

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Planning Committee

15 March 2004

REPORT NO : /04 FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

FOR INFORMATION /

NAME OF WARD: ALL

THE LONDON PLAN

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the publication of The London Plan, the Mayor of London's statutory Spatial Development Strategy For Greater London. Outlines its key policies and considers its principle implications for the Borough.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That your Committee notes this Report and the need to consider The London Plan strategies and policies when determining relevant planning applications.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this Report. However, satisfying the implementation requirements of the London Plan, particularly in respect of the required intensive level of monitoring and the undertaking of the forthcoming GLA Housing Capacity Study, will have significant resource implications for the Planning Service, which it is not possible to quantify at present.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None specifically arising from this Report at this stage, but not likely to be insignificant in view of 3.1.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The London Plan aims to protect and enhance London's built and natural environments by strongly advocating sustainable development strategies which emphasise resource conservation and pollution control.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Unitary Development Plans (UDP) of the London boroughs are currently statutorily required to be in 'general conformity' with The London Plan, which upon being adopted replaces the Government's Regional Planning Guidance Note 3. The current Planning Bill proposes that The London Plan will form part of the development plan along with the UDP. In the event of conflict between the two, the later plan to be adopted, which in Brent's case will be the Mayor's, will prevail.

- 6.2 While officers consider that the UDP's land use strategy and planning policies do not generally conflict with The London Plan, they recognise that developers will seek to exploit even relatively minor divergences. However, officers considered that it would not be in the Council's interests to have delayed the Adoption of our UDP, so that it became the 'later plan', as the Mayor has quite clearly indicated an intent to closely scrutinise all UDPs which have not been adopted prior to the publication of The London Plan and to require any necessary changes, either voluntarily or with recourse to the Secretary of State and ultimately the courts.
- 6.3 The Local Development Documents which are due to replace the UDP under the new Bill are also required to be in 'general conformity' with the Mayor's Plan. In the event of conflict again the later of the two would prevail.

7. Diversity Implications

- 7.1 Recognition of the diversity of London's population and the wide range of specific sectoral needs to combat disadvantage, discrimination and exclusion is a central theme of The London Plan.

8. Key London Plan Objectives

- 8.1 The London Plan published by the Mayor last month is only the second strategic land use plan in London's history (Greater London Development Plan 1976). The Plan is the first of the new regional spatial development strategies which the Government intend should go beyond traditional land use plans to encompass economic and social considerations, within an overarching sustainability context, in accordance with European Union spatial strategies.
- 8.2 The Plan articulates the Mayor's vision of London as an exemplary sustainable, socially inclusive world city affording its highly diverse residents, workers and visitors a high quality of life and good living, working and recreational environments, with housing and employment opportunities irrespective of their socio economic, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age status. The London Plan is the spatial expression of the Mayor's other strategies (Transport, Economic, Biodiversity, Air Quality, Waste, Noise, Culture and Children).
- 8.3 The Mayor's overarching planning strategy is driven by the need to accommodate a projected London population increase of 800,000 by 2016 – the equivalent of nine times the New Wembley Stadium capacity – requiring an estimated 640,000 jobs, mostly in the services sector, particularly IT, and up to 33,000 new homes annually. The Mayor seeks to achieve these targets through his 'compact city' strategy which maximises the development of all suitable site opportunities, particularly brownfield, while maintaining London's open spaces, especially the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land .
- 8.4 The Mayor envisages that much of the projected new homes and jobs will be developed in the major defined Opportunity Areas, two of which, Wembley and Park Royal are located, at least in part, in Brent. Wembley and the adjacent parts of Brent are also located within the 'Western Wedge' a major economic growth zone running from Paddington to Heathrow. Lesser but still substantial growth opportunities are envisaged in the Areas of Intensification which includes Willesden Junction. The strategic development of these Opportunity and Intensification Areas

will be elaborated, in consultation with the Council, in the proposed West London Sub Regional Development Framework later this year.

- 8.5 The Mayor is also committed to encouraging socio economic development and community building in the Areas of Regeneration which are based on London's 20% most deprived wards, some of which are situated in Brent.
- 8.6 The Mayor intends to undertake a Review of the Plan early in the next Mayoral term which is likely to formally increase housing and other key development targets, while reconsidering strategic initiatives in the light of the available funding.

