

# GROWING WELL: MAKING LONDON'S NEW PLACES FIT FOR THE FUTURE

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As London's growth continues, the importance of growing well – of ensuring that growth makes the city better for all its citizens as well as bigger – is assuming greater prominence. As the Mayor develops his plans and strategies for the city's growth, this paper looks at how London's largest sites can be delivered as successful places at a time of dramatic technological, demographic and environmental change. While predictions of the future are unreliable, we know that London's labour market will be heavily affected by automation, that its population is growing and ageing, and that climate change calls for radical shifts in how we live and build. It argues for courageous leadership, and stronger partnerships between public and private sectors, with a shared vision for resilience and adaptability, a focus on innovation and a commitment to better growth.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, London is growing faster than almost any other European city, having emerged from what looked like an inexorable decline in the mid 1980s. The Greater London Authority (GLA) estimates that London needs at least 50,000 new homes and 40,000 new workplaces every year to keep up with demand. It is an ambitious target, and one that London has been undershooting year after year.

London needs to up its game, in terms of leadership, ambition and delivery, if it is to meet the challenges of growth. And it needs to do so at a time of dramatic technological, environmental and demographic change, complicated by Brexit and by the difficult politics of the past few years.

London abounds in sites with large development potential – including but not limited to the GLA’s 38 Opportunity Areas. They can make a huge contribution to accommodating London’s growth. Indeed the Opportunity Areas alone have a combined housing capacity of around 300,000. That equates to roughly six years’ worth of the housing supply we need, according to the Mayor’s targets. Centre for London has already published a report, *Growing Well* looking at what needs to be done to unlock these sites and get development going on them, including through developing clear visions, better masterplanning, and more sophisticated long-term partnerships between public authorities and developers, with shared risks and rewards.<sup>1</sup>

This paper builds on our earlier research by asking how those engaged in developing London’s largest sites should plan and design for the future. What can we do now to ensure that new developments can meet emerging challenges, work over the long term and are adaptable to change? How can we make sure that London is admired around the world as a beacon of enlightened and far sighted development? What should the public be expecting of developers? And what is needed from the boroughs, the Mayor and government in terms of investment, partnership and leadership?

This paper responds to a growing awareness that accommodating growth should not be at the expense of London’s character, as delineated in *The London Recipe*<sup>2</sup>, Centre for London’s 2014 report. In it, Charles Leadbeater argued that London’s highly sophisticated systems combined with its human scale empathy create a unique and compelling metropolis. ‘Good growth’ is becoming a popular term - expressing the aim that growth should make a city better, not just bigger, that new buildings should find ways of connecting citizens and communities not dividing them, that development creates sustainable integrated pieces of city, not soulless monocultural enclaves.

The Mayor of London has set out his own ambitions for London, and his articulation of ‘good growth’, in documents such as *A City*

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## London's 38 Opportunity Areas



- |                            |  |                                     |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Harrow & Wealdstone      | 15 VNEB                                | 27 Woolwich                         |
| 2 Colindale/Burnt Oak      | 16 Bromley                             | 28 Thamesmead & Abbey Wood          |
| 3 Cricklewood/Brent Cross  | 17 Lewisham, Catford, New Cross        | 29 Bexley Riverside                 |
| 4 Wembley                  | 18 Deptford Creek/ Greenwich Riverside | 30 London Riverside                 |
| 5 Park Royal               | 19 Canada Water                        | 31 Royal Docks & Beckton Waterfront |
| 6 Old Oak Common           | 20 Old Kent Road                       | 32 Lower Lea Valley (inc Stratford) |
| 7 Kensal Canalside         | 21 Elephant & Castle                   | 33 Ilford                           |
| 8 White City               | 22 London Bridge, Borough & Bankside   | 34 Upper Lea Valley                 |
| 9 Earls Court & West Kens. | 23 Waterloo                            | 35 City Fringe                      |
| 10 Southall                | 24 Isle of Dogs                        | 36 Kings Cross St Pancras           |
| 11 Heathrow                | 25 Greenwich Peninsula                 | 37 Euston                           |
| 12 Croydon                 | 26 Charlton Riverside                  | 38 Tottenham Court Road             |

