK symbolically), in history, leisure and sport, biodiversity, culture and inclusion (everyone can enjoy the Thames) is difficult to overstate. It deserves the best protection for present and future generations.

#### Policy SI17 Protecting London’s waterways

*Paragraph 9.17.2* should also refer to the need to protect open vistas along rivers from buildings that protrude out over the river. We therefore suggest the wording “development into waterways” should be amended to read “development into and over waterways”.

*Paragraph 9.17.3* should be strengthened to prevent discharge from vessels.

### **Chapter 10 Transport**

#### Policy T3 Transport capacity, connectivity and safeguarding

*Table 10.1* – indicative list of transport schemes - should make clear that step free access at London Underground, Overground and mainline stations should be improved where none exists but also, such as at Kew Gardens, where the step free option is inadequate. For example at Kew, passengers travelling from central London, many wanting to visit the Royal Botanic Gardens, have either to take a long detour to cross over the railway line or to travel on to Richmond and come back again to Kew to access a truly step free exit/entrance.

#### Policy T6.3 Retail parking

*Paragraph 10.6.15* acknowledges that Retail Developments are “significant trip attractors”, or put another way, they generate increased road traffic. Overall the Mayor’s policies aim to reduce road traffic in London. Ideally we would like to see a policy which bans the developments of any further retail parks with large car parks, thereby avoiding increased traffic to such sites and promoting improved air quality. It is not enough to say



that such developments “should be well connected by public transport”. Shoppers must be actively encouraged to use public transport, walk, or cycle, to new retail developments by minimising parking at them. We accept that a total ban on providing parking for the general public at such developments is unlikely so we propose that parking provision should be reduced by 50% over that proposed in Table 10.5. , i.e. it should not exceed one space per 150 m<sup>3</sup> gross internal area for Inner London, or one space per 100 m<sup>2</sup> GIA for Outer London. We note that research by Sustrans and other bodies, shows that shoppers who do not arrive by car spend more than those who do and that pedestrianisation increases turnover of retail businesses rather than decreasing it. See:

([https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/170609\\_activetraveltoolbox\\_ec\\_whatw\\_orkswellv6.pdf](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/170609_activetraveltoolbox_ec_whatw_orkswellv6.pdf)), and the Department for Transport ([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/509587/value-of-cycling.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509587/value-of-cycling.pdf)).

#### Policy T7 Freight and servicing

Policy T7G should also refer to the need to mitigate noise from deliveries in residential areas, particularly at night. This should refer to existing as well as new developments.

#### Policy T8 Aviation

Policy T8C. We agree that the aviation industry should fully meet its external and environmental costs with respect to noise, air quality and climate change. We think that added emphasis needs to be given in the Plan to the industry meeting the full costs of any airport expansion and that planning permission should only be given for such expansion if the industry can clearly demonstrate that it is committed to this and has the financial resources for it. As the Mayor knows, the current proposals for expansion by Heathrow Airport Limited do not meet this criterion.

Policy T8D should also include a requirement to demonstrate economic value to the UK as a whole. This has not been demonstrated to date. See <http://www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org/>.

*Paragraph 10.8.4* should not refer to extra runway capacity but increased capacity through more efficient use of existing runways. See <http://www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org/> for the evidence that demonstrates no new runways are needed.

*Paragraph 10.8.5* should be strengthened by adoption of World Health Organisation guidelines on noise as required standards to be achieved. There should be a requirement for no increase in existing noise levels as a minimum requirement and preferably an aim to reduce noise at source since mitigation measures, such as double glazing, only improve noise control when people are indoors. Londoners should have the right to enjoy their outdoor environment year-round.



*Paragraph 10.8.6 should require improvement of air quality, not just no worsening.*

## **Chapter 11 Funding the London Plan**

### Policy DF1 Delivering the Plan and Planning Objectives

We welcome the aim, in Policy DF1C, to tighten up on the requirement to provide affordable housing on site. This policy should require publication of viability assessments to improve public scrutiny.

