

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

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Written Statement for Wandsworth Local Plan Examination in Public

Dear Charlotte,

Re: Examination of the London Borough of Wandsworth Local Plan (WLP). Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions. Main Matter 1 – Legal Requirements and Overarching Issues. Main Matter 3 – Wandsworth Town (Policies PM2, WT1 to WT22). Main Matter 4 – Nine Elms (Policies PM3, NE1 to NE13). Main Matter 14 – Tackling Climate Change (Policies LP10 – LP14). Main Matter 16 – Providing Housing (Policies LP23 to LP32)

Thank you for inviting written statements in advance of the London Borough of Wandsworth (LBW) Local Plan Examination in Public hearing sessions. LBW has engaged with officers at the Greater London Authority (GLA) to discuss concerns raised in the Mayor's Regulation 19 letter of conformity dated 28th February 2022, Regulation 18 consultation response issued 1st March 2021.

As you will be aware, development plan documents prepared by London boroughs must be in general conformity with the spatial development strategy (SDS) for London (referred to as the London Plan) in accordance with S.24 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The London Plan was formally published on the 2 March 2021, and now forms part of LBW's Development Plan and contains the most up-to-date policies.

In response to the Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions, the Mayor considers that as currently written the draft Wandsworth Local Plan (WLP) is not in general conformity with the London Plan due to the proposed approaches to the management of the borough's industrial land. Below are specific issues that the Mayor raised that relate to the Main Matters 1, 3, 4, 14, and 16. In recent discussions with the LBW officers, the Mayor proposes modifications that can reasonably bring WLP in general conformity with the London Plan regarding management of the borough's industrial land (Main Matter 1). For the other Main Matters 3, 4, 14, and 16 related to safeguarded wharves, waste, and housing, the Mayor has raised concerns that can be addressed by proposed modifications to the policy wording.

Main Matter 1 – Legal Requirements and Overarching Issues

Is the WLP in 'general conformity' with the London Plan as required by the provisions of Section 24 of the 2004 Act?

Issue of General Conformity:

The Mayor considers that as currently written the WLP is not in general conformity with the London Plan due to the proposed approaches to the management of the borough's industrial land.

The Mayor welcomes the borough's commitment to a net increase in industrial floorspace expressed in SDS1 (Part E 3) and he is pleased to see the clear acknowledgement of the importance of retention and protection of the borough's existing remaining industrial land, as well as the need for intensified industrial floorspace where appropriate. However, he remains unpersuaded that the plan will deliver the identified need for industrial floorspace, given that the policy allows and facilitates the introduction of non-industrial uses within SIL and therefore undermines SIL functions. This is contrary to the London Plan.

Specifically, the WLP is not in general conformity with the following policies:

- Policy E4A – which makes it a requirement that Local Plans should ensure there is a sufficient supply of land and premises to meet current and future demands for industrial and related functions;
- Policy E7B – which is clear that the scope for co-locating industrial uses with residential and other non-industrial uses may be considered within Locally Significant Industrial Sites (LSIS), but not SIL.

LBW's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) identifies core industrial capacity of 44,828sqm over the plan period, of which a floor space demand of 30,500sqm for B8 uses is identified. While LBW presented additional materials from the HELAA and the Battersea Design and Technology Quarter (BDTQ) Economic Appraisal and Design Framework to address concerns about industrial floor space uplift identified in site allocations, the WLP currently lacks a robust strategy for delivery and viability for forecasted demand for B8 uses.

The WLP also creates ambiguity by defining economic use and industrial use: Based on the glossary of the WLP, a major difference between economic use and industrial use is that economic use includes office uses in addition to other uses that are mentioned under industrial uses – research and development, light industry, general industrial, storage and logistics/distribution, and appropriate *sui generis* uses. While the policy text emphasises protecting industrial uses and industrial intensification, this major overlap in the definitions of economic and industrial use renders the policy undeliverable in terms of achieving the 44,828sqm of core industrial capacity identified in the HELAA, of which the majority is for B8 uses.

