

Local Plan: key issues

1. The following are the key issues that arose out of consultation on the Draft Local Plan and updates to the evidence base, together with an outline of the revisions made to the Plan in response to them.
2. **Offices.** In March 2013 the Ramidas report “Taking Stock” was published, demonstrating the economic importance of the City’s office accommodation. In May 2013 the Secretary of State exempted the City from proposals to remove planning controls over change of use from offices to housing, in recognition of its position as a nationally significant area of economic activity. In view of this, the approach of Local Plan policy DM1.1 “office protection” has been maintained, resisting the loss of the City’s office stock to other uses. A reference has been added to the proposed publication of a supplementary planning document (SPD) which will set out in greater detail the criteria by which planning applications for change of office sites and buildings to other uses will be assessed. I will report the text of this SPD to Planning & Transportation Committee in November, recommending that it be published for public consultation at the same time as the Local Plan.
3. **Licensing and planning.** Several comments were received on the issue of disturbance from late-opening bars and clubs. In response, policy DM3.5 “night-time entertainment” has been revised to promote better co-ordination and minimise duplication between planning and licensing controls, concentrating on those aspects which the Local Plan can influence or control, while maintaining protection of amenity.
4. **Thames and the Riverside.** Policy CS9 has been amended to replace the reference to an “office gateway” with text promoting office-led commercial development.
5. **Visitors, Arts and Culture.** Policy DM11.3 “hotels” has been amended to complement and relate it more closely to policy DM1.1 “office protection”. Further references have been made to the cultural quarter focused on the Barbican area.
6. **Sustainable development.** The government recently published draft proposals to deal with carbon off-setting through building regulations instead of the planning system (from 2016 for housing and 2019 for commercial development). No revisions to the Plan are considered necessary, but detailed mechanisms for addressing off-setting in the interim period will be included in a supplementary planning document (SPD) on s106 planning obligations that is currently in preparation.
7. **Public transport, streets and walkways.** The overall approach of this section has been maintained. The supporting text of policy DM16.4 “facilities to encourage active travel”, which deal with cycling, has been made more succinct.

8. **Waste.** Consultants were commissioned to carry out research on the City's waste and have recently presented their report, which indicates that waste generation in the City will grow slowly over the next 10-15 years, and identifies the main locations where the City's waste is taken. A reference has been added to the need to engage with authorities in these locations in accord with the "duty to co-operate" under the Localism Act.
9. **Housing.** Policy 21.1 "location of housing" has been amended to locate new housing development "in or near" identified residential areas. This and other policies in this section have also been amended to relate them more closely to and to complement policy DM1.1 "protection of offices".