

MALP EIP [matter 1 housing standards](#) Statement from the Mayor of London

Inspector's introductory paragraph

The Core Planning Principles referred to in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) support high quality design. Further advice on Housing Standards is provided in the Planning Practice Guidance (Housing – Optional Technical Standards); the Written Ministerial Statement dated 25th March 2015; and the DCLG publication entitled 'Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard'.

Against this background:

1a What is the relationship between the Housing Standards MALP and the Draft Interim Housing SPG?

- 1a.1 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in general is intended to provide guidance on the implementation of London Plan policy – it does not itself constitute policy. The draft Interim Housing SPG updates the 2012 SPG to address changes in the 2015 London Plan (in particular the new housing targets). In addition, because of the coincidence of timing in the publication of national guidance on housing standards, MALP and the draft SPG, the opportunity has been taken to use this draft SPG to also explain the arrangements for the introduction of new housing standards (as they were understood at the time of writing). This explanation will be finalised (and if necessary subject to a further round of consultation) following the EIP.
- 1a.2 It is thought that having such detailed draft guidance on implementation of broad strategic MALP policy might help inform the EIP. A similar approach was used during the EIP into the 2011 London Plan and was found useful.
- 1a.3 The guidance is consistent with the proposals in the MALP. The draft SPG is clear that the proposed policy changes set out in the MALP are subject to the EIP process and are thus not yet policy. However, many of the changes to the detailed standards are simply as a result of the outcome of the Coalition Government's Housing Standards Review¹ and reflect the then SoS' Written Ministerial Statement of the 25th of March² which states 'From 1 October 2015: Existing Local Plan, neighborhood plan, and supplementary planning document policies relating to water efficiency, access and internal space should be interpreted by reference to the nearest equivalent new national technical standard'. The SPG is consistent with the Mayor's Transition Statement (May 2015)³ which sets out what are the nearest equivalent national standards for London. Because of the introduction of the new national technical standards, this update to the standards

¹ For detail on the Housing Standards review process and development see:

- DCLG Housing Standards review: consultation. August 2013.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/230250/1-_Housing_Standards_Review_-_Consultation_Document.pdf.
- DCLG Housing Standards review: technical consultation. September 2014.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/housing-standards-review-technical-consultation>

² Eric Pickles 'Steps the Government are taking to streamline the planning system, protect the environment, support economic growth and assist locally-led decision-making. March 2015

³ Mayor of London. Housing Standards Policy Transition Statement. Implementation: October 2015. May 2015.

section of the SPG would have been carried out even in the absence of the Minor Alteration to the plan.

- 1a.4 Part 2 of the SPG covers a range of housing standards – providing detail on implementing Policy 3.5 (Quality) and 3.8 (Choice) of the London Plan. Historically the London Plan has set out the minimum Gross Internal Area (GIA) standards that homes should adhere to but referred to the SPG for the other detailed standards. The scope of these standards is set out in Policy 3.5 C. These policies, along with the associated detailed guidance, deliver the requirement of the NPPF to ‘always seek to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings’ (NPPF para 17).
- 1a.5 The Government is clear that extra technical standards relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings should not be imposed through planning.⁴ However, this does not preclude the setting of standards through the planning process where they do not relate to the internal layout, construction or performance of new dwellings, or where they relate to design. Therefore the SPG provides guidance on the design of developments and sets standards on aspects such as requirements for private open space, number of dwellings per core and lift requirements which are outside the scope of the Housing Standards review.
- 1a.6 A number of detailed technical standards have been removed in the draft SPG to reflect the above advice in the Written Ministerial Statement⁵. For example standard 4.4.1 of the 2012 SPG which set minimum standards for the combined floor area for living/kitchen/dining has been removed because the Nationally Described Space Standards only includes minimum room sizes for bedrooms. Standards such as these should not be required through planning from October 2015 when the new Building Regulations and Nationally Described Space Standards come into force. Annex 1 of the SPG sets out where the standards have been altered from the 2012 SPG and the reason for this change, clearly identifying those standards that have been affected by the introduction of the national technical standards.
- 1a.7 Policy 3.8 (Choice) of the current London Plan 2015, sets out the proportion of homes that should meet Lifetime Homes standards (3.8Bc) and the proportion that should meet wheelchair accessible or easily adaptable standards (3.8Bd). From October 2015 the new ‘optional’ Building Regulations for access and water come into force. Part M (which covers access) has been divided into three categories;
- M4(1): category 1 - Visitable dwellings (regulation M4(1) is mandatory for all new dwellings to which Part M of the Building Regulation applies, unless one of the optional requirements M4(2) or M4 (3) applies)
 - M4(2): category 2 – Accessible and adaptable dwellings
 - M4(3): category 3 – Wheelchair user dwellings (comprised of wheelchair accessible and wheelchair adaptable dwellings).

⁴ Eric Pickles ‘Steps the Government are taking to streamline the planning system, protect the environment, support economic growth and assist locally-led decision-making. March 2015.

⁵ *ibid*

- 1a.8 Part M of the Building Regulations states; “Requirements M4(2) and M4(3) are ‘optional requirements’ as defined in the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2015). An optional requirement only applies where a condition that one or more dwellings should meet the relevant optional requirement is imposed on new development as part of the process of granting planning permission. Where no condition is imposed, dwellings (to which Part M applies) only need to meet requirement M4(1). Compliance should be assessed against only one of requirements M4(1), M4(2) or M4(3)” (paragraph 0.3 Part M 2015). The MALP updates Policy 3.8 to reflect this – (see statement relating to Matter i).
- 1a.9 From October 2015 existing accessible housing standards are to be interpreted by reference to the nearest equivalent new national technical standard. For London this means that Lifetime Homes should be interpreted as M4(2) and Wheelchair accessible/easily adaptable homes should be interpreted as M4(3). However, as only one of the standards can apply to any single dwelling, the requirement for M4(2) has been amended to 90% (rather than 100% which currently applies to Lifetime Homes), as also set out in the Mayor’s Transition Statement. The SPG provides more guidance on meeting the new Building Regulations, particularly recognising the potential implications of M4(2) for developments of four storeys or less, (which unlike Lifetime Homes, requires step free access -see para 2.3.11) in terms of both viability and service charges.
- 1a.10 The Transition Statement and the draft SPG set out the same approach in relation to the housing standards review. However the Transition Statement will be removed following the successful adoption of MALP, and the SPG provides greater detail on implementation of the new standards.

1b Does it need to be made clearer that the advice and policies apply to both residential new-build and conversions?

- 1b.1 Accessible housing standards are now covered by Part M of the Building Regulations – with the optional technical standards set out in Approved Document Part M. Part M of the Building Regulations generally only applies to new build dwellings due to the limits of the application of the Building Regulations⁶. This means that new homes delivered as a result of a conversion or material change of use can no longer be required to meet accessibility standards. The nationally described space standards and the remainder of Policy 3.5 apply to all new dwellings; new build, conversions and change of use.
- 1b.2 Lifetime Homes standards and earlier wheelchair homes standards have effectively been ‘withdrawn’. Therefore, the MALP updates Policy 3.8c to remove references to Lifetime Homes standards and replaces it with M4 (2) as the nearest equivalent national standard. Similarly Policy 3.8d has been updated to reference M4(3) – Wheelchair User dwellings.

Background

- 1b.3 The Building Regulations 2010 (Statutory Instrument 2010 No. 2214) (amended 2015 Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 767) set out (amongst other elements):

⁶ The Building Regulations, 2010

- The meaning of building work
 - Requirements relating to building work
 - The meaning of material change of use
 - Requirements relating to material change of use, and
 - Limitation on requirements
- 1b.4 These effectively state what types of development (Building Regulations definitions, not planning definitions) different Parts of the Building Regulations apply to. This is often referred to as the ‘limits of application’.
- 1b.5 The application of the new housings standards contained in Part M are limited by this Statutory Instrument. Part M does not apply to a material change of use where a new dwelling has been created- see:
- Regulation 5. Meaning of material change of use
 - Regulation 6. Requirements relating to material change of use (The Building Regulations 2010 (Statutory Instrument 2010 No. 2214))
- 1B.6 Therefore it is not possible to apply M4(2) and M4(3) to homes which have been created through a material change of use. It should be noted that the definitions now used in relation to the application of accessible housing standards i.e. ‘change of use’ and ‘building work’ are Building Regulations definitions, not planning definitions.
- 1B.7 Similarly the M4(2) and M4(3) would generally not apply to homes that have been created through the conversion of an existing dwelling – this is because Part M specifies “Where a dwelling is subject to a material alteration, the building should be no less compliant with requirement M4(1) than it was prior to the building work taking place” (Para 0.11 Part M), which relates to:
- Regulation 3. Meaning of building work
 - Regulation 4. Requirements relating to building work (The Building Regulations 2010 (Statutory Instrument 2010 No. 2214))
- 1B.8 Due to the limits of application of the Building Regulations set out in the Statutory Instrument and the introduction of the planning and building control systems working together to create accessible housing, the London Plan can no longer require the application of accessible housing standards in terms of Lifetime Homes (now M4(2)), or wheelchair accessible housing (now M4(3)) to ‘conversions and change of use’.
- 1b.9 The draft interim Housing SPG and Accessible London SPG will be updated to make these definitions and this distinction clearer.

1c Do the Mayor’s proposed alterations (with regard to Housing Standards) appropriately reflect the national advice referred to in the introductory paragraph above?

1c.1 Yes. The Mayor has brought forward early alterations to the 2015 London Plan which are based on robust evidence in terms of need and viability and appropriately align existing adopted London Plan policies with the Government’s optional technical standards. As advised by the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS)⁷ and NPPG, these alterations will ensure that housing standards in the London Plan are consistent with the Government’s standards.

Need

1c.2 In line with the NPPG⁸, the GLA’s evidence of need demonstrates the requirement for optional accessibility standards in London, taking into account official statistics on the number of older and disabled people in London; GLA household projections; the quantity and quality of specialist accommodation for older people; and the accessibility and adaptability of the existing housing stock. In addition, the GLA has undertaken further supplementary research to examine the need for optional access standards and, in particular, to provide an overall estimate of the number of disabled people in London and to compile further data on the accessibility and age of the capital’s existing housing stock. These are referred to in Matter 1i and, in line with the WMS, provide a clearly evidenced need for optional accessibility standards in London.

1c.3 The GLA’s evidence of need study⁹ provides a robust and clearly evidenced justification for continuing the application of space standards in London by reference to up-to-date data, a literature review and detailed consideration of the distinct local circumstances and housing challenges faced in the capital, including the need to address:

- recent and forecast population growth;
- the density and generally flatted nature of the majority of new build housing schemes in London; and
- its unique urban heat island effect.

1c.4 The GLA’s evidence also clearly justifies the local need for optional water efficiency standards in London in order to address existing and forecast water shortages within the capital and surrounding area. This follows advice in the NPPG¹⁰. The study confirms that London is classified by the Environment Agency (EA) as a water-stressed area. It also highlights the findings of the various Water Resources Management Plans in the area, which all indicate that London experiences an existing and forecast water deficit. This provides a robust basis for requiring the optional water efficiency requirement. In accordance with the

⁷ Eric Pickles ‘Steps the Government are taking to streamline the planning system, protect the environment, support economic growth and assist locally-led decision-making. March 2015

⁸ DCLG, NPPG, Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 56-007-20150327

⁹ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner & Theobald, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015

¹⁰ DCLG, NPPG, Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 56-013-20150327 to Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 56-017-20150327

NPPG¹¹, engagement has been undertaken with local water and sewerage companies and the EA through the public consultation on the MALP.

Viability

- 1c.5 The GLA has undertaken a detailed independent viability appraisal to robustly examine the impact of applying the optional national technical standards in London. Overall, the study concludes that there are no measurable cost impacts associated with applying the optional standards for space and water as these are no more onerous than the existing London Plan standards¹².
- 1c.6 As the requirement for step-free access (ie. lifts) to residential units accessed above the ground floor is not currently a requirement of Lifetime Homes for buildings of four storeys and less, specific viability testing has been undertaken in order to fully consider the impact of this policy change on low rise developments. As shown on Figure 1c below, the provision of a lift on these medium density schemes (at 80 dph) does not significantly impact the residual value of schemes in relation to benchmark land values. Therefore, the provision of lift access does not significantly affect the viability or deliverability of development at these densities and at policy compliant levels of affordable housing provision. Higher density schemes of five storeys and more in any tenure must currently provide lifts in order to comply with the London Plan, so the alterations do not represent an additional cost for these schemes.
- 1c.7 The study¹³ follows the same methodology as the 2014 SHLAA study¹⁴ which was tested and found sound as part of the FALP EiP. This approach is consistent with paragraph 174 of the NPPF which requires plan-makers to assess the cumulative impacts on development of all existing and proposed standards. Viability testing was therefore predicated on schemes being policy compliant in terms of affordable housing provision, CIL/s106 and density and meeting housing standards, with benchmark land values taken from borough CIL viability studies. In line with the NPPG advice to allow for changing market circumstances¹⁵, the study tests different scenarios such as changes in house prices and build costs.
- 1c.8 The assessment tested a notional 1 hectare tile in each borough and case study sites in 8 boroughs. These boroughs were specifically selected as they have significant amounts of identified housing capacity but have been identified as also having potential viability difficulties and also to provide a geographical spread. This approach accords with the NPPG which suggests that viability evidence should be proportionate; focused on areas where viability is potentially an issue; and based on an appropriate sample of sites¹⁶.

