



New Local Plan Review Policy Formulation Report – October 2022

Policy V1: Vision for the Borough



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

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1. Introduction

1.1 New Local Plan Review

- 1.1.1 The Council is undertaking New Local Plan Review (NLPR) to ensure we have an up-to-date and fit-for-purpose Local Plan to guide the development of the Borough and reflect our values.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this Policy Formulation Report (PFR) is to demonstrate how the vision for the Local Plan (V1) has been developed and evidenced to a level of detail which cannot be included in the NLPR document itself. It considers whether the vision is appropriate.

1.2 Existing Local Plan

- 1.2.1 This vision replaces the vision within the existing Local Plan, “CV1 Vision for the Royal Borough.”

1.3 Key issues and policy drivers

- 1.3.1 Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the Council committed to carrying out an early review of its Local Plan. This review is intended to reflect the Council’s new priorities and values. This includes “putting communities first”, “respecting others” and “acting with integrity and working together”.
- 1.3.2 However, there are a number of other key drivers. These include the need to contribute to the recovery from the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the acute need to meet the housing needs of our residents, and recognition that planning has a fundamental role in addressing the climate emergency. These build upon the long held ambitions to reduce inequality, protect the built environment, provide the facilities needed by our residents, support our town centres and to ensure that the design of new development is of the highest quality.

2. Legislation, policy and guidance context

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The existing Local Plan was adopted in 2019. It was driven by a vision which reflected the need to develop a strong and varied sense of place and to assist in a community-led recovery to the Grenfell disaster.
- 2.1.2 The new vision continues with this central ambition, although also reflects the

need to have the environment at the centre of all new development within the borough.

2.2 National

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

2.2.1 A central strand of the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out the three strands, or overarching objectives, which must be addressed if sustainable development is to be achieved: the economic, the social and the environmental. All these strands are relevant for the vision which drives the Local Plan.

- a. ***an economic objective*** – *to help to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b. ***a social objective*** – *to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being;*
- c. ***an environmental objective*** - *to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

2.2.2 Paragraph 15 notes that *“the planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.”*

[NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE \(NPPG\): TOWN CENTRES AND RETAIL](#)

2.2.3 The National Planning Practice Guidance on Local Plans states that, *“the development plan is at the heart of the planning system and that, “plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving*

well designed places.”

2.3 Regional

THE LONDON PLAN (MARCH 2021)

2.3.1 The London Plan is underpinned by the central ambition to deliver “good growth”. Good growth is defined as “*growth that is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable.*” This intended to support the Mayor’s vision which is described as “*creating a city for all Londoners, where no one is left behind.*” (para 1.0.5).

2.3.2 To ensure that “Good Growth”, each of the policy areas in the London Plan is informed by six “Good Growth” objectives:

GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities

2.3.3 Plan with London’s diverse communities to “make new connections and erode inequalities”.

2.3.4 This includes, “*Delivering good quality, affordable homes, better public transport connectivity, accessible and welcoming public space, a range of workspaces in accessible locations, built forms that work with local heritage and identity, and social, physical and environmental infrastructure that meets London’s diverse needs is essential if London is to maintain and develop strong and inclusive communities*”

2.3.5 It also includes encouraging early and inclusive engagement with stakeholders when plan making.

GG2 Making the best use of land

2.3.6 This is concerned with “*creating places of higher density in appropriate locations to get more out of limited land, encouraging a mix of land uses, and co-locating different uses to provide communities with a wider range of services and amenities.*”

GG3 Creating a healthy city

2.3.7 Development must seek to improve London’s health and reduce health inequalities.

2.3.8 It states that, “*the mental and physical health of Londoners is, to a large extent, determined by the environment in which they live. Transport, housing, education, income, working conditions, unemployment, air quality, green space, climate change and social and community networks can have a greater influence on health than healthcare provision or genetics. Many of these determinants of health can be shaped by the planning system, and local authorities are accordingly responsible for planning and public health.*”

