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From: Paul Creed <[REDACTED]>
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Attachments: LBN Reg 19 GLAP Reps.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Hi

Please see attached representations from GLA Land & Property Limited.

Thanks
Paul

Paul Creed
Head of Development & Placemaking
[REDACTED]

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Planning Policy Team
LB Newham

Dear Planning Policy Team

Regulation 19 – Royal Docks Team/GLA Land & Property Limited comments

I'm pleased to be able to provide comments and suggestions on the Council's Regulation 19 draft of the new Local Plan (the Plan) for Newham. The work of the Royal Docks Team (RDT), including our work on GLA Land and Property Limited (GLAP) sites is aligned with the corporate priorities of the Council as set out in the jointly agreed Royal Docks Delivery Plan.

The comments below and in the attached schedule set out some areas where we feel amendments or additions to the Plan could further support the Council and the RDT's work.

In the attached schedule are a series of specific changes which we have organised with reference to the pages and policies of the draft. However, there are a number of strategic points which we wish to make so I have summarised these below for ease:

Affordable Housing

The new strategic target of 50% social rented homes and a further 10% of affordable home ownership is ambitious. In our view and experience, such a level of affordable housing is not viable on any of the GLAP sites that we are responsible for, nor in our view across any sites in the Royal Docks & Beckton Opportunity Area. Whilst it is for the Council to determine what it considers viable and deliverable in the borough, it should recognise that the Affordable Housing Policy (H3) will likely result in all strategic sites following the viability testing route. As a consequence, the process for testing viability must be adequately resourced to ensure that there are no delays to strategic site delivery. The Plan should acknowledge this reality, for example, in policy BFN4:2 which states that viability testing will be in "exceptional circumstances" rather than being the default scenario. There is also a broader point, which is that in promoting the Plan with this policy included (without an acknowledgment that the policy is purely aspirational), there is a risk that it creates the perception in the development community that the Council does not fully appreciate the reality of the housing market or viability in general.

Existing Planning Permissions:

In some instances, policies on GLAP land (and potentially on other sites) do not reference or mirror the consented, and in some cases implemented, planning permissions. This is particularly the case for Thameside West. This seems problematic to us, especially when some key points already agreed (building heights, land uses, open space, etc) are different in the Plan as compared to the consents. We strongly urge that the Plan conforms to consented permissions or, in the example of Silvertown Quays (N2.SA1), reflects the current Hybrid Planning Application on which our respective teams (and The Silvertown Partnership)

have been working together for nearly two years. It seems to us to be incongruous to have two visions for the same site, both endorsed by the Council.

Open Space:

The Spatial Strategy (BFN1) sets a minimum 2ha Local Parks on the majority of site allocations and there are a series of plans showing indicative locations and arrangement of these spaces. Whilst we accept that the Royal Docks requires more open space, our strong view is that setting arbitrary targets for the open space does not meet the requirements for masterplan-led development (as required in BFN2(1)) as well as creating a risk that the policy hinders a design-led approach. To set a borough-wide minimum without assessing the site specifics could undermine delivery. This is particularly the case for the Excel Western Entrance site, where the Local Plan allocates then site as a Strategic Site (which is welcomed), but then protects the majority of the site as Green Space, to the extent that the site allocation becomes undeliverable.

Meanwhile Use:

We suggest an alternative approach on large strategic sites. In those instances, supported by an appropriate strategy, we feel that meanwhile uses should be allowed for up to 10 years rather than 5 years. Our experience of large sites indicates that multi-phase schemes can provide longer meanwhile uses which could, with certainty over tenure, be better, larger, and have a greater impact with a 10-year planning consent. Meanwhile uses are challenging to make commercially viable and enabling a pay-back over a longer period will enable operators to more ambitious in their proposals and deliver better projects. In addition, a ten-year temporary consent could be renewed where the Council felt the landowner had a reasonable justification as to why there were delays in the main scheme coming forward.

Water Spaces:

Currently the draft Local Plan Policy GS W2 sets out some broad policies relating to Green and Blue infrastructure with policies applying across all water bodies. In our view, this fails to properly recognise the unique characteristics and opportunity of the Royal Docks. These three expanses of water are not comparable to the other water bodies in the Borough and therefore justify a bespoke and targeted approach that is linked to the scale of change on the adjoining land in the Enterprise Zone.