¹¹ DCLG, NPPG, Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 56-015-20150327

¹² David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea and Gardiner & Theobald. 2015. Greater London Authority: Housing Standards Review - Viability Study, page 3-4

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Three Dragons, David Lock Associates, Traderisks2013 GLA Strategic Housing Land Viability Assessment. Final Report. 2014

¹⁵ DCLG, NPPG, Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 10-008-20140306

¹⁶ DCLG, NPPG, Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 10-005-20140306 to Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 10-006-20140306;

Timing

- 1c.9 The NPPG advises that there may need to be a reasonable transitional period following the adoption of optional space standards¹⁷. In this context, it should be borne in mind that the optional housing standards are no more onerous than London's existing space standards which have been in place since 2011 and will by now have been taken into account by landowners and developers in London.
- 1c.10 Whilst the NPPG does not mention timing with respect to the introduction of accessibility standards, it is similarly the case that accessible housing standards have been in place in London since 2004. Where the M4(2) standard now requires step-free access (lifts) on residential buildings of four storeys and less, this has a relatively small impact on base build costs for these developments (circa 2 to 2.4%)¹⁸. Moreover, developers and landowners have had considerable advance warning of this change via the Government's housing standards review, together with the Government's public consultation in September 2014 and the WMS in March 2015. Following the WMS, the GLA published a transitional statement on housing standards in May 2015, which provided further advice the development industry on standards which will come into force in London from 1 October, irrespective of the MALP.

Affordability

- 1c.11 The Mayor recognises that housing affordability is a key issue in London which is reflected in his Housing Strategy and London Plan Policies 3.8A and 3.10-13. Accordingly, consideration has been given to this factor and to the Government's cost impact report undertaken by EC Harris¹⁹, as advised by the NPPG²⁰. This is explained further in matter 1k. The GLA's viability assessment also examined the potential affordability impacts associated with lift related service charges for residents in all tenures, which is described in more detail in matter 1k²¹.
- 1c.12 Where the service costs are demonstrably likely to have a significant impact on the affordability and viability of housing provision, sufficient flexibility is provided in paragraph 3.48A of the MALP, together with recommended Suggested Changes (Reference HSC4) to ensure these site specific affordability factors and service charges specifically are taken into account when applying M4(2) requirements. This follows the approach recommended by the NPPG²².

Ceiling heights

- 1c.13 Note 3 to Table 3.3 of the London Plan strongly encourages higher ceiling heights of 2.5m in order to address the distinct density and flatted nature of residential development in London and to take account of the unique urban heat island effect. The Mayor's strong encouragement for ceiling heights of 2.5m in London

¹⁷ DCLG, NPPG, Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 56-020-20150327

¹⁸ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea and Gardiner & Theobald. 2015. Greater London Authority -Housing Standards Review - Viability Study, page 3

¹⁹ Department for Communities and Local Government. Housing Standards Review. Cost Impacts. EC Harris. 2015

²⁰ NPPG Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 56-020-20150327; Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 56-003-20150327

²¹ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea and Gardiner & Theobald. 2015. Greater London Authority -Housing Standards Review - Viability Study, paragraph 4.21

²² DCLG, NPPG, Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 56-008-20150327

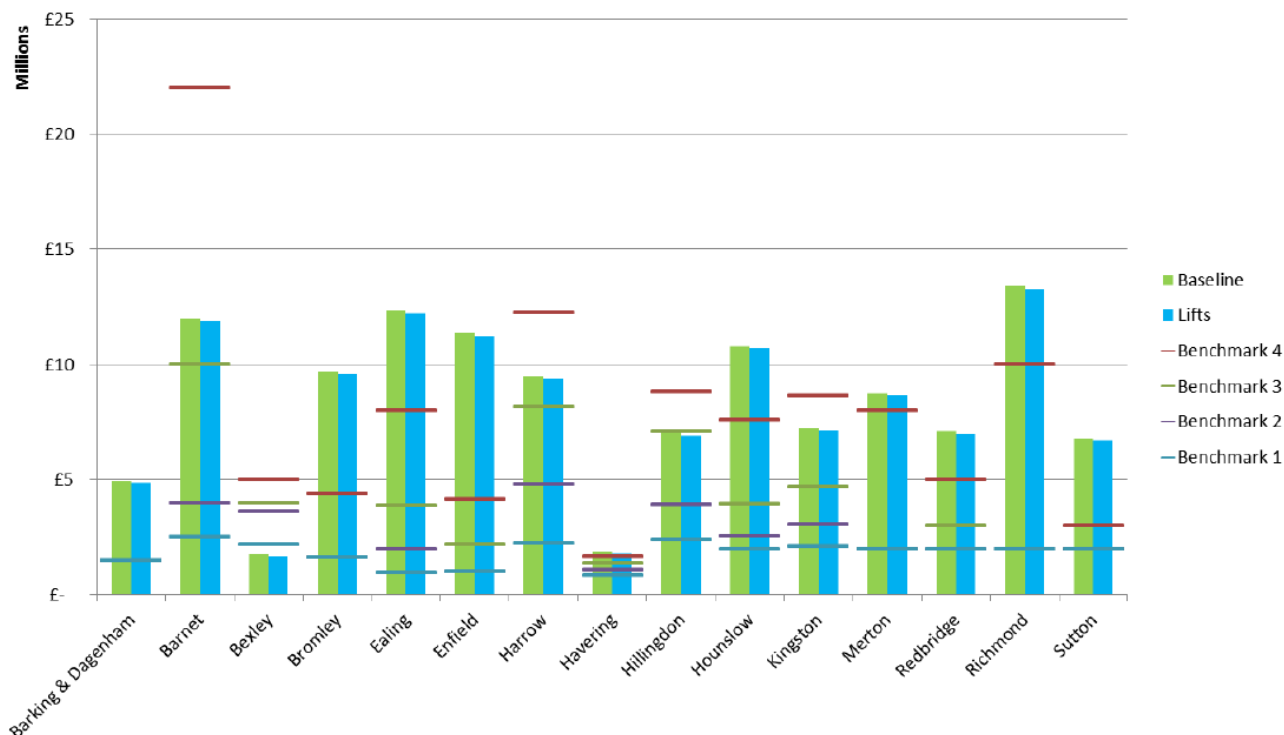
does not create uncertainty or conflict with the WMS or NPPG. Instead, it provides a clear understanding to developers of the Mayor's aspiration for new homes in London. This reflects the London Plan's overarching objective that housing developments in London should be of 'the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context', as set out in Policy 3.5A.

- 1c.14 The justification for this encouragement is detailed in the GLA's statement to Matter 1h and is considered to be consistent with the NPPF, in particular its core planning principle that the planning system should 'always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings'²³. It also appropriately reflects paragraph 10 of the NPPF, which states that 'plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas.' Moreover, it accords with paragraph 58 of the NPPF which suggests that policies relating to the design quality of development should reflect an area's 'defining characteristics' and ensure that developments function well over the lifetime of a development.
- 1c.15 As set out in the Mayor's statement on Matter 1h, the Mayor is not of the view that the implementation of the Government's housing standards review prevents the London Plan from strongly encouraging developers to exceed the minimum requirements set out in the nationally described optional space standards. GLA officers can find no explicit statements in the WMS, NPPG or NPPF which would suggest that the GLA is mistaken in this view. Importantly, it should also be recognised that the statutory framework for preparing Local Plans²⁴ and the London Plan²⁵ emphasises the need to have regard to national policy and advice and guidance issued by the Secretary of State. It does not require plan makers to slavishly follow Government guidance to the extent that this would fail to take into account local circumstances.

²³ DCLG, NPPF, 2012, Core Planning Principles, paragraph 17, fourth bullet point

²⁴ The Planning Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004, Section 19(2)(a) The Greater London Authority Act 1999, Section 337

²⁵ The Greater London Authority Act 1999, Section 337

Figure 1c – viability of lift provision on medium density 1ha tiles

(Source: GLA, MALP Technical Seminar Presentation – Housing Standards, slide 25)

1d Is the evidence in the Integrated Impact Assessment Report on Housing Standards sufficiently robust?

- 1d.1 Yes, the evidence in the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Report on Housing Standards is sufficiently robust.
- 1d.2 The Mayor adopts an integrated approach to assessing the impacts of his strategies. The IIA incorporates the Mayor’s legal requirements to carry out environmental, social, economic, health, equality and community safety impact assessments. Carrying out an IIA enables any synergies and cross-cutting impacts of the assessments to be identified.
- 1d.3 The IIA is an iterative process that informs the development of the proposed policies. It identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on environmental, economic and social factors using the evidence base. The IIA process should be proportionate and relevant to the alteration being assessed.
- 1d.4 Para 167 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that:

‘Assessments should be proportionate, and should not repeat policy assessment that has already been undertaken. Wherever possible the local planning authority should consider how the preparation of any assessment will contribute to the plan’s evidence base...’

- 1d.5 Para 009 Reference ID: 11-009-20140306 of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) states:

‘The sustainability appraisal should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects of the Local Plan. It should focus on the environmental, economic and social impacts that are likely to be significant. It does not need to be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is considered to be appropriate for the content and level of detail in the Local Plan.’

- 1d.6 In addition Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 11-016-20140306 of the NPPG states:

‘The term ‘baseline information’ refers to the existing environmental, economic and social characteristics of the area likely to be affected by the Local Plan, and their likely evolution without implementation of new policies...

...Baseline information provides the basis against which to assess the likely effects of alternative proposals in the plan.

Wherever possible, data should be included on historic and likely future trends, including a ‘business as usual’ scenario (i.e. anticipated trends in the absence of new policies being introduced). This information will enable the potential effects of the implementation of the Local Plan to be assessed in the context of existing and potential environmental, economic and social trends.’

- 1d.7 Section 2.3.1 of the Minor Alterations to the London Plan (MALP) Housing Standards IIA report outlines that:

‘A large proportion of existing baseline evidence used previously for the FALP has not changed in the short period between the FALP review and this draft Housing Standards MALP review. Therefore, the majority of existing baseline evidence from the previous FALP assessment has been used for this proposed MALP. Documents and information have been updated where new versions have been created since the FALP assessment, and some new supporting evidence sources have been found as well’.

- 1d.8 The Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP) IIA Scoping Report and IIA Report set out the broad evidence base relevant to the proposed alterations. The IIA was found to be sound by the FALP IIA Inspector to comply with the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004²⁶.

- 1d.9 Table 3 in the MALP Housing Standards Scoping Request sets out the updated Baseline Information. At the Scoping Stage the statutory consultees were invited to comment on the proposed approach to the appraisal, including identifying any additional baseline data relevant to the proposed alterations. The Environment Agency recommended referencing the draft Thames River Basin Management Plan. This document was reviewed and was not considered as relevant as those set

²⁶ Paragraph 16 of the Further Alterations to the London Plan Inspector’s Report November 2014

out in the final IIA Report. In addition, Natural England recommended reference to two additional documents - Habitats Regulations 2010 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is identified in the FALP Scoping report and the Habitats Regulations 2010 is referenced in section 3.8 which specifically relates the Habitats Directive Assessments.