GG4 Delivering the homes Londoners need

- 2.3.9 A central strand of the London Plan is to provide the homes needed. It notes that, *“Londoners of all means and backgrounds to play their part in community life. Providing a range of high quality, well-designed, accessible homes is important to delivering Good Growth, ensuring that London remains a mixed and inclusive place in which people have a choice about where to live.”*

GG5 Growing a good economy

- 2.3.10 Planning must support London’s economy. This includes planning for *“sufficient employment and industrial space in the right locations to support economic development”* but also to support the provision of the homes needed as well as physical and social infrastructure to support London’s growth. It also requires plans to *“promote and support London’s rich heritage and cultural assets.”*

GG6 Increasing efficiency and resilience

- 2.3.11 *“A focus on Good Growth provides an opportunity to become more efficient and resilient. A responsible city must limit its impact on climate change while adapting to the consequences of the environmental changes that human behaviour is already creating. Global cities also face other threats against which London must protect its residents and visitors, and proper strategic planning can help to make the city a safer place.*
- 2.3.12 *All cities must face up to the reality of climate change and the need to limit their future contribution to this major global problem. This London Plan will require developments to contribute towards London’s ambitious target to become zero-carbon by 2050 by increasing energy efficiency, including through the use of smart technologies, and utilising low carbon energy sources. Creating a low carbon circular economy, in which the greatest possible value is extracted from resources before they become waste, is not only socially and environmentally responsible, but will save money and limit the likelihood of environmental threats affecting London’s future”.*

2.4 Local

EXISTING LOCAL PLAN POLICY

- 2.4.1 The vision within the existing Local Plan (CV1) is to
- “reduce inequality within the Borough, and to allow each community to fully realise its potential. This will further develop the strong and varied sense of place of the borough and will assist in a community-led recovery to the Grenfell disaster”*
- 2.4.2 This has three separate, but interrelated elements.
- 2.4.3 It will ***“stimulate improvements across the borough and particularly in areas of change through the provision of better transport, better housing and better***

facilities, aiding better health.

By 2028 the Royal Borough will have significantly improved transport, including a new Elizabeth Line station at Kensal, better links to Hammersmith and Fulham across the West London line and improved north-south bus links overcoming the generally lower levels of accessibility in the north. A significant quantum of new homes will have been built, both private market and affordable, addressing the serious shortfall in local housing need, and helping to diversify supply.

It will be of a high quality design, well integrated into its context, overcoming some of the barriers to movement by which the north of the borough is characterised. New development should establish the 'Conservation Areas of the future', reflecting and matching the high quality urban design that already exists in the borough.

Better facilities will have been provided by ensuring sufficient primary and secondary school places in the borough, and a better distribution of GP surgeries, helping to make life more local for residents. The deficiency in local shopping will have been addressed with new town centres at Kensal and Latimer and the Earl's Court Opportunity Area.

Jobs will be readily available across the borough as a range of new businesses have been allowed to grow and to thrive. The employment zones will have been enhanced with new and improved employment floorspace and some supporting residential development providing a mix of uses and thriving centres for small businesses and the cultural and creative industries sector.

The north of the borough will be at the heart of environmental sustainability through, for example, the combined heat and power network at Kensal and Wornington Green.

2.4.4 It will “**enhance the reputation of our national and international destinations** – Knightsbridge, Portobello Road, South Kensington, the King's Road, Kensington High Street, – by supporting and encouraging retail and cultural activities in particular. The unique character of Golborne and Portobello Roads will have flourished, including the antiques and street market, adding to the vitality of the area.

In the borough as a whole our reputation as a national and international destination will have been further enhanced. The borough will have avoided becoming little more than a residential suburb, with a flourishing and rich variety of retail and cultural activities adding so much to the quality of life of the residents.

Our top retail destinations of Knightsbridge, King's Road, Kensington High Street and Portobello will have been maintained and enhanced. Construction will have started on a Crossrail 2 station at King's Road, scheduled to open in the early 2030s.