The adequacy of funding for infrastructure for new developments to meet the increase in housing targets is clearly a weakness in the current Plan. This is acknowledged in the proposal that new developments may be phased where existing infrastructure and provision of future infrastructure is not yet adequate but it is unclear how this will work in practice.

We hope you will be able to take the points we have made on board and look forward to seeing the next version of the plan.

Yours faithfully,

*Caroline Brock*

Caroline Brock  
Chair, Kew Society

## CHANGES TO THE ULTRA LOW EMISSION ZONE AND LOW EMISSION ZONE

We have carefully considered your consultation document on the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) and Low Emission Zone (LEZ) and wish to make a number of points we hope you will take into account. By way of background:

- **Kew**, a ward of the London Borough of Richmond, has over 11,000 residents. **The South Circular Road** (A205), proposed as the boundary for the Inner London ULEZ, runs through Kew;
- The **Kew Society** has over 700 members many of whom are very concerned about poor air quality and traffic density in our area;
- **The South Circular Road in Kew** carries 15,000 daily **traffic movements** (AADFs) between Chalker's Corner and Kew Road (A307), and 28,000 movements (AADFs) as it passes over Kew Green. (*Department for Transport Road Traffic Statistics*);
- **Air quality** along the Kew section of the South Circular Road, which is residential, is very poor. The annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentration at the junction of Kent Road and the South Circular was 56µg/m<sup>3</sup>, exceeding the EU/UK legal limit (40µg/m<sup>3</sup>), as it has every year since 2003 (*London Borough of Richmond upon Thames*). The legal limit for PM10s is exceeded on the section of the South Circular approaching Kew Bridge (*London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory 2013 update, published 2016*);
- **Three primary schools** (Queens, Kew College, and Riverside) are sited adjacent to the South Circular Road in Kew, a particular cause of concern for our children's health.

We are thus very supportive of the Mayor of London's mission to reduce the level of polluting traffic and to clean up the air we breathe in London and, of course, in our own locality. However we believe that **he should be more ambitious (i) in the timing proposed for introducing new emissions standards for heavy vehicles in the existing LEZ and (ii) in the size of the area proposed for the ULEZ for light vehicles and cars and for its start date.**

### Proposals for HGV's, coaches and buses for the Low Emission Zone

(p.39, *Supporting Information Document [SID]*)

The Low Emission Zone (LEZ), covering most of Greater London, was phased in from 2008. 97% of HGVs and 99% of large vans are now compliant with the current LEZ standards (Euro IV), helping to remove the most polluting vehicles from Greater London (*page 14 and Figure 1, SID*).



An estimated 3000 HGVs and 800 nonTransport for London (TfL) buses and coaches per day in the LEZ do not comply with the more rigorous Euro VI emission standards (*table 10, page 41 SID*). Thus, given the compelling need to achieve further improvements in air quality across the whole of London, **we strongly support the Mayor's proposal to require heavy vehicles entering the LEZ to meet Euro VI emissions standards** from 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The Mayor estimates this would reduce NOx concentrations London wide by 19% and PM10/ PM2.5 by 1% in 2021 (*page 106, SID*). Given this prediction of an immediate and dramatic effect of lowering NOx levels **we urge the Mayor to introduce Euro VI emissions for heavy vehicles in the LEZ from October 2019.**

We appreciate that implementation of Euro VI standards will cause financial problems for some businesses as they upgrade their fleet to meet the new emission requirements. However for many businesses such problems will be the same whether Euro VI is introduced in 2019 or 2020. This must be weighed against the fact that 10,000 Londoners per year die prematurely because of toxic air quality and, if the Mayor's prediction for radically improved air quality is correct, many deaths and much ill health in 2020 could be avoided by the earlier implementation of Euro VI in the LEZ in 2019.