- 1d.10 The assessment of each of the proposed alterations in the MALP Housing Standards IIA Report includes a section that highlights the main sources of baseline information and outlines key baseline data. For example, section 5.2 on water efficiency identifies the water companies' water resource management plans along with water consumption and deficit statistics for London. These statistics are from the water resource management plans. Most of this evidence is supplied by Government Departments such as the Department for Communities and Local Government or the relevant industries such as the water industry and therefore is considered to be robust. Where required further evidence was produced by the Greater London Authority, for example from data available from the London Development Database which monitors planning approvals and development starts and completions across London.
- 1d.11 Each proposed policy appraisal also highlights the key plans and programmes which also influence the appraisal. These documents highlight wider policy considerations that influence policy development.
- 1d.12 Whilst the Housing Standards Review - Evidence of Need Report and Housing Standards Review - Viability Assessment were not published at the time of publication of the IIA, the consultants were aware of the preparation of these documents and the Sustainability Appraisal reflects the initial findings from these reports.
- 1d.13 It is not the role of the IIA to produce more evidence but to identify the existing evidence and any gaps in the data that could result in uncertainty. As stated above the IIA process should be proportionate to the proposed amendments. For example section 7.2 of the MALP Housing Standards IIA Report notes that no baseline information could be found by the consultants to suggest levels of accessibility in existing London stock. However, it does note that the London Annual Monitoring Report details the number of applications that have been approved to Lifetime Homes standards and wheelchair housing standards. This identified lack of evidence was addressed by the relevant sections of the Housing Standards Review - Evidence of Need Report and further in house evidence was obtained from the London Development Database to ensure the evidence is robust. Where there are gaps in the evidence, monitoring and review of policy is recommended. Chapter 8 of the London Plan includes the Key Performance Indicators that are monitored through the London Annual Monitoring Report.
- 1d.14 The evidence identified in the IIA was the most relevant available at the time and is robust. It is proportionate to the proposed Alterations and reflects the strategic nature of the London Plan policies. The IIA is an ongoing process and therefore is reviewed and updated, if required alongside the development of the proposed policies. Additional baseline data not available at the scoping stage is reflected in the final MALP Housing Standards IIA report and was considered during the final appraisal of the proposed policy amendments.

1d.15 The EiP is an open process where new evidence and policy can be considered in the assessment of the policy.

1e How will it be determined whether or not a room is ‘functional and fit for purpose’ (policy 3.5 C)?

- 1e.1 A degree of planning judgement will be required to determine whether or not a room layout is ‘functional and fit for purpose’ as part of good practice in the development management process. Account should be taken of general planning and design considerations including: the size, dimension and shape of a room (as shown on scaled floor plans); the intended function and purpose of a room; the number of potential occupants; and, where appropriate, external design considerations such as the aspect and orientation of a room in relation to its surroundings and the potential for daylight/sunlight.
- 1e.2 The Nationally Described Space Standards provide minimum requirements for the overall gross internal floor area of a new dwelling and set out minimum width and floorspace requirements for bedrooms. However, they do not provide any specifications for main living spaces within a dwelling, such as living rooms, dining rooms or kitchens. Consequently, it is possible for new homes to accord with the minimum national standards but provide living spaces which are inadequately sized and designed for the number of potential occupants.
- 1e.3 For example, conventional housing schemes could meet the minimum national space standard by providing very large bedrooms but leaving very little space within a new home for other essential habitable rooms (eg a living room or kitchen). Similarly, living rooms or kitchens could be poorly designed in terms of their dimensions and shape to the extent that the amount of useable space available for occupants to undertake essential living activities such as eating, resting, socialising, cooking and movement is considerably reduced or compromised. Without a degree of design control, this could result in the provision of dysfunctional and overcrowded accommodation, with new dwellings failing to provide appropriately designed, liveable or sustainable homes.
- 1e.4 Clearly, inadequately designed homes would fail to meet the Mayor’s objective in the London Plan for housing developments to be of ‘the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context’ (Policy 3.5A). Nor would it reflect the NPPF requirements to ‘deliver a wide choice of high quality homes’²⁷ and for the planning system to ‘always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings’²⁸.
- 1e.5 As confirmed by the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) dated 25th March 2015²⁹, the Housing Standards Review and the introduction of national technical standards has sought to rationalise the range of existing standards into a simpler, more consistent and streamlined system³⁰. The WMS also states that “from the

²⁷ DCLG, NPPF, 2012, Core Planning Principles, paragraph 50

²⁸ DCLG, NPPF, 2012, Core Planning Principles, paragraph 17, fourth bullet point

²⁹ The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament, 25th March

³⁰ The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament, 25th March

date the Deregulation Bill 2015 is given Royal Assent, local planning authorities and qualifying bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should not set in their emerging Local Plans, neighbourhood plans, or supplementary planning documents, any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings”.

- 1e.6 The amendment to Policy 3.5C which sets out the Mayor’s preference for efficient room layouts ‘which are functional and fit for purpose’ is not a local technical standard or requirement. Instead, it provides a general best practice design objective for all new homes, which reflects the core planning principles of the NPPF³¹ and takes into account the issues highlighted in paragraphs 1e2 t 1e4.
- 1e.7 In response to the WMS, the Mayor has brought forward Alterations to the London Plan and revisions to the Draft Interim Housing SPG which aim to align London’s existing housing standards with the Government’s national technical standards. In line with this approach and for consistency, the Mayor’s Draft Interim Housing SPG proposes the removal of standards 4.4.1 and 4.4.2. These provided good practice standards for the combined floor area for living rooms, dining rooms and kitchens (depending on the number of occupants) and provided a minimum width for the main sitting area within a home.
- 1e.8 Securing liveable and well-designed new homes is not simply about ensuring that new development meets minimum space standards, but also requires consideration of the proposed layout and design of new homes. As set out in the NPPF’s core planning principles, planning should ‘not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives³²’. It is considered that the suggested amendments to Policy 3.5C provide the appropriate level of planning guidance to ensure that the size, layout and design of homes is appropriate and accords with the London Plan and NPPF’s emphasis for good quality design³³.
- 1e.9 It should be recognised that a functional and fit for purpose home (both in terms of space provision and room layout) is a particularly important consideration for families, and is also an essential requirement for all other households including older and disabled people and those renting or sharing conventional homes. The GLA’s evidence of need³⁴ and RIBA’s ‘Case for Space’³⁵ report highlight the benefits of ensuring the provision of sufficient and appropriately designed living space for households in terms of how this supports: health and well-being; family life; uninterrupted private study; working from home; reduced overcrowding; flexibility for households to adapt to changing life styles or the changing physical requirements of occupants. The GLA’s evidence of need also suggests that the substantially higher densities found in London, together with a higher proportion of flatted developments in the capital means that it is particularly important to ensure new homes provide occupants with a good quality of life³⁶.

³¹ DCLG, NPPF, 2012, Core Planning Principles, paragraph 17, in particular the fourth bullet point

³² DCLG, NPPF, 2012, Core Planning Principles, paragraph 17, second bullet point

³³ DCLG, NPPF, 2012, paragraph 56 to 58; paragraph 17, in particular the fourth bullet point

³⁴ Greater London Authority, Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015, page 15

³⁵ RIBA, 2011. The Case for Space: the size of England’s new homes

³⁶ Greater London Authority, Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015, pages 24 to 26

1f Paragraph 3.32A refers to the standards being sound ‘in terms of need and viability’. Is the evidence in the documents entitled ‘Viability Assessment’ and ‘Evidence of Need’ sufficiently robust?

Need

Space

- 1f.1 In line with the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS), NPPF and NPPG, the GLA’s evidence of need study³⁷ provides a robust and clearly evidenced justification for continuing the application of space standards in London by reference to up-to-date data, a literature review and detailed consideration of the distinct local circumstances and housing challenges faced in the capital, including the need to address London’s unique:
- recent and forecast levels of population growth;
 - density and generally flatted nature of the majority of new build housing schemes in London; and
 - urban heat island effect.
- 1f.2 This locally sensitive approach reflects the requirements of paragraph 58 of the NPPF which confirms that policies which address the quality of development in an area should be based on ‘an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics’³⁸. In addition, the evidence of need provides an authoritative literature review which clearly outlines the range of benefits provided by adequate internal space in terms of undertaking basic daily activities within a household and in relation to broader planning objectives such as liveability, health and wellbeing and quality of life.
- 1f.3 The NPPG does not provide prescriptive advice to authorities seeking to adopt the nationally described optional space standard. It suggests that authorities should ‘provide justification’ for requiring optional standards, taking into account need, viability and timing³⁹ – factors which are covered in detail in the Mayor’s evidence base⁴⁰. The NPPG does however, advise that evidence should be provided on the size and type of dwellings currently being built in the area, to ensure that the adoption of space standards can be properly assessed (for example, by considering any potential impacts on starter homes)⁴¹. However, space standards have been in place in London since 2011 so any assessment of recent delivery will reflect the existence of these adopted space standards. Moreover, the existing adopted space standards in Table 3.3 of the 2015 London Plan are very similar to those set out in the nationally described space standard, so there would be little practical value in assessing the impact of adopting the Government’s optional space standard and considering in detail how this relates to recent housing delivery.

³⁷ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner & Theobald, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015;

³⁸ DCLG, NPPF, paragraph 58

³⁹ DCLG, National Planning Practice Guidance – Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 56-020-20150327

⁴⁰ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner & Theobald, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015; David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner & Theobald, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Viability Assessment, 2015;

⁴¹ DCLG, National Planning Practice Guidance – Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 56-020-20150327

- 1f.4 However, the GLA undertook authoritative research into the size of dwellings within new build housing schemes being delivered in London prior to the adoption of housing standards in 2011⁴². This research drew on a representative sample of different sized market housing approvals across London prior to the introduction of standards. Overall, the study showed that 42% of units in the sample met or exceeded the proposed space standards⁴³. It also provided evidence on the median internal space provision being provided in London by unit type and the extent of variance with the London Plan standard⁴⁴.

Access

- 1f.5 The GLA's evidence of need study provides robust support for the application of optional accessibility standards in London. In line with the NPPG⁴⁵, this draws on official statistics and takes into account: the need for housing for older and disabled people; specialist housing provision for older people (eg care homes, sheltered and extra care homes); and the accessibility and adaptability of the existing housing stock.
- 1f.6 Drawing on the English Housing Survey, the study highlights the number of London households who need to make adaptations to their home in order to cope with the disability of a household member, together with the number of households who are seeking to move to somewhere more suitable⁴⁶. It also estimates the number of Londoners aged over 65 who use a wheelchair⁴⁷ and outlines how the number of older person households in London is expected to increase, with reference to GLA household projections⁴⁸.
- 1f.7 In addition, the study explains the range of benefits M4(2) homes provide for families with small children, in particular, the requirement for step free access⁴⁹. This is an important consideration and a key principle in the original intent and scope of Lifetime Homes⁵⁰ and the Plan's Lifetime Neighbourhoods concept (see Matter 1i).
- 1f.8 The GLA has undertaken further research to supplement the study and, in particular, provide an estimate of the overall number of disabled people in London and compiled further data on the accessibility and age of the capital's existing housing stock. These draw on the data sources provided in the Government's summary data sheet and are referred to in Matter 1i.

Water

⁴² HATC, London Housing Standards 2009/10, 2012

⁴³ HATC, London Housing Standards 2009/10, 2012, page 11

⁴⁴ HATC, London Housing Standards 2009/10, 2012, page 10-14

⁴⁵ DCLG, National Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 56-007-20150327

⁴⁶ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner & Theobald, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015, page 43, para 4.3.4

⁴⁷ *ibid*, page 47, para 4.3.18

⁴⁸ *ibid*, page 44, para 4.3.7

⁴⁹ *ibid*, 4.3.12, page 45

⁵⁰ <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/pages/lifetime-homes.html>

1f.9 The evidence of need report clearly justifies the local need for optional water efficiency standards in London in order to address existing and forecast water shortages within the capital and surrounding area. In accordance with advice in the NPPG⁵¹, this draws on Environment Agency water stress classifications and the Water Resources Management Plans in the area. Further detail on this is provided in paragraph 1c4.

Viability

1f.10 The viability study⁵² provides a robust understanding of the viability implications of the proposed Minor Alterations. The approach of the study is consistent with para 173 and 174 of the NPPF. The viability testing indicates that the introduction of the new housing standards does not represent a significant determinant of the viability and delivery of housing development in London. Moreover, most of the standards set out in MALP are already being delivered in London and thus can be considered viable.

1f.11 The NPPG provides guidance on viability⁵³ and states that the impact of adopting the Government's optional standards should be considered as part of the Plan's overall viability assessment⁵⁴. In line with this, the study is designed to understand the cumulative impact of obligations and requirements to ensure the London Plan is deliverable and thus assumes policy compliance.

1f.12 The NPPG is clear that there is no standard answer to questions of viability, nor is there a single approach for assessing viability⁵⁵ and that assessing the viability of plans does not require the testing of every site or the assurance that individual sites are viable. Site typologies may be used together with samples of sites⁵⁶.

1f.13 The study adopts the same methodology as the 2013 Viability Assessment⁵⁷ which was found sound at the FALP EIP. This methodology employs two approaches:

- a 1 hectare tile for each borough using three density typologies provides a broad understanding of viability in each borough. Boroughs were grouped into three density categories.
- Case study scheme types in eight boroughs provide more detailed, locally specific understanding of viability. The same eight boroughs were used as in the 2014 viability study. Five/six separate case study sites were assessed for each of the boroughs – 43 case studies in all. The case studies provide more detailed site specific modelling of potential schemes, including building heights, mix of dwellings reflecting site characteristics, density of development and comparison with known dwelling mixes for recent

⁵¹ DCLG, National Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 56-015-20150327

⁵² David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner and Theobald. Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Viability Assessment. 2015

⁵³ NPPG Viability section. ID:10

⁵⁴ DCLG, National Planning Practice Guidance. PPG: Reference ID: 56-003-20150327.