Earl's Court will remain an important cultural destination, as well as providing offices, at least 2000 new homes within the borough and a new town centre to address local shopping deficiency within the Opportunity Area.

Exhibition Road in South Kensington will be providing a first class experience to visitors to the national institutions, and have set a new standard nationally of streetscape design. Opportunities to promote Kensington High Street as a cultural hub will have been taken following the opening of the new Design Museum.

The Royal Marsden, and Royal Brompton hospitals and the Institute of Cancer Research will continue to further their international reputation for delivering world class health care, education and research activities.

2.4.5 It will **uphold our residential quality of life** through cherishing quality in the built environment, acting on environmental issues and facilitating local living, including through strengthening neighbourhood centres and maintaining and updating social infrastructure.

Our residential quality of life will be improved for everyone and we will remain the best place to live in London with our network of local neighbourhood centres offering a wide range of everyday services within easy walking distance, our glorious built heritage protected and improved, new buildings of exceptional design quality and the creation of the Conservation Areas of the future.

A significant quantum of new homes will have further diversified housing tenure, meeting the acute housing needs of many of those who live within the borough. These new homes will provide high standards of environmental performance to further the aim of sustainable development, including through the use of Council assets.

The waste we produce will be re-used, recycled or disposed of in or very near to the borough. Sustainable Drainage systems will be commonplace throughout the borough, reducing the risk of flood events, especially in the west of the borough when combined with the upgrading of Counters Creek sewer and storm drain.

Green links will help to improve biodiversity and air quality and noise levels will have been significantly improved.

2.5 Summary

Date	Document	Organisation
June 2019 (as amended)	National Planning Policy Framework Paragraphs 8 and 15	DLUHC
September 2020	National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG): Local Plans	DLUHC
Mar 2021	The London Plan Policies GG1, GG2, GG3, GG4, GG5 and GG6.	Mayor of London

3. Evidence base

- 3.1 The vision for the Local Plan will have been informed by the need for various uses, each of which are considered in detail in their respective Policy Formulation Reports.
- 3.2 The vision is also directly informed by our “Council Plan” updated in March 2022. This document draws together all of the Council’s ambitions, including those which have a spatial element and those which do not. It sets out five “priorities”: This can be viewed [online](#). These priorities are:
- Grenfell recovery
 - A great place to live and work
 - Safeguarding and supporting vulnerable residents
 - Healthy, clean safe and sustainable
 - A place of culture to visit and explore.
- 3.3 The following aspects have had a particular contribution in helping inform the vision of the London Plan.
- 3.4 ***A great place to live, work and learn.*** This includes the following ambitions:
- Rebuild and diversify our workforce.
 - Increase local employment opportunities.
 - Enhancing local places and spaces.
 - The creation of quality public spaces.
 - Support for the walkable neighbourhood.
 - Enhance our high streets.
 - Support affordable workspace to support start-ups and business innovation.
 - Delivering more affordable housing.
 - Develop a new Local Plan with a focus on community housing, which will deliver even more affordable housing at social rent.
 - Deliver the new homes programme.
 - Fund sustainability work on the Lancaster West Estate.
- 3.5 ***A Place of culture to visit and explore.*** This includes the following ambitions:

- Work with partners to deliver long term sustainable plans that build upon the unique qualities of our global destinations. This includes support for our museums and protection of beautify residential streets and garden squares.
- Enhance and support our offer to retail and hospitality. This includes support for al fresco dining, making streetscape improvements and supporting our markets.
- Promote and support the borough’s creative and cultural offer.
- Create cultural quattrres with galleries, workshops and public spaces in places such as Kensal.

3.6 In addition to the Council Plan, the vision has been informed by a range of other Council strategies and action plans, documents which will also have been informed by the Council plan. These include:

3.7 [The Housing Strategy](#) and [Action Plan](#). Key strategic objectives relevant to the Local Plan) include, supporting Grenfell survivors, increasing the supply of genuinely affordable housing, improving the quality and environmental sustainability of housing.

