
Subject: City Plan Update - Westminster City Council

From: Planning Policy: WCC (planningpolicy@westminster.gov.uk)

To: planningpolicy@westminster.gov.uk;

Date: Thursday, 16 November 2017, 11:30



Councillor Daniel Astaire

Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Realm

Email: planningpolicy@westminster.gov.uk

Date: 16th November 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

City Plan Update - Westminster City Council

I am writing to update you about the revision of our vital City Plan, a once in a generation opportunity to set out the innovative planning policies that will shape, protect and enhance the future of this world class city.

We are committed to developing a set of clear, up-to-date policies that will help us deliver our priorities, including the homes we need to deliver mixed and resilient communities, the right kind of growth to assist economic development and a city that works for all.

It is clear from the engagement and consultation we have done to date that there is wide support for many of the policy approaches we have announced, particularly around stepping up and accelerating delivery of the affordable housing we need to ensure resilient, vibrant communities.

There is also support for taking a pragmatic and responsible approach to ensure we support growth in ways that maximise its benefits to our people, preserve Westminster's heritage and enable us to make the most of what is best of the City – ensuring it is a place we can be proud to hand on to our successors.

We don't think this will be delivered by simply permitting more and new tall buildings anywhere across the City. Such a blanket approach would risk Westminster's unique character. We want to take forward innovative approaches such as infilling, better use of existing space and bringing buildings up to the same height as their immediate surroundings.

Our decision to review the timeline for preparing the City Plan is in direct response to the Mayor and Central Government making a number of significant policy announcements in recent months, particularly on affordable housing. In addition, the Mayor will be publishing his draft London Plan for consultation at the end of this month. We also expect that next week's Budget will include proposals that we will have to take into account. We also have to take account of pre-election "purdah" restrictions. For all of these

reasons, instead of consulting at the end of this year as we had originally set out in March, we will now be consulting on the details of the City Plan in Spring 2018.

Adjusting our timetable will enable us to better consider and take account of these new over-arching regional and national strategies and policies, so the City Plan will be much more robust. There is, of course, never a time when the landscape is wholly settled, but there are times, such as currently, when you know that information is forthcoming which means that in the long-run it will be more effective to take the time to take this on board rather than to be forced to make major changes later on.

We think that this slight adjustment in the timeline has to be in the very best interests of the city, its residents and businesses and we will make sure we keep everyone who has an interest well informed and engaged in this important process.



Councillor Daniel Astaire
Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Realm

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