⁵⁵ Ibid, Reference ID: 10-002-20140306

⁵⁶ Ibid, Reference ID: 10-006-20140306

⁵⁷ Three Dragons, David Lock Associates, Traderisks2013 GLA Strategic Housing Land Viability Assessment. Final Report. 2014

planning permissions, sales and costs per sq metre for each location and building type.

- 1f.14 The study compares the residual land values to the range of benchmark land values (BLV) used in the relevant borough's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) viability studies to assess if the site is viable. The CIL BLV take into account local circumstances and includes an assumed incentive payment to the landowner to ensure a 'willing sale'. These BLV underpin the Boroughs CIL charging schedule and to date 27 have been through EIP and been found sound.
- 1f.16 The study specifically looks at the additional costs associated with adopting the new national technical standards. Some key assumptions are set out below:
- **Minimum space standards** have been required since 2011, therefore the study assumes that the costs of delivering the current Plan's space standards are already factored in to London's build costs.
 - The optional Building Regulation requirements **M4(2)** are very similar to current Lifetime Home (LTH) requirements. The viability study therefore assumes that generally the move from LTH to M4(2) does not add additional costs. However, the requirement for step free access as part of M4(2) does represent a significant change from LTH for developments of 4 storeys or less as it requires all homes to have step free access. Currently dwellings are only required to be served by a lift where they are entered on the fifth storey or above. Therefore the viability appraisal tests the impact of the addition of a lift for developments of four stories or less. More detail can be found in response to Matters c and i.
 - **M4(3) – wheelchair adaptable standard** is very similar to the London Plan's current wheelchair standard, therefore the adoption of the new Building Regulations standard M4(3) for 10% of homes is assumed not to have any additional cost implications over the existing London Plan requirement for wheelchair accessible homes. The viability study does recognise and include an increase in floor space for wheelchair homes M4(3), over M4(2) homes/standards.
 - **Water.** The MALP seeks to adopt the Building Regulations Part G optional standard for water of 110 litres a day. This is broadly equivalent to the current London Plan standard (see Policy 5.15), and thus it was assumed that there are no additional cost implications.
 - **Security.** The government has introduced a new mandatory Building Regulation Approved Document on security (part Q). For the reasons detailed in response to matter m, no additional cost implications were assumed.
 - **Carbon dioxide emissions reduction targets** set out in the London Plan for 2013 -2016 require a 40% improvement on 2010 building regulations. The viability study assumes that this cost is already factored into the cost of development as it has been in place since 2013.
- 1f.17 In addition, the study explores the impact of a number of scenarios, including average levels of affordable housing delivery and a decrease in house price and an increase in build costs. Overall the study shows that the introduction of the

national standards have a limited impact on costs and do not pose a threat to viability in London.

- 1f.18 The study models typical developments; a mix of private market homes, affordable rent and shared ownership properties. It does not look at specifically at private rented schemes or custom build. The Mayor encourages high quality covenanted private rented schemes and recognises the distinct economics of this sector⁵⁸, however the majority of housing in London is developed for sale. Schemes that are nominally private rented but are not covenanted would be assessed as traditional ‘for sale’ products. Likewise custom build is encouraged by the Mayor, but is unlikely to deliver significant numbers.. The NPPF states (paragraph 174) that evidence supporting viability assessments should be proportionate. Focusing on developments for private sale with an element of affordable rent and shared ownership provides that proportionate evidence base. See also response to Matter i.

1g Are paragraph 3.36 and Table 3.3 sufficiently aspirational?

- 1g.1 Yes. The standards set out in table 3.3 and paragraph 3.36, combined with the wider quality requirements set out in Policy 3.5 and associated SPG standards will ensure that homes in London are fit for purpose and of good quality. In addition, Policy 3.5 is clear that all of the nationally described space standards apply to housing development in London (not just the standards explicitly set out in table 3.3).
- 1g.2 Like the Mayor’s standards, the national minimum space standards have been developed to ensure that all homes can accommodate the basic furniture, access and activity space requirements derived from the HCAs Housing Quality Indicators (HQI) and meet the space requirements of Lifetime Homes. This ensures that all homes meet a basic standard, helping ensure they are functional and fit for purpose, but does not propose an excessive burden or limit on development. Moreover, the standards are clearly set out in the Plan as minima; para 3.36 states ‘These are minimum standards which developers are encouraged to exceed’.
- 1g.3 The Government’s housing standards review aimed to ensure new homes are of high quality, accessible and sustainable. Its approach to the setting of technical standards for new housing aims to rationalise the many differing existing standards across the country into a simpler, streamlined system.
- 1g.4 To realise this aim of ‘streamlining standards’, the Written Ministerial Statement (25 March 2015) is clear that ‘plans should not set additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings’. This means that for these specific technical issues planning policy should not require adherence to standards that are more onerous than those set out in the national technical standards.
- 1g.5 The Mayor worked closely with DCLG as part of its Housing Standards Review, with officer representatives on the overall steering group and the space and access

⁵⁸ See paras 3.54 and 3.54B of the London Plan 2015 and paras 3.1.26 -3.1.31 of the Draft Interim Housing SPG.

sub groups. The Mayor was concerned to ensure that the national space standards meet the needs of Londoners and that the government could build on the Mayor's experience of developing and introducing space standards. The 2011 London Plan had already robustly established what those standards should be and they can be considered sufficiently aspirational for minimum space standards which developers are encouraged to exceed.

- 1g.6 The nationally described space standards are very similar to the current London Plan standards. The Gross Internal Areas (GIAs) set out in the nationally described space standards for single storey dwellings are the same as those in the current London Plan. However, the national standards for two and three storey dwellings are on average around three square meters below those in the current London Plan. This is mainly a result of an alternative way of providing a stair case. Most output in London is for flatted dwellings and research carried out to inform the 2011 Plan demonstrated that it is the one and two bedroom flats that, before the introduction of the standards, were falling below the minimum levels of space⁵⁹. The study also found that houses with a larger number of bedrooms generally met or exceeded the minimum standards set out in the London Plan before they were introduced. Therefore, this difference in GIAs is likely to have limited impact on the GIA of houses built in London.
- 1g.7 Most of the other aspects of the nationally described space standards reflect the standards in the current London Plan. However, the minimum ceiling height in the nationally described standard is lower than that in the current London Plan; the national space standards include a requirement for all homes to have a ceiling height of at least 2.3 meters for 75% of the dwelling. To address the unique circumstances of London (see Matter h), the current baseline standard set out in the 2012 Housing SPG is that the minimum floor to ceiling height in habitable rooms should be 2.5 meters between floor level and finished ceiling. The SPG does provide flexibility for rooms with sloping or stepped ceilings and recognises that lowered ceilings might be necessary in kitchens and bathrooms to allow for ducting and in mezzanine typologies⁶⁰ but also encourages dwellings to meet 2.6m or above where possible (see response to Matter h).
- 1g.8 In the 2014 Technical Housing Standards consultation⁶¹, the Government consulted on a ceiling height of 2.5m. The 2014 consultation response document⁶² notes that 42.9% of respondents to the consultation agreed with the Government's proposed approach to ceiling heights as set out in the then proposed nationally described space standard (2.5m for at least 75% of the dwelling) and 28% had no strong views.
- 1g.9 Ceiling heights are an important element in the design of a dwelling, particularly in a high density urban setting like London. Higher ceilings can positively impact on how spacious, light and comfortable the dwelling is and can improve the amount and quality of natural light and ventilation to help ensure that homes do not overheat and help address the unique heat island effect of London. The Mayor has raised his concerns with Government on this matter and in MALP has included

⁵⁹ GLA. London Housing Standards 2009/10. HATC limited. 2013.

⁶⁰ Mayor of London. Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance. 2012

⁶¹ DCLG; Nationally Described Space Standard- technical requirements. Consultation draft. September 2014.

⁶² DCLG. Housing standards review: summary of responses. March 2015

strong encouragement for ceiling heights of at least 2.5m for 75% of the dwelling. There is nothing in the Written Ministerial Statement or the NPPG which prevents encouragement to exceed the minimum space standards.

- 1g.10 Like most of the national technical standards, because these standards are already in place, the cost of meeting this higher ceiling height is already embedded in build costs in London.
- 1g.11 It should also be recognised that table 3.3 only represents part of the Plan's quality standards; Policy 3.5 identifies a wide range of factors that should be addressed in all development, with further detail provided in the Housing SPG (see Statement to Matter a for more detail on the SPG). Together these standards help ensure developments are high quality, accessible and sustainable.
- 1g.12 Para 3.63 also recognises that while the majority of schemes should meet the GIA standards, there may be occasions where there could be flexibility in their application - if they are smaller dwellings of otherwise exceptional design and layout, intended to meet specific housing needs and representing a valid addition to the housing stock. This recognises that standards should not stifle innovation, but the Plan is clear that this is an exception and needs to be justified robustly.

1h What is the justification for 'strongly encouraging' a ceiling height of 2.5m (Table 3.3)? Does this introduce a degree of uncertainty?

- 1h.1 A taller ceiling height of 2.5m is strongly encouraged to ensure that new dwellings are of an adequate quality in terms of light, ventilation and a sense of space. This reflects the predominant and unique flatted nature and higher density of new build housing provision in London and also seeks to address overheating within homes, which can be a significant issue during summer months of the year due to the distinct heat island effect experienced in the capital.
- 1h.2 Strong encouragement for ceiling heights of 2.5m in London does not create uncertainty. Instead, it provides a clear understanding to developers of the Mayor's preference for new homes in London to address its unique circumstances described below. The approach also reflects the London Plan's overarching objective that housing developments in London should be of 'the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context', as set out in Policy 3.5A.
- 1h.3 It also resonates with the NPPF's core planning principle to 'always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings'⁶³. In addition, paragraph 10 of the NPPF recognises the need for 'plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas.' Strong encouragement of higher ceiling heights reflects the particular local circumstances faced in London and the requirement of national policy to take these factors into account when preparing plans.

⁶³ DCLG, NPPF, 2012, Core Planning Principles, paragraph 17, third bullet point

- 1h.4 In line with the Written Ministerial Statement⁶⁴, the Mayor is not setting an additional standard for ceiling heights. Instead, in accordance with the objectives of the London Plan and NPPF outlined above, the Mayor is seeking to strongly encourage developers to exceed the minimum requirement in order to reflect the distinct circumstances found in London in relation to residential density and overheating. As set out in Matter 1c, GLA officers can find no explicit statements in the WMS, NPPG or NPPF which would suggest that the Mayor should not seek to encourage developers to exceed minimum standards in order to reflect local circumstances.

The density and the flatted nature of residential development in London

- 1h.5 DCLG statistics⁶⁵ show that average residential densities for new build housing schemes across London are substantially higher than in other areas of England (see Table 1 and Figure 1 below). Between 2008 and 2011, average densities across London (140 dph⁶⁶) were more than three times higher than the national average across England (42 dph). Within inner London, average densities were 230 dph - five and a half times higher than the national average. Even in Outer London, new build densities were double the national average at 81 dph.
- 1h.6 Trends between 1996 and 2011 show that average residential densities have increased across England by 68% reflecting the emphasis of national policy to optimise housing capacity on brownfield land, particularly where there is good public transport infrastructure. However, national statistics show that average new build residential densities have increased 146% across London and 174% in inner London compared to 68% across England.
- 1h.7 In order to meet London's requirement for 49,000 new homes a year, recent levels of housing output will need to be doubled over the next 20 years and this will necessitate residential densities on available brownfield sites being optimised, for example in opportunity areas, town centres and on surplus industrial land (as suggested by Policy 3.3 of the London Plan and Draft Interim Housing SPG). This underlines the need for new homes to provide satisfactory quality of life for occupants. Marginally taller ceiling heights are therefore strongly encouraged within the London Plan as an important element of residential quality within higher density schemes. The GLA's evidence of need, drawing on a range of research undertaken by RIBA⁶⁷, shows that taller ceiling heights, together with appropriate space provision, can significantly enhance the amount of daylight, ventilation and personal space provided within higher density development⁶⁸.
- 1h.8 The 2011 Census shows that flats comprise just over half of London's accommodation, compared to less than 20 per cent in the rest of the country⁶⁹ and the London Development Database (LDD) shows that they make up the large majority (7/8th) of new dwellings being built in London.