The work we have done to date on our draft Water Activation Strategy seeks to set out a vision for the activation of the dock, by creating a framework within which new water-related activities/uses can come forwards, balancing the docks as an environmental, social and economic asset. We are pleased that this is recognised in the Green and Water Infrastructure Study 2024 (para 7.38).

This work identifies the different character areas of the Royal Docks and the different nature of the three docks:

- King George V Dock, with its proximity to the airport is affected by security and access constraints as well as the land use to the south of the dock. This therefore reduces the scope for public access but does increase the potential for engineering (including marine engineering), sustainable energy production, and supporting the wider operation of the Royal Docks.

- Royal Albert Dock, which is currently largely dominated by organised water sports and has the potential to increase this as well as interact with and support the redevelopment of the Royal Albert Dock North neighbourhood.
- Royal Victoria Dock, is already a visitor and leisure destination in its own right, with a unique role in terms of opportunities for water activation and water related uses, underpinned by its location in proximity to Custom House station, ExCeL, City Hall, the Cable Car, City Airport, and the strategic site allocations across the Royal Docks. The western end of Royal Victoria Dock in particular has become a focus for a variety of activities and floating uses, which contribute towards it's unique character, such as the wakeboarding, the summer beach, the Oiler Bar, the Good Hotel and NOWCA open water swimming. We also consider that Royal Victoria Dock includes Pontoon Dock.

In this respect London Plan Policies SI16 and SI17 are relevant as they recognise that different bodies of water have their own characteristics, which need to be considered in the plan making process. Policy SI 17 E) is particularly relevant, which states *"Development proposals along London's canal network, docks, other rivers and water space (such as reservoirs, lakes and ponds) should respect their local character, environment and biodiversity and should contribute to their accessibility and active water-related uses. Development Plans should identify opportunities for increasing local distinctiveness and recognise these water spaces as environmental, social and economic assets"*.

Accordingly, we think it is important for the new Local Plan to better recognise the unique character of the Royal Docks and the different nature and functions of each dock. In particular, we suggest that the role of Royal Victoria Dock deserves a bespoke policy to provide a much clearer policy framework within which proposals can come forwards and be assessed.

Taking the above into account, our suggestion is that the following wording should be added to Policy GWS2 'Water Spaces', which links back to the vision referenced in the Green and Water Infrastructure Study and seeks to promote the unique role of Royal Victoria Dock and the opportunity for water-related activation and uses:

- *Reflecting the local distinctiveness of Royal Victoria Dock (which includes Pontoon Dock) and the evolving and active nature of a dock, floating vessels/structures for uses such as leisure, culture, residential moorings, visitor accommodation and food and beverage, will be supported providing they:*
 - *support the role of Royal Victoria Dock as a visitor and leisure destination;*
 - *meet an evidence based market need;*
 - *directly facilitate or contribute towards wider water-activation initiatives (such as water sports activities; open water swimming; improved greening/biodiversity);*
 - *deliver high quality, sustainable and inclusive design, that promotes access to the water;*
 - *do not negatively impact on navigation, ecological value and water quality; and*
 - *contribute to the role of the dock as an environmental, social and economic asset.*

We are aware of the representations submitted directly relating to Silvertown Quays, Thameside West and Excel and can confirm that we endorse the suggestions therein. We're

happy to have more detailed discussions about how we can support further iterations of the Plan and how its implemented.

