



## Just Space Briefing

# Opportunity Areas in London Planning

Towards a London Plan Research Agenda  
|| May 12 2023

Prepared by Michael Edwards and Jason Katz

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- 1 Introduction
- 2 History of Opportunity Areas
- 3 Key Critiques of Opportunity Areas
- 4 Open Discussion + Breakout Groups
- 5 Insights (leading to wine and conversation)



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01

# Introduction

4:00 - 4:20



# INTRODUCTION

## Just Space

[Just Space](#) is an informal alliance of around 80 community and activist groups, campaigns and concerned independent organisations which came together to help each other on planning issues and reinforce the voices of Londoners at grass-roots level during the formulation of London's major planning strategy, the London Plan, and is now active at borough and local levels too.



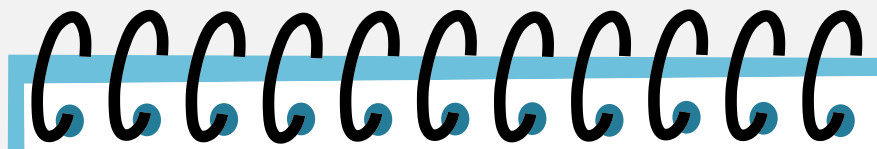
# INTRODUCTION

## Just Space

- Just Space has published a draft of a **new report** outlining the network's historical position on Opportunity Areas.
- This is now available for comments by members of Just Space.

## Links

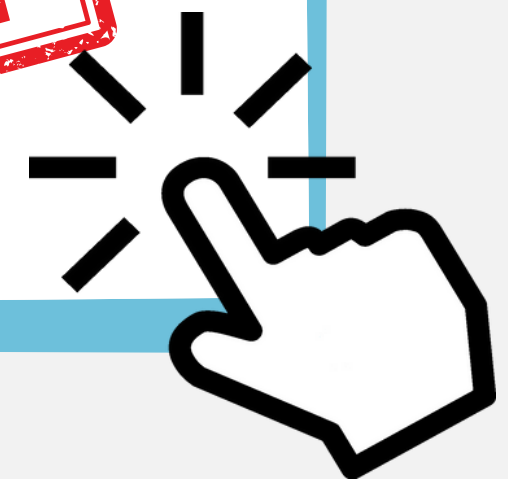
- [Just Space \(May 2022\). "Mayoral Development Corporations". Submission to London Assembly.](#)
- [Just Space. \(Feb. 2022\). "Just Space Memorandum on Opportunity Areas". Submission to London Assembly.](#)
- [Just Space. \(2018\). "Opportunity Areas". Summary blog post.](#)



**Opportunity Areas  
in London planning**

[\(click for report\)](#)

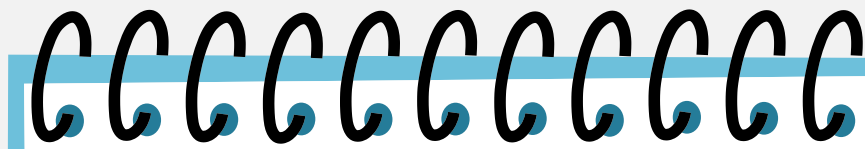
[\(Add suggestions to  
the draft HERE\)](#)



# INTRODUCTION

## Report Sections:

1. A history of the OA planning mechanism
2. Just Space's engagement with the London Assembly on OAs
3. Commentary on the current state of OAs
4. "What Next?"



**Opportunity Areas  
in London planning**

[\(click for report\)](#)

[\(Add suggestions to  
the draft \*\*HERE\*\*\)](#)



# CONTEXT

## Greater London Authority

### Mayor's Office:

- Responsible for developing policies and delivering TfL services across the city.

### London Assembly:

- The closest thing we have to a London City Council.
- Responsible for holding the Mayor and the Mayor's Office to account, scrutinizing policies, and overseeing the budget and performance of the GLA.

**MAYOR OF LONDON**

---

**LONDON ASSEMBLY**





# CONTEXT

## GLA Resources

### Links

- [OA Overview Page](#)
- [Map of Opportunity Areas](#)
- [Monitoring OAs: Residential development dashboards](#)
- [Monitoring OAs: Non-residential development data dashboard](#)

MAYOR OF LONDON

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LONDON ASSEMBLY

# CONTEXT

## Planning and Regeneration

### Committee

In the last 2 years Just Space has collaborated with the Planning and Regeneration Committee of the London Assembly.

This has put pressure on the Mayor of London and secured a **new policy document** and **web site**. This represents modest progress.



