



GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

WIDER SOUTH EAST JOINT SUMMIT 9 December 2016 at King's College, London

SUMMARY

The summit was attended by over 100 senior councillors and officers from local authorities and LEAs from across London, the South East and East of England (the Wider South East – WSE). It took the form of an interactive debate to help shape the new London Plan, on which there will be a formal consultation later in 2017.

Summit Facilitator Phil Swann (Shared Intelligence) highlighted the following four key points in his summary of the event:

1. **Honest and open discussion:** The need for a more honest discussion about whether (or not) London can meet its own growth, and an explicit recognition by the Mayor that the South East and East of England have to accommodate their own growth pressures.
2. **Tackling infrastructure priorities together:** There is an opportunity to address infrastructure priorities across the WSE and in doing so it is important to acknowledge that not all priority routes are in and out of London.
3. **The green belt:** There should either be a review of the green belt across the WSE or the Mayor should act to accommodate the impact of his green belt policy within London.
4. **Appetite for growth:** There is an appetite for collaboration on particular growth options in some areas, but the nature of this collaboration is unclear.

During discussion, the following suggestions/issues were also raised by delegates. It was however recognized that councils across the WSE are not in universal agreement on all these suggestions:

- Discussions with regards housing barriers need to focus more on deliverability and the discussion with DCLG needs to be moved forward;
- Potentially worth considering a joint approach to assessing the impact of major transport projects such as HS2, Crossrail, Heathrow third runway;
- Some delegates suggested production of the London Plan could also be a catalyst for producing a light touch plan for the WSE;
- There is a need to review the function of Green Belt in the mid-21st century;
- Timing issues could be difficult as the London Plan schedule does not match local plan periods outside the capital;
- There could be a role for a joint dialogue with business across the WSE;
- The collaboration and interconnections across the Wider South East with the rest of the UK should also be promoted.

Jules Pipe, the Deputy Mayor of London for Planning, Regeneration and Skills at the Greater London Authority (GLA), responded to a number of the issues raised during the course of discussions. In particular Jules Pipe highlighted:

- The Mayor of London is committed to closer collaboration with partners across the WSE and is keen to make this engagement very real.
 - There are significant opportunities to work together on growth corridors as well as identifying strategic infrastructure need and investment opportunities.
 - He echoed the desire for an honest dialogue on housing and identified this as another area where working together will be important. The Mayor is clear that he has no hidden agenda and seeks to accommodate as much growth within the capital as possible, address ineffective land use and explore untapped capacity – for example by making better use of car parks and exploring whether housing development on top of retail sheds could be viable.
 - There need to be greater variation in typologies for development across London, so that genuinely mixed developments can be provided.
 - There is also a need to retain land for essential infrastructure and services in London and to explore the opportunities of a growing digital economy.
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NOTES FROM THE WSE SUMMIT WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOP 1. SHAPING KEY LONDON PLAN ISSUES

1. How do we strike the balance between London's housing & employment needs, the Wider South East's needs and environmental and other land use policies or constraints (eg Green Belt)?

Green Belt

The biggest concern to emerge from discussions related to the Mayor of London's commitment to protecting London's Green Belt. Delegates highlighted that:

- Many authorities in the WSE are already having to review the Green Belt in their areas to accommodate locally derived growth. Unreasonable for London not to review its Green Belt if it identifies it cannot accommodate all its own growth.
- Councils outside of London queried whether the Mayor of London's position on the Green Belt is the appropriate solution for London. The broader role and purpose of the Green Belt is also in need of review and a coordinated approach to the Green Belt is needed.
- The London Plan and the Mayor of London needs to acknowledge the impact of London's Green Belt policy on councils in the WSE.
- Whilst not all councils are in agreement, there were also some calls for a strategic review of the Green Belt across the WSE
- Delivery through densification, mixed use developments and by exploring what more Outer London councils can do should be prioritized to enable London to meet its own needs.
- There are limited brownfield sites and the WSE also needs to protect its own greenbelt.

