



64 Victoria Street
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SW1E 6QP

Reference: WCC_LETTER_005

3rd February 2020

Dear Mr Sims and Mr Fleming,

Thank you for your letter dated 23rd January 2020. Following on from email correspondence with the Programme Officer relating to the change in Leadership at the Council I can now confirm that a new Leader of the Council has been appointed and the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning has stepped down. His successor (Cabinet Member for Business and Planning) was only appointed last week. As indicated in my previous letter (WCC_LETTER_001) this will result in delays in the formal approval of the publication of certain documents that you have requested, such as Statements of Common Ground while the new Cabinet Member familiarises himself with the portfolio.

This letter sets out which documents will be provided in response to your letters (see table below) and responds to other points made in your letter 'INSP 2'. The Council aims to achieve sign off of these additional documents by **31st March 2020**. The reasons (beyond a change in Cabinet Member) for this delay are explained in more detail later in this letter.

Document	Inspector letter reference
Statement of Common Ground: Mayor & TfL re. parking policy	INSP 1 – Question 4
Statement of Common Ground: Marylebone Cricket Club	INSP 1 – Question 4
Statement of Common Ground: Environment Agency & Thames Water	INSP 1 – Question 4
Statement of Common Ground: Mayor re. General Conformity	INSP 1 – Question 8 INSP 2 – Paragraph 9
Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications (separate from Minor modifications & including rolling modifications from signed Statements of Common Ground)	INSP 1 – Question 6 INSP 2 – Paragraph 4
IIA Topic Paper Addendum: Reasonable alternatives	INSP 1 – Paragraph 32-33 INSP 2 - Paragraph 8
Housing Topic Paper Addendum: Key Development Sites	INSP 1 – Paragraph 33 - 34 INSP 2 – Paragraph 18
Housing Topic Paper Addendum: Windfall Housing Supply	INSP 1 – Paragraph 35 INSP 2 – Paragraph 11 - 12
Housing Topic Paper Addendum: housing requirement	INSP 2 - Paragraphs 10 - 15
Revised 5 year land supply statement	INSP 2 – Paragraph 14 - 15
Updated Local Development Scheme	INSP 2 – Paragraphs 13 & 19

Paragraph 6d of 'INSP 2'. You requested that within Section 2 of the Council's online document library:

- i. it would be appropriate to note that the development plan will in due course include the Site Allocations DPD, which is included in the LDS and referenced in the Plan itself,**
- ii. that the reference to pre-hearing statements is potentially confusing and a matter best left to our written guidance in due course.**

Both of these amendments have been made to section 2 of the [website](#).

Paragraph 9a of 'INSP 2' seeks a statement of conformity with the adopted London Plan as well as the emerging plan.

Question 8 of 'INSP 1' requested a statement be prepared to clarify conformity of the City Plan with the (New) London Plan. This document has been drafted in co-operation with the GLA, and covers all matters raised in the Mayor's statement of conformity letter. The GLA have signed the document and we are in the process of briefing the new Cabinet Member for a signature from the Council before this document can be released. 'INSP 2' however requests a statement of general conformity with the *adopted* as well as new London Plan. Given the advanced state of the new London Plan, I seek clarification whether the statement prepared to satisfy question 8 in 'INSP 1' is sufficient, or if a further statement will be required to cover conformity with the adopted London Plan.

Paragraphs 4 & 8 of 'INSP 2' indicates an expectation that flood risk assessments will be provided for Key Development Sites.

I would like to clarify that the Council do not consider the Key Development Sites (KDS) listed in Appendix 1 of the City Plan to be site allocations and therefore the Sequential and Exceptions tests as related to flood risk have not been carried out for them. As indicated in the introductory text to Appendix 1, the KDS are a list of some sites of strategic importance to the delivery of the spatial strategy to the Plan and are identified as opportunities for potential delivery. The forthcoming Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) will provide all the requisite assessments (such as flood risk or heritage impact) and detail required for site allocations. Given the intended nature of Appendix 1, the Council would consider making amendments to, or removing this appendix as a Main Modification if that resolves confusion as to their function and relationship with the forthcoming Site Allocation DPD.

Paragraph 13 of 'INSP 2' seeks clarification of the timetable for the forthcoming Site Allocations DPD.

Following on from my response to the previous question, an update to the Local Development Scheme is being prepared to clarify the intended function of the Site Allocation Development Plan Document and its relationship to the City Plan. We have reviewed the projected timetable for the production of this document (which will commence after the adoption of Westminster's City Plan

2019 – 2040) to remove confusion and complications arising from the current projected overlap with the City Plan timetable.

This revision will also address paragraphs 19-20 of 'INSP 2' which expresses concern as to the reliance on forthcoming Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), explaining the anticipated content of such documents. The Council considers the City Plan to provide a sound policy framework on its own and the intended content of the SPDs will only add further detail and guidance to the development plan. However, the Council would consider the drafting of Interim Guidance Notes to cover the period between adoption of the City Plan and adoption of SPDs and/or the insertion of modifications to the text of the relevant policies should the Inspectors find this necessary.

Paragraphs 10-12 of 'INSP 2' seek reassurance on the validity of the Council's approach of combining a calculation based on the Local Housing Need methodology with the London Plan figures and the high reliance on windfalls.

As explained in my previous letter, evidence on housing supply exists in a format that previously was not publishable. Your letter 'INSP 2' (particularly paragraphs 10 - 16) has raised additional questions on our approach to calculating our housing requirement and therefore we are taking the opportunity to review our evidence to address the points you raise. Papers are being drafted to draw the evidence together and provide a clear explanation of the route the Council has taken to justify its housing delivery. As part of this work we have reviewed the 5 year land supply statement which was provided in draft form at Submission.

Yours sincerely

Kimberley Hopkins MRTPI
City and Planning Policy Team Leader
Westminster City Council