The Mayor welcomes numerous areas identified to direct net increases in industrial floorspace – (i) strategic industrial reservoirs SIL and LSIA (Locally Significant Industrial

Areas), (ii) Economic Use Intensification Areas (EUIAs), (iii) Economic Use Protection Areas (EUPAs) and (iv) Focal Point Areas (FPAs). The Mayor is not convinced that this area strategy can viably deliver the industrial space identified as needed by the HELAA without further strengthening the policy and clearly demarcating areas and sites for industrial uses.

LSIAs are equivalent of the Mayor's Locally Significant Industrial Sites (LSISs) and allow for industrial uses as defined in LP34 part A and does not allow for residential or office uses. However, an exception is made for the BDTQ for the upper floors to allow for offices, and research and development uses (LP34 B4a). There is also an expectation set that development in BDTQ can be predominantly office use. The Mayor considers that rather than intensifying and reinforcing the SIL designation in BDTQ, the introduction of such uses is likely to weaken the integrity and the operational function of the SIL and further restrict opportunities to meet future industrial needs. In addition, the EUIAs and Focal Point allow for mixed use residential. Industrial uses, specifically heavy industrial and B8 uses – by virtue of their scale, noise, odours, dust, emissions, hours of operation and/or vehicular movements – can conflict with other land uses, particularly residential development.

The HELAA identifies a requirement of 4.7ha of land area to meet 30,500sqm demand for B8 floorspace until 2034. The policy and the supporting evidence does not provide any clarity on the deliverability and viability of this specific B8 demand. For example, LP35 A(2) EUIAs refers to intensification of economic floor space, with an expected uplift of 50% within the Bendon Valley EUIA and 25% in the Wandle Delta sub-area – this does not provide clarity as to whether this uplift is able to meet the identified need for specific industrial use, say B8. Moreover, industrial intensification is predominantly provided as light industrial uses, B1a/b and E (g)(iii) and (ii). The policy mentions that there is a potential for ground floor spaces to be used for B8, which the Mayor considers does not provide a strong foundation for delivering the borough's need. The majority of this intensification is located within the Riverside Business Centre EUIA (13, 613sqm) and BDTQ (22,297sqm) which, based on current planning applications, do not provide B8 uses.

GLA officers have had continued dialogue with LBW officers to discuss how the WLP policy can be made more robust to respond to the specific industrial space needs identified in the HELAA. The Mayor recognises (i) the borough's vision for BDTQ, (ii) the type of developments coming forward in the BDTQ (Figure 1 in the appendix), and (iii) the small size of the sites, especially in the northern part of BDTQ that may not be able to accommodate large logistics and storage functions. Based on this and conversations with LBW officers, the Mayor proposes modifications that align with the borough's vision of protecting and enhancing industrial uses while constructively addressing the general conformity issue with the London Plan.

Proposed Modifications:

1. Redraw BDTQ boundaries to exclude the heavy industrial uses (Figure 2 in the appendix), especially to safeguard the following uses (Figure 3 in the appendix):

- a. Self store Ingate Place
- b. the Tarmac site (B2) in Silverthorne Road
- c. the Bidfoods site (B8) in Silverthorne Road
- d. the Abellio bus garage facility (SG) in Silverthorne Road

The Mayor strongly supports the need to retain the Queenstown Road Battersea SIL location to facilitate sustainable servicing of the CAZ and retain capacity within proximity to the CAZ.

2. Re-designate SIL to LSIA in the redrawn BDTQ boundary (Figure 2 in the appendix). WLP designates Summerstown LSIS to SIL which may create a balance of the supply of SIL in the borough – Summerstown only has some potential for industrial intensification as per the HELAA (Figure 4 in the appendix).
3. Strengthen policy wording in the text and site allocations to retain existing industrial land / uses, prioritise the right kind of industrial uses (especially near CAZ) and re-provide affordable workspace to existing uses. Since Wandsworth is in the Central Services Area, paragraph 6.4.7 of London Plan Policy E4 must be reflected in the WLP, especially for the BDTQ.
4. Wandsworth has already adopted Article 4 directions in various locations in the borough that cover most of the SIL, LSIA, EUAs, EUPAs and FPAs where industrial intensification is directed (Figure 5). The Mayor asks the borough to provide clarity through policy on how the Article 4 directions will be implemented to genuinely provide for industrial uses especially in areas where residential and office uses are also allowed.
5. Address the ambiguity in the definitions of economic use and industrial use and identify specific areas/sites and floor levels that allow for office and residential uses and where B8 uses are appropriate and can be accommodated.
6. Commit to taking up the BDTQ master planning that focuses on introducing design codes to create opportunities for reasonably sized industrial units. This will address a growing need for micro-hubs and other B8 type of uses that can be accommodated on ground floor and a few upper floors.

