

London Housing Strategy Consultation Draft

Introduction

Hot on the heels of the Affordable Housing and Viability SPG, the Mayor published his draft London Housing Strategy, which sets out his five priority areas to help tackle London's housing crisis, on 6 September 2017 for consultation until 7 December 2017. The Mayor's office has indicated that the final London Housing Strategy will be published in 2018.

1 Building Homes for Londoners

Building significantly more homes has been firmly placed at the heart of his strategy to tackle the housing crisis. Set within the context of his continued push for devolved powers and resources, the Mayor wants to increase land supply through proactive intervention in the land market whilst investing in homes and infrastructure, such as Crossrail 2. In addition to tackling the construction skills gap, aspirations for the diversification of the house building industry are set out, including support for the Build to Rent sector and modular construction.

2 Delivering genuinely affordable homes

Beyond the long-term strategic target for half of new homes built to be genuinely affordable, the strategy introduces policies that any affordable homes lost through demolition or Right to Buy will have to be replaced on a "like-for-like" basis. In addition to the £3.15 billion secured in last year's Autumn Statement, the Mayor has earmarked a further £250 million for City Hall to buy and prepare land for new affordable housing.

3 High quality homes and inclusive neighbourhoods

Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the Mayor is seeking to improve safety standards whilst securing well-designed, good quality and environmentally sustainable homes that meet London's diverse housing needs.

4 A fairer deal for private renters and leaseholders

The Mayor has set out his proposals for improving standards for private renters including a light touch landlord registration scheme and reforms to upfront costs and fees.

5 Tackling homelessness and helping rough sleepers

The Mayor will work with Councils to prevent homelessness and help homeless Londoners get into sustainable accommodation.

Commentary

The strategy signposts a number of key policy areas that we are likely to see greater detail on in the draft London Plan when this is published for consultation in November 2017. The Mayor has reiterated his commitment to protecting the Green Belt by seeking to promote high-density schemes and prioritise development on brownfield land, especially at town centres. It will be interesting to see how the proposed "presumption in favour of appropriate development of small sites" relates to the brownfield land registers, which local planning authorities must publish by 31 December 2017, and provisions for permission in principle. Careful consideration will need to be given to the implications of a "like for like" replacement of affordable homes lost through regeneration schemes. Whilst further details on zero carbon aspirations can be expected the strategy is surprisingly silent in other areas, notably neighbourhood planning.



Further information

Alex Chapman
Associate Director

E alex.chapman@torltd.co.uk
T 0203 664 6755

www.torltd.co.uk

Terence O'Rourke is working on major schemes across London and is well placed to assist in the preparation of any representations to the consultation.