#### Proposals for TfL buses

*(p.45 Supporting Information Document)*

**We agree that all TfL buses, as major contributors of NOx in London, should be required to meet the same emission standards as other heavy vehicles.** We note with approval the statements in this section of the SID that all TfL buses operating in the current Congestion Charging Zone should comply with Euro VI emission standards by 2019 and that single decker buses in that zone will all be zero emission by 2020. We also support the introduction of 12 low emission bus zones in other parts of London to deal with the worst pollution hot spots and we already see the benefit of the first to be introduced in 2017 in Putney High Street, our near neighbour. However **we are less impressed with the Mayor's ambition, detailed in his London Environment Strategy, 2017, that all TfL buses should be zero emission by 2037.** We are assured in the Strategy that new double decker buses will be hybrid, electric, or hydrogen powered from 2018, and that new single decker buses will be zero emission from 2020. Given this, **we propose that a more ambitious programme for retiring older more polluting buses should be adopted immediately** so that the total fleet will be zero emission long before 2037. We understand there would be cost implications in bringing this date forward to say, 2030. However we suggest that a faster programme for retiring older buses and renewing the fleet would also stimulate Londoners to increase their use of this very important arm of public transport which, in turn, would have an added benefit for air quality by reducing car usage.

#### Proposals for cars and light vehicles

*(p.46 Supporting Information Document)*

**We agree that the proposals for heavy vehicles are not sufficient alone to tackle London's air quality problems.** The SID records that light vehicles, whilst individually less polluting, make up a far greater percentage of traffic in Inner London and therefore contribute to a great proportion of emissions overall (*Section 5.1 page 34, and page 46, SID*). In Kew 80% of the traffic movements on the South Circular and over Kew Bridge are light vehicles (*TfL Road Traffic Statistics*). **We propose that light vehicles also make up a far greater percentage of the traffic London wide** and therefore contribute a great proportion of the emissions in Outer London. **Thus we stress that it is essential to reduce emissions from light vehicles on a London wide basis.**

Currently cars and light vehicles driving in the London Central Congestion Zone (CCZ) must comply with Euro 4 standards, or pay the T-charge in addition to the congestion charge. **We fully support the proposal that from 2019 diesel-powered cars and light vehicles will have to comply with Euro 6 emission standards, and that the period over which charges will apply for both non-compliant petrol and diesel vehicles will extend to 24 hours/7 days per week.** These changes will form the initial Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ, *page 33, Figure 11, SID*).

The Mayor proposes expanding the ULEZ from October 25<sup>th</sup> 2021. Euro 4 (for petrol), or Euro 6 (for diesel) emission standards will continue to apply to cars and light vans but within an expanded ULEZ extending out to the North and South Circular Roads (*page 46, SID*). The expanded zone is referred to as Inner London.

The Mayor estimates that 100,000 of 540,000 cars entering the Inner London ULEZ each day would be non-compliant. The impact of these changes, modelled for 2025, suggest a 9% reduction in NOx emissions from cars in Inner London (excluding the CCZ) and an 8% reduction in Outer London (*page 66, Table 27, SID*). The latter is presumably a "knock-on" effect since Outer London is outside the expanded ULEZ in this proposal, but this is not explained in the SID.

**We fully support the proposal to expand the ULEZ for cars and other light vehicles but we propose that the expansion should go beyond the North and South Circular Roads to cover the whole of the LEZ.**

We note that the Environment Committee of the London Assembly, responding to the ULEZ consultation (phase 3a) on behalf of the London Assembly, also strongly supports extension of ULEZ across the whole LEZ. ([https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london\\_assembly\\_ulez\\_3a\\_response.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_assembly_ulez_3a_response.pdf)). Our proposal for extending the ULEZ throughout the LEZ area is based on the following considerations:-

- We accept that the revised LEZ standards for heavy vehicles, and particularly buses, will lower NOx significantly in Outer London. However, after this reduction, parts of

the Circular Roads and some hotspots on Outer London's major roads (7%) remain polluted, even by 2025 (*Figure 45, page 81, Figure 59, page 109 and Figure 60, page 110*). Representing the reduction in NOx emissions in percentage terms for the whole of Outer London (population over 5 million, *Table 35, p83*), as in *Table 45 (page 110)*, is misleading. If you live in a pollution hotspot beside a polluted main road, your health will be compromised and you may die an early death. **We propose that if diesel cars and light vehicles in Outer London had to comply with Euro 6 emission standards, there would be further decreases in NOx in the area which would help to ameliorate this situation;**

