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Parking Standards – Minor Alterations to The London Plan Consultation Draft

Following the publication of the Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP) in March 2015, the Mayor has committed to bringing forward further minor alterations to the Plan on Housing Standards and on Parking Standards to bring it in line with new national housing standards and car parking policy. The proposed changes are currently being consulted on and deadline for comments to be received is 5:00 pm on Monday 22\textsuperscript{nd} June 2015.

The proposed changes

Policy 6.13 of The London Plan deals with parking. At present, the policy wording does not differentiate between specific different geographical areas of the city, but rather categorises them by whether they are suburban, urban or central and also by their Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating. The proposed alterations to the plan seeks to recognise that the needs of Outer London can often be different to those of Central and Inner London, and accordingly the Mayor proposes two significant changes to the wording of the policy.

In relation to the planning decisions, the following additional wording is proposed to Policy 6.13C:

“The maximum standards set out in Table 6.2 in the Parking Addendum to this chapter should be the basis for considering planning applications (also see Policy 2.8), informed by policy and guidance below on their application for housing in parts of Outer London with low public transport accessibility (generally PTALs 0-1)”

In relation to the preparation of parking policies in Development Plan documents the following additional wording is proposed to Policy 6.13E through a new sub-point (e):

“outer London boroughs should promote more generous standards for housing development in areas with low public transport accessibility (generally PTALs 0-1) and take into account current and projected pressures for on-street parking and their bearing on all road users, as well as the criteria set out in NPPF (Para 39).”

Three new paragraphs are proposed to the supporting text of the policy:

“6.42i In developing their residential parking standards in the context of London Plan policy, outer London boroughs should take account of residents’ dependency on the car in areas with low public transport accessibility (generally PTALs 0-1). Where appropriate in these locations Boroughs should consider revised standards (which could include minima) and permitting higher levels of provision there than is indicated in Table 6.2, particularly to avoid generating unacceptable pressure for on-street parking. This may be especially important in ‘suburban’ areas and for areas with family housing.

6.42j In outer London a more flexible approach for applications may also be acceptable in some limited parts of areas within PTAL 2, in locations where the orientation or levels of public transport mean that a development is particularly dependent on car travel. Further advice is provided in the draft Housing SPG and forthcoming TfL guidance on parking design.

6.42k In deciding whether or not more generous standards are to be applied, account should be taken of the extent to which public transport might be provided in the future. Consideration should also be given to the impact of on-street parking measures such as CPZs which may also help reduce the potential for overspill parking and congestion, and improve safety and amenity.”
Reflecting the changes to the main policy, the Mayor is proposing a number of changes to Table 6.2 ‘Car parking standards’, the main one of which is the introduction of the following wording in the ‘Notes’ section of the table:

“In outer London areas with low PTAL (generally PTALs 0-1), boroughs should consider higher levels of provision, especially to address ‘overspill’ parking pressures.”

What the changes mean

The clear thrust of these proposed changes, reflecting the various announcements of the previous Coalition Government and associated changes to national planning guidance, is that Local Planning Authorities should be more flexible to higher car parking ratios for proposed developments that are not well served by public transport in Outer London boroughs. This should be reflected in both the preparation of Outer London Councils’ parking policies in Development Plan documents, and on decisions on planning applications.

DLP Planning Ltd has considerable experience of preparing and submitting planning applications for a range of development scales, including in Outer London Boroughs, and can assist you maximising the development potential of your site. We can also make representations to the Mayor on your behalf in relation to the proposed changes to this key planning document for London. If you require any further advice regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact one of the offices listed below.
If you require more information or would like to discuss the issues mentioned in further detail please contact:

**Bedford**
4 Abbey Court
Fraser Road
Priory Business Park
Bedford
MK44 3WH
T 01234 832 740
F 01234 831 435

**Bristol**
Unit 1 Blenheim Court
Beaufort Office Park
Woodlands
Bradley Stoke
Bristol
BS32 4NE
T 01454 410 380
F 01454 410 389

**Cardiff**
Sophia House
28 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ
T 029 2064 6810

**East Midlands**
1 East Circus Street
Nottingham
NG1 5AP
T 01158 966620

**Leeds**
Princes Exchange
Princes Square
Leeds
LS1 4HY
T 0113 280 5808

**London**
The Green House
41-42 Clerkenwell Green
London
EC1R 0DU
020 3761 5390

**Milton Keynes**
Midsummer Court
314 Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes
MK9 2UB
T 01908 440015
F 01908 357750

**Sheffield**
Ground Floor
V1 Velocity Building
Tenter Street
Sheffield
S1 4DE
T 0114 228 9190
F 0114 272 1947