⁶⁴ Eric Pickles 'Steps the Government are taking to streamline the planning system, protect the environment, support economic growth and assist locally-led decision-making. March 2015

⁶⁵ DCLG Table P231 Land Use Change: Density of new dwellings built, England, 1989 to 2011

⁶⁶ Dph – dwellings per hectare

⁶⁷ RIBA, 2011. The case for space; and RIBA, 2015. Without Space + Light, available at: <http://www.withoutspaceandlight.com/#>

⁶⁸ Greater London Authority, Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015, pages 16, 26

⁶⁹ Ref

Overheating

- 1h.9 Increased ceiling heights are one of a number of design measures to reduce potential overheating and reliance on air conditioning systems⁷⁰. The use of high ceilings increases the volume of air within a dwelling, meaning that it is likely to take longer for internal temperatures to increase to uncomfortable levels within a home. To be effective during the hotter summer months, this measure needs to be linked to other cooling measures which can reduce overheating such as ventilation (window openings and the provision of dual aspect units for natural cross ventilation), shading devices (eg external/internal blinds, shutters or balcony overhangs), orientation and fenestration (glazing percentage and glazing design) and albedo devices and green roofs/walls/shading.
- 1h.10 Academic research illustrates the urban heat island effect experienced by London, showing the temperature difference between central London and nearby rural locations is 2.8°C during the summer, with nocturnal temperatures 6 to 8°C higher during heat wave conditions⁷¹. Climate change projections suggest that such extreme weather events are likely to increase over the life of new buildings⁷². The heat island effect also means that temperatures in London take longer to cool down, especially in the evening and cooler hours of the day. For example, during the August 2003 heatwave, the difference between the night time air temperature of London, and the surrounding areas, was observed to be 9°C.⁷³
- 1h.11 Kings College research has developed a methodology for spatially analysing the levels of vulnerability to overheating in London based on the exposure to heat and the sensitivity of residents (eg based on age and health). This shows that large areas of London are estimated to have a higher vulnerability to heat wave conditions (see Figure h2 below). More vulnerable areas are found across London, with particular concentrations in central and inner London, but also higher risk areas found in Outer London, especially around town centres. Across London the locations which are identified as being suitable for higher density, mixed use, residential-led development are generally more at risk from overheating during peak summer temperatures.
- 1h.12 The GLA's evidence of need study⁷⁴ also shows that the effects of climate change are likely to exacerbate the impact of London's urban heat island effect, with UK Climate Projection modelling anticipating an increase of 1.5°C increase by the 2020s and 2.7°C increase by the 2050s. From an historic perspective, average summer temperatures in London have warmed by over 2°C since 1977⁷⁵.

⁷⁰ Mayor of London, Creating Benchmarks for Cooling Demand in New Residential Developments, GLA, 2015, page 34

⁷¹ Wolf and McGregor. The development of a heat wave vulnerability index for London, Kings College London, Published in Weather and Climate Extremes, 2013

⁷² Mayor of London. Delivering London's Energy Future. The Mayor's Climate Change Mitigation and Energy Strategy, GLA, 2011, page 4

⁷³ Doick and Hutchings, Air temperature regulation by urban trees and green infrastructure, Forestry Commission, 2013

⁷⁴ Greater London Authority, Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015, page 27

⁷⁵ Mayor of London. London Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2011

1h.13 Single aspect units, which are more at risk from overheating due to the absence of natural cross-ventilation, are also common in London due to the densities which are typically achieved on large sites. GLA research in 2011 (prior to the adoption of housing standards in the London Plan and Housing SPG) showed that around 64% of new build private housing units approved in London were single aspect⁷⁶. It also found that nearly two fifths of family units (3 bed plus) were single aspect⁷⁷. This drew on a representative sample of different sized market housing approvals across London to help justify introduction of the original standards through the 2011 London Plan EIP. In addition, greater numbers of single aspect units are typically provided in higher density mixed use schemes in more central and urban locations and in more accessible locations such as transport nodes and town centres. Generally, these locations are also more at risk from overheating due to the intensity of commercial uses and activities. While the 2011 London Plan and associated SPG discourages single aspect dwellings, there are still pressures for this form of development and higher ceiling heights are important in addressing its propensity to over-heat.

Conclusion

1h.14 The Mayor's strong encouragement of ceiling heights of 2.5m takes into account the particular local circumstances highlighted above in relation to the typical density and form of residential development found in London; the urban heat island effect and potential increases in summer-time temperatures; and the associated quality of life, residential amenity and overheating issues. Therefore, it is considered to be sufficiently clear, justified and consistent with national policy, legislation and guidance.

Table h1 – Average new build residential densities (1996 to 2011)

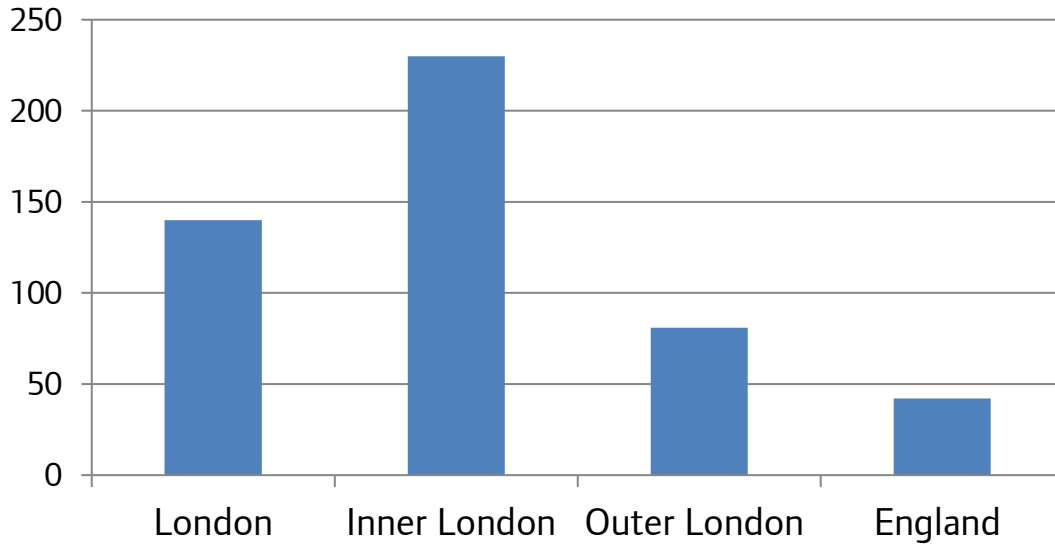
	Average Dwellings per hectare				Percentage increase during period
	1996-1999	2000-2003	2004-2007	2008-2011	
London	57	78	105	140	146%
Inner London	84	126	164	230	174%
Outer London	40	47	66	81	103%
England	25	28	41	42	68%

(Data Source: DCLG Table P231 Land Use Change: Density of new dwellings built, England, 1989 to 2011)

⁷⁶ HATC, London Housing Standards 2009/10, 2012

⁷⁷ HATC, London Housing Standards 2009/10, 2012, page 15

Figure h1 - Average residential Density (dwelling per hectare) - 2008-2011



(Data Source: DCLG Table P231 – Average dwellings per hectare 2008-2011)

Figure h2 - Spatial distribution of the heat vulnerability across Greater London

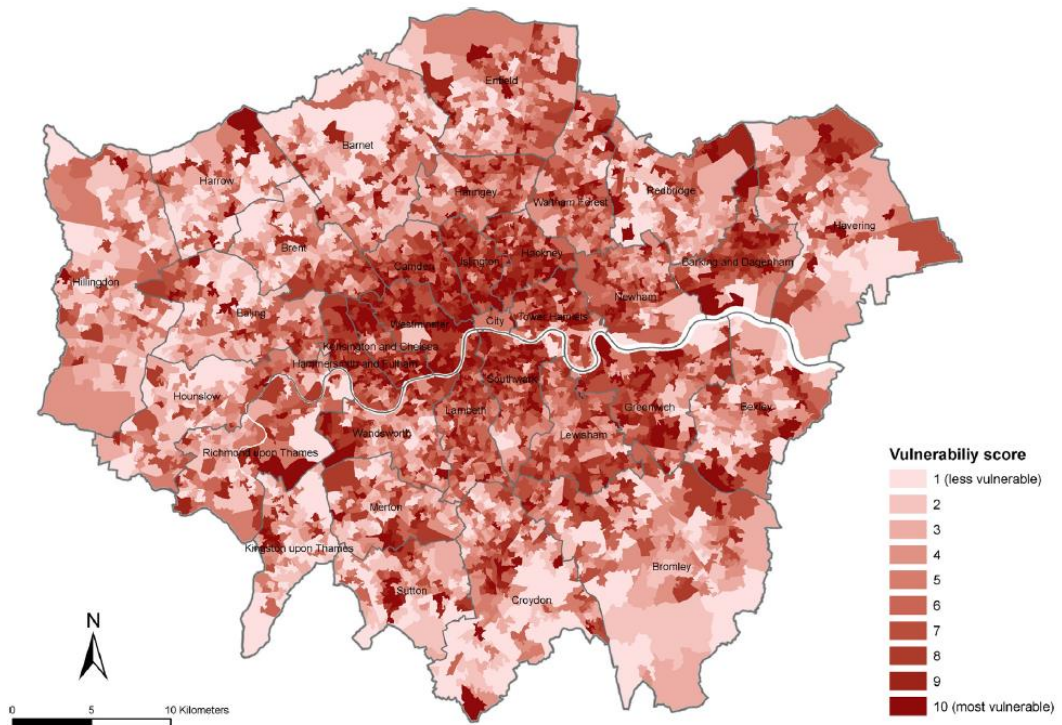


Fig. 8. Spatial distribution of the heat vulnerability across Greater London as categorised by 10 heat vulnerability classes. Heat vulnerability increases from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest).

(Source: Wolf and McGregor. The development of a heat wave vulnerability index for London, Kings College London, Published in Weather and Climate Extremes, 2013)

1i What is the justification for the 90% figure in policy 3.8 (c)?

- 1i.1 Whereas Policy 3.8Bc of the current 2015 London Plan requires 100% of new housing in London to be built to ‘the Lifetime Homes’ standards, the way the new optional accessibility standards are to be applied through Building Regulations means that only one optional standard can be required to any given dwelling⁷⁸. Building Regulations are clear that where the optional requirement M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings) is applied, the requirements of M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) do not apply⁷⁹. Hence, the Mayor has adjusted Policy 3.8Bc to require 90% of new homes to meet Category 2 standard, leaving the remaining 10% to accord with M4(3). This effectively mirrors the existing policy framework in the Plan.
- 1i.2 Official statistics together with the GLA’s supporting evidence base show that the requirement for 90% of new homes to meet M4(2) standards is clearly and robustly justified taking into account: the age and accessibility of London’s existing housing stock; the number of older and disabled people in London; forecast increases in the number of older people over the next 20 years; the recent paucity in the supply of both accessible and adaptable housing and specialist housing for older people; and the number of families with young children. Evidence shows that the application of the standard to 90% of new homes is also viable and deliverable (see matter 1f).
- 1i.3 Building Regulation M4(2) highlights the role of accessible and adaptable dwellings in meeting the needs of a wide range of people, not just older people, who will account for nearly half of projected growth, and disabled people (and some wheelchair users). Importantly, the Regulations confirm that the design of M4(2) homes should enable potential occupants/households to adapt their homes to meet their changing needs as these emerge over time. The GLA’s evidence of need highlights the critical importance of this built-in capacity for adaptation in order to ensure households or individuals are able to remain living independently without either having to move home or undertake expensive structural works following a change in their circumstances or levels of mobility⁸⁰. The requirement for step-free access would ensure that all homes can be accessed by older and disabled people (including wheelchair users) and can be adapted to meet their specific requirements.
- 1i.4 In addition to this, the GLA’s needs study highlights the benefits that M4(2) provides for people/households who would not consider themselves to be disabled, including families with children who may have to use push chairs⁸¹. This is an important consideration and a key principle in the original intent and scope of Lifetime Homes/accessible and adaptable housing⁸² and also the London Plan’s Lifetime Neighbourhoods concept.

⁷⁸ HM Government, The Building Regulations 2010. Approved Document M – Access to and use of Buildings, paragraph 0.3

⁷⁹ HM Government, The Building Regulations 2010. Approved Document M – Access to and use of Buildings, page 8

⁸⁰ Greater London Authority, Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015, pages 43

⁸¹ Greater London Authority, Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015, pages 42

⁸² <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/pages/lifetime-homes.html>

- 1i.5 The provision of accessible and adaptable homes for families is especially pertinent in London considering the generally flatted and higher density nature of new build housing in the capital. DCLG statistics⁸³ show that average residential densities for new build housing schemes across London are substantially higher than in other areas of England (see Matter 1h). London Development Database (LDD) monitoring shows that 85 per cent of completed new build homes in London between 2009 and 2012 were flats. Moreover, 70 per cent of completed 3 bed units in London were flats which are likely to be occupied by families with children. The London SHMA⁸⁴ shows that 31% of projected annual household growth in London between 2011 and 2035 comprises families with children amounting to growth of 12,000 households each year.

