

The Rt. Hon. Theresa Villiers MP

Member of Parliament for Chipping Barnet

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Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
Via Email: londonplan@london.gov.uk.

Reference (please quote if replying) TV/CC/27759

2nd March 2018

Dear Mayor

Draft London Plan

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on the Draft London Plan. My views are as follows:

Housing & Planning:

I am concerned about your proposals for housing and planning that would give Barnet the highest target for new homes of any outer London borough.

My view is that these changes could lead to over-development in the Chipping Barnet constituency. I accept the need for new homes and we are building more homes in Barnet than in any other London borough (primarily through large scale regeneration schemes). However, I believe it is vital to ensure that new development is in tune with the surrounding area and does not put undue strain on local services and infrastructure.

The draft London Plan proposes to remove the 'housing density matrix' which puts limits on how dense a development can be in a local area. This is likely to open the way for much larger scale, high-rise, high-density development in Barnet. I strongly oppose this aspect of the draft London Plan and would ask for it to be deleted from the final version.

Removal of the housing density matrix would have a negative impact on my constituents, including added pressure on roads and parking.

I am also disappointed to note that the target that 36% of affordable homes should be family sized is being removed. I believe that this will make it more difficult for young families to find a place to make their home in this area.

Current planning rules give some protection to back gardens to prevent too many of them from being built over. These protections would be removed under the new plan, giving more opportunities for so-called 'garden grabbing'.

I hope that the plans to remove protection for back gardens will be reconsidered. I strongly oppose removal of protection for back gardens. They play an important role in quality of life and biodiversity in London. Allowing more 'garden grabbing' could create long term damage to our environment.

I am deeply concerned about reports that the Mayor wishes to prevent parking spaces from being included in new developments which are within reach of public transport networks. People will always depend on cars in suburban areas, not least because the radial nature of public transport means that routes between suburban destinations are always less well served than routes into and out of the centre of London. Banning new parking spaces in new developments will inevitably mean displacement of cars into roads where residents already find it hard to park their cars.

Pinkham Way Alliance (PWA):

I have been shown the submission by the PWA and note their welcome of your stated ambition to make London at least 50% green by 2050. The organisation also welcomes clarification in the plan about suitable sites for locating waste treatment facilities.

However, the PWA is concerned by the inclusion of the Pinkham Way site in the New Southgate Opportunity Area where major development is planned. I note that the PWA site is shown as either within, or immediately adjacent to, the New Southgate Opportunity Area.

I sympathise with their view that this site is not suitable for large scale development. The whole of the site is designated a Site of Borough Wide Importance for Nature Conservation.

The PWA submission details the reasons why they believe as much as possible of this area should be retained as green open space because of the wildlife, trees and other important species that inhabit this land.

You will further note the view of the PWA that Waste Policy S18 is inconsistent with Policies E6, SK1, E4, and E7 insofar as it refers to Locally Significant Employment Sites/Land. The PWA believe it should be amended to Locally Significant Industrial Sites which would be consistent with the explanatory narrative throughout the rest of policies and narrative in the Plan. It would remove the confusion about whether designated 'Employment sites' were suitable for waste uses.

Barnet Residents Association (BRA)

The Barnet Residents Association have also sent me a copy of their comments on the London Plan. They raise some important points about housing and planning but also about public transport provision.

The BRA comments that presently public transport for those travelling into central London for work is insufficient and I agree with that view. If the number of additional homes you would wish to see in Barnet are built, this will have a significant impact on public transport and, not least, the Northern Line which is already overcrowded.

Lastly, I share their view that the plan should recognise that the character of the suburbs is very different to inner London and it should reflect those differences.

I hope that my comments and those of my constituents will be taken on board before any final decisions are reached.

Regards