Housing

On the issue of housing it was widely acknowledged that this is one of the biggest pressures. One key challenge is that the migration resulting from housing benefit changes and shortage of housing more broadly is being felt by councils outside London, who are seeing the knock-on impact locally as demand in London is being displaced. There has also been a similar movement of people between Inner London, where prices are highest, to Outer London. The GLA stressed these sort of movements are part of the relationship between most urban areas and their wider housing market areas – the challenge arises where net outflows are likely to rise significantly above historic trends.

The balance between affordable and market is also a key aspect to get right and there is support for the Mayor's approach on affordable housing.

Delegates suggested that in the London Plan consideration should be given to:

- Addressing wider property market challenges (eg the direct/indirect effect of overseas investors buying up London homes), radical public sector vehicles to provide homes and greater density/city-style approaches across more areas of London.
- Urgent action to address unused planning permissions to deliver the homes that councils already have approved.
- The delivery mechanisms also need to be reconsidered, including prefabrication (but only if the quality is right) and initiatives that advance "right-sizing".
- Whilst the scale of under-delivery is acute nationally, the issues are so acute in London, and the knock-on impacts so great, that this should be considered as a special case for London to step in when permissions are not taken up.

Infrastructure

A clearer understanding is needed of what London's ability is to deliver new growth and what efforts are/will be made to ensure that growth elsewhere is mixed (housing, employment and infrastructure). The Greater London Authority stressed that it is undertaking a new SHLAA and SHMA. Councils in the WSE have been sent the SHLAA methodology for comment and it's only when the GLA have completed these that they will know definitively whether London can meet need within its own boundaries without intruding on London green belt.

During discussions it was also pointed out that:

- Councils across the Wider South East do not just want housing for commuters, they want to achieve sustainable communities.
- There needs to be a stronger understanding of what common strategic economic goals are; what infrastructure is deliverable in the next 20 years and where the likely growth points/locations are.
- Criteria also need to be developed for floodplains and land swaps.
- There is a need to deliver smart growth through smarter developments.
- There needs to be a better understanding of what employment needs are and where they need to be provided.
- WSE should look at how to incentivize investment and move more jobs out of London – this would reduce pressures on commuter routes and help keep local economies vibrant.
- Consideration can also be given to forward fund infrastructure – before development occurs – through some of London's CIL/ retained business rates to fund out of London schemes that benefit London. There is also a need for better infrastructure to meet existing demands.

2. *What capacity is there for areas to collaborate on options for growth (such as growth corridors and towns inside and outside London or relocation of industry) and what are the opportunities and challenges involved?*

On capacity for growth:

- Infrastructure investment is essential as a prerequisite to deliver growth and effective collaboration across the WSE. Some councils are happy to consider taking further growth but not at the expense of jobs and infrastructure.
- The current approach of the London Plan is too London-centric and also focuses growth along a few radial growth corridors only. There is potential to consider new growth corridors by linking growth locations.
- The London Plan needs to capture / understand WSE local authority planning challenges in order to understand capacity for collaboration on housing and economic growth.
- Many councils in the WSE are struggling to meet their own need and are already looking to neighboring councils to take some of their own growth, so there is often little capacity to also respond to further demands from London.
- There is a need to look at road corridors across the WSE as well as public transport - better orbital roads would relieve pressure on London and increase the growth capacity of the WSE as a whole.
- The quality and depth of the relationships must be non-party political and the leadership needs to be more visionary.
- There needs to be a narrative of housing and jobs for future generations in areas of growth. Relocation of the right industries into areas outside of London is thus critically important.
- The relocation of businesses/employment from London potentially brings benefits to the Wider South East, however how can this be achieved without significant intervention to make relocation of business attractive? Focus should be on relocating high quality business not just warehousing.
- Could the Mayor of London help attract infrastructure investment for areas willing to accept some of London's growth?.