## Links

- [Planning and Regeneration Policy Document](#)
- [GLA Website](#)

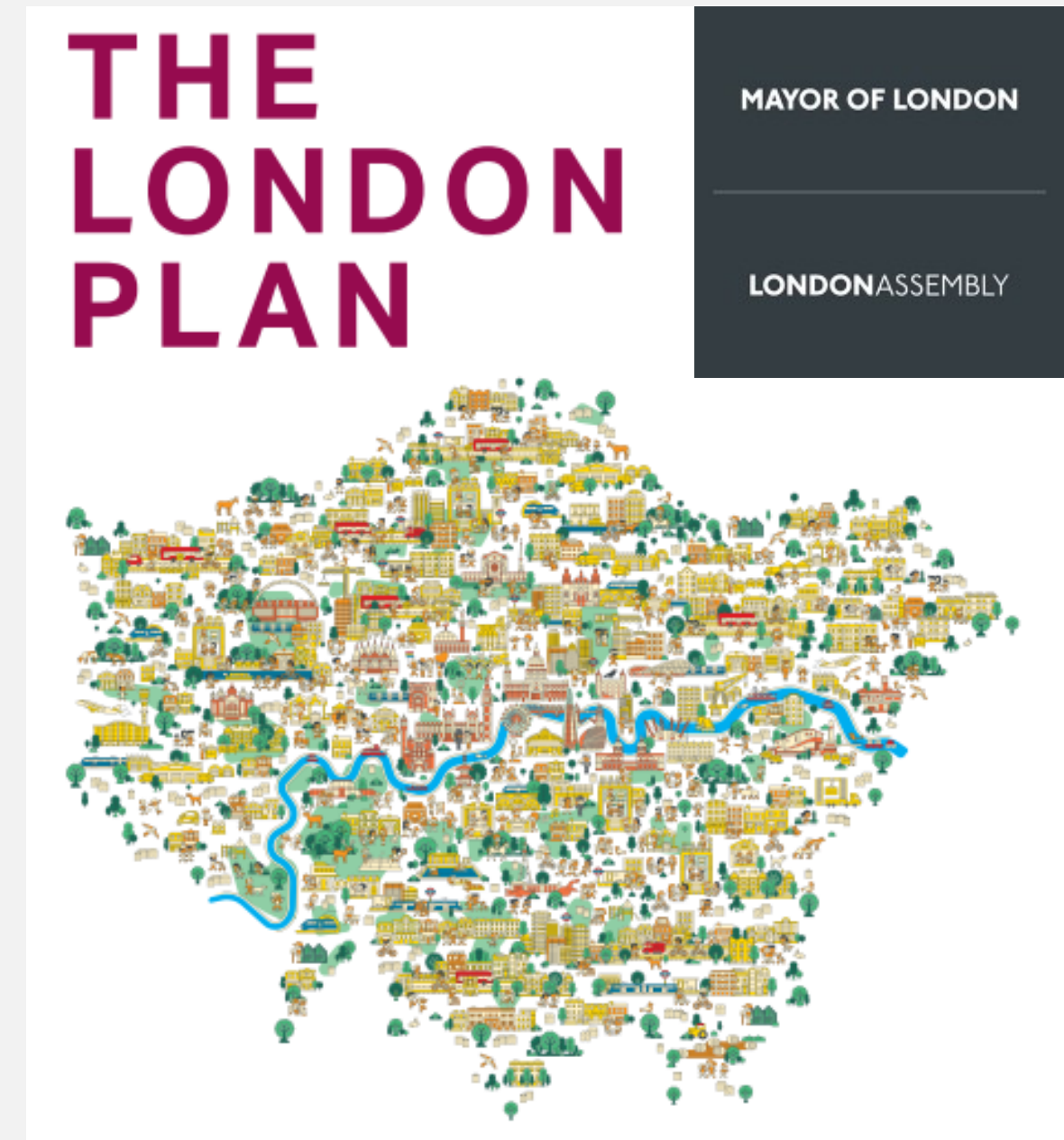
# CONTEXT

## The London Plan

### What is it? Who prepares it?

The Mayor's Office prepares broad strategies (transport, housing, culture, economy...) into an over-arching Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) which links diverse policies in geographical space across London.