Status of the proposed modifications:

LBW officers have agreed in principle to these proposed modifications. They are internally discussing the implications of these proposed modifications on the local plan timeline, the borough resources, and potential for re-consultation. LBW officers have also identified that specific proposed modifications in the policy text to reflect these changes will take time and require several discussions with GLA officers during the next few weeks. Detailed proposed modifications to WLP may materialise only after the examination in public is concluded.

Main Matter 3 – Wandsworth Town (Policies PM2, WT1 to WT22)

Is the area strategy and are the site allocation policies for Wandsworth Town justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, local context, and are they in 'general conformity' with the LP?

Issue:

The issue here specifically relates to WT22 Pier Wharf site allocation. Paragraph 4.173 Site Layout implies that the safeguarded wharf may be de-designated, and in this case a mixed-use residential scheme could come forward. Based on the Safeguarded Wharves Review which finds this wharf in active use – and noting its particularly high throughput relative to its size – the Mayor would object to this, as it would completely undermine its strategic long-term protection.

Proposed modification:

LBW officers proposed to add 'in line with LP40 – Protected Wharves' to the paragraph 4.173 to emphasise that any de-designation should be in line with this policy. This addition is not sufficient and still implies the potential for redevelopment on this Wharf. The only paragraph that is directly relevant in LP40 to this site allocation is 18.88 which sends the reader back to development and design considerations under the site allocation.

Moreover, development considerations under site allocations must be related to access, public realm that enable/enhance continued use of the wharf without conflicts. The Mayor finds that mention of redevelopment of the Wharf to a mixed use residential weakens the protection of this Wharf despite policy LP40. The Mayor recommends deleting the site allocation WT22 as the entire site allocation paragraphs are based on the premise of de-designation and mixed use residential development.

Main Matter 4 – Nine Elms (Policies PM3, NE1 to NE13)

The Mayor proposes strengthening the policy text for Kirtling Wharf (NE9)/Cringle Dock (NE11) and Middle Wharf (NE10) to create a more specific commitment to safeguarding the wharves for the longer term.

Main Matter 14 – Tackling Climate Change (Policies LP10 – LP14)

Policy LP13 (Circular Economy, Recycling and Waste Management) – Does the policy provide certainty regarding committing to future capacity?

Issue:

The Wandsworth Waste Evidence Base identifies a waste capacity gap that amounts to 2.1ha of land. The WLP commits to safeguarding existing waste sites and the policy LP13 F states that any new waste capacity is directed towards existing facilities, safeguarded wharves, SIL and LSIAs. However, the WLP does not identify any specific additional sites or areas for waste, which the Mayor considers misses an opportunity, and calls into question the deliverability of the plan approach, given the identified waste capacity gap. Based on the issues identified in the industrial intensification policy, realistically there is slim likelihood of

waste capacity being delivered through policy LP13 F without proactive efforts from the borough.

As the Greater London Authority is not a waste planning authority, the Mayor considers that it is for the borough to take a more proactive approach to deliver additional capacity, in line with paragraph 9.8.6 and 9.8.7 of the London Plan, and to document effective cooperation and clearly set out where it has gone as far as it is able to.

The Mayor appreciates a detailed response by the LBW officers to the concerns raised and acknowledges that the borough did not receive any site allocations for waste use. According to SD 105 Waste Evidence Base Addendum that forms part of the examination library, the borough has identified the following opportunities that have the potential to come forward to close the 2.1 ha waste capacity gap identified as part of the WLP.