- The SID informs us that without ULEZ expansion about 12,000 people are forecast to still live in areas of exceedance in 2025, but that this is expected to fall to about 3,000 with the Mayor's proposals (*page 81*). This is still a very large number of people blighted with air pollution, even though it may be a very small percentage of London's total population. **All Londoners should have the same entitlement to clean air and the regulations which aim to achieve it, whether they live in Central, Inner or Outer London. We ask the Mayor to be more ambitious with his proposals for the ULEZ by at least extending it to the LEZ boundary.** In contrast to Mayor Khan's conservative proposal for a ULEZ extending only to the Circular roads, the Mayor of Paris will ban all diesel-engine vehicles from her city by 2024, and petrol-engined vehicles by 2030 (*Le Monde, 24 January 2018*);
- Drawing the ULEZ boundary at the Circular Roads will encourage non-compliant vehicles to avoid charges by staying just outside the ULEZ. As an example, currently, in South West London, cars travelling from Wandsworth, or Putney to the M4 or West London, would normally go north across Wandsworth or Putney Bridge and make for Hammersmith and thence to the A4 and motorway. The present ULEZ proposal extends up to, but does not include the Circular roads. Thus non-compliant cars and light vehicles could avoid the charge by taking the South Circular Road through the highly congested areas of Barnes, East Sheen and Kew, crossing the river at Kew Bridge to join the M4 at Chiswick Roundabout. Numerous examples of this sort could be given, all having in common that **more polluting vehicles will focus on the already polluted and congested South Circular Road. The Mayor must avoid creating this situation through his proposals.** With respect to the North Circular Road, we note that the section nearest to Kew, between Chiswick Roundabout and the junction with the A40 at Hanger Lane, is currently the most congested route in the UK during peak hours (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-42917201>). This reinforces our



**view that the Mayor must avoid creating even more traffic (and pollution) on this road through his proposals;**

- The London Borough of Richmond identified four Air Quality Focus Areas in its Air Quality Action Plan 2017-2022. These are deemed worthy of special attention since they not only exceed EU air quality standards for NO<sub>x</sub> but are also locations of high human exposure. Three of the AQ Focus Areas (Upper Richmond Road to Chalkers Corner on the South Circular(A205), Richmond Town Centre, and Twickenham Town Centre) will lie outside the ULEZ if the boundary is to the inner side of the South Circular. 25-40% of the NO<sub>x</sub> at these AQ Focus Areas comes from diesel cars and vans (*LBRuT AQAP 2017*). Action point 22 of Richmond's AQAP states that "if the ULEZ extends only to the South Circular Road, many of the Borough's town centres will remain outside the ULEZ and may be subject to displacement of higher emission vehicles. The ideal outcome for the London Borough of Richmond would be the extension of the ULEZ to all London Boroughs". **We strongly support our Borough's ideal.** Without this extension the Borough would have to introduce Clean Air Zones to reduce air pollution in these AQ Focus areas. We propose that only the most radical approach – introducing *charging* clean air zones to restrict traffic entry - would be sufficient to bring air quality within these particular AQ Focus Areas to legal levels. This would not be popular! Moreover it would be a piecemeal solution as we suspect that other Boroughs which have the Circular roads running through them have a similar situation with AQ focus areas to Richmond. Thus rather than having multiple CAZs surrounding a ULEZ demarcated by the South and North Circular roads it would be **more logical and beneficial for London as a whole if the Mayor extended the ULEZ to the boundary of the LEZ in Outer London. We urge the Mayor to do this;**
  