*for All Londoners*<sup>3</sup> – his precursor to the London Plan – and *Good Growth by Design*<sup>4</sup>, as well as in his draft transport and environment strategies. These have placed a strong emphasis on inclusion and integration, equity and opportunity, quality of place and sustainability, and this is expected to be reflected in the London Plan. The Mayor’s *Good Growth by Design* sets out his vision for the city:

*“How we deal with the expected population boom is undoubtedly one of our biggest challenges, but it also opens up unprecedented opportunities to begin a new chapter in London’s evolution and shape the future of our city – not only the way it looks and feels, but its character and how we enable Londoners to live prosperous and fulfilling lives.”*

In considering what London’s possible futures should mean for the way we plan and deliver development today, this paper draws on:

- Desk-based research – a review of futures literature and case studies
- A series of workshops and roundtables hosted by Capco with academics, architects, developers, policymakers, engineers, entrepreneurs and researchers
- Interviews with individual developers and policy makers
- Contributions to the Futures edition of the *London Essays* – published concurrently with this paper – along with contributions to earlier issues of *London Essays*.

## LONG-TERM THINKING

While long-term approaches are generally preferable to short-term ones, this is particularly true when it comes to the built environment. After all, new developments don’t just tend to last for years, but for decades. Many of London’s streets were laid down hundreds of years ago. The fundamental shape of the City of London was established by the early 18th Century, and the West End, by the early 19th Century. 23 per cent of London’s homes were built before 1900, rising to 65 per cent in Kensington and Chelsea.<sup>5</sup>

When London develops its large sites and Opportunity Areas, it is creating pieces of the city that should last for generations; getting it right means creating places that will work for the capital and its residents down the decades. These developments will help London retain its status as one of the most liveable and economically successful cities in the world.

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## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

It is often said that we can't predict the future, so how can we plan for it? And it's true that our powers of foresight are very limited.

But there are four points we need to remember.

First and most fundamentally, part of planning for the future is to approach it with a clear sense of vision and values. Rather than predicting the future and then asking how we should prepare for it, we should be setting out a distinct and steadfast view of the sort of future we want – the sort of city we wish London to become, and the type of developments we want to see realised in it. The Mayor has recently set out his own vision for 'Good Growth' in the capital. But this will require more detail and committed leadership if it is to provide us with the tools we need to mould the future that we want to see.

Secondly, the near future is in fact fairly predictable in outline – even if longer-term developments are not. The children being born this year will be placing demands on schools in five or six years' time. People in middle-age today will need greater care as they age. London's population is likely to grow over coming decades, even if we don't know exactly the rate. Our weather looks set to get hotter and more extreme, even we can't foresee precisely what climate change will mean for the capital.

Thirdly – and most importantly – there are ways of thinking about the future that don't involve predicting it. In her essay in the Futures edition of the *London Essays*, Corrine Swain, an Arup Fellow, argues that London government needs to make less use of trend-based predictions and more of scenario planning. The illusory certainties of 'predict and provide' planning have been widely abandoned, and 'plan, monitor and manage' is proving insufficiently ambitious and responsive for the scale of change we are seeing. Scenarios help us think about different possible futures and what we need to do to prepare for them. As Swain writes "*imagining how the daily lives of different people might change in different worlds can be a useful way of exploring potential futures.*"<sup>6</sup>

Finally, while we cannot foresee the future in any detail we can aim for systems that are highly resilient to change – adaptable to different futures. Indeed, scenario thinking points us to the value of resilience. It encourages us to identify plans and approaches that would hold up well across a range of different futures, some better some worse. Swain provides an example; successive mayors have supported a radial approach to the planning and development of London, investing heavily in the central business district, and in transport infrastructure like Crossrail 1 and 2 to service it. If we think of London as a target, policy has encouraged – or at least accepted – the concentration of investment on and around the bull's eye, with the outer circles increasingly playing the role of

residential quarters. But scenario thinking could persuade us to favour a more polycentric approach, which might be more resilient to a range of scenarios, including environmental shocks (runaway climate change), economic decline, or more distributed ways of working and producing.