- (1) A new East London Waste Plan that was to come forward after May 2022 election.
- (2) Surplus capacity in Bexley based on existing and pipeline facilities once their local plan examination is concluded.
- (3) Wandsworth seeking an update on the work that was undertaken to study the capacity for Powerday facility which can allow the pooling of apportionment targets of Western Riverside authorities.
- (4) Following up on the Western Riverside Waste Technical Paper (2017) that identified sufficient waste management capacity.

While the Mayor recognises that allocating additional sites in absence of site allocations coming forward is not under the borough's control, there are sufficient opportunities as stated in the Waste Evidence Base Addendum that the borough can commit to taking a proactive approach to ensure robust delivery of its plan.

Proposed modification:

Since, the GLA is not a waste planning authority, and the borough should take a more proactive approach firming its commitment to making the plan deliverable, the Mayor therefore, proposes further edits to the proposed modifications to paragraph 15.73 (deletions – bold, strikethrough; additions – bold, italicised, underlined):

“Wandsworth ~~will seek~~ ***commits*** to working toward closing the capacity gap by identifying the most suitable locations for new waste facilities. ... Where monitoring demonstrates that waste management capacity to meet the apportionment target ~~has not been~~ ***is unlikely to be*** achieved by 2026, the Council will ~~work with the GLA to~~ ***proactively engage with operators and other authorities*** to encourage delivery of additional waste management capacity in the borough”.

Main Matter 16 – Providing Housing (Policies LP23 to LP32)

- Are the requirements of the Housing policies justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context, and meeting the requirements of the London Plan?
- Are the policies relating to Affordable Housing, Development Density, Housing justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context, and SDS1?

Issue:

LP23 Part C sets a tenure split of 50:50 (social/affordable rent: intermediate) with 25% for First Homes. Whilst paragraph 17.12 acknowledges the London Plan's requirement for provision to be focused on genuinely affordable tenures and commits to prioritising these tenures, the WLP also proposes a broader spectrum of affordable housing provision including other intermediate products such as Shared Equity, Discounted Market Sale and Intermediate Rent. While the London Plan does not prevent a focus on these other tenures, the Mayor would not support an approach which made Discount Market Sale a preferred tenure.

Although a 50:50 split is within the limits of Policy H6 of the London Plan, the Mayor considers that given the extent of need – including as detailed in the borough's Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020) – the inclusion of 25% First Homes requirement with a variable discount (depending on viability) before exploring greater proportions of low-cost and intermediate rents to provide for a range of incomes, is a concern. Moreover, the London Plan is clear that intermediate ownership products should be affordable to households with incomes up to £90,000. It is considered unlikely that First Homes – even with a deep discount to market value – can deliver genuinely affordable homes to a range of household incomes up to this cap, therefore more information is needed surrounding First Homes deliverability and affordability in Wandsworth in the context of strategic and local need.

Proposed modifications:

The Mayor welcomes the deletion of 25% First Homes from the policy text as a response to Regulation 19 comments. National policy on First Homes sets a policy expectation and is not a legislative requirement. GLA's First Homes Practice Note makes this clear, and under s38(6) PCPA the starting point for decision making is the development plan, including the London Plan. The local plan policy should de-prioritise First Homes and include that First Homes should not impact deliverability of other affordable tenures in light of local circumstances, housing need, and market values. The Mayor also recommends including affordability/household incomes to provide a local context within the policy.

LBW officers also propose to include 'at least' 50% instead of 50:50 split. While the Mayor welcomes this inclusion of 'at least' 50%, it is not a significant shift from what the local plan policy previously set out.

Considering the borough's local need of genuinely affordable housing (*current – 56.9% (Table 11), 51% for newly forming households (Table 12) that amounts to over 3,000 homes per annum (Table 14) (SD-043 -LBW Local Housing Needs Assessment)*), the Mayor suggests that the borough should push for a higher target for the tenure split from 50:50 to either 70:30 or 60:40 (social/affordable rent: intermediate) to better align with the local affordable housing needs of the borough.