- Sites often need investment to unlock contamination. How can such investment be secured for locations outside London?
- London needs to be engaging with councils across the WSE individually and collectively on growth challenges.

On opportunities:

- There is no narrative in the government's language which recognizes the economic significance of the East and South East. This needs to be picked up by government and the Mayor of London.
- There is also a need to support/fund transport studies in order to evidence benefits of significant infrastructure schemes.
- Greater dialogue with businesses in all sectors about their needs and where they want to locate is necessary.
- There is potential for industrial relocation but this needs to be combined with an understanding of the economy of the wider area. The cluster approach could be a starting point for sectoral redistribution.
- The WSE could benefit from scoping all growth locations and partnerships across the whole area and any inter-connections and linkages with growth areas beyond the WSE.
- The Local Planning process should be seen in the context of the 21st Century and the capacity of local authorities to respond to changing market and policy needs.

On challenges:

- There is a need to work collaboratively but very little strategic capacity is present across councils and partners to engage and capture the value of growth.
- There is a timing challenge: housing is needed now within the next 10 years vs infrastructure improvement which is needed in 10 years and beyond.
- Green belt is a political challenge, not just for London, but also in the South East and East.
- Incentives for investing in jobs and skills in areas of growth are lacking.
- Attracting and retaining skills and jobs is a challenge.
- Viability as a material consideration is in some cases inhibiting planned growth. Collaboratively the WSE could also push for landowners to pay more for infrastructure. Permitted development rights cause difficulties for councils.
- Developers can face build-out challenges due to finance and viability challenges.
- Increasing land values are a key challenge to delivering developments of all kinds.

Examples of collaboration/locations for growth proposed by councils/ LEPs included:

- Thames Gateway Essex - C2C improvements, Barking and Dagenham, Thurrock
- Thames Gateway Kent – Crossrail 1 Extension and potentially Ebbsfleet
- London Stansted Cambridge Corridor – Crossrail 2 and West Anglia Mainline
- Brighton Mainline
- West London – Crossrail, Heathrow Strategic Planning Group
- West Suffolk, Colchester, Tendring and Braintree (Sudbury) are possible willing partners for growth.

It was highlighted that the GLA should engage in dialogue with relevant authorities to clarify the extent and nature of such collaboration.

3. Which issues related to the Wider South East could be reflected in the London Plan (eg economic development, transport, water infrastructure, housing and protected land) and what are the opportunities and challenges involved (including the remit of the Mayor and the London Plan)?

- London needs to recognize that the transport corridors are not London centric, and that London must support non-London transport routes so commuters and businesses can bypass London. Improvements should include transport on orbital routes as well as radial to help economies outside London and reduce pressure on routes in/out of London.
- London needs to think carefully about where it places its businesses. Planning must support business clusters in central London at key transport hubs, such as Kings' Cross and Liverpool Street.
- An effective strategy for green infrastructure and smart growth would enhance the work of the Mayor of London and the WSE as a whole.
- Broadband, Waste and Water infrastructure are critical and should be given high priority in the London Plan.
- Significant challenges include the London Mayor's (and TFL's) remit. These powers should remain within London boundaries.
- Waste / Pollution / Air Quality / Waste as a fuel should be included in environmental concerns.
- London Finance Commission – retention of Business Rates in London and the need for more equitable distribution.
- There is a need for effective WSE engagement in London Plan development, not just consultation.
- Mayor of London needs to consider development on Green Belt and take responsibility for the impacts of his policies outside London.
- A light touch WSE regional section with more detail than the existing London Plan would be useful. Whilst the Framework would not necessarily go into detail regarding the levels of growth it could highlight the key growth locations, key infrastructure projects and environmental assets.
- There is potential to move jobs out of London, including high value jobs, in order to reduce pressure on commuter infrastructure and improve sustainability.
- In relation to delivering housing, it is worth looking at higher density in towns within London boundaries, learning from successful European models and public sector delivery.
- Unused planning permissions must be addressed by all of WSE, with help from Government.
- Infrastructure improvements are needed – for existing demand as well as any future growth.