London is in fact a good example of a highly resilient city. The City of London has thrived for more than half a millennium and the West End has remained a successful, highly sought-after area since it was laid down in the 17th and 18th centuries. Much of that longevity is traceable to built form and London's unique system of planning.

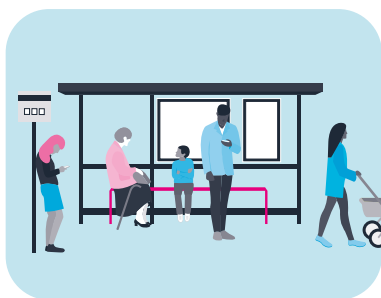
As Charlie Leadbeater observes, London has remained intensely human in scale – narrow streets and roads, walkable neighbourhoods and a rich, extensive and varied public realm.<sup>7</sup> This humanity has ensured that it has continued to attract migrants, entrepreneurs and investors down the centuries, even as technologies and economies have changed beyond all recognition. London contains an exceptional variety of accommodation, making it highly versatile. The capital has also taken a flexible approach to use – many historic West End buildings have served as houses, flats, and offices in the course of their existence. For its part, the City of London has remained relaxed about replacing obsolete buildings with modern ones. We need to find ways of continuing this tradition of creating human scale, adaptable and resilient places. This should be the lodestar for everything we do.

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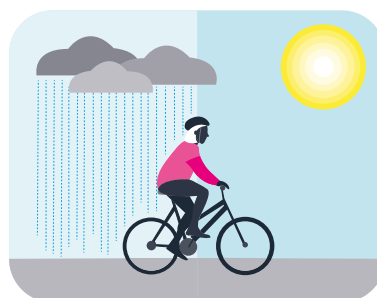
## THREE DRIVERS OF CHANGE

Our research has identified three drivers of change likely to have a particularly profound effect on the development process and the built environment:

### Demography



### Environment



### Technology



### 1. Demography

London's population is expected to continue to grow; the latest GLA estimates suggest the population will rise by about 100,000

residents a year over the next two decades, putting huge pressure on London's already strained infrastructure and building stock. But the capital's demographic profile is also expected to change, particularly in terms of age.

While we can expect to see population growth across all age groups some will grow at a faster rate than others. The proportion of under-18 year olds is expected to increase by around only 7.5 per cent between now and 2030, while the 19-65 group will grow by 12 per cent. The most dramatic increases, however, will be in the older population, with a 40 per cent increase in Londoners aged 75 or over.

The rise in population, as set out in *London Essays*, Futures edition along with other pressures, will mean that we will need to build at higher densities than we have in the past – current density guidelines were prepared around 20 years ago and seem increasingly outdated, with more and more schemes already exceeding the ranges set out. High-density development in turn will demand approaches that facilitate close-quarter living and working, including well designed homes and workspaces, which maximize space and light, shared facilities, and a safe and inviting public realm.

In the case of workspace, there is already a trend to provide less space per worker, with more open plan offices, hot-desking and other flexible arrangements – as highlighted in Centre for London's research on innovation districts.<sup>8</sup> While there has been some experimentation with micro-housing – sometimes with shared communal space for entertaining and socializing – such approaches remain controversial.

Writing in the Futures edition of the *London Essays*, Richard Brown argues that London's planning system is too focused on use class. Developers should be encouraged to create buildings that can be easily adapted to different uses - that can be changed from family homes to live-work studios, to office space. More use could then be made of property taxes as a way of meeting demand for different types of uses and encouraging a good mix of activities.<sup>9</sup>

A growing population will also place more pressures on our transport system. London already suffers from high levels of congestion and pollution – and both have worsened in recent years. These will only intensify unless we transform the way we move around the capital, with priority given to space-efficient, non-polluting and healthy modes of travel – first and foremost public transport, but also car sharing and consolidated freight. We will need to continue to invest in new rail infrastructure, including Crossrail 2, rolling out a London Overground-style service across South London<sup>10</sup> and extending Tube lines. We will have to give greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists in the way we design and manage our streets. And we will also need to get

better at spreading the demands on our roads throughout the day, with more freight delivered early morning and late night.

