

## Report – Planning and Transportation Committee

### City of London Local Plan Review: Proposed Publication of the City Plan 2036

*To be presented on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020*

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons  
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

#### **SUMMARY**

The City Corporation is reviewing its Local Plan, which sets out the Corporation's vision, objectives and policies for planning the City of London. The current City Local Plan was adopted in 2015 and sets the context for land-use and development requirements up to 2026. The new Local Plan will have an end date of 2036.

Preparation of the new Local Plan has been informed by two rounds of public consultation, firstly on key issues and potential policy options in autumn 2016 and then on a full draft Plan between November 2018 and February 2019. Other factors that have influenced the new Plan include national planning policy, the Mayor's London Plan and the emerging new London Plan, an evidence base of research, including a viability assessment, a supporting Integrated Impact Assessment and delivery of the Corporate Plan and other City Corporation strategies.

Since the close of consultation on the draft Local Plan, the Local Plans Sub Committee of the Planning and Transportation Committee has met on several occasions to agree a revised version of the Plan, known as the Proposed Submission City Plan 2036. The Plan was agreed under urgency procedures following consideration by Members of the Planning and Transportation Committee at an informal virtual meeting on 31 March 2020 and by a formal meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 7 May 2020. We now therefore seek approval from the Court of Common Council to publish the Proposed Submission City Plan 2036 for a final period of public consultation, following which it will return to the Planning & Transportation Committee for final consideration before being submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for examination by an independent Planning Inspector. Consultation will take place after the Recess and when it is feasible in line with Government health advice. The new Plan is currently expected to be adopted in 2021 and a full version of the Proposed Submission City Plan 2036 is available at [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036).

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Members approve the Proposed Submission City Plan 2036 set out at [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036) and agree that it be published for consultation.

## MAIN REPORT

1. The Local Plan sets out the City Corporation's vision, objectives and policies for planning the City of London. The Local Plan has to be consistent with national planning policy and in general conformity with the London Plan, which is currently being reviewed by the Mayor. The current City Local Plan, adopted in 2015, sets out the planning policy context for development in the Square Mile up to 2026. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that local plans should look ahead over a minimum 15-year period from adoption and be reviewed at least every 5 years to ensure that they are up to date.
2. The draft Local Plan has been subject to two rounds of public consultation on, key issues and potential policy options in autumn 2016 and a full draft Plan between November 2018 and the end of February 2019. Approximately 900 written comments were received from 180 respondents to this latter consultation, along with informal comments collected at workshops and meetings. A summary of the written comments received is available on the City Corporation's website at [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036).
3. Issues arising from the consultation were considered by the Local Plans Sub-Committee during 2019 and more recently by an informal virtual meeting of the Planning & Transportation Committee under urgency procedures on 31 March 2020 and by a formal meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee on 7 May 2020.
4. Consultation comments were received on all aspects of the draft Plan in 2018/19. A number of key changes were made to the Plan and these are reflected in the draft before the Court today, they include:
  - The addition of a spatial strategy to link the vision and strategic objectives to the Key Diagram and the detailed policies.
  - Further strengthening of the air quality policy to reflect the City Corporation's Air Quality Strategy and changes to the London Plan.
  - A new policy on Health Impact Assessments to embed the consideration of health impacts within the planning process.
  - A commitment to deliver 50% affordable housing on public sector land in accordance with the draft London Plan policy approach.
  - A more flexible approach to the loss of office floorspace to residential use in or near residential areas, particularly where the residential accommodation is of a type such as Build to Rent or Co-Living which may be more complementary to the business City.
  - The addition of a requirement for major development applications to include Cultural Plans to show how the development will help enrich and enhance the City's cultural offer.
  - Greater emphasis on the use of 3D computer modelling technology to assist in the determination of planning applications.
  - Differentiation between the policy approaches for proposed development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets.

- Refinements to the policies on tall buildings and protected views, including clarifying that the White Tower protected silhouette of the Tower of London on the eastern fringe of the City is an area inappropriate for tall buildings.
  - A new policy on trees, which was an omission from the draft Plan.
  - Extension of the Fleet Street Key Area of Change to include Ludgate Hill and Carter Lane, emphasising the importance of the Fleet Street/Ludgate Hill spine which forms part of the historic processional route between Westminster and the City.
5. The Proposed Submission version of City Plan 2036 is available at [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036). It is accompanied by two Policies Maps showing which policies apply to specific locations. The structure of the Plan follows that of the City Corporation's Corporate Plan to help ensure that spatial planning is aligned as far as possible with wider corporate objectives. It aligns with the adopted Transport Strategy and Air Quality Strategy and has been prepared alongside initial work on the City's Climate Action Strategy to ensure an integrated approach.
  6. The Plan seeks to deliver a minimum of 2 million m<sup>2</sup> net additional office floorspace that meets the needs of different types of business occupiers and supports the development of cultural, leisure, retail and other complementary uses to maintain the City's role as a global hub for innovation in financial and professional services, commerce and culture. It sets ambitious targets to transition to a zero carbon City, delivering additional urban greening and incorporating circular economy principles. The Plan provides a long-term strategy to accommodate development in the City and has been drafted to be flexible and adaptable to change. Regular monitoring will be used to assess whether key targets in the Plan can be met and whether revisions need to be considered to address changing economic, social and environmental trends.
  7. The current Covid-19 pandemic is having a dramatic impact on the City in the short-term but it is too early to know how the Covid-19 pandemic will impact on the City, and development in the City, in the medium to longer term. The Plan is looking beyond the current crisis to a period when a probable vaccine has enabled many previous trends to resume, though some trends will not, and some new trends will emerge. It is considered that the Plan is sufficiently flexible to adapt to change and that the robust monitoring framework will provide the information needed to adjust Plan implementation to meet changing needs, as required.
  8. The Plan has been informed by an Integrated Impact Assessment, which combines a Sustainability Assessment, a Habitats Regulation Assessment and a Health Impact Assessment. It is supported by a range of evidence documents, including a Viability Assessment and an Infrastructure Delivery Plan. These documents are also available on the website at: [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/cityplan2036).
  9. This report therefore recommends that the Local Plan be agreed and published for public consultation for a minimum period of 6 weeks. Due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is proposed to post the draft Local Plan on the City Corporation's website in June for a 'soft launch' to the consultation, with the

formal statutory consultation taking place in September and October. The timetable will be kept under review in light of the measures in place to limit the spread of Covid-19 during the summer and autumn.

10. This consultation represents a formal stage in the Plan preparation process in accordance with government regulations and is an opportunity for those with any outstanding concerns to register formal objections.
11. Following consultation, the Plan will be brought back to the Planning & Transportation Committee for final consideration, after which, the Plan, the comments received and the supporting evidence base will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Secretary of State will appoint an Inspector to examine the soundness of the Plan. The Inspector will hold hearings and will subsequently issue a report to the City Corporation, which may include recommended modifications. Subject to the potential impacts of Covid-19 on the examination timetable, and assuming the Inspector finds the Plan sound, it is expected to be adopted in 2021.

#### **Conclusion**

12. Your Committee recommends that the Proposed Submission City Plan 2036 be agreed and published for a final six-week period of public consultation.

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 31<sup>st</sup> day of March 2020.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

**Deputy Alastair Moss**  
Chair, Planning and Transportation Committee