



HEAR EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK

Examination in Public of the Draft London Plan

Response in lieu of personal attendance at EIP in respect of Matter 6-January 2019

HEAR and Ms Christine Goodall as their representative in her capacity of Network Coordinator are very grateful to the panel for permission to submit a written statement in lieu of personal attendance at the EIP for Matter 6 due to illness.

The following is in response to the points raised by fellow participants through their written submissions in respect of Matter 6.

HEAR strongly endorses the point made by the London Tenants' Federation that the planning process can be complex and extremely technical and that this can sometimes render it impenetrable and exclusionary for members of the community unless strenuous relevant efforts are made to ensure that the consultation process is inclusive and accessible.

We do not consider that such efforts were sufficient to ensure meaningful involvement in the process for many Londoners. This was exacerbated by the timings of the consultations on the various strategies that are fundamental to the plan, for example the Housing Strategy, and we strongly endorse the points made in respect of this by CPRE London, in that this could have been much

better coordinated, so that opportunities to influence key policies in the Plan were not missed. HEAR members who attended one of the equalities focused consultation events at City Hall were frustrated that when they raised points about a specific part of the draft Plan, for example in respect of affordable housing, they were told that this was addressed in the Housing Strategy-however consultation on the Housing Strategy had already closed!

We also support the point made by Just Space, CPRE London and the London Tenants' Federation regarding the diversity of groups engaged in both the consultation process and the EIP, and the weight given to community groups, particularly equalities groups, involvement as contrasted with other types of stakeholder. Just Space point regarding the importance of engaging with both communities of geography and interest is particularly important, and one HEAR strongly supports. We echo the concern that there appeared to be no strategic systematic plan to ensure this.

HEAR also supports the call made by several of the respondents for a formal written statement of commitment to engagement on the London Plan by the Mayor. This would strengthen the ability of civil society to monitor the consultation process and hold the Mayor to account against measurable and clearly expressed targets.

Engagement should also take place earlier in the process, so there is an opportunity for genuine co-production with communities on planning issues at an earlier stage when there is a more realistic chance of influencing.

In addition to the above HEAR would have addressed in person at the hearing the following points on behalf of its members:

There were good efforts to engage with equalities focused community groups during the consultation process, and opportunities to run consultation events at City Hall were facilitated by GLA colleagues, with a specific focus on equality

issues. However participation in these events was made impossible for some disabled participants because of the shocking lack of sufficient disabled parking spaces at City Hall, which is a matter of significant concern. Added to this is the complexity of arrangements required to use taxis to travel to City Hall because of the lack of road access at street level, and the bureaucracy in place to gain access for taxis; participation for many is greatly compromised, in not just this but many other Mayoral consultation and engagement exercises.

The format of the document itself was very dense, and although the presentation online, with the document broken down into sections, was helpful for some, others felt that it was very difficult to navigate, particularly those who don't access online information, or have specific impairments. For example the Easy Read version of the document was not widely promoted or displayed, making it much more difficult to access. Copies should have been readily available at all consultation events, and not only on request.

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