We will also have to rethink the way we plan and design for an aging population, as Centre for London's forthcoming report from the Commission on the Future of London's Roads and Streets will explore. Creating homes and neighbourhoods that work for older people is a challenge but also an opportunity: it could encourage older people to downsize from their old larger homes they no longer need, so freeing them up for others - too many older people stay in their old homes because there are few attractive, flexible and practical alternatives that meet their needs - and enable them to live longer independently, so reducing burdens on NHS and social care. According to the architect Sarah Wigglesworth, writing in the Futures edition of *London Essays*:

*“Simple measures to help people stay in touch with one another – like level thresholds, access to an outdoor space or a view, provision for casual social interaction with neighbours, and appropriate spaces for carers or service providers – are all achievable with thoughtful design. In the public realm, attention to such factors as accessible public transport; navigable pavements; well-lit streets; access to green spaces; places to rest ... [and] well-maintained public toilets, all give older people the confidence necessary to make independent journeys.”*

Disabled people and people with children will share similar objectives – in fact all of us will benefit from buildings and public spaces designed in this way, regardless of our age or physical condition.

## **2. Environment**

London's environment is already under stress. Air quality regularly breaches EU targets, energy and water infrastructure is under stress and many people lack access to green space.<sup>11</sup> However, it is climate change that is likely to become, over the next few decades, an increasingly important influence on London. Summer and winter temperatures are expected to rise significantly by 2030. Winters are likely to be wetter than they are now and summers to see less rain. London is considered to be more vulnerable to heat rises than any other UK region, with summer temperatures expected to increase by at least one per cent and up to more than four per cent by the 2050s (UK Climate Projections). London has a high proportion of areas extremely (8 per cent) and relatively (32 per cent) exposed to flooding. The places that are most vulnerable to rising temperatures – notably inner East London – are also particularly vulnerable to flooding,



as Tom Colthorpe's climate change graphic shows in the Futures edition of *London Essays*.

The UK has committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 57 per cent of 1990 levels by 2030, and the Mayor of London's draft Environment Strategy has set a target for London to be carbon free by 2050, alongside commitments on air quality, waste and green infrastructure – including a pledge to make London the first 'national park city'.

How we plan new buildings and places can have a huge impact on carbon emissions, and on mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change. Highly insulated homes (with natural ventilation and measures to reduce solar gain) will minimise heating bills and associated carbon costs. Green infrastructure – such as street trees, parks and open spaces, and sustainable urban draining systems – can mitigate urban temperatures by providing shade and cooling, absorb carbon dioxide, and enable swift absorption of rainfall. Finally, around 30 per cent of a building's lifetime energy consumption can be embodied in the materials used to build it, so using low carbon materials, and creating buildings that are resilient and adaptable, are important ways of minimizing environmental impact.

A more 'circular' economy – which uses waste products as raw materials – can be accompanied by sustainable energy generation, a dramatic reduction in use of plastics and other energy efficient or non-biodegradable materials, and promotion of active travel – foot and pedal power.

Tackling London's environmental challenges requires some major strategic interventions, on infrastructure, on minimising car use, on building regulations, but there are also myriad small interventions – building more above ground cycling stands, planting street trees, creating pocket parks – that can improve both the urban environment and quality of life.

### **3. Technology**

Our world has been utterly transformed by new technologies since the industrial revolution of the 18th Century and technological disruption shows no sign of slowing down. Indeed, if anything the rate technological advancement and adoption has intensified over recent years. It took the radio 38 years to reach 50 million people but only three years for the internet to reach the same number. Writing in the technology edition of *London Essays* Richard Dobbs and Vivian Hunt of McKinsey have previously identified 12 technologies that are likely to have a particularly profound impact on our economy and society over the next decade.<sup>12</sup> 'The disruptive dozen' broadly fall into four groups:

- **New entities** – advanced genomics and new materials will produce new types of high performing entities, including genetically manipulated plants and nano-materials;
- **New energy** – advances in renewable energy and energy storage, as well as oil and gas exploration, will make energy both cheaper and less polluting;
- **New information technologies** – developments in cloud computing, connected objects and automation of knowledge work will further intensify the reach of the internet, resulting in faster and more powerful devices and programmes and an explosion of intelligent objects and infrastructure;
- **New machines** – progress in robotics, autonomous and connected vehicles and 3D printing will result in a new generation of intelligent and dexterous machines.