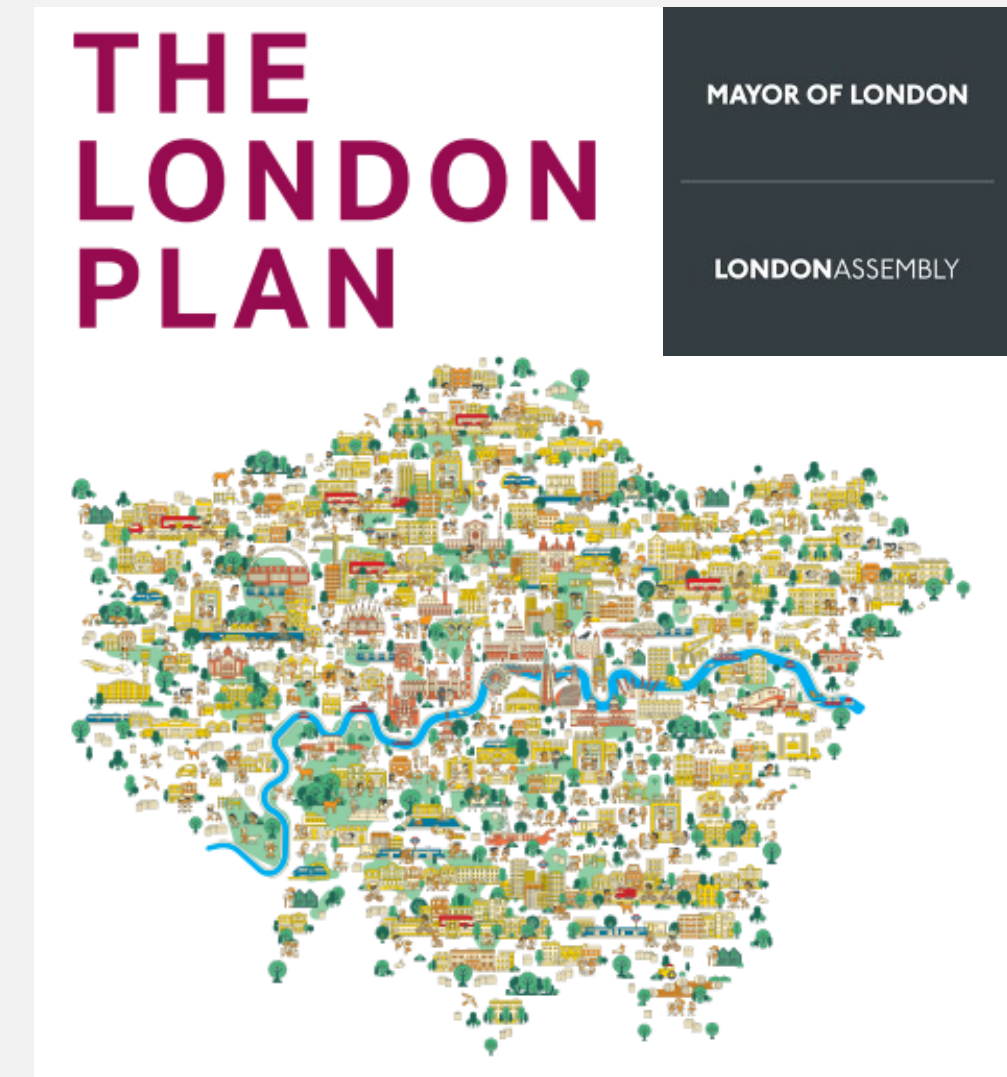
This is known as The London Plan.



# CONTEXT

## The London Plan

The London Plan also forms part of broader 'Development Plan' for London. Local Plans made in response to the London Plan by the 33 boroughs (and 2 Mayoral Development Corporations) must be in general conformity with it.



## Links

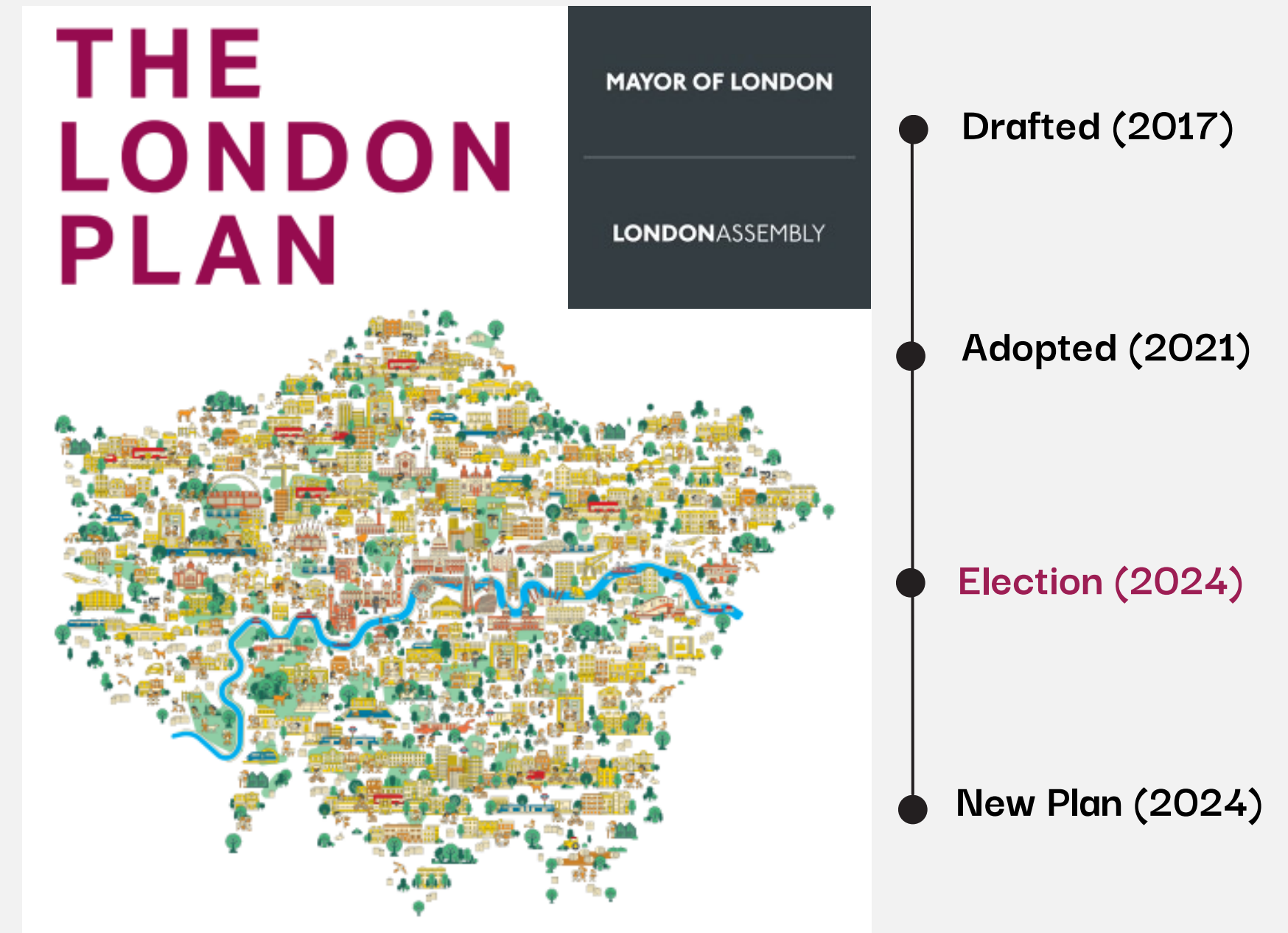
- [The London Plan 2021](#)
- [GLA Dashboard on Local Plan responses](#)

