

Response to the GLA consultation on *A City for all Londoners* from King's College London, Queen Mary University of London, LSE and UCL.

Introduction and Background

1. We welcome the opportunity to respond to *A City for all Londoners*. As leading London-based universities, representing a substantial part of London's community (we educate and employ a significant number of London citizens), we would like to highlight the unique impact that higher education and research has in London today and the capacity that universities have to contribute to the achievement of the vision of *A City for all Londoners*.
2. London's universities are a crucial part of what makes London a global city, contributing to the social, cultural, intellectual and economic prosperity of London, and attracting a diverse international staff and student community. *A City for All Londoners* recognises how important it is that London continues to attract and develop the best talent, and London has more world-class universities than any other city,¹ carrying out high-quality teaching and research and engaging with business, policymakers, community organisations, and cultural bodies. London's universities play a significant role in the city's current and future prospects.
3. London's universities are also a substantial economic sector in their own right and deliver considerable economic impact for the London region, generating £5.8 billion of output which in turn generates an additional £5.9 billion in other London industries. They are significant employers, directly providing nearly 57,000 FTE jobs and generating a further 64,000 FTE jobs in London. Additionally, London's universities generate £2.5 billion of export earnings and attract both UK and international students who contribute £2.6 billion to the London economy.² They also account for nearly a fifth of the UK's spin-out companies and have a cumulative portfolio of over 5,500 patents - the highest of all UK regions.³
4. London's universities help to underpin the social fabric, community life and health of Londoners. Their cultural activities span museums (such as the [Grant](#) and [Petrie](#) Museums at UCL), galleries (including the Science Gallery at King's which opens next year), cultural partnerships (UCL East is a founding member of the [Cultural and Education District](#) in Queen Elizabeth Park, each year supporting over 250 cultural organisations in London and bringing over 75,000 people into exhibitions and events. London's universities engage the public directly, almost 7.4 million people attended free and charged events organised by higher education institutions in London in 2014-15⁴. Through its [Public Engagement Unit](#) UCL has supported 750 projects to engage citizens with research, LSE's public events programme, which welcomes leading figures from the fields of academia, business, politics and civil society to the School, was in 2015-16 made up of 241 free public events attended by 56,713 people. London's Universities also play a major role in the health and well-being of London, including their important role in medical training (nearly half of the UK's medical students⁵), links with London's hospitals, and the pharmaceutical industry.
5. Universities in London are uniquely placed to contribute to the achievement of the vision of *A City for All Londoners* through the provision of research expertise to help respond to challenges related to housing, city planning, infrastructure, transport, urban development, energy and environment, and inequalities, among others. In particular, research is already engaged with understanding some of the underpinning challenges that London (like global

¹ <http://www.studyinlondon.ac.uk/why-study-in-london/best-universities-in-london>

² Universities UK. *The Economic impact of the London Higher Education Sector*. April 2014.

³ [HE Business and Community Interaction Survey, 2014/15](#). Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited, April 2016.

⁴ [HE Business and Community Interaction Survey, 2014/15](#). Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited, April 2016.

⁵ London Higher. *London: The Knowledge Capital*.

city peers) faces, in order to develop 'good growth' where housing, transport and enterprise activity are developed together in a sustainable way. We would urge the Mayor and the GLA to take advantage of the substantial breadth, quality and volume of academic expertise in London on many of their priority policy areas expertise to refine future policy formation.