3.8 The Economic Strategy contains a number of elements of direct relevance. These include; provision of affordable workspace; support for street markets; promotion of Kensington High Street as a cultural quarter; and attracting more footfall to our town centres.

3.9 It also includes direct reference to the need for planning policies which prevent the loss of offices and promote the provision of new offices and other business uses across the borough; provide a diverse mix of business premises; allow new homes in the borough’s Employment Zones where these will help deliver new commercial floorspace; reflect the changing nature of the retail sector, the function of our town centres and the need to maintain their vitality and viability. It also explicitly supports Kensal Canalside as a high quality mixed use site, including market-rate, social and intermediate housing, new shops and premises and opportunities for employment, skills and enterprise which meet local needs.

3.10 The Cultural Plan includes an ambition which is supported by the Local Plan, to create a “place of culture to visit and explore”. In essence it seeks to support the venues needed to achieve this ambition. It recognises the value that culture can have in supporting the function and the diversity of our high streets.

3.11 The Green Plan focuses on a number of environmental priorities. The following are of direct relevance to the Local Plan: achieving carbon neutrality and tackling climate change, improving air quality, minimising waste and protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

SUMMARY

Date	Document	Organisation
March	The Council Plan	RBKC

Date	Document	Organisation
2022		
2019	Housing Strategy	RBKC
2020	Housing Strategy Action Plan	RBKC
2020	Live, work and learn, Our Plan for a successful local economy	RBKC
2020	Culture Plan	RBKC
July 2021	Green Plan	RBKC

4. Options, consultation and Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

- 4.1 The Council included a proposed vision as part of the Borough Issues (September 2020) and Issues and Options (July 2021) consultation documents. Consultees were asked whether they supported the vision as drafted, or whether changes should be made. The Consultation Schedules and Consultation Summaries for these are set out in the Consultation Statement published alongside the Regulation 19 Publication Policies (October 2022) consultation document. Consultation responses have been reviewed and used to inform the development of, and modification to, the draft NLPR Policies.
- 4.2 A breakdown of the public consultations undertaken by RBKC to inform the production of the NLPR is set out in the table below.

Public Consultation	Timeframe
Borough Issues Consultation	29 September – 10 November 2020
Issues and Options Consultation	26 July – 4 October 2021
Regulation 18 Draft Policies	9 February – 23 March 2022
Regulation 19 Publication	October 2022

Figure 4.1 : RBKC NLPR Consultation Timeline.

- 4.3 The options considered through the consultations are summarised below. The final vision has been the subject of an IIA. In essence the two main alternative are taking the existing vision forward, or amending this to better reflect the Council's current ambitions and values.
- 4.4 The Council has considered the options particularly in light of the 'tests of soundness' which are set out in the NPPF:

- **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
- **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common

- ground; and
- **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework

VISION

Option	Status	Reason
<p>1 The vision is explicit that the Council will support “good growth”. This is defined as growth that is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable.</p> <p>It develops the Local Plan’s vision through three headings. All development must be “green”, “inclusive” and “liveable”.</p> <p>In terms of the vision “green” means development which minimises its carbon footprint, improving air quality, supporting urban greening and sustainable urban drainage, minimise floor risk and promote biodiversity. It sets high energy standards.</p> <p>“Inclusive” is concerned with development reducing inequality which exists across the borough and ensuring that we provide truly affordable homes, employment opportunities and access to a wide range of facilities which meet our residents day-to-day needs. This includes open space, social, education and sports/ leisure facilities. It includes support for the “walkable neighbourhood” or ensuring that all residents have access to the range</p>	<p>Preferred option</p>	<p>The Council has amended its vision to better reflect the Council’s core values and its ambitions for new development across the borough.</p> <p>The key stands of being “green”, “inclusive” and “liveable” are seen as being as essential as delivering good growth and reflect its values.</p> <p>They are the elements that run through the Council Plan and through subsidiary plans or Strategies. For example, the need to maximise affordable housing is central to the Council’s Housing Plan, the need for “green development” a necessary response to the Council’s declaration of the Climate Emergency and the Green Plan, and Council’s Economic Strategy dovetails with the “inclusive” strand and the ambitions to maintain the attraction of our town centres.</p> <p>The vision also reflects the ambitions of many of our residents who have stressed, though the various rounds of public consultation, the need to recognise the importance of protecting the build environment and the borough</p>