Inevitably these technologies will play out in unpredictable ways. But they are all likely to have important applications to the way we develop and live in London. Our research has identified four of these.

#### *i) Automation*

New technologies are bound to transform the labour market, as machines take over jobs currently done by humans and new technologies spawn new business models. As a general rule, less-skilled jobs are more vulnerable to automation than more highly-skilled ones; those that involve physical labour and predictable routine administration are more vulnerable than those that involve human connection, emotional intelligence and cultural creativity.

London's economy is considered to be slightly less at risk overall than other UK regions'. But some sectors face considerably higher risks, with jobs paying less than £30,000 eight times more likely to be automated than those paying more than £100,000, and jobs in sectors such as transportation, sales and administration at particular risk.<sup>13</sup>

Previous phases of technological innovation, however, have also created new jobs, and London has already established a reputation as a European centre of the tech economy. Perhaps the real risk is not that there won't be enough work in London, but that there won't be enough satisfying and well-rewarded work created for people who are already economically disadvantaged. If present trends continue then over time the London labour market will become increasingly polarised. Centre for London is currently undertaking research with EY, looking into these trends in more detail, and a report will be published in early 2018.

Ongoing technological transformation may have two further, related, impacts on the labour market. First, we are likely to see the continued rise in self-employment, enabled by sophisticated on-line platforms that efficiently link clients and freelancers. Second, we could well see an extension of home or remote working, though we should sound a note of caution: the rise of ‘teleworking’ has been predicted for 20 years or more, but cities and city centres have continued to exert their magnetism over people and enterprises alike.

Automation and other technology-induced changes to the labour market pose big challenges for national and London government – especially on schools and skills policy, labour market regulation and our tax and welfare system. Their relevance to development, regeneration and place making is somewhat less clear. But the continued rise of self-employment and more flexible patterns of working would have implications for the way we plan and design: homes will increasingly double up as offices and demand on local work spaces – cafes, libraries, shared and flexible work hubs – will grow.

And government will rightly expect the developers, construction companies and landlords to play an active role in addressing labour market challenges – through offering fair pay, for instance, and supporting skills and social mobility initiatives.

#### *ii) Construction techniques*

There is also a growth of interest in modern construction techniques that use precision manufacturing to create high-specification homes for rapid assembly on site.<sup>14</sup> Many of these techniques have become commonplace on commercial construction in recent years; now investors are seeing their potential to reduce costs in housing delivery, while raising the quality and speed of delivery. There is still some scepticism on the part of housebuyers, some planners, and insurance companies however, which has inhibited take-up to date. In some cases, precision-manufactured homes can also be relocated, enabling effective medium-term (3-5 year) use of parts of large sites that are awaiting later-phase development. Further Centre for London research on these issues will be published in 2018.

#### *iii) Mobility as a service*

The rise of digitally enabled car clubs and cab services like Uber are already challenging old models of car ownership and use – private car use has fallen gradually in recent years, and use of ‘on demand cab’ services has rocketed. Many predict that we will eventually see a similar transformation of bus services, with more flexible, point-to-

point ride sharing services taking the place of buses running along fixed routes – though these will not be the result of inexorable trends alone, but also of innovations by policy-makers, and their regulatory response to innovation in the market place.

Advancement in energy storage, along with policies aimed at reducing pollution and carbon emissions will lead to electric vehicles taking the place of those propelled by oil. Vehicles will become quieter and safer – though, as John Adams argued in the Technology edition of *London Essays*, fully autonomous vehicles are likely to be of limited use in a crowded city like London, where road space is fiercely contested and other road users will always out-manoeuvre them.<sup>15</sup>

One implication for planning and place making will be a lessening need to make provision for private car parking spaces but a requirement to provide more EV charging stations, pick up and service bays and cycle racks. Centre for London's independent commission on London's roads and streets will be addressing many of these issues in its October 2017 report.

