

Ealing Council
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 London W5 2HL

Tel 020 8825 8056

Mr D. McCreery and Ms C Dillon,
 The Planning Inspectorate
 c/o Paige Gaughan,
 Local Plan Programme Officer,
 Ealing LPA

Your ref

My ref
CR/009

Extension
8056

Date
3rd March 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Examination of the Ealing Local Plan 2024-2039:
 Ealing LPA's Response to Initial Questions,
 Part 7, re. IQ7.**

Further to my note, dated Friday 10th January 2025, please find a further response below regarding the initial questions on the general conformity with the London Plan (IQ7).

General conformity with the London Plan

IQ7. Considering the requirements of section 24(1)(b) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, please provide a table setting out the Council's position on general conformity with the London Plan for each policy in your plan. This should include any reasons for variance and the Council's understanding of the GLAs position on conformity for each.

LPA Response: The Statement of Common Ground agreed between the GLA and Ealing Council on 28 February 2025 identifies only one policy that the Mayor considers not to be in general conformity with the London Plan: Policy HOU. This policy relates to Affordable Housing and is an Ealing LPA local policy. All other policies are considered to be in general conformity by both Ealing Council and the GLA.

Policy	GLA Comments	LBE Response
HOU	On average, schemes that were referable to the Mayor that followed the Fast Track Route provided 44% affordable housing in	Interpretation of general conformity in local plans has typically allowed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The word 'general' is specifically included in

Policy	GLA Comments	LBE Response
	<p>2022, whereas viability tested schemes provided only 28%. Applicants also typically seek to demonstrate the existence of 'viability deficits' through the viability assessment process and use these as a credit in viability review mechanisms which can reduce the likelihood that additional affordable housing is secured over the lifetime of the development.</p> <p>There is a significant risk that the borough would secure fewer affordable homes through a blanket 40% requirement than could be achieved through the 35% threshold for sites that are not on public or industrial land. The Mayor is therefore concerned that, in reality, a headline threshold target would achieve less than a more feasible, lower one.</p> <p>Setting the threshold level above the Mayor's 35% for schemes on privately owned land means that it may be more difficult for proposals to achieve this level of affordable housing and in turn may result in a greater number of planning applications following the Viability Tested Route (VTR). The proposed approach could result in lower levels of affordable housing being secured or reduce the effectiveness of viability reviews.</p>	<p>statute to permit some degree of flexibility in local plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local plans should uphold rather than undermine the <u>general principle</u> that strategic policies are concerned with. - The rationale and evidence for any variation is relevant to its general conformity. <p>LBE considers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The <u>aim</u> of the variation from a 35% threshold to that of 40% as proposed in Policy HOU cannot be considered to contradict the <u>aim</u> of the London Plan in delivering affordable housing; and, - The scope of the variation is well evidenced in local policy as being both necessary in relation to local housing needs, and viable. <p>GLA's position should therefore be seen as resting primarily on a view on the <u>effect</u> of the policy, which is poorly evidenced and inherently speculative.</p> <p>The fact that viability tested schemes have averaged a lower rate of affordable housing contribution should not be considered surprising as by definition this includes those schemes that have inherent viability constraints. If the reported 44% average</p>

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	In December 2024 the Mayor published a practice note on Accelerating Housing Delivery. The section headed 'Local plan affordable housing policies' is clear at paragraph 3.8 that boroughs setting their own threshold level for affordable housing risk the implementation of the London Plan threshold approach and in those instances will be raised as general conformity objections.	<p>contribution has any significance, it is to suggest that the average scheme would not be caught by the new threshold.</p> <p>Ealing's whole plan viability assessment is the most relevant available evidence, and this suggests that the policy is viable and therefore likely to be delivered.</p>

Yours sincerely

Steve Barton

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