Housing and city planning

6. We welcome the focus on affordable housing throughout *A City for all Londoners*. This is clearly a critical need for Londoners, including university staff and students, and is a challenge that London's Universities are well placed to assist with. [The Bartlett: School of Planning](#) at UCL is a world leading centre for learning and research about the form, planning, design and management of cities including expertise on urban regeneration and densification. LSE London is a centre of research excellence on the economic and social issues of the London region, with a strong reputation in housing as well as broader planning issues covering labour markets, social and demographic change and finance and governance, and is a leading centre for analyses of city-wide development in London. LSE Housing and Communities undertakes multi-disciplinary research and consultancy on the different dimensions of social disadvantage, particularly from neighbourhood perspectives. The UCL Grand Challenge of Sustainable Cities has also been undertaking work addressing housing in London, and King's College London's 'London Commission' chaired by Lord Adonis, is addressing this among other issues.
7. In terms of housing needs affecting London's universities, student accommodation requirements continue to grow, and meeting these requirements is essential to ensure London remains a destination of choice for the large numbers of talented students that our institutions and economy depend upon. Savills estimate that the total London Full-time HE population is 261,500, for which there is currently 81,481 bed spaces; and Knight Frank estimate that just 3,585 student beds will be completed in the next two years compared with 10,508 in the last two years. It is also important that we protect the interests of students in the private rental accommodation market.
8. The housing challenge extends to our workforce, who represent a significant proportion of London's citizens. The market for the best research and teaching staff that we depend on is increasingly global in nature, and the cost and availability of accommodation is an important factor in determining who we can recruit. Greater capacity and lower costs will not only help ensure London's Universities remain pre-eminent, but will also ensure that the wider economic benefits of academic activity are not lost to competitor cities.
9. There is a clear desire in *A City for all Londoners* to create integrated land-use where appropriate. Universities can play a pivotal role in creating communities, bringing together concentrations of business (small and large), culture and cultural spaces, residences and academia and stimulating local economies in the process. These locations become attractive to both our own staff and students, but also secondary users in business and the wider community where there is appropriately zoned space available at affordable rates. There are examples of this effect throughout the world including in Boston, the San Francisco bay area, and Cambridge (UK) where the presence of a major university has been pivotal to the wider social, economic and cultural life of the community.
10. This important link between university presence and wide social, economic and cultural benefit underpins the HMG and GLA support for the Culture and Education District at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park where both UCL and London College of Fashion will link academic and research activity to extensive innovation activity, together and separately. It is also what Imperial West, again supported by HMG, seeks to achieve at White City. King's aspires to the same vision at Canada Water, catalysing an intensive development of housing, offices,

teaching, research and commerce and exploiting the excellent infrastructure in place to develop a 'cluster approach' with co-location for businesses. The proposed bridge between Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf will make connections between this campus and the financial services at Canary Wharf much easier.

11. QMUL is working closely with its primary health provider Barts Health Trust on a large-scale redevelopment of extensive areas of land adjacent to the new Royal London Hospital, in order to create a Life Sciences campus. The new development will bring together world class research and clinical expertise, supported by a range of industrial connections, pharmaceutical and IT companies, biotech startups, and charities and other partners. This development will be combined with shared community social, cultural and interaction space. The unique development will integrate spaces for charities and patients with QMUL's nationally leading Centre for Public Engagement activities such as the Centre of the Cell (QMUL holds the first gold watermark from the RCUK sponsored National Coordinating Centre for Public engagement). The development will be supported by adjacent housing for students and staff to create a work/living environment to attract the best of both to East London's thriving entrepreneurial centre where Tech and Med City converge.
12. We would like to highlight the importance of research in science, technology and engineering, the outputs of which are often the first that can be translated to wealth creation. This major research effort in the London universities is of central importance to London as it will fuel entrepreneurial activity and innovation, and drive the diversification of the wider economy. Much of this research is expensive, requiring specialist space for laboratories and development spaces, and has specific environmental requirements and occasionally the potential for environmental impact that needs to be carefully managed. Whilst there are financial and environmental barriers to locating this activity at scale in highly developed, central areas, prioritising space for this activity in science parks or precincts that are highly accessible but non-central should be considered for this plan, and Canada Water is a prime example of this.
13. Finally, we note the ambition in *A City for all Londoners* to use NHS and TfL land for the development of housing. We support this ambition with the caveat that NHS land, if it is part of or adjacent to a clinical hub, is often the only location where leading biomedical research can be undertaken. The three London Academic Health Science Centres⁶ provide the platform for the life sciences economy in London, and for this to continue to thrive, basic and translational clinical research will need to continue to grow, requiring more space for labs on or adjacent to clinical hubs. There will be several examples of where this need is most pressing, one location is at Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals where expansion space for [for educational and health care expansion is essential](#).

Infrastructure and transport

14. Good transport hubs and networks are essential to all of the universities and we are broadly supportive of the vision in *A City for all Londoners* to improve and extend the transport infrastructure. London universities recognise the importance of transport to the London Plan and how it is integrated with housing and enterprise activity. There is a concentration of transport research among London universities where expertise is available to inform and contribute to the development of transport in London. For example, the [UCL Transport](#)

⁶ London's academic health science partnerships are: King's Health Partners, Imperial College Health Partners, and UCL Partners.