Existing household characteristics

- 1i.6 Family Resources Survey⁸⁵ findings in London suggest that 1.8 million households in London include either: a disabled household member⁸⁶; a child under five; or someone aged over 65. This represents 52% of all households in London. All of these households would benefit from having access to an M4(2) dwelling. At present, there are estimated to be 1 million households with a disabled household member in London⁸⁷.

Demographic forecasts

- 1i.7 Whilst London has a relatively young existing population profile compared to other areas in England, 20% of households include someone aged over 65, and the overall number of these older person households in the capital is substantial – nearly 700,000⁸⁸. This is expected to increase to over 1 million households during the period of the Plan (2015 to 2035). This will represent an increase of 50% (over 350,000 additional households) and will mean that older person households will constitute 25% of all households in London. As shown below in Table i1 and Figure i1, particularly substantial increases are expected in the number of households with representatives aged over 85, which are forecast to more than double.
- 1i.8 In line with these trends, ONS statistics compiled by POPPI⁸⁹ show that significant increases are forecast in the number of older people (aged over 65) who experience limiting long term illnesses which restrict their day-to-day activities significantly. By 2030 there are expected to be over 350,000 individuals aged over 65 who are likely to fall into this category in London, representing an increase of 44%⁹⁰.

⁸³ DCLG Table P231 Land Use Change: Density of new dwellings built, England, 1989 to 2011

⁸⁴ Mayor of London. The 2013 London Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Part of the evidence base for the Mayor's London Plan. 2014

⁸⁵ Department for Work & Pensions, Family Resources Survey – 2013/14, June 2015

⁸⁶ The definition of disability used in this publication is consistent with the core definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. A person is considered to have a disability if they have 'a long-standing illness, disability or impairment which causes substantial difficulty with day-to-day activities'.

⁸⁷ Department for Work & Pensions, Family Resources Survey – 2013/14, June 2015

⁸⁸ GLA 2013 household projections (central trend)

⁸⁹ POPPI – Projecting Older People Population Information System

⁹⁰ POPPI – Projecting Older People Population Information System

London's existing housing stock

- 1i.9 Official statistics show that London's existing housing stock is characterised by its age and lack of accessibility and adaptability for older and disabled people. Twenty two percent of homes in London were built before 1900, compared to 16% nationally⁹¹. Overall, nearly half of London's existing housing stock was built prior to 1939. Homes of this age are by definition not likely to accord with modern standards for accessible and adaptable housing. Indeed, 85% of London's housing stock was built before the concept of Lifetime Homes was developed in 1992 and 90% of London's housing stock was built before Lifetime Homes standards were introduced in the 2004 London Plan⁹².
- 1i.10 The English Housing Survey (EHS) grades the accessibility of the existing housing stock by reference to the four 'visitability' features⁹³. GLA analysis of EHS data⁹⁴ shows that around one fifth of all homes in the capital have no 'visitable' features – over half a million dwellings⁹⁵. A further 1 million homes have only one 'visitability' feature and only 9% of London's existing housing stock is estimated to exhibit all four 'visitability' features. Consequently, in a city containing over 3.4 million properties and nearly 3.5 million households, less than 300,000 homes have all four 'visitability' features (see Table 2i). Visitable features also only enable disabled people to visit dwellings; they are unlikely (on their own) to ensure homes are suitable for disabled people to live in on a day to day basis.

New build supply

- 1i.12 In terms of approvals, the London Plan Annual Monitoring Report shows that a very high proportion of new build units in London currently comply with Lifetime Homes standards (93%)⁹⁶. However, due to the time lag between approvals and completions particularly on approved large schemes, only 59,000 units have been completed which meet Lifetime Homes standards since the standards were introduced in 2004 London Plan⁹⁷. This shows that the overall quantity of modern accessible and adaptable stock is insufficient to address the need identified in paragraph 1i6. Hence, it is important for existing standards to be maintained and continued.
- 1i.13 Over time, and as large schemes approved since 2004 are built out in their entirety, it is expected that the quantity of accessible and adaptable new build stock will increase substantially. However, even where housing output in London is increased to 49,000 new homes a year and all new homes achieve 90% and 10%

⁹¹ Valuation Office Agency, June 2015

⁹² *ibid*

⁹³ These are: level access; flush threshold; a sufficiently wide door and circulation space to move around; and use of a WC on the ground or entry floor.

⁹⁵ DCLG and ONS, English Housing Survey, 2012

⁹⁶ Mayor of London, Annual Monitoring Report 11, 2013-14, GLA, 2015, page 98

⁹⁷ London Development Database, Lifetime Homes completions 2004/5 to 2014/15

compliance with optional M4(2) and M4(3) standards, it could still take 36 years for the capital to address the indicative need outlined in paragraph 1i6⁹⁸.

Tenure and downsizing

- 1i.14 Currently, around 30% of London's older households are accommodated in the private rented sector - a tenure in which it is generally less likely for property owners to be willing to make substantial or costly structural changes to a property in order to accommodate the needs of a resident, due to the relatively short-term cycle of most rented tenancies. Moreover, the percentage of households containing someone with a disability, long-term illness or infirmity is substantially higher in the private rented sector (46%) than other tenures⁹⁹. This underscores the need for standards to be applied across housing tenures.
- 1i.15 As London's housing need increases, it is ever more important to encourage older person households or individuals to elect to downsize where they are under-occupying large family homes. GLA evidence suggests that many older people would consider downsizing if more suitable accessible and adaptable smaller units were available across the full range of tenures and designed to support them as they age¹⁰⁰. The provision of accessible and adaptable homes across all tenures will support this aim.

Specialist housing provision

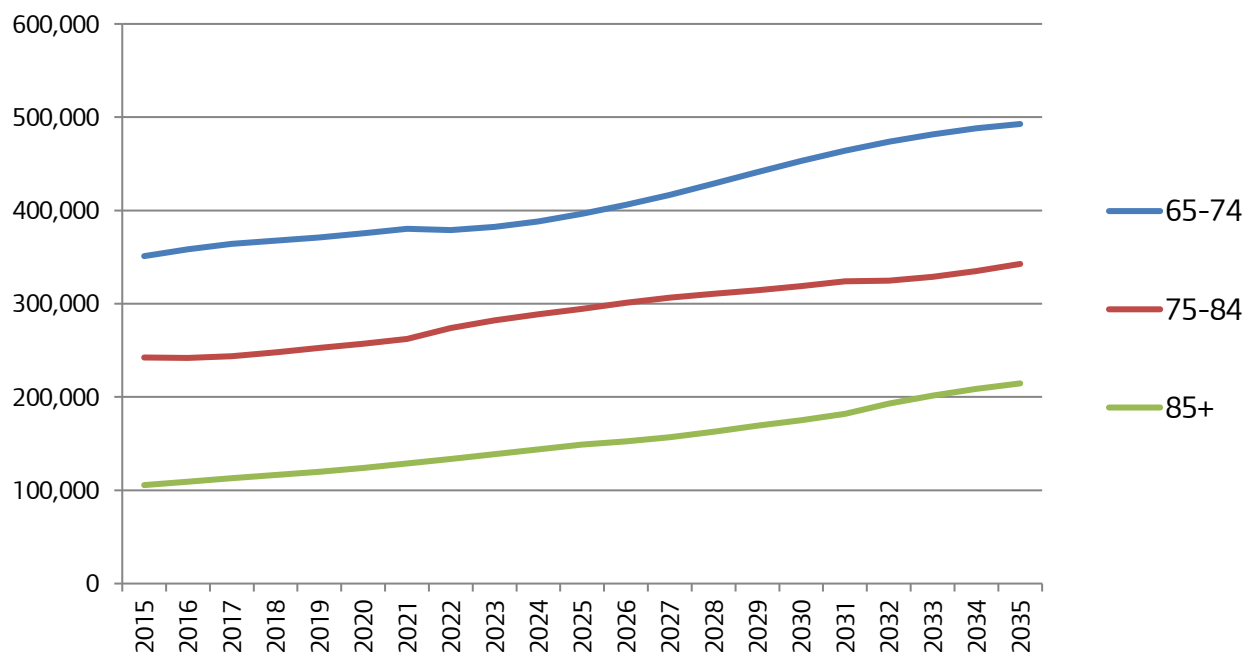
- 1i.16 Whilst a proportion of older person households can be expected to be housed in specialist accommodation (care homes, sheltered or extra care housing), it should be recognised that the trend is for people to live independently for longer. This is reflected in the GLA's evidence¹⁰¹ which estimated that the potential demand for specialist retirement housing which cannot be met from existing stock is of the order of 3,900 units a year. This estimate is based on the assumption that 15% of households aged 75 and over and 2.5% of households 65-74 are likely to require specialist older persons housing. It also takes into account existing levels of provision and the current pipeline. These demand estimates have been subject to an Examination in Public (EiP) and are set out as indicative annualised strategic benchmarks in Annex 5 of the London Plan.
- 1i.17 As is clear from the estimates provided in this study, specialist housing for older people is expected to cater for a very small proportion of the 700,000 older person households currently living in London, or for that matter the 1 million older person households expected by 2035. Hence, it is essential that London's conventional housing stock provides a range of accessible homes which are capable of being adapted to meet the requirements of London households as these change over time.

⁹⁸ This estimate assumes need to be 1.8 million households (see paragraph 1i6) and takes account of the 59,000 lifetime homes completed since 2004

⁹⁹ English Housing Survey, 2011

¹⁰⁰ Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research et al, The role of the planning system in delivering housing choices for older Londoners, GLA, 2012, page 13

¹⁰¹ Three Dragons and Celandine Strategic Housing, 2014, - Report to the Greater London Authority: Older Persons Housing Needs Assessment Report 2013

Figure i1 - Projected number of older households in London (2015 – 2035)**Table i1 - Projected number of older households in London (2015 – 2035)**

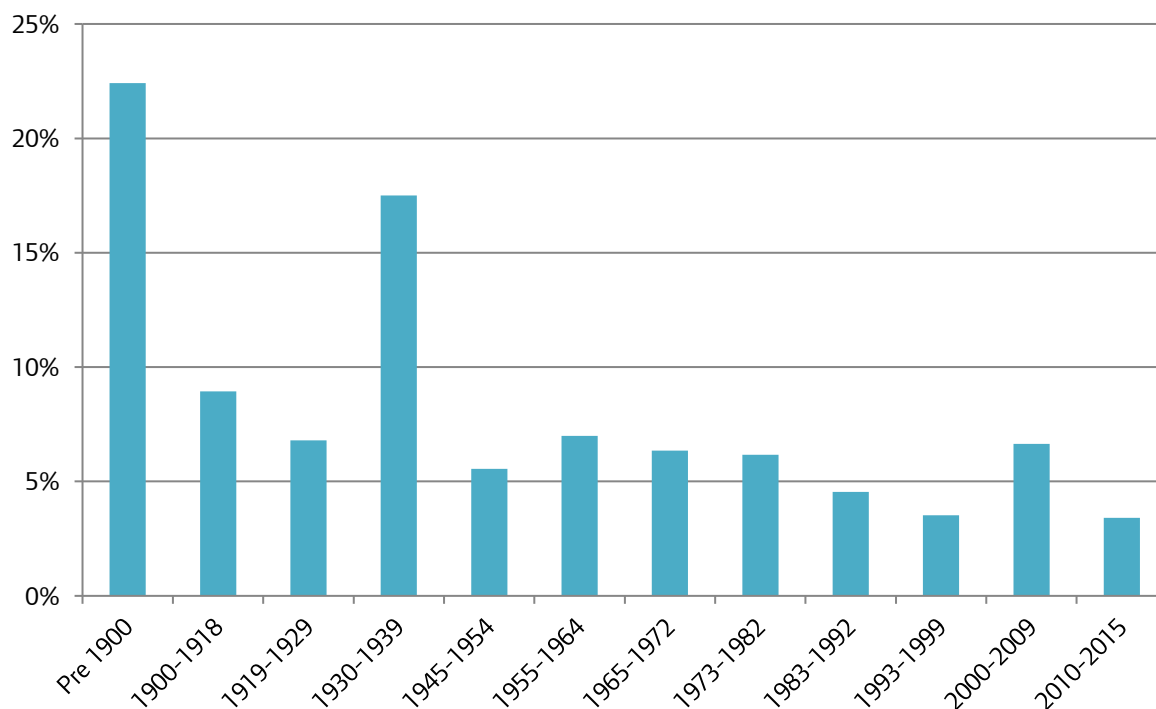
Age	2015	2035	net change	% change
65 to 74	351,061	492,723	141,662	40%
74 to 84	242,267	342,687	100,420	41%
85+	105,561	214,603	109,042	103%
all 65+	698,889	1,050,013	351,123	50%

Source: GLA central household projections, 2013

Table 2i – Accessibility of London’s existing housing stock

	Total	Percentage
No visitable features	636,696	20%
One visitability feature	1,005,963	32%
Two visitability features	702,331	22%
Three visitability features	540,440	17%
Four visitability features	294,361	9%
Total housing stock	3,179,791	

(Source: English Housing Survey, 2012)

Figure i2 - Stock of properties by build period - London

(Source: Valuation Office Agency, June 2015)

1j Does paragraph 3.48A provide sufficient clarity with regard to the provision of lifts? How would a prospective developer know whether or not a viability assessment would be required? Should any parts of paragraph 3.48A be included within a policy?

