Twenty Years of London Planning

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LSE London: Roundtable 1 on

Strengthening the Strategic Core of London Plans
in the face of New and Old Challenges

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London Plan targets – capacity driven
Green belt / MOL inviolate

Target	Need
2004 - 30,000 Monitoring target of 23,000	33,600
2011 – 32,000	33-47,000 (NHPAU advice)
2016 – 42,000	49,000
2021 – 52,000	66,000

Standard Method in 2022 = 86,000

Mayor has always disregarded advice and policy from central government on assessing need.

Mayor not bound by PINS reports.

Housing delivery

614,474 - net additional homes between 2001 and 2022

29,261 - average per year over 21 years

Source: ONS Live Table 122: net additional dwellings by local authority

Net additions per year between 2001 – 2021

2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
19,688	21,648	25,775	26,873	28,852	30,927	31,557	32,290	28,330	21,820

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21[R]	2021-22
24,866	21,039	23,577	26,843	30,390	39,560	31,723	36,618	40,870	34,023	37,204

‘Towards an Urban Renaissance’

Can London provide more than 50,000 net additions a year?

All four London Plans informed by the ‘urban renaissance’ orthodoxy of the Urban Taskforce, 1999

Palpable fail?

Mayor warned by PINS in 2016 to rethink this approach.

“The evidence before me strongly suggests that the existing London Plan strategy will not deliver sufficient homes to meet objectively assessed need…In my view, the Mayor needs to explore options beyond the existing philosophy of the London Plan.” (para. 57)

Unmet need unresolved

- 2016 Plan – 7,000 dwellings a year
- 2021 Plan – 14,000 dwellings a year

- Could be much greater if the Standard Method is more accurate as a basis for assessing need

- Duty to cooperate ineffective

- No appetite by authorities to compensate for London's unmet need

- No enthusiasm by London Mayor's to push this

- Consequence: increasing anxiety in Tory shires about induced outmigration of households from London (e.g. Julian Brazier loses seat to Rosie Duffield)

- Is this inevitable?

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London housing land supply

Major sites = 40,000 dpa
Small sites = 12,000 dpa

- 2021 London Plan housing targets rely on increasing delivery of dwellings on small sites <u>but unidentified</u>
- 12,000 a year (down from 25,000 in draft plan)
- 'incremental densification' – aligns with White Paper 'Street Votes' idea (Policy Exchange)
- PTALs 3-6 or within radius of 800m from tube or train station or district centre
- GLA SHLAA 2017 – 'modelled approach' – conversions and infill

"This estimates the potential for increased levels of housing delivery on small sites above recent trends to reflect the potential impact of policy changes in the draft new London Plan – including a presumption in favour of small housing developments"

"Modelling assumes that 1% of the existing stock of houses will increase in density in areas which benefit from PTALs 3 to 6 or are within 800m of a tube station, rail station or town centre boundary"

- Generally resisted by London borough in preparing local plans, e.g. Barnet and Bexley (Theresa Villiers) – outer and inner tensions
- No monitoring by GLA to see if it is working

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Notwithstanding…London Plan is an effective vehicle for planning for the city region

- Efficient
- Provides a development plan for 35 local planning authorities
- Targets become part of the development plan for the 35 LPAs as soon as London Plan is adopted
- Identifies need in consistent way and distributes across London on basis of capacity
- Provides a uniform set of development management policies for city region although scope for improvement
- Updated regularly

The future: threats to delivery

- Residential increasingly less popular than other land use types, e.g. student accommodation, hotels, logistics, commercial
- Brownfield development more costly and difficult
- Electric and water capacity
- Rising costs – interest rates, materials and labour
- Local planning departments under extreme pressure
- RPs increasingly unable to invest in building new homes themselves or acquiring new homes through S106 agreements – will dampen housing supply overall