Yours sincerely

Paul Creed
Head of Development & Placemaking

Detailed Comments Schedule

Page Ref	Policy Ref	RDT Comment
28	BFN1 (5c)	The consented scheme for Thameside West does not include a new health centre but a off site contribution to the Custom House health centre and this S106 commitment should be reflected in the Plan.
28	BFN1 (5e)	The open space policy shouldn't set an arbitrary minimum. It also fails to reflect the consented park within the Thameside West consent.
31	BFN1.7	The Plan could directly reference here, as well as in the IDP, the options to replace, upgrade, and/or reinforce the utility infrastructure to support growth.
32	BFN1.8	We suggest that for Strategic Sites, there is a more flexible meanwhile use policy. Limiting meanwhile use to 5 years is not appropriate for large, multi-phase sites where land could be used for at least 10 years whilst phased development occurs. This should be allowed to ensure that sites are appropriately used whilst development of early phases occurs. Longer consents for meanwhile uses will also enable more investment in their scale and quality thereby creating opportunities for better outcomes to be achieved. The policy could also clarify that energy performance requirements apply differently to the reuse of existing buildings.
32	BFN2.2	We support the requirement for co-design and would suggest that this is reinforced by a clearer definition of the extent of the process to enable applicants to better understand the Council's intentions and requirements in this regard. This will also provide clarity to stakeholders and the community about what to expect as well as ensuring a consistent approach.
38	BFN2.4	See comments above on meanwhile uses. This policy requires proposals for land vacant for more than three years but limits proposals to five years. This should be adjusted for larger sites.
38	BFN2.5	We support Post Occupancy Evaluation and have worked with LLDC to explore how this can be applied to GLA funded affordable housing. We are happy to share the output of this work. However, we struggle to see how developers are going to be able to oblige 40% of their tenants and residents to respond.
44	BFN4 (3)	Given the points above about Affordable Housing, it may be appropriate to prioritise infrastructure if that infrastructure is essential to unlocking the development of the site. This is particularly the case on strategic sites where there are often large sums required for contributions to highways upgrades or DLR station improvements. We suggest that the policy includes some flexibility for the Council to adjust the priorities on a site-specific basis. This could be linked to the Infrastructure Sufficiency Statement.
46	BFN4:2	The use of the word "exceptional" to describe the requirement for viability testing should be removed since it is likely that all sites will be unable to meet all the policy requirements of the Plan. The use of the word "exceptional" is therefore misleading. As set out above, the viability testing process must be properly resourced to avoid delays.

49	D1(4)	The aspiration for high quality design for temporary buildings is supported but this should reflect the realities of viability of temporary use. These challenges can be mitigated by increasing temporary planning consents for meanwhile use as set out above.
53	D1.4	As above.
71	TBZ6 Albert Island	The tall buildings level should also reflect the consented Albert Island permission.
72	TBZ9 Royal Albert North	Heights should reflect the maximum possible with the airport safeguarding limits. Reference to the “Royal Albert Quay emerging office complex” should be deleted as it is no longer relevant.
73	TBZ13 Canning Town and Royal Victoria	The Thameside West consented and implemented permission should be reflected here to ensure consistency.
78	TBZ21 Excel West	The consented Royal Eden Dock (three phases) should be reflected here.
138	HS5 Visitor Evening and Night Time Economy	Given the presence of ExCeL, hotels, and the emerging development at Silvertown and the scale of residential growth in the Royal Docks, it would seem sensible to reflect the evening and night time visitor economy in the Royal Docks. In particular allowing activities to continue beyond 11pm in order to provide appropriate amenity with the principles of 15min cities.
149	HS8 Visitor accommodation	It is suggested that for clarity, the distance from ExCeL should be by reference to a distance rather than a walking time (which is inherently subjective and unclear). Specific reference within site allocations as to which ones are considered appropriate to support ExCeL could be considered. In addition, given the continued evidence of high demand for hotels to support ExCeL’s operation, consideration should be given to increasing the distance from ExCeL to allow a greater range of options for hotel sites.
182	J1 Employment and Growth	The SIL allocation on the Policies Map is incorrect as the SIL allocation has been relocated as part of the Thameside West planning permission (now implemented).
182	J1/J2 Employment and Growth	Consideration should be given to including creative and cultural uses in the definition of the policy to ensure that the aspirations for cultural growth can be achieved.
185	J1 Employment and Growth	LMUA1 (Silvertown Arches) uses should be expanded to include Visitor Accommodation in line with HS8 but should not exclude Residential Floorspace as this may be critical to supporting a viable masterplan.
188	Employment Map	The map incorrectly marks the SIL designation on Thameside West which has been relocated as part of the now implemented Thameside West planning consent.
202	J4 CWB	Seeking as a minimum a 35% construction and 50% end-user local employment is very challenging to achieve. It is unclear how a 50% end-user target can be realistically achieved by a developer in practice. What mechanisms does the Council believe are appropriate for a developer of new employment space to oblige a