# CONTEXT

## The London Plan

The GLA refuses to start consulting on a new London Plan until after the next Mayoral election (May 2024).

JS has voiced the widespread disapproval of the delay.



# CONTEXT

## The London Plan

**However**, this offers a **12 month period** to coordinate existing community work and academic research ahead of the consultation period.




# TIMELINE

Feb 2022



**P&R Committee Meetings**

See JS [1 page Memorandum on OAs and extended memorandum on OAs](#)

12 mo. until consultation for London Plan 2024 



# TIMELINE

Feb 2022

March 2022

12 mo. until consultation  
for London Plan 2024

P&R Committee  
Meetings on OAs

See JS [1 page Memorandum on OAs and the extended memorandum on OAs](#)

P&R Committee  
Releases Letter to  
Mayor

See [Press Release with the letter and the Mayor's response](#)





# TIMELINE



# TIMELINE

12 mo. until consultation

**May 2023** for London Plan 2024



Feb 2022

April 2022

Nov 2022

**P&R Committee Meetings on OAs**

See JS [1 page Memorandum on OAs](#) and the [extended memorandum on OAs](#)

**P&R Committee Releases Letter to Mayor**

See [Press Release with the letter and the Mayor's response](#)

**P&R Committee Meeting on MDCs**

See [Meeting on MDCs](#), and the [JS member responses](#)

**JS Summary of OAs, Briefing and Agenda setting**

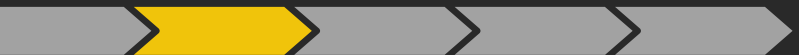
See [recent draft publication on Opportunity Areas](#)