1j.1 Paragraph 3.48A clearly sets out that to comply with Building Regulation M4(2) step free access is required. This is detailed in the Government’s Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, which gives practical guidance about how to meet the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations. However, to make this clearer to those unfamiliar with the Building Regulations, the Mayor has suggested a further change to the inspector which would add the following text (in blue) to paragraph 3.48A “As set out in Approved Document M of the Building Regulations - Volume 1: Dwellings to comply with requirement M4(2), step free access must be provided. Generally this will require a lift where a dwelling is accessed above or below the entry storey”.

1j.2 This was not a requirement of Lifetime Homes and lifts have historically only been required in dwellings of five stories or more through London Plan policy. The National Planning Policy Guidance suggests that before adopting any of the national technical standards the impact on viability should be considered¹⁰². It also emphasises that this should not undermine ambitions for high quality design and wider social and environmental benefit, but such ambitions should be tested

¹⁰² NPPG Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 56-003-20150327

against the likelihood of delivery¹⁰³. As discussed in the Mayor's response to Matter f, the majority of the requirements of M4(2) do not represent an extra cost to development above those already embedded in development costs through the delivery of Lifetime Homes standards. These standards have been in place since the 2004 London Plan. However, the provision of a lift does represent a new requirement for dwellings of four stories or less i.e. they were not required by Lifetime Homes standards.

- 1j.3 There is a clear need for optional standard M4(2) (see response to Matter f) and the viability study¹⁰⁴ found that relative the impact of complying with M4(2) as opposed to Lifetime Homes is minimal. Given this, the policy approach of requiring 90% of homes to meet M4(2) and 10% of homes to meet M4(3) is robust and should not be weakened.
- 1j.4 The easiest way for a developer to gain planning permission is by delivering a policy compliant scheme, which would include meeting the requirements of M4(2) and the viability evidence referred to above suggests this will be possible in the majority of cases. However, the addition of para 3.48A recognises that some schemes of four stories or less will not be able to deliver step free access viably due to issues such as site typology and layout. This paragraph therefore provides the flexibility for decision makers to revert to mandatory minimum Building Regulations requirements i.e. M4(1) in these exceptional cases. The paragraph also explicitly recognises that the addition of a lift could lead to an increase in service charges for tenants and allows this to be taken into account when judging if a scheme should be required to meet M4(2). Schemes of five stories and above will continue to need provide lifts as has always been the case.
- 1j.5 Providing viability information on a case by case basis where a developer believes they are not able to comply with a particular obligation or requirement of a standard is an established practice in planning. Therefore, there is no need for this to be set out in policy. Moreover, all developers will have produced some sort of development appraisal for a scheme to understand funding requirements, cash flow etc, so there are no specific additional process cost implications for this requirement.
- 1j.6 Further guidance is provided in para 2.3.11 of the Draft Interim Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance¹⁰⁵ which states *'It is recognised that the application of requirement M4(2) may have particular implications for blocks of four storeys or less, where historically the London Plan has not required lifts. However in certain specific cases, for example low rise blocks, flats above shops, or stacked maisonettes, complying with the requirement M4(2) in terms of step-free access to dwellings on first, second or third floor, may cause practical difficulties and have implications for viability of schemes and have implication for the affordability of service charges, where lifts have to be installed. Boroughs should consider the application of M4(2) to these particular type of schemes on a case by case basis. This may require 'bespoke' assessments of site-specific circumstances. Where it is demonstrated that installing a lift is not viable or would lead to*

¹⁰³ NPPG Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 10-001-20140306

¹⁰⁴ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner and Theobald. Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Viability Assessment. GLA 2015

¹⁰⁵ Mayor of London. Draft Interim Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance. May 2015

significantly higher service charges, then the base Building Regulation M4(1) could be applied, but schemes could still be encouraged to comply with the other requirements of M4(2). These dwellings would still be expected to comply with the nationally described space standards and other standards set out in the London Plan and this SPG¹⁰⁶.

1k Do the Minor Alterations (Housing Standards) have any significant implications for other policies in the London Plan and if so how have they been addressed?

- 1k.1 The Alterations have positive implications for a number of other policies in the Plan. These include: Housing choice (Policy 3.8) - especially in relation to older and disabled people and families with children; Ensuring equal life chances for all (Policy 3.1); Improving health and addressing health inequalities (Policy 3.2); An inclusive environment (Policy 7.2); Lifetime neighbourhoods (Policy 7.1); Overheating and cooling (Policy 5.9); Sustainable design and construction (Policy 5.3); and Water use and supplies (Policy 5.15).
- 1k.2 Recognition of this positive impact is supported by the findings of the Mayor's Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), undertaken by external consultants¹⁰⁷. The IIA is an integral statutory process in the preparation of the MALP and considers in detail the proposed Alterations and the potential implications on the various objectives and policy areas of the London Plan, taking into account any cumulative effects. As shown on Table 8.1 of the IIA¹⁰⁸, the proposed Alterations to the London Plan in terms of space standards, accessibility and water efficiency are considered to have 'positive' or 'minor positive effects' on a broad range of London Plan policy areas and are not considered to have any negative effects on any policy area.
- 1k.3 Considering the IIA findings in more detail, it is evident that the Alterations associated with space and accessibility standards have 'major positive effects' and contribute significantly towards IIA objectives for health and well-being, equalities, accessibility and mobility and liveability and place¹⁰⁹. The assessment also concludes that the continuation of existing London Plan internal space standards through the adoption of the nationally described space standard would have 'major positive effects' in relation to the IIA objective for housing, with accessibility Alterations considered to have a 'minor positive effect' on this IIA objective. MALP changes with respect to water efficiency are also considered to have 'minor positive effects' in relation to IIA objectives for water quality and water resources, biodiversity, flood risk and climate change adaptation, housing, equalities, regeneration and land-use, and climate change mitigation and energy. Overall, the IIA finds the impact of the Alterations on the range of policy areas in

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ AMEC – Integrated Impact Assessment Report – Minor Alterations to the London Plan (Housing Standards)

¹⁰⁸ AMEC – Integrated Impact Assessment Report – Minor Alterations to the London Plan (Housing Standards), page 39

¹⁰⁹ AMEC – Integrated Impact Assessment Report – Minor Alterations to the London Plan (Housing Standards), page 39

the Plan to be either positive or benign with no significant adverse implications identified.

- 1k.4 The GLA has commissioned an independent viability assessment which considered in detail the impact of space and accessibility standards on the viability and deliverability of development identified in the London Plan, in line with paragraph 173 and 174 of the NPPF and the NPPG¹¹⁰. This takes into account the cumulative impact of space and accessibility standards alongside other planning policy requirements and assumes that sites are delivered at the appropriate density range (Policy 3.4) and at policy compliant levels of affordable housing (Policy 3.11). Overall, viability testing shows that the MALP housing standards do not represent a significant determinant of the viability and delivery of housing development in London (Policy 3.3) or the delivery of affordable housing (Policy 3.11). Further detail on the viability assessment findings are set out in the Mayor's statements on Matters 1c and 1f.
- 1k.5 Space standards have been applied to all housing tenures in London since 2011 without having had a noticeable impact on the overall supply and density of new housing or affordable housing provision. The certainty provided by space standards has a positive effect on policies which aim to optimise housing provision (3.4) and maximise affordable housing (3.11). Space standards play a critically important role in raising the quality of residential accommodation in London (Policy 3.5). This is a particularly important objective in London, considering the density and flatted nature of development in the capital (see Matter 1h).
- 1k.6 In terms of open market housing, consideration has been given to housing affordability and how this is affected by the application of space standards in London, drawing on the Government's cost impact report undertaken by EC Harris (as advised by the NPPG¹¹¹ and the NPPF¹¹²). This reflects the Mayor's strategic objective to provide Londoners with a genuine choice of homes they can afford and which meet their requirements (Policy 3.8A). EC Harris's findings would suggest that the impact of the optional space standards on the affordability of homes in London is relatively minor, taking into account other development costs and median and average house prices in the capital (see table 1k below).
- 1k.7 In addition, there is no evidence to suggest that the removal of space standards would lead to reduced sales values for purchasers and therefore improved affordability, especially as residential values are not singularly affected by space provision, but are affected by a range of other variables and housing market dynamics at a local, regional and, in London's case, even global scale. In line with the London Plan and NPPF, the Mayor has considered housing affordability alongside his objectives to ensure that housing of an appropriate quality is provided (Policy 3.5) in order to meet the varied needs of Londoners (Policy 3.8).
- 1k.8 As shown in the Mayor's Statements on Matter 1c and 1f, the requirement for step-free access (lifts) for units accessed above the ground floor has been the subject of specific viability testing. This shows that lift provision does not

¹¹⁰ DCLG, National Planning Practice Guidance - Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 10-005-20140306 to Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 10-015-20140306

¹¹¹ NPPG Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 56-020-20150327; Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 56-003-20150327

¹¹² DCLG, NPPF para 17, 3rd bullet point

significantly affect the viability or build costs on medium density schemes (at 80 dph) – see Figure 1c, Matter 1c. Consequently, the provision of lift access does not significantly affect the viability or deliverability of development at these densities and at policy compliant levels of affordable housing provision. It should be recognised that higher density schemes of five storeys and more in any tenure must currently provide lifts in order to comply with the London Plan, so the Alterations do not represent an additional cost for these schemes.

- 1k.9 Small sites under 0.25ha are expected to provide around 25% of London’s housing capacity over the next 10 years¹¹³ and therefore play an important role in terms of housing supply (Policy 3.3), housing choice (Policy 3.8) and affordable housing (Policy 3.11), particularly for certain boroughs. Whilst residential densities on small sites can vary significantly depending on the location and surroundings, there may be particular circumstances where step free access is demonstrably not viable. For example, specific site constraints such as the size or dimensions of a plot, together with conservation area designations or adjacent heritage assets may limit the height and overall floorplate of a building and potentially constrain the provision of lift access. However, the addition of para 3.48A recognises that where step free access is not viable there is flexibility for decision makers to revert to mandatory building regulations in these exceptional cases. Consequently, it is not considered that the requirement for M4(2) has significant implications for small sites or their contribution in meeting London Plan housing targets both at a strategic and local basis.
- 1k.10 Because optional accessibility standards are applied through Part M of the Building Regulations, they cannot be applied to dwellings delivered as a result of conversions or change of use. Hence the accessible housing standards do not have implications for housing supply from these sources.
- 1k.11 The GLA has considered the affordability impact of providing lifts on residential buildings of four stories or less in terms of service charges and maintenance costs for tenants in all housing tenures¹¹⁴. The GLA’s viability study has assessed an indicative whole life cost for a lift at circa £120,000 over a 25 year period and around £4,800 a year¹¹⁵. The exact annual/monthly impact on each household within a building in terms of service charges will depend on the number of units grouped around a lift core and the typology and height of a building. Consultants suggest that grouping 12 units around the same core would mean that service charges associated with lifts are kept at an affordable level (circa £33 per month/£400 pa)¹¹⁶. This is possible at 3 and 4 storeys. In addition, where the service cost of the lift is spread across more units the affordability impact will be significantly reduced. For example, a four storey block containing 24 units provided with deck access would mean service charges would be £17 per month/£200 pa per unit. Both examples would comply with the Mayor’s Housing

¹¹³ Mayor of London, London Strategic Housing Land Availability Study, 2013, page 69

¹¹⁴ David Lock Associates et al, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Viability Assessment, 2015, paragraph 4.21

¹¹⁵ David Lock Associates et al, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Viability Assessment, 2015, paragraph 4.21

¹¹⁶ David Lock Associates et al, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Viability Assessment, 2015, paragraph 4.21

SPG standard 3.2.1 which states that the number of dwellings accessed from a single core should not exceed eight per floor.

