

New Local Plan approved by Full Council – incorporating fire safety measures

1 year ago



After four rounds of public consultation, the Council has adopted its [new Local Plan](#) which sets the tone for development in Kensington and Chelsea for the next two decades.

On Wednesday 24 July 2024, councillors approved the Plan which considers all the borough's communities and balances housing need carefully against heritage and design. Some of the key policies include defining "tall" buildings for the first time, designing in green measures and introducing stringent fire safety measures.

More than 1,500 people had their say on the Local Plan from 2021 to 2023. The review was not due until this year, after a Local Plan was adopted in 2019, but the Council committed to completing the process early, as part of its ongoing response to the Grenfell tragedy which happened in North Kensington in 2017.

Leader of Kensington and Chelsea Council, Cllr Elizabeth Campbell, said:

"The Local Plan provides a firm foundation for the future of our shared places and makes sure that they work for all our communities. Our approach to it has evolved significantly over the last five years and since the bereaved and survivors from Grenfell challenged us to become the best Council for our communities.

"We have heard from more than 1,500 people during the consultation process. Our plan is ambitious on providing affordable housing and protecting the historic streets that make our borough one of the most liveable, diverse, and desirable areas of London attracting people from all over the world."

To read Kensington and Chelsea's Local Plan and see the report which went to Full Council, visit the [committee pages](#) of the Council website.

What does the Local Plan say about housing?

London faces a major housing shortage and Kensington and Chelsea will play its part in building new homes. The Local Plan sets out a stepped trajectory for housebuilding to exceed the borough's 10-year housing target of 4,480 homes set by the London Plan. In the first five years until 2029, there will be a target to deliver 1,250 homes. This goes up to 2,230 in years six to 10 and to 4,480 in years 11 to 20 as the major opportunity areas in Kensal Canalside and Earl's Court are built.

Developments should provide at least 35 per cent affordable housing on private land and 50 per cent on public land.

Building safety

The plan includes a policy to ensure all development proposals demonstrate the highest standards of fire safety. All planning applications will need to have a planning fire safety strategy or fire statement submitted alongside the application. Tall buildings of 30 metres or more must have a Qualitative Design Review panel report submitted with the planning application. The Council as planning authority will establish the review panel, consisting of fire safety experts, who will assess the means of escape proposals in the application.

Protecting the environment in the Local Plan

Developers will have to calculate and report on the whole life-cycle carbon emissions of their project and demonstrate the actions they are taking to reduce carbon emissions. This means the emissions associated with the materials and construction process throughout the whole lifecycle of a building. Developers are encouraged to design in energy saving measures in the new policy. The best developments will design buildings that require less energy from the outset and for where energy is needed, prioritising renewable options. The requirement is for developments to be net zero carbon in operation.

Applications for major developments will have to prepare circular economy statements. This means how they will reuse, recycle and refurbish materials to reduce waste. Developments should prioritise retention and refurbishment over demolition and rebuilding.

Keeping the borough's unique character

Tall buildings have been defined in size for the first time for Kensington and Chelsea in the Local Plan. These are 21 metres and 30 metres and areas in the borough have been identified as suitable for buildings of this size, in keeping with similar heights around and to support the opportunity areas in Kensal Canalside and Earls Court.

The Local Plan supports developments that contribute to the vibrancy of the borough's town centres, where businesses with a shop front providing a direct service to the public are prominent in our town centres. The Plan resists betting shops, payday loan stores, pawn brokers and amusement arcades in town centres and new homes on town centres shouldn't be front facing at ground level. The Local Plan notes the council's al fresco dining policy and will support proposals that contribute to the café culture within the borough.