WORKSHOP 2. SHAPING WSE PRIORITIES FOR 2017

1. Should we maintain momentum on some/all of the current four broad priority themes? ie:
 - London Plan (including effective engagement and consultation)
 - Tackling housing barriers
 - Strategic infrastructure (also consider e.g. waste, water?)
 - Common understanding of evidence (to support plan making and delivery).

During discussions delegates were in agreement that the current priority themes are the right ones and that they should remain the key focus in 2017. It was noted however that:

- There needs to be a strategy for campaigning/lobbying, which is able to engage MPs.
- It would be helpful if the Mayor of London could to use his political weight to strengthen awareness of the work of the WSE, particularly by supporting schemes that are critical not just for London but also for the East and South East.
- Transport should remain the primary infrastructure focus, but also consider utilities (broadband, water and waste).
- The work being carried out at present is important but very technical. Messages emerging from technical work and numbers need to be simple, and enable informed political decision making.
- "Understanding the numbers" emerging from the London Plan is still important particularly in terms of housing numbers; need, supply, shortfall, expectation on WSE to make up gap.

- Going forward there needs to be a push to ensure that technical work and forecasting methodologies reflect business and the real world.
- Consideration should be given to light, agile, higher level strategic principles or framework for the WSE.

2. Should we consider political engagement/strategic collaboration also/instead on any new themes such as: Wider South East future economic performance, strategic freight distribution, logistics and ports, and natural resources and environment?

In terms of the other priority themes:

- Housing barriers need to focus more on deliverability and move the discussion with DCLG forward.
- Potentially worth considering a joint approach to assessing impact of major transport projects such as HS2, Crossrail, Heathrow third runway.
- Work on strategic freight distribution, logistics and ports is very important but should be covered under collaboration on joint strategic infrastructure.
- There is a need to review the function of Green Belt and the impact on the WSE of the Mayor of London's policy on it.
- Wider South East Economic performance and jobs, as well as Water, Waste and Recycling are key challenges.
- WSE collaboration should also explore how smarter places, through the use of technology, can have potential benefits for the WSE in terms of economy and business, transport, environmental (including zero carbon and climate change mitigation) and well-being.
- The collaboration and interconnections between the Wider South East with the rest of the UK.
- The WSE effort needs to make the case for the region as a whole.
- Dialogue and engagement needs to be undertaken on an equal footing between London, the East and South East in order to address the joint challenges and opportunities.

SUMMIT REGISTRATION

Title + First name	Last name	Authority/ Organisation
South East		
ClIr Ricky	Bower	Arun DC
ClIr Carole	Paternoster	Aylesbury Vale DC
ClIr Paul	Bettison OBE	Bracknell Forest Council
ClIr Martin	Tett	Buckinghamshire CC
ClIr Peter	Martin	Chiltern DC
ClIr Paul	Spooner	Guildford BC
ClIr Roy	Perry	Hampshire CC
ClIr Matthew	Balfour	Kent CC
ClIr Vivienne	Michael	Mole Valley DC
ClIr Robert	Piper	Sevenoaks DC
ClIr Sohail	Munawar	Slough BC
ClIr Ralph	Bagge	South Bucks DC
ClIr Peter	Martin	Surrey CC
ClIr Gerry	Lewin	Swale BC
ClIr Nicolas	Heslop	Tonbridge & Malling BC
ClIr Bob	Standley	Wealden DC
ClIr David	Johncock	Wycombe DC
Matthew	Evans	Basingstoke and Deane BC
Max	Baker	Berkshire Unitaries
Liz	Hobden	Brighton and Hove City Council
Geoff	Raw	Brighton and Hove City Council
Tim	Wates	Coast to Capital LEP
Mike	Ebbs	Dover DC
Mark	Behrendt	Elmbridge BC
Kathy	Slack	Enterprise M3 LEP
Tony	Chadwick	Gravesham BC
Chris	Murray	Hampshire CC
Sarah	Platts	Kent CC
Nazeya	Hussain	Lewes District & Eastbourne BC
Cath	Rose	Reigate & Banstead BC
Brian	Horton	SE LEP
Nick	Woolfenden	SEEC
Emma	Sutton	SEEC / SESL
Heather	Bolton	SEEC
Ian	Mackie	SEEC
Neil	Border	SESL
Alison	Bailey	South Bucks DC
Hannah	Cook	Spelthorne BC
Sue	Janota	Surrey CC
Richard	Longman	Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Tim	Smith	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Ian	Bailey	Tonbridge & Malling BC
Ernest	Amoako	Woking BC
Ian	Manktelow	Wycombe DC