- 1k.12 Where service charges associated with lifts are expected to have a significant impact on housing affordability (eg for affordable housing units), there is sufficient flexibility provided by paragraph 3.48A to ensure that this factor is taken into account when applying M4 (2) requirements. Consideration would be given to other Plan requirements including the need to ensure that the overall housing costs for affordable housing residents (including service charges) are kept at affordable levels in order to comply with London Plan and NPPF definitions (Policy 3.10). This would also be a consideration for private tenures where the number of units per core is limited (eg on a particularly small and narrow/shallow infill plot).
- 1k.13 The amendments do not have implications for Policy 7.4 (Local Character) as, irrespective of the need for a lift to be provided, the height and bulk of a proposed residential development will still have to have regard to its local character.
- 1k.14 The proposed adoption of the optional space and accessibility standards do not raise significantly adverse implications for the private rented sector (Policy 3.8Ba1), as highlighted in the Mayor's statement to Matter 11.
- 1k.15 In summary, the alterations do not have significant negative implications on any policies in the London Plan, as shown by the GLA's supporting viability evidence and IIA. Where potential site specific circumstances might mean that the requirement for lift access may be challenging in terms of viability and service charges, sufficient flexibility is provided in the London Plan for these issues to be appropriately considered. Importantly, the Alterations have significant and wide-ranging positive impacts on a number of policies in the London Plan.

Table 1k - Mean and median new build house prices in London in 2014 by borough

Borough	Mean	Median
Barking And Dagenham	205,473	182,995
Barnet	487,286	358,256
Bexley	227,313	215,000
Brent	311,522	278,500
Bromley	337,345	275,000
Camden	945,589	742,000
City Of London	1,113,515	862,250
Croydon	279,874	245,000
Ealing	476,746	385,000
Enfield	335,394	280,000
Greenwich	428,443	385,000
Hackney	487,137	450,000
Hammersmith And Fulham	912,395	780,000

Haringey	478,742	410,000
Harrow	525,644	285,000
Havering	262,477	240,000
Hillingdon	381,753	344,998
Hounslow	419,575	360,000
Islington	525,316	462,000
Kensington And Chelsea	1,758,053	1,292,500
Kingston Upon Thames	485,822	415,000
Lambeth	770,624	402,748
Lewisham	337,485	325,000
Merton	563,668	380,000
Newham	288,671	274,750
Redbridge	305,617	249,995
Richmond Upon Thames	543,348	434,500
Southwark	562,462	443,000
Sutton	307,661	285,000
Tower Hamlets	451,615	385,000
Waltham Forest	279,864	275,000
Wandsworth	639,298	525,995
Westminster	2,040,017	1,355,750
London	543,400	375,000

Source: GLA analysis of Land Registry Price Paid Data

Note: 'New build' homes are identified by the Land Registry as properties newly registered, and includes a small number of non-new build homes such as conversions

11 Do the Minor Alterations (Housing Standards) have any significantly adverse implications for the private rented sector and /or for the provision of starter homes and if so how have they been addressed?

- 11.1 No. The proposed adoption of the optional space and accessibility standards do not raise significant adverse implications for the private rented sector (PRS) or for the provision of starter homes. The optional standards generally mirror the existing standards in the London Plan, which have been in place since 2011 without having a noticeable impact on the delivery of housing in London. The GLA's evidence of need highlights the importance of applying standards to all housing tenures in London, including PRS and all forms of market and affordable housing¹¹⁷. Housing standards are particularly important across all tenures considering: the typical density of residential development in the capital; the fact that homes can switch tenure over the life of a dwelling; and the need to ensure all new homes are accessible and adaptable and provide a decent quality of life for residents.

¹¹⁷ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner & Theobald, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need. GLA 2015

- 11.2 The GLA's independent viability assessment does not specifically examine the viability of starter homes or purpose built PRS housing in London as it focuses on the viability of market sale schemes, assuming policy compliant levels of affordable housing provision, density and s106/CIL contributions. This is considered to be consistent with the emphasis in the NPPF and NPPG for a viability evidence base supporting plans to be 'proportionate' and reflect the development likely to come forward in an area and in order to deliver the plan¹¹⁸. It is appreciated that covenanted purpose built PRS and starter homes are types of housing provision which may increase over time in London and , depending on particular market dynamics could potentially play an important role in achieving London Plan targets. However, they do not presently make a substantial contribution to housing supply in London and hence were not examined in detail in the Mayor's viability assessment.
- 11.3 Currently the 2015 London Plan requirement for internal space provision (Table 3.3), Lifetime Homes (Policy 3.Bc) and wheelchair accessible and adaptable housing (Policy 3.8Bd) are applicable to both starter homes and proposals for purpose built PRS housing. The NPPG implies that space standards should be applied to them. Whilst the NPPG states that the potential impact of space standards on starter homes should be considered¹¹⁹, it also confirms the Government's intention that starter homes should be 'well designed and of a high quality'¹²⁰. The Government's document – Starter Homes Design¹²¹ – dated March 2015 sets out an initial set of exemplars based on the early work by the Government's new Design Advisory Panel, which appear to accord with or exceed the nationally described space standard.
- 11.4 Purpose built private rented sector (PRS) housing is not considered to be fundamentally different to other tenures of conventional housing provision and should consequently meet the same minimum housing standards in terms of space and accessibility. The fact that tenure patterns in London have shifted over the past 30 years, with increasing numbers of households relying on the private rented sector to meet the housing needs reinforces the need for housing standards to be applied consistently to all tenures¹²². Moreover, the GLA's evidence of need shows that shared/multi-adult households in the private rented sector are typically at maximum occupancy levels¹²³. Therefore, adequate space provision within new build PRS schemes is essential in order to address overcrowding and to provide the same basic levels of internal amenity space as other tenures. The need for space standards is not dependent on the tenure of a household and applies consistently to conventional homes for affordable rent, intermediate sale/rent, private rent and market sale.
- 11.5 Currently, around 30% of London's older households are accommodated in the private rented sector – a tenure in which it is generally less likely for property owners to be willing to make substantial or costly structural changes to a property

¹¹⁸ DCLG, NPPG – Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 10-009-20140306

¹¹⁹ DCLG, NPPG – Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 56-020-20150327

¹²⁰ DCLG, NPPG – Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 55-011-20150327

¹²¹ DCLG, Starter Homes Design, March 2015

¹²² Mayor of London, London Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013, page 15

¹²³ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner & Theobald, Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Evidence of Need, 2015, page 32

in order to accommodate the needs of a resident due to the relatively short-term cycle of most rented tenancies. The percentage of households containing someone with a disability, long-term illness or infirmity is substantially higher in the private rented sector (46%) than other tenures¹²⁴. This underscores the need for standards to be applied across housing tenures.

- 11.6 The Mayor recognises that there is a need to exercise an appropriate degree of flexibility in applying housing standards, not only to take account of the distinct economics of particular housing products and their role in addressing specific housing needs, but also to reflect the potential for design innovation. However, the London Plan and the Draft Interim Housing SPG¹²⁵ make clear that such flexibility only applies in exceptional and well-justified circumstances and that such schemes should only be permitted where they are of an exemplary design quality and also contribute to the achievement of other objectives of the Plan (Policy 3.5D). Paragraph 3.54 of the London Plan also states that the distinct economics of PRS proposals should be taken into account when undertaking viability appraisals on covenanted schemes.
- 11.7 This tailored approach to assessing the design credentials of individual proposals and rigorously examining the justification for exemptions on an exceptional and case by case basis accords with the core planning principle of the NPPF to ‘always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants’¹²⁶. Blanket exemption of either purpose built PRS schemes or starter homes from meeting the optional space or accessibility standards in the absence of reasonable evidence or justification would not be appropriate and would significantly conflict with the core planning principle and the overall objective to secure sustainable development in London.

New housing products and shared living

- 11.8 The Mayor also recognises that as housing need and affordability challenges increase in London, new approaches to meeting housing need are emerging. This includes the presence of more non-conventional housing products, including proposals for large-scale Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMO) or ‘shared living’. Many of these schemes are more similar to proposals for student accommodation and, consequently, are likely to be categorised as non-self-contained housing in the Sui Generis Use Class. To address these trends the Mayor has provided tailored advice in the Draft Interim Housing SPG which suggests that, where these products are of a high quality and well-designed, they can be encouraged in line with Policy 3.5D, subject to meeting other planning policy considerations¹²⁷.
- 11.9 However, it is important to differentiate large HMOs (SG Use Class) from more mainstream purpose built PRS housing provision which is conventional housing in Use Class C3 – dwelling houses. In contrast to proposals for shared living, mainstream PRS units tend to be lived in for longer periods and may enter the private sale market at some point (eg, following the end of a covenanted period).

¹²⁴ English Housing Survey, 2011

¹²⁵ Mayor of London, Draft Interim Housing SPG, GLA, 2015, paragraph 2.3.23

¹²⁶ DCLG, NPPF, para 17, third bullet point

¹²⁷ Mayor of London, Draft Interim Housing SPG, para 3.1.35

Consequently, it is important standards are applied consistently to conventional dwelling houses in Use Class C3 across all tenures.

1m Has the issue of security been considered by the Mayor (Building Reg. Part Q) and if so what conclusions were drawn?

- 1m.1 Yes. The Mayor considered the new mandatory security building regulations set out in approved document Part Q as part of the minor alterations and the requirement was taken into account as part of the viability assessment¹²⁸.
- 1m.2 Building Regulation Approved Document on security (Part Q) is mandatory for all development. It covers technical security standards for all new homes and sets out the exact requirements for secure windows and doors. The Mayor is fully supportive of the introduction of Part Q.
- 1m.3 The standard only relates to technical security standards for homes and not those relating to external design and layout of new development. These aim to reduce crime and disorder and can still be applied through planning policy - such as those already set out in 7.3 of the London Plan.
- 1m.4 As Part Q is a mandatory building standard and consistent with current policy, no update to the Plan was required. Planning documents only need to refer to building regulations where planning has a role in determining which 'optional' standards should be applied.
- 1m.5 In terms of the viability implications, London Plan Policy 7.3 'Designing out crime' includes the requirement for 'places and buildings and structures should incorporate appropriately designed security features'. The supporting text in para 7.10 refers to Secured by Design Guidance, section 2 of which relates to physical security and was required as part of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Government's cost assessment¹²⁹ suggests that the cost of the new standard is £40 -£107 pounds a dwelling, significantly less than adhering to Part 2 of the Secured by Design document. Given this and the minimal cost associated with meeting the standard, the viability assessment assumes that there are no additional costs associated with the introduction of Part Q.

1n Are the monitoring and review mechanisms and the Transition Statement, in relation to the Housing Standards, sufficiently clear and robust?

- 1n.1 The Transition Statement clearly sets out how the London Plan's existing policies and associated standards will be applied in light of the Written Ministerial Statement (March 2015). For ease of use it identifies the current policy/standard

¹²⁸ David Lock Associates, Hoare Lea, Gardiner and Theobald. Greater London Authority Housing Standards Review: Viability Assessment. 2015

¹²⁹ Department for Communities and Local Government. Housing Standards Review. Cost Impacts. EC Harris Built Asset Consultancy. September 2014
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/353387/021c_Cost_Report_11th_Sept_2014_FINAL.pdf

and how that should be interpreted by reference to the nearest equivalent national standard.

- 1n.2 The transition period starts in October 2015 and is in place until the adoption of the minor alterations.
- 1n.3 The Transition Statement was published in May in order to ensure that developers and local authorities are aware of what standards will be in place from October, allowing them sufficient lead in time for the changes.
- 1n.4 The Mayor ensures that Local Plans reflect the Plan's standards through his 'general conformity' duty. Historically, the London Plan has set minimum standards which local authorities could exceed if justified in their local plans. As set out in the Written Ministerial Statement, boroughs should not now set any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction or internal layout or performance of new dwellings. Therefore, boroughs are expected to adopt the optional standards set out in the London Plan unless there is robust local evidence which supports the adoption of a different approach.
- 1n.5 The London Plan Annual Monitoring Report provides information on the number, type, size (in terms of numbers of bedrooms) and tenure of homes being approved and completed and compares it with information for the previous two years. It also provides statistics on compliance with Lifetime Homes standards and Wheelchair Homes standards. From October, the number of or M4 (2) and M4 (3) homes approved and completed will be monitored through the London Development Database (LDD). The move to Building Regulations based standards potentially provides a more robust understanding on compliance with the standard once the building is completed (the figures in LDD provide information on the planning permission and the completion of that permission, not if the unit actually met the required standard).
- 1n.6 Information on gross internal area and layout of the home has not been collected through LDD because of resource constraints and the use by some boroughs of different space standards to those set out in the London Plan. Monitoring benchmarks have been developed to assess the introduction of space standards¹³⁰ independently.

¹³⁰ HATC. London Housing Standards 2009/2010. GLA 2012.