[Institute](#), including the Transport Lab and [PAMELA](#) facility, carries out research and consultancy (including for TfL) on a variety of modes of transport and infrastructures and from a variety of perspectives including culture, health, accessibility and the environment underpinned by the cross-cutting theme of equity resonating with the plan's aim for good growth. LSE's Spatial Economics Research Centre and What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth have made significant contributions to transport and infrastructure policy, locally and nationally.

15. London's universities also have considerable expertise on infrastructure, spanning physical infrastructure (UCL is the coordination node for [UKCRIC](#), the £150 million, 14 partner university programme of national infrastructure research); social considerations of infrastructure (such as the UCL Healthy Infrastructure Research Group or research into urban green spaces); and digital infrastructure (such as the UCL-Aston £4.8 million [Unlocking the Capacity Optical Communications](#) (UNLOC) project). The National Infrastructure Commission resulted in part from a recommendation of LSE's Growth Commission, and the School continues to contribute to the Commission's work.

Health and Inequality

16. We support the ambition of a *City for all Londoners* "to improve health and to reduce health inequalities". London Universities are intrinsically connected to the health infrastructure of London through the NHS (e.g. the Imperial AHSC, King's Health Partners and UCL Partners) but also hold centres of expertise and research to support efforts to reduce health inequalities. London universities can play a vital and central role to support the Mayor to deliver this ambition. There is a very wide range of expertise available on these issues, including for example the [UCL Institute of Health Equity](#) supported by the British Medical Association and the Department of Health which seeks to increase health equity through action on the social determinants of health and where a core aspects of the Institute's work is to inform global and national policies as well as local policy in London. LSE Health provides a unique research base in health policy, health economics and demography and, as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Policy and Pharmaceutical Economics and founding member of the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, it provides benefit to the international and national health policy community.
17. London universities share the Mayor's objective to address inequalities, to tackle discrimination and disadvantage and to promote full participation among all communities in London in the life of the city. Combined with the Mayor's vision to address health inequity we support efforts to improve Social Integration in London and point to London universities as examples of plurality where diversity is both welcomed and championed and where we share values of inclusion and respect. We welcome dialogue with the Mayor and the GLA on how universities in London can contribute to this aspect of the plan and to demonstrate that 'London is Open', London universities are open to the citizens of London and to the world and it is essential that they remain so. Widening Participation activities across all our universities greatly diversify the make up of student bodies to the enhancement of the student experience and learning environment.

Energy and Environment

18. As significant owners of buildings, and as businesses and employers in their own right, London's universities can play a significant role in increasing energy efficiency and sustainability (for example, the UCL Sustainability Team works with the UCL community to embed sustainability into research, buildings and behaviours at UCL, and both UCL and LSE have been awarded a 'First Class' award by People & Planet's University League. London

universities also undertake globally-leading research into energy and resource use, the environment and climate change. UCL's [Energy Institute](#) which carries out cross-disciplinary research and policy support on climate change and energy security, focusing in particular on buildings (including energy efficiency and retrofitting); energy systems (including low-carbon energy) and transport (including reduction of emissions). UCL's [Institute of Sustainable Resources](#) generates knowledge on the globally sustainable use of resources, including developing sustainability indicators, researching resource efficiency, and developing the green economy. The LSE Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment is a world-leading centre for policy-relevant research and training on the environment, which is making a significant contribution to major policy processes, including COP 21.

Leveraging London's concentration of leading universities

19. There are opportunities to further leverage existing areas of academic concentration. For example, King's and the LSE are close neighbours in the Strand/Aldwych area with a significant footprint of activity. Space is highly constrained in this area however which limits the degree to which King's and LSE can build communities, and leverage decades of investment and reputation to create a wider economic and social dividend. There are a number of measures that could be taken to create a better platform the two Universities and Somerset House to increase their openness and grow more easily in future. These include:
 - ❖ Protecting office space in this area from being converted into further restaurants, hotels or high-end housing;
 - ❖ Working with us to grow more capacity for academic, cultural and commercial activity;
 - ❖ Increased pedestrianisation of busy streets and more focus on public/green space.
20. We note that international competition in research and higher education is intensifying. London will be challenged by both established presences (Boston, New York, San Francisco) and emerging hubs such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Beijing as well as other cities across the US and Australia. We would therefore like to see future iterations of *A City for all Londoners* consider how to sustain the success of London universities, given the important contribution they make to London. We would be keen to discuss further how London's leading universities can play an active role in contributing to the development of *A City for all Londoners* and any subsequent revision to *The London Plan*.