02

# History of OAs

4:20 - 4:30



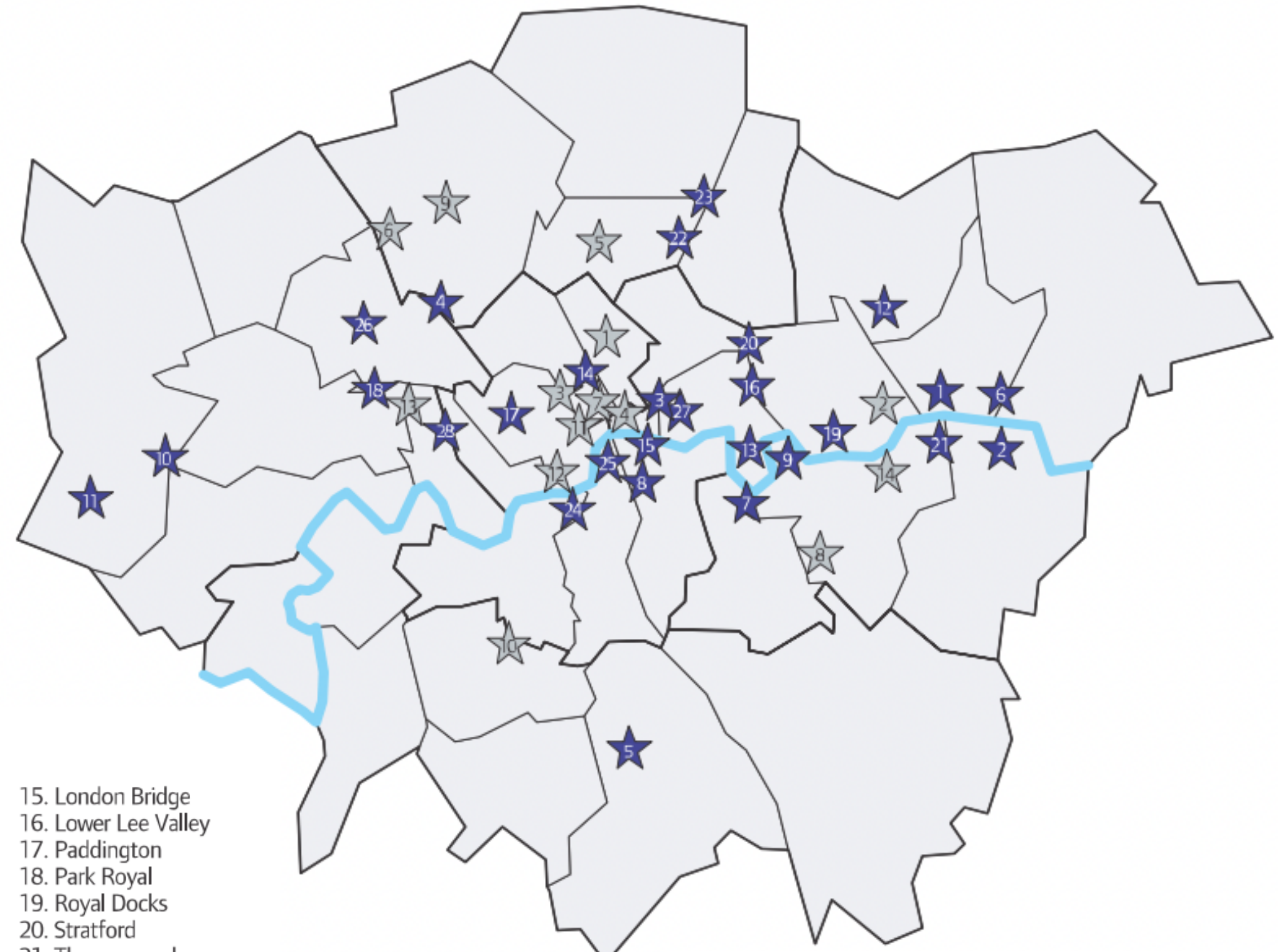
map 2A.1 Opportunity Areas and Areas for Intensification

**2004 London Plan**

**28 OAs**

2008

2023



★ Opportunity Areas

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Barking Reach                          | 15. London Bridge                    |
| 2. Belvedere/ Erith                       | 16. Lower Lee Valley                 |
| 3. Bishopsgate/ South Shoreditch          | 17. Paddington                       |
| 4. Cricklewood Brent Cross                | 18. Park Royal                       |
| 5. Croydon Town Centre                    | 19. Royal Docks                      |
| 6. London Riverside                       | 20. Stratford                        |
| 7. Deptford Creek/<br>Greenwich Riverside | 21. Thamesmead                       |
| 8. Elephant & Castle                      | 22. Tottenham Hale                   |
| 9. Greenwich Peninsula                    | 23. Upper Lee Valley                 |
| 10. Hayes/West Drayton/Southall           | 24. Vauxhall/Nine Elms<br>/Battersea |
| 11. Heathrow/Feltham/Bedfont Lakes        | 25. Waterloo                         |
| 12. Ilford                                | 26. Wembley                          |
| 13. Isle of Dogs                          | 27. Whitechapel/Aldgate              |
| 14. King's Cross                          | 28. White City                       |

★ Areas for Intensification

- |                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Arsenal/Holloway               | 8 Kidbrook                            |
| 2 Beckton                        | 9 Mill Hill East                      |
| 3 Euston                         | 10 South Wimbledon/Colliers Wood      |
| 4 Farringdon/Smithfield          | 11 Tottenham Crt Rd                   |
| 5 Haringey Heartlands/Wood Green | 12 Victoria                           |
| 6 Colindale                      | 13 Willesden Junction                 |
| 7 Holborn                        | 14 Woolwich Town Centre/Royal Arsenal |