Option	Status	Reason
<p>of facilities that they need.</p> <p>“Livable” has a number of elements. It is concerned with enhancing the Borough’s townscape, and ensuring that development is to the highest quality, but it is also about supporting our cultural offer and our town centres, so that the borough remains a desirable place to live and to visit.</p>		<p>rich architectural heritage.</p> <p>In addition the Council made a decision to try to draft the entire plan in a more concise manner. The new vision reflects this ambition.</p>
<p>The Council takes the existing vision forward.</p> <p>This is “to reduce inequality within the Borough, and allow each community to fully realise its potential.” This has three strands. The ambition to “stimulate improvements across the Borough... through the provision of better transport, better housing and better housing, aiding better health”. This includes support for the provision of a range of social and community facilities as well as businesses.</p> <p>It is also to “enhance the reputation of our national and international destinations. This includes support of our town centres and the Borough’s role as a cultural destination.</p> <p>The third strand is the need to “uphold our residential quality of life. This includes “cherishing quality in the build environment, acting on environmental issues and Maintaining</p>	<p>Reasonable alternative</p>	<p>The vision within the existing Local Plan remains relevant. This vision would support a more socially inclusive borough and a borough which builds upon its strengths.</p> <p>However, this vision is not appropriate in that it does not reflect the Council’s current ambitions. In particular, the new vision better reflects the Council Plan. This was published after the adoption of the 2019 Local Plan. This is explicit in the need to recognise how the Council should help Borough recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. The proposed vision also better reflects the increased emphasis on the need for “green” development, an ambition given greater prominence with the Council declaring a climate emergency in October 2019.</p> <p>The new vision also reflects the ambitions of our stakeholders. At each stage of the policy formulation the</p>

Option	Status	Reason
<p>and updating social infrastructure.” This also includes the provision of the housing needed to meet the acute housing need of many of those who live within the borough.</p>		<p>Council had asked if the proposed vision was relevant. All elements were supported.</p>

5. Publication Policy

5.1 Following consideration of the options presented above, consultation and reasonable alternatives, the Council has finalised the vision:

V1 Vision for the Borough

The Local Plan will support good growth and future development in the Borough to be:

- **Green.** It will put the environment at the heart of all new development, and support sensitive and safe retrofitting of existing buildings so we can support the health and well-being of our residents and our visitors, now and long into the future;
- **Inclusive.** It will narrow the inequality which exists across the Borough, and ensure that we provide the truly affordable homes, the employment opportunities and access to a wide range of facilities that meet our residents' day-to-day needs, including open space, social, education and sports/leisure facilities;
- **Liveable.** It will enhance the Borough's outstanding townscape, preserving and conserving the context where required and by ensuring that the design of new development is of the highest quality and safety standards, reinforcing an area's character in addition to developing our cultural offer and supporting our internationally recognised town centres and their shops, theatres, museums, events, festivals and markets to create a highly desirable place to live.

6. Duty to cooperate and strategic issues

- 6.1 The legal obligation of the 'duty to cooperate' requires the Council to "engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis" and have "regard to activities" (i.e. strategies, plans, policies) of other bodies in the preparation of Local Plans "so far as relating to a strategic matter". This includes "considering whether to consult on and prepare... agreements or joint approaches"¹.
- 6.2 However, the vision of the plan is not something which will be subject to the duty to cooperate. The policies which help achieve this vision are. The nature of the cooperation is set out in the relevant policy formulation report.
- 6.3 There is nothing in the vision that would conflict with the ambitions of our neighbours.

¹ Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2010