		tenant to ensure 50% of their staff are Newham residents? It is unclear what legal and contractual route can achieve this.
202	J4 CWB	The requirement for affordable workspace for at least 15 years or in perpetuity is welcome but it may be advisable to require developers to select a workspace provider from an approved list in the same way housing associations are pre-selected. This would help ensure workspace is properly managed and that engagement is required pre-application. It may be appropriate to seek advice from the Creative Land Trust for this policy detail.
207	H1 Meeting Housing Need	The objective of the policy to require development to "optimise site capacity" is welcomed and supported but needs to be reflected in other policy areas such as open space requirements (BFN1 5e).
209	H1 Meeting Housing Need	Policy H1.2 includes specific reference to the Newham Characterisation Study (see comments below) as a guiding document. As stated above, this document doesn't appear to include an assessment of viability or the existing planning approvals so the weight attached to it in this policy should be adjusted to reflect that fact.
214	H3 Affordable Housing	See comments above relating to the percentages sought by the policy.
218	H3 Housing mix	Linked to H3 Affordable Housing, the prescriptive requirements for minimums of 40% 3beds and 5% 4beds and maximum of 15% 1beds are likely to have impacts on viability that will inhibit affordable housing provision. The percentages for housing mix should therefore have some flexibility to ensure viable and deliverable proposals can be developed.
264	GWS 2 Water Spaces	This policy should place greater emphasis on the unique character of the Royal Docks compared to all the other water bodies in the Borough. The size and scale of the Royal Docks means that it is appropriate to take a different approach to achieve the outcomes of the policy. This includes more nuanced approaches to the use of the water, increasing access and amenity value, and the link between land and water. This is markedly different to the other water bodies in the Borough.
	GWS 2 Water Spaces	(Design) For the Royal Docks we would advocate the inclusion of the Design Guidance document from the work we've undertaken with DKCM to help provide a framework to ensure quality of development on the water in the Royal Docks. We are happy to work with you to explore how this can be implemented.
		(Royal Victoria Dock) The detail in the evidence base document (Green and Water Infrastructure Strategy 2024) should be elevated to the main Plan document itself. Specifically, the information in section 7.38 which explains the potential for residential and economically productive initiatives.
		(Royal Albert Dock) Specific reference should be made to the Royal Albert Dock Trust facility on Royal Albert Dock and the options to increase the scale of provision by improving the building on the dock edge.
		(King George V) The Plan should recognise the reality of the airport's security requirements and the impact this has on the ambitions of the Plan. For example, GWS 2.2 (Accessibility) should exclude KGV because public access is not achievable. The Plan should also reflect that the northern edge of Royal Albert Dock is already open to the public and the southern side is the airport.

	GWS 2.2	Loss – the wording should be adjusted to allow the covering of water by floating structures (boats, pontoons, jetties, piers, etc) as these are essential to enabling use of the water.
	GWS 2.4	We would expect to see here reference to GLAP and the Royal Docks Team given the work to date that we have undertaken and that in relation to the Royal Docks (where the scope for moorings is most extensive) neither the PLA or the CRT have any jurisdiction.

Characterisation Study – Neighbourhood Design Principles

Page	Section	Comment
	General comment	The Characterisation Study is a design approach and series of recommendations – the use of it as a piece of evidence with which to judge any future applications should be on this basis – i.e.: that the proposals within it have not been tested for viability or commercial delivery. There is a risk of over reliance on the document given its extensive use throughout the Plan.
180	Royal Victoria Neighbourhood	The report says “from 2022, a branch of Crossrail will open”. This suggests that the content is over two years old and may not properly reflect the current context. In particular the reference to poor PTAL levels may not be correct.
183		The report fails to reference the consented and implemented Thameside West and Silvertown Quays developments (8,000 homes consented) despite the changes proposed under the planning permissions. It also incorrectly shows SIL designation on part of the Thameside West site despite the change consented in the Thameside West permission. The evidence base should reflect the reality of consented and implemented projects.
322	Recommendation 3	Given that St William has already submitted a planning application for the first phase of Beckton Riverside, the recommendation seems to have been overtaken by events and should be adjusted. As per comments previously, any SPDs for key sites should only be taken forward where there is no current planning consent in place.