9. The Council's Representations To The Plan And The Mayor's Response

- 9.1 The London Plan has been derived from the Draft London Plan (2002) which was the subject of public consultation culminating in the Examination in Public (EiP, 2003) and its, non binding, Panel Recommendations (Panel, 2003) to the Mayor. Unlike the Council's UDP Review, the Mayor was not statutorily required to publish any proposed modifications for further consultation before submitting the Intended Plan to the Secretary of State's scrutiny prior to publication and adoption.
- 9.2 Members approved extensive comments on the Draft London Plan (Planning Committee, 28/8/02; Scrutiny 3/10/02; Executive 17/9/02) some of which were subsequently elaborated into further written submissions and oral evidence to the Panel, particularly on the Council's key objections to the Mayor's policies for the Wembley and Cricklewood/Brent Cross Opportunity Areas:
- 9.3 **Wembley;** The Council considered that the Mayor's policies for the comprehensive regeneration of this area unnecessarily restricted the potential for retail development associated with regeneration of the area adjacent to the new stadium and, accordingly, sought appropriate amendment. The Panel generally concurred with the Council's concerns and recommended the deletion of the relevant section of the Plan. The Mayor has deleted the key sentence which was of most concern to the Council, and has further modified the Wembley section of the Plan by recognising that new housing provision is "expected to be substantially greater than the minimum 400" (section 5.103) identified in the West London Opportunities Area table 5D.1.
- 9.4 **Cricklewood/Brent Cross,** Brent objected to the Mayor's proposals promoting the expansion of Brent Cross as a new town centre because of the likely impact on proposals to regenerate Wembley. The Panel however concluded that Brent Cross will, over time, evolve from its current role solely as a retail centre, while indicating that its future role was unlikely to be determined without a detailed and comprehensive retail study. The Mayor is still proposing that the Cricklewood site enabled expansion of the Brent Cross regional shopping centre should evolve into an "integrated town centre complementing the roles of other centres nearby" But has recognised that this "should be informed by an independent assessment of the need for and impact of further retail development" (section 5.125).

10. Other Key London Plan Changes

- Annual new housing target to be increased from 23,000 to 30,000; 50% of which should be affordable, subject to the forthcoming London Housing Capacity Study.
- Sub Regional Development Frameworks, including West London; greater commitment to working with the boroughs and other key stakeholders.
- Sustainable design and construction; enhanced policies.
- Waste and recycling; wider policy context.
- Tall buildings; greater flexibility to the boroughs in identifying suitable and non – suitable locations.
- Greater emphasis on ‘people-centred’ and ‘quality of life’ policies.
- Greater recognition of the suburbs key role .
- Housing density; recognition of importance of ‘local character’.

11. Key Brent Proposals

- Wembley Opportunity Area; 238 hectares , “nationally important opportunity area for leisure related development”, capacity for 5,000 new jobs and substantial housing.
- Park Royal Opportunity Area ; 470 hectares capacity for 10,000 new jobs but little housing envisaged.
- Willesden Junction Area of Intensification; capacity for 3,600 jobs and 500 homes.
- Willesden Junction Station; enhanced rail service to Clapham Junction (West London Orbital Rail proposal).
- Housing Capacity for 13,510 new homes between 1997-2016. Likely to be increased in the Plan’s Review following the forthcoming Housing Capacity Study.
- Park Royal (part) and Wembley Stadium (part) are identified in the Mayor’s Strategic Employment Locations as Preferred Industrial Locations and East Lane as an Industrial Business Park.

12. Conclusions

- 12.1 The publication of The London Plan should be welcomed as affording London its first spatial development strategy and offering a new strategic land use and development plan after a near twenty year hiatus. The London Plan will support key Borough regeneration strategies. The Plan will present new challenges, most of which should be amenable to resolution through the proposed West London Sub Regional Development Framework.

13. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Details of Documents:

- 13.1 The London Plan
EiP Panel Report, July 2003
Council’s comments to the Mayor
Council’s submissions to the EiP
- 13.2 Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Michael Maguire, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6BZ, Tel: 0208 937 5310

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