#### *iv) Retail – from goods to services*

Finally, the ongoing rise of on-line shopping and delivery services is expected to continue to change the nature of retail in London and other cities, as outlets selling goods give way to outlets selling services, including cafes, restaurants, bars, hair dressers, spas and gyms. At the same time, further globalisation, population increases and other factors are likely to lead to the further growth of the evening and night time economy, with retail outlets staying open later, and Londoners working and communicating around the clock. These trends will demand new ways of designing and managing the city, including different types of retail spaces and higher standards of sound insulation.

## **CHANGE WON'T BE EVEN**

The demographic, environmental and technological drivers of change we have outlined are going to affect all of London but they will be felt more acutely in some areas than others. As a general rule they will have their greatest impact in areas that are, at least in some respects, least well equipped to address the challenges change will bring. As the latest edition of *London Essays* highlights, development is most active and populations expected to grow fastest in places like Tower Hamlets, Newham, and Barking and Dagenham. But these boroughs are already high density in places. Their populations are among some of London's most deprived. And they are particularly vulnerable to climate change.

Moreover, 2015 research by Centre for London found that the areas of London that look most vulnerable to demographic,

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climate, technological and economic change, particularly poorer East London boroughs, have also faced disproportionately heavy funding cuts, so potentially compounding their vulnerability.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, cuts have fallen particularly heavily on planning and development services, despite the likely demands on these as London's growth continues. New approaches to the way that London is taxed and funded are needed if the city is to be ready for the transformations ahead. The capital badly needs, in particular, to be given more control over taxes – in return for a cut to central government grant – as set out in the two reports of London Finance Commission, chaired by Professor Tony Travers.<sup>17</sup> In the shorter term, central government and the Mayor need to make sure that those parts of London facing the largest growth challenges get the support that they need.

## LONDON AS A LAB

London is in many ways in an exceptionally strong position to develop creative approaches to solve these urban challenges. For the UK in general, and London in particular, leads the world when it comes to expertise in city making.<sup>18</sup> The capital has a large and growing urban services sector, including planning, design and engineering services that trade around the world. It has become a global centre of digital innovation, much of it, urban application. The capital in particular has outstanding university and research strengths. It can boast four or five of the world's best universities. No city scores better. And these universities have particular strengths in various aspects of city making.

But one of the points often made in the course of the roundtables we held to inform this paper is that the capital does not make as much use of this expertise as it could.

London's universities – who like to see themselves as global and not merely national, let alone city organisations – have not for the most part developed particularly close working relationships with the Mayor and London government. Yet, these institutions are playing a leading role in many of London's innovation districts, as highlighted in Centre for London research: Imperial College have invested at Shepherds Bush, UCL are at the heart of plans for the Olympic Park, and Kings College London is developing a new campus at Canada Water.<sup>19</sup>

So, what could we do to support London's expertise in city-making in order to ensure it grows well? Over the last few years cities and organisations across the world have taken quite deliberate approaches to fostering urban innovation. Former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, for instance, has established a major philanthropic programme supporting innovation in city

government. There are various ways of fostering innovative approaches to city making and development in particular:

- **Innovation officers in government** – challenging established ways of working in cities such as San Francisco and Philadelphia
- **Urban innovation units** – organisations, either within city governments or independent of them, charged with fostering new ideas and approaches to improving city living
- **Formal partnerships** – between mayors and universities and research organisations to tackle urban problems and develop new solutions
- **Challenge prizes** – inviting and rewarding innovative approaches to city problems
- **Innovation sand-pits** – allowing small scale and temporary experiments, even where they challenge existing rules and regulations, to establish proof of concept for new approaches

These types of approach require close partnerships between public, private and civil society organisations and between large, highly structured organisations and smaller, more entrepreneurial ones. Creating and sustaining these partnerships can be challenging on all sides. For public officials, the degree of ‘letting go’ of their domains of expertise can be a tough proposition; for entrepreneurs, understanding the complexity of governance, the constraints on businesses and bureaucracies, and public values underpinning city administration can also be difficult. But these partnerships can bring substantial benefits. First, of course, they can help London in addressing its issues. But they can also help promote London’s ‘future cities’ sector – so boosting the capital’s and the UK’s economy.