## Map 2.4 Opportunity and Intensification Areas

### Opportunity Areas

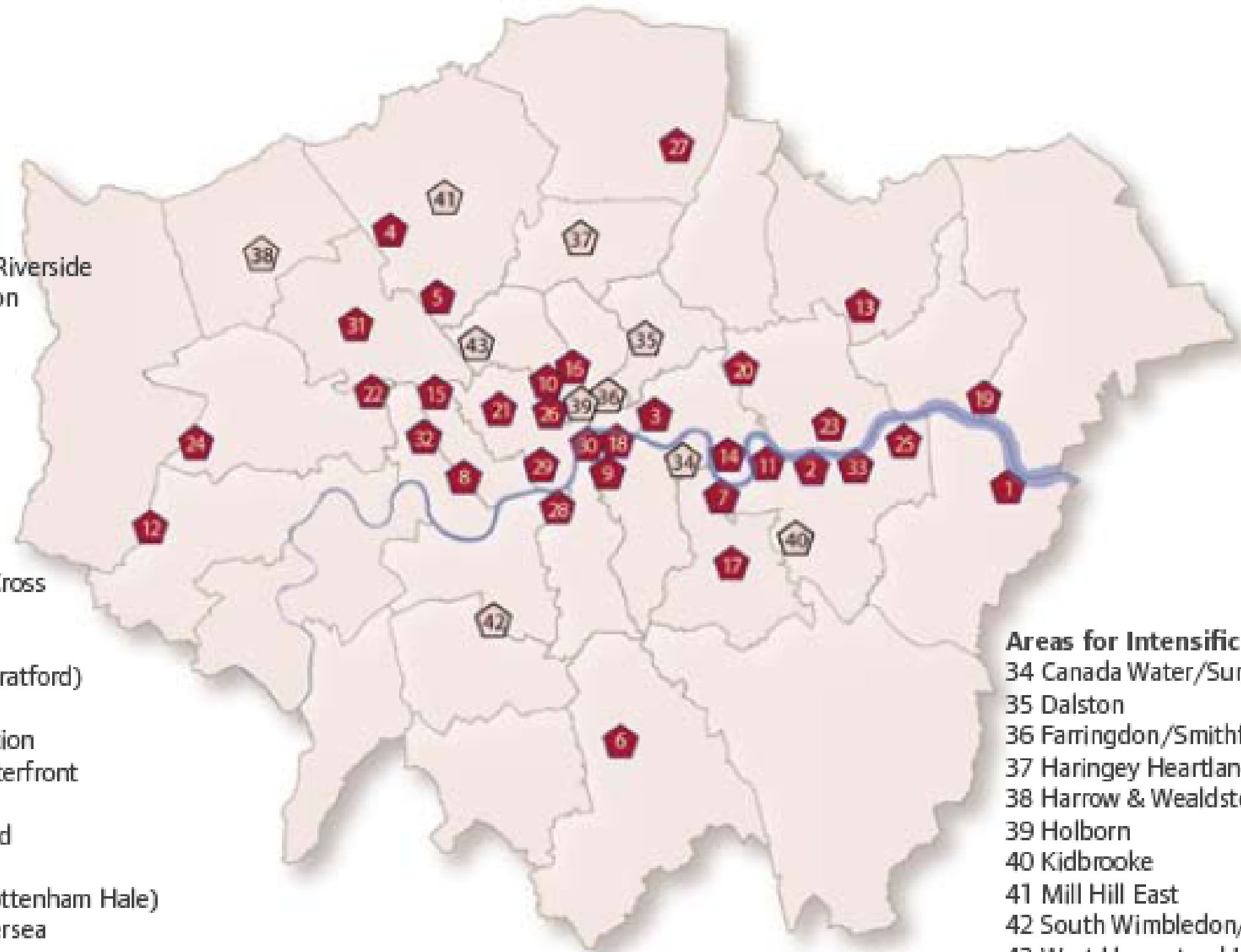
- 1 Bexley Riverside
- 2 Charlton Riverside
- 3 City Fringe
- 4 Colindale/Burnt Oak
- 5 Cricklewood/Brent Cross
- 6 Croydon
- 7 Deptford Creek/ Greenwich Riverside
- 8 Earls Court & West Kensington
- 9 Elephant & Castle
- 10 Euston
- 11 Greenwich Peninsular
- 12 Heathrow
- 13 Ilford
- 14 Isle of Dogs
- 15 Kensal Canalside
- 16 King's Cross
- 17 Lewisham, Catford & New Cross
- 18 London Bridge & Bankside
- 19 London Riverside
- 20 Lower Lea Valley (includ. Stratford)
- 21 Paddington
- 22 Park Royal/Willesden Junction
- 23 Royal Docks & Beckton Waterfront
- 24 Southall
- 25 Thamesmead & Abbey Wood
- 26 Tottenham Court Road
- 27 Upper Lea Valley (includ. Tottenham Hale)
- 28 Vauxhall, Nine Elms & Battersea
- 29 Victoria
- 30 Waterloo
- 31 Wembley
- 32 White City
- 33 Woolwich

### Areas for Intensification

- 34 Canada Water/Surrey Quays
- 35 Dalston
- 36 Farringdon/Smithfield
- 37 Haringey Heartlands/Wood Green
- 38 Harrow & Wealdstone
- 39 Holborn
- 40 Kidbrooke
- 41 Mill Hill East
- 42 South Wimbledon/Colliers Wood
- 43 West Hampstead Interchange