East of England		
Mr Allan	Simpson	Anglian Water
Cllr Richard	Moore	Basildon BC
Mayor Dave	Hodgson	Bedford BC
Cllr Kevin	Price	Cambridge City Council
Cllr Bill	Sharp	Castle Point BC
Cllr James	Jamieson	Central Bedfordshire Council
Mr Andrew	Davie	Central Bedfordshire Council
Ms Claire	Stuckey	Chelmsford BC
Cllr Neil	Gulliver	Chelmsford BC
Cllr Paul	Smith	Colchester BC
Cllr Linda	Haysey	East Hertfordshire Council
Ms Liz	Watts	East Herts DC
Ms Claire	Sime	East Herts DC
Mr Kevin	Step toe	East Herts DC
Ms Cinar	Altun	East of England LGA
Ms Cecilia	Tredget	East of England LGA
Ms Deborah	Sacks	East of England Waste Technical Advisory Body / South East Waste Planning Advisory Group
Cllr David	Finch	Essex CC
Mr Graham	Thomas	Essex CC
Cllr Derrick	Ashley	Hertfordshire CC
Ms Jan	Hayes-Griffin	Hertfordshire CC
Mr John	Wood	Hertsfordshire CC
Mr Brian	Horton	South East LEP
Cllr Robin	Howe	Huntingdonshire DC
Mr Russell	Williams	Ipswich BC
Mr John	McGill	LSCC
Cllr Roy	Davis	Luton BC
Cllr Miriam	Lewis	Maldon DC
Cllr Derrick	Haley	Mid Suffolk DC
Cllr Lynda	Needham	North Hertfordshire DC
Mr David	Scholes	North Hertfordshire DC
Cllr Tom	Fitzpatrick	North Norfolk DC
Cllr Alan	Waters	Norwich City Council
Cllr Mike	Step toe	Rochford DC
Cllr Lynda	Harford	South Cambridgeshire DC
Cllr John	Gardner	Stevenage BC
Mr James	Cutting	Suffolk CC
Mr Richard	Hatter	Thurrock Council
Mr Gordon	Glenday	Uttlesford DC
Mr Phil	Morris	Norfolk CC
Mr Peter	Geraghty	Southend on Sea BC
London		
Jules	Pipe	Deputy Mayor of London for Planning
Fiona	Fletcher-Smith	Greater London Authority
John	Lett	Greater London Authority
Darren	Richards	Greater London Authority
Jorn	Peters	Greater London Authority
Cllr Stephen	Carr	LB Bromley
Victoria	Manning	LB Camden

Steve	Barton	LB Ealing
Natalie	Broughton	LB Hackney
Cllr Sachin	Shah	LB Harrow
Cllr Jason	Frost	LB Havering
Martyn	Thomas	LB Havering
Malcolm	Thornton	LB Hounslow
Cllr Alan	Smith	LB Lewisham
Sir Steve	Bullock	LB Lewisham
Joanne	Woodward	LB Redbridge
Andrea	Kitzburger-Smith	LB Richmond and Wandsworth
Katharina	Winbeck	London Councils
Jennifer	Sibley	London Councils
Adam	Dodgshon	Planning Advisory Service
Clare	Loops	RB Greenwich
David	Jowsey	Transport for London