The Mayor and other partners need to view London, and in particular its large sites, as R&D laboratories, in which the capital’s city-making or ‘future cities’ services can experiment with new approaches, develop expertise and demonstrate their abilities.

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## NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND TOUGH CHOICES

This paper has reviewed some of the demographic, environmental and technological changes likely to transform London in coming decades. But how well positioned is London to make a success of these sites and ensure they are developed for the long term?

In some respects London has a good story to tell. Developments

like Canary Wharf, King's Cross and Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park have been held up as exemplars of long-term public private partnership – though it is worth noting that all three developments experienced significant changes in direction over their lifetime, as their circumstances changed and new opportunities presented themselves.

And City Hall has begun to think more long term: the London Infrastructure Plan, which has been studied and emulated by other cities, sets out London's long-term infrastructure needs, and has been revisited in detail in preparation for the Mayor's strategies,<sup>20</sup> with discussion of a new programme office to join up the activities of different partners. Meanwhile the Mayor has launched a new service to support borough planning – The Place Agency – that will focus on supporting boroughs in planning and developing larger sites.<sup>21</sup>

But the development of London's large Opportunity Areas has been slow and suffers from a number of weaknesses.

- Challenges that all levels of government can face in thinking beyond the political cycle and planning for the future.
- Weakened local authority capacity in masterplanning and place-shaping and in developing and managing long-term partnerships.
- A standard development private sector model that focuses on gradual construction and sale of properties at standard absorption rates, rather than taking a long term stake in an area, building at scale with a mix of tenures, and investing in integrated place-making
- Barriers to 'joined up' working such as
  - Many large sites straddling local authority boundaries
  - Some public administrations organised on conventional functional lines – planning, housing, economic development, education, health, energy, environment – rather than around, say, places or corporate objectives.
  - Public sector difficulty in sharing risks and supporting innovation

Clearly, addressing these weaknesses is not easy or this would have happened already. It will take leadership, commitment and political capital, making tough choices on issues such as restrictions on car use, affordable housing and density. But, given the important role that London's large sites can play in accommodating growth and supporting London's 'future cities' sector, the city surely needs to redouble its efforts.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

London's opportunity areas have huge potential, but it will take courageous leadership and more powerful partnership working to realise this potential, and ensure that they become models of far-sighted development rather than missed opportunities. Our approach to planning and partnership needs to move on from an essentially 20th Century focus on prediction and regulation, to a more mature model that reflects the complexities and uncertainties of place-making in the 21st Century.

This would bring developers and public agencies together in more active and long-term partnership, with public and private sectors developing shared visions, and holding each other to account for delivery. Such arrangements would be tighter in prescribing quality, in pushing for delivery at pace, in measuring and stipulating social impact, but would be looser in trying to specify and set in stone every detail of projects that will take decades to complete at a time of accelerating change.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *i. General*

- Make more use of scenario planning to consider London's possible futures and their implications for the city, rather than trend-based 'prediction' or responsive 'monitoring and managing'
- Identify clear visions for the future, and use these to guide scenario planning.
- Mix large-scale strategic interventions with small-scale partnerships and community initiatives like tree planting.
- Create public realm that mitigates the impact of climate change, and creates a better city for all citizens – including an ageing population.
- Identify the groups and areas particularly at risk from likely changes in London's climate, economy and demography – and put in place the civic infrastructure to support them
- Set out clear principles for regulation of new technologies, etc, and work with London's world-leading HE sector to create spaces for experimentation



- Think about how these join up – strengthen London government’s capacity to ‘think future’ and to plan for the long term

ii. *Large Sites*

- Set out a clearer, future-orientated vision for London’s large sites. This should include principles of resilience and adaptability, circular economy, and inclusivity.
- Form long-term partnerships that share vision, risk and reward, and a commitment to delivering excellent and resilient new places.
- Link transport and development to optimise density and capture land value increments to fund investment.
- Consider establishing a new agency to support local authorities and unlock delivery on London’s large sites and opportunity areas.
- Develop new generation partnerships between developers and public authorities to accelerate delivery, sharing vision, risk and reward
- Allow large sites to be used as testbeds for innovation in planning, design, construction and management – including planning for next generation urban mobility.

## ENDNOTES

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