 Opportunity areas

 Area for intensification



2004

**2008 London Plan**

**33 OAs**

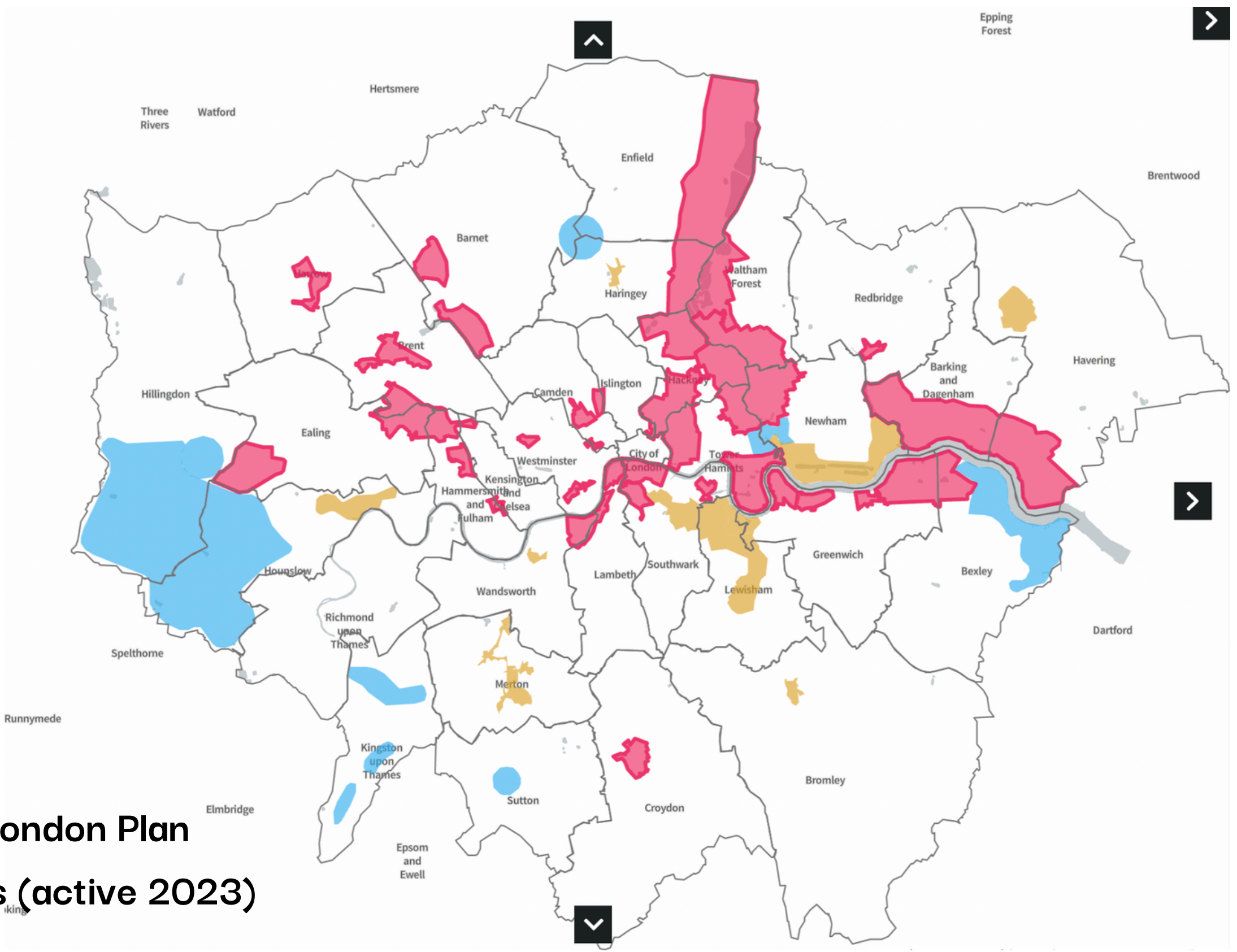
2023

Source: GLA 2009 © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Greater London Authority 100032379 (2009)

2004

2008

2016 London Plan  
**47** OAs (active 2023)



# Opportunity Areas Map i

This Opportunity Area webmap provides information on the status of London's Opportunity Areas. The data is updated on a regular basis and is correct at the time of publication. If there are inaccuracies or if you would like to suggest improvements, please send your feedback to [opportunityareas@london.gov.uk](mailto:opportunityareas@london.gov.uk)

- Opportunity Areas ⌵
- Opportunity Areas (OAs) are identified in the London Plan as significant locations with development opportunities to accommodate new homes,.. [Read More](#) i
- Adopted boundary ⌵
- Emerging boundary ⌵
- Boundary to be defined ⌵
- Growth Corridors ⌵
- Transport schemes ⌵
- London Borough ⌵
- Greater London Boundary ⌵

**Source:**  
<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/implementing-london-plan/londons-opportunity-areas/oa-locations>