- **We believe that some businesses around the Circular Roads will be adversely affected if the ULEZ boundary lies just within them.** For example, in our own area, the Kew Retail Park is situated on the Inner London side of the South Circular Road, within the ULEZ (*ULEZ Map nr. 83*). Shoppers come from far and wide and virtually all drive there via the South Circular Road. Under the Mayor's present proposals those coming from Outer London in non-compliant cars would incur a charge. We believe this would deter some visits to the Retail Park, damaging its business. There are likely to be many more examples like this. **If the ULEZ boundary were implemented at the LEZ boundary, owners of non-compliant vehicles in Outer London would be more**

likely to upgrade their vehicles to Euro 6 or 4 standards and would not be deterred from travelling anywhere within the ULEZ;

- **We believe that a ULEZ boundary just within the Circular Roads may have other unintended consequences.** For example, the Richmond Borough Recycling Centre at Townmead Road, Kew, is situated on the Inner London side of the South Circular Road, within the ULEZ (*ULEZ Map nr. 82*). Many borough residents go there to recycle and virtually all drive there via the South Circular Road. Under the Mayor's present proposals those coming from Outer London in non-compliant cars would incur a charge. It is likely this would deter some and lead to an increase in illegal fly tipping in the Borough. **If the ULEZ boundary were implemented instead at the LEZ boundary, owners of non-compliant vehicles would be more likely to have upgraded their vehicles to Euro 6 or 4 standards and would not be deterred from travelling anywhere within the ULEZ;**
- The London Assembly Environment Committee have drawn attention to the fact that the South Circular Road cuts through Inner London much more closely than the North Circular  
[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london\\_assembly\\_ulez\\_3a\\_response.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_assembly_ulez_3a_response.pdf). They propose that if a diversionary road boundary is chosen for the ULEZ, sections of the A232 (running from Ewell in the west to Orpington in the East) are more equivalent to the North Circular than is the A205, South Circular. They support the A232 use as a boundary as the minimum required to bring symmetry between north and south London. **We agree with the Environment Committee that the preferred boundary for the ULEZ is the current LEZ boundary.** The Supplementary Information Document informs us that the LEZ boundary is well established, has infrastructure in place to operate the scheme (i.e. the LEZ) and was designed to cover as much of the GLA administrative area as possible whilst still enabling diversions to take place to avoid entering the zone (*page 41-42*).

It is not possible to ascertain from the SID how the proposed ULEZ will operate. The ULEZ maps confirm that even cul-de-sacs which junction with the inner side of Circular roads will be included. There are several of these in Kew, for example Ruskin Avenue leading to The National Archives (NA), Bessant Drive leading to the NA car park and to the Kew Retail Park, etc. Will the entry to each of these roads be monitored by cameras and signs or road markings? There are likely to be considerable costs associated with setting up this boundary but **we have not seen any cost benefit analysis for this, especially one which compares costs with setting the ULEZ boundary at the LEZ boundary.** The latter already has some operational equipment and signs in place.



### Enforcement of the expanded ULEZ

The Supplementary information document gives no information about how the ULEZ will be enforced other than to say that an “opt in” scheme for boroughs would not provide a workable solution *because of the need for a clear enforcement strategy*. Presumably enforcement will involve automatic number plate recognition as with the LEZ, but important questions remain. For example will there be (i) a “tight boundary” with cameras at every entry point into the ULEZ? Alternatively, (ii) will there be a more “porous boundary” with cameras positioned near the boundary and within the zone at locations such as intersections where the likelihood of picking up non-compliant vehicles is highest? (iii) Will mobile enforcement camera teams be deployed, as opposed to fixed cameras? Adoption of one or another of these various options, or indeed a combination of them, has implications for the speed with which the ULEZ could be introduced and enforced and the cost of setting it up. **We propose that the Mayor should publish his enforcement policy without delay.** In the absence of that policy **we favour enforcement by option (ii) above.** That scheme would be less costly and minimize “street furniture clutter” by avoiding camera installations at every entry point (particularly cul-de-sacs), whilst still identifying almost all non-compliant vehicles travelling more than a very short distance within the zone.

### Timing of the introduction of the expanded ULEZ

We are anxious to see the air quality in London improve as quickly as possible. Therefore **we urge the Mayor to bring forward the implementation of the expanded ULEZ by one year to October 2020.**