



John Hodson  
Interim Head of Policy & Strategy  
Regeneration and Planning  
London Borough of Hackney  
263 Mare Street  
London  
E8 3HT

Phone : 0207 517 4747  
Email :  
anna.richards@ltgdc.org.uk@ltgdc.org.uk

11 December 2009

Dear John,

### **Hackney Core Strategy: Proposed Submission Documents**

I am writing following our meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November to discuss the Hackney Core Strategy. The Corporation welcomed the opportunity at this meeting to discuss the Hackney Core Strategy and to provide further comments in writing. Although only a small geographic area of the London Borough of Hackney falls within the Corporation's area, the Core Strategy will be a significant policy determinant for this part of the Thames Gateway, especially given the current master planning work in the Hackney Wick and Fish Island area. As such, the Corporation, as the statutory planning authority for strategic planning applications in this area, would welcome the opportunity for further involvement as the Core Strategy is finalised for submission to Government and in the subsequent Examination process.

As outlined at the meeting, the Corporation's principal concern is that Core Strategy Policy 5 should provide a more positive vision for the area based on the creation of a new local centre focused on an improved and remodelled station to serve an expanded wider residential community, support regeneration and maximise the opportunities presented by Olympic Legacy. Although this is to a large extent set out in the supporting text (in particular paragraph 4.40), it is considered that this should be more explicitly stated within the policy itself. The Corporation has been working with officers London Borough of Hackney to develop an Area Action Plan for Hackney Wick. The preparation of the AAP has advanced significantly since the Proposed Submission Version of the Core Strategy was published in June 2009 and has recently been published for public consultation in accordance with Regulation 25. Whilst LTGDC officers recognise that more detailed policy guidance is appropriately set out in the Area Action Plan, it is considered that the Core Strategy should set a sound framework for the Area Action Plan, particularly as it will be the one of the principal policies that any planning applications are assessed against until the Area Action Plan is examined and adopted.

Set out below is a suggested amended first paragraph for Policy 5 which corresponds with the vision for Hackney Wick within the AAP and which the LTGDC officers consider would address these concerns:

*“The Council will direct significant investment and employment led mixed use development including residential development to the Hackney Wick area. Development should maximise opportunities presented by Olympic Legacy and the area’s waterside and green corridor location to contribute to the creation of a new and cohesive neighbourhood. The area around the station will be developed as a mixed-use local centre focused on an improved and remodelled station to serve new and existing communities in the wider area and support regeneration and growth”.*

The previous version of the Core Strategy Preferred Options identified Hackney Wick as a Local Centre. Preferred Policy 12 stated that growth will be guided to a hierarchy of centres which will accommodate commercial, retail, mixed use, cultural and leisure development. The LTGDC supported this in previous comments. The approach has changed as the Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document now identifies a range of growth locations, including Hackney Wick as a ‘New Community’. Hackney Wick is no longer identified in the town centre hierarchy as this now covers existing centres only. It is clear from the Area Action Plan that the objective for Hackney Wick is to create a new centre, providing shops services and access to public transport to support the existing and new population. It is considered that the Core Strategy is the appropriate document to identify Hackney Wick as a potential new local centre within the retail hierarchy. This would also be consistent with the Tower Hamlets Core Strategy policy for Fish Island, where ‘Fish Island North’, which borders Hackney, is identified for mixed use development focused on a new neighbourhood centre around the station.

The proposals map allocates Hackney Wick as ‘Other Industrial Area’. However, the policy on employment land (Policy 17) does not define this allocation, so it is not explicitly set out in policy how this allocation will be applied in assessing planning applications in the area (though the supporting text to Policy 5 makes reference to the range of uses within the Area Action Plan Area at Paragraph 4.40). It is considered that, as this is a specific designation on a proposals map, it should be clearly defined in policy. The Area Action Plan states that *“in areas designated as Other Industrial Areas (OIA) the Council will support development proposals which seek to intensify the use of sites through the introduction of other uses as long as existing industrial floorspace is re-provided within the development”*. It is considered that further guidance could be given in the Area Action Plan as to how this will be applied to individual development proposals. The Corporation would welcome the opportunity to develop this definition further with Hackney officers.

Greater clarity is also required regarding the assumptions behind the figures set out in Paragraph 4.40 (500 dwellings and 87,141 sqm office floorspace); in particular the area over which this housing and employment will be distributed and the assumptions made regarding Olympic Legacy Development. It is

understood from discussions with officers at Hackney that these figures are for the whole of the Area Action Plan area as defined on the proposals map, which includes the Olympic site. If this is indeed the case, the figure of 500 dwellings is considered low. LTGDC officers consider that this figure should be expressed as a minimum.

I trust that this summarises our discussion on 19<sup>th</sup> November assists in developing the Core Strategy to submission. Please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number should you wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

Anna Richards

Planning Policy Implementation