# 2016 London Plan

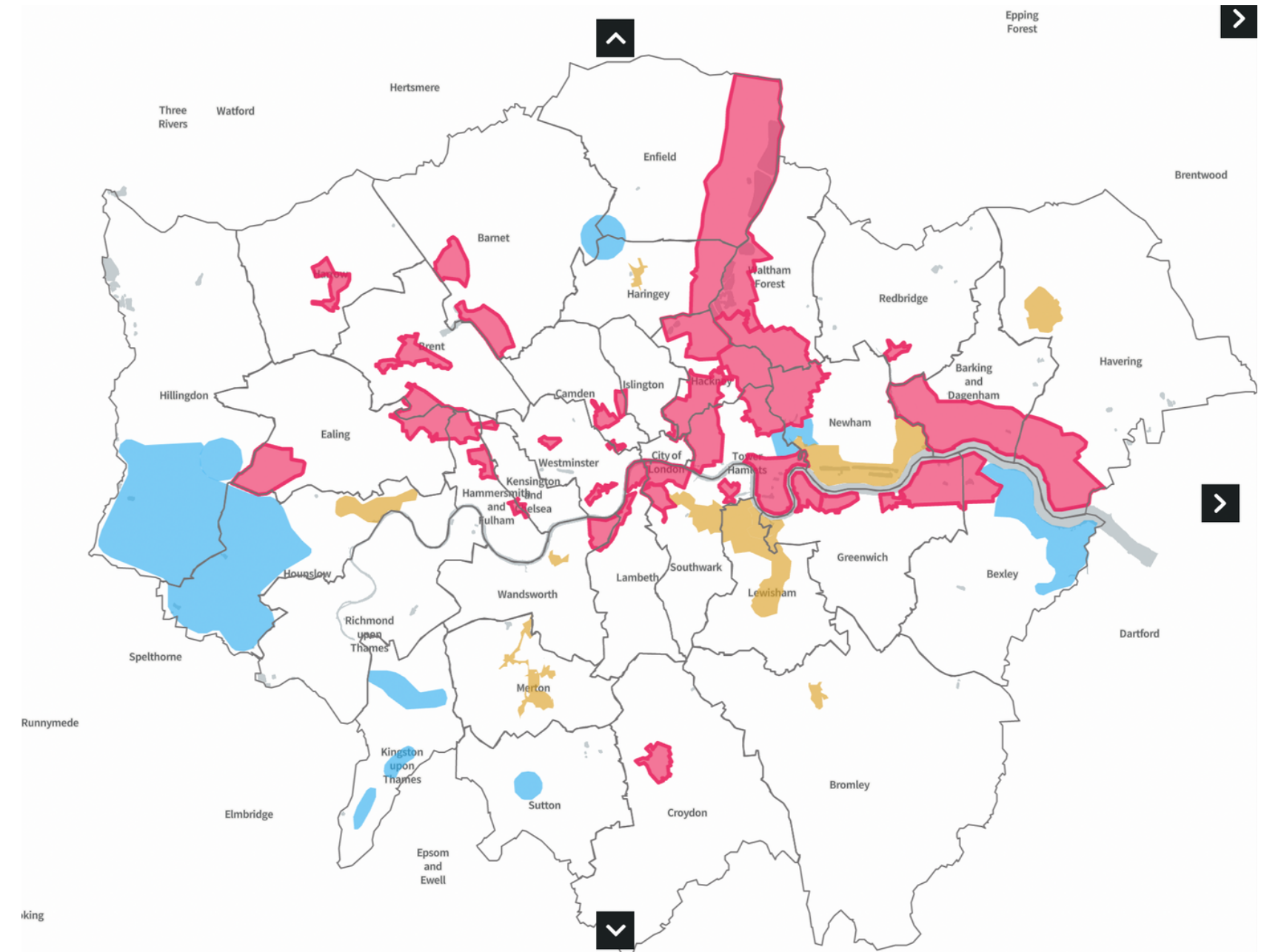
## 47 OAs (active 2023)

Opportunity areas are separated according to the degree to which their boundary has been defined:

**Adopted boundary** OAs are those with a defined boundary contained within a local planning document that has been subject to public consultation and formal adoption by a local planning authority and/or the Mayor.

**Emerging boundary** OAs are those where a boundary has been published and the relevant policies are on track to being adopted (for example public consultation stages of a planning document).

**Boundary to be defined** OAs are those where a defined boundary is yet to be published). The degree to which a boundary is defined does not correlate with the date that the OA was designated.



[Link to Interactive map of London's Opportunity Areas.](#) (Source: GLA)

See the [report draft](#) for details.

# JS Critique of OAs

4:30 - 4:45





# **JS Critique of OAs**

**'Opportunity Areas' have outgrown their original mandate.**



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**There remains an urgent need for a comprehensive review of Opportunity Areas and their continuing use.**



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There remains an urgent need for a comprehensive review of Opportunity Areas and their continuing use.

**The designation of further Opportunity Areas should be halted until their use has been studied and the results have been made public.**



# JS Critique of OAs

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There remains an urgent need for a comprehensive review of Opportunity Areas and their continuing use.

The designation of further Opportunity Areas should be halted until their use has been studied and the results have been made public.

**Opportunity Areas are broadly undemocratic, their targets are arbitrary, and the intense development they sanction often displaces valued local land uses and intensifies cost burdens for local residents.**



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Opportunity Areas are broadly undemocratic, their targets are arbitrary, and the intense development they sanction often displaces valued local land uses and intensifies cost burdens for local residents.

**Pending a review, Opportunity Areas should be supported as diverse spaces of democratic experimentation.**



04

# Open Discussion

4:45 - 5:45



**4.5**

**Breakout  
Group  
5:45 - 6:00**



# Conclusion