As previously raised, First Homes are unlikely to deliver genuinely affordable homes to a range of household incomes up to this cap of £90,000. Additionally, based on dialogue with the Wandsworth officers, there is no demand or supply of First Homes that has come forth in the borough since the First Homes evidence was produced in December 2021. This reinforces the need for a reconsideration of affordable tenure targets and de-prioritisation of the First Homes policy in the WLP.

The Mayor also suggests further edits to the borough's proposed modifications (deletions – bold, strikethrough; additions: bold, italicised, underlined):

Amend para 17.13 to read, '~~In accordance with the~~The updated Planning Practice Guidance, **sets a policy expectation that requires** 25% of all homes ~~required~~delivered through developer contributions as part of planning obligations agreed under Section 106 agreements ~~should to~~ be delivered as First Homes. ~~Policy LP23 will require the delivery of~~ **Where** First Homes **are delivered, these** ~~which are~~ should be discounted by at least 30% against the market value, **acknowledging the variance of market conditions, and the importance of not impacting on deliverability of other affordable rent tenures across the borough.** The Council will apply local eligibility criteria (such as income caps) as part of section 106 agreements, which might in some cases necessitate a greater level of discount.'

I hope this statement can inform the Examination of LBW's Local Plan. If you have any questions in relation to this Statement, please contact Monika Jain at

Yours sincerely

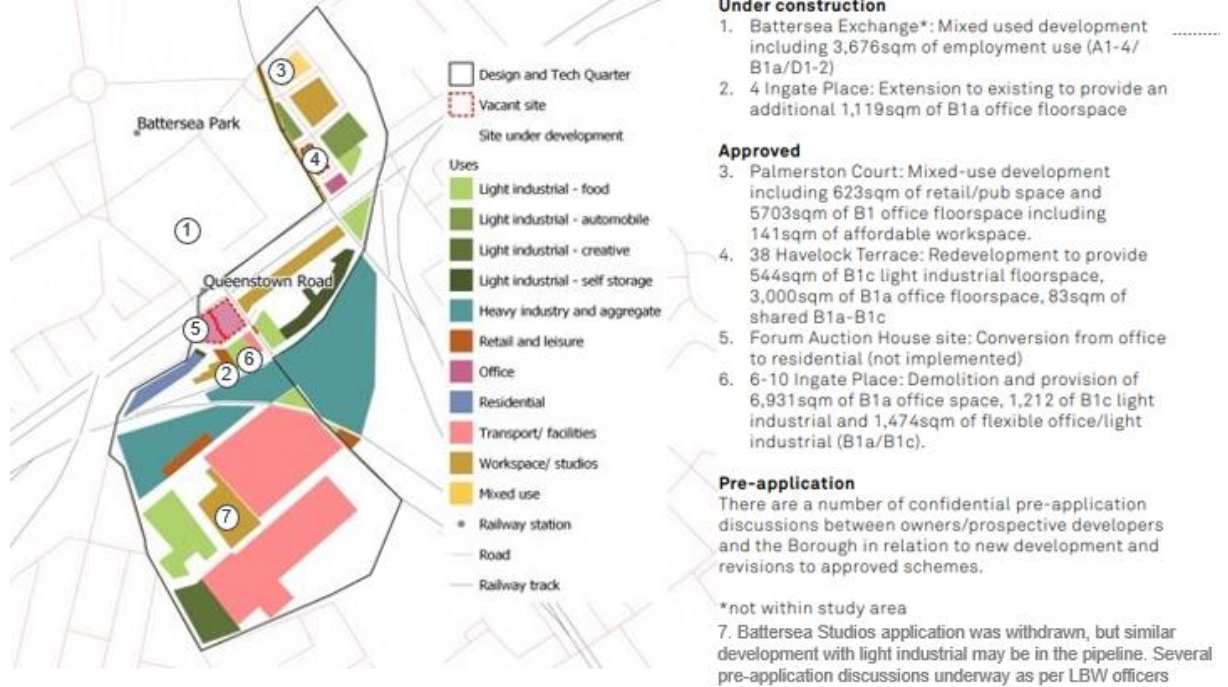
Lucinda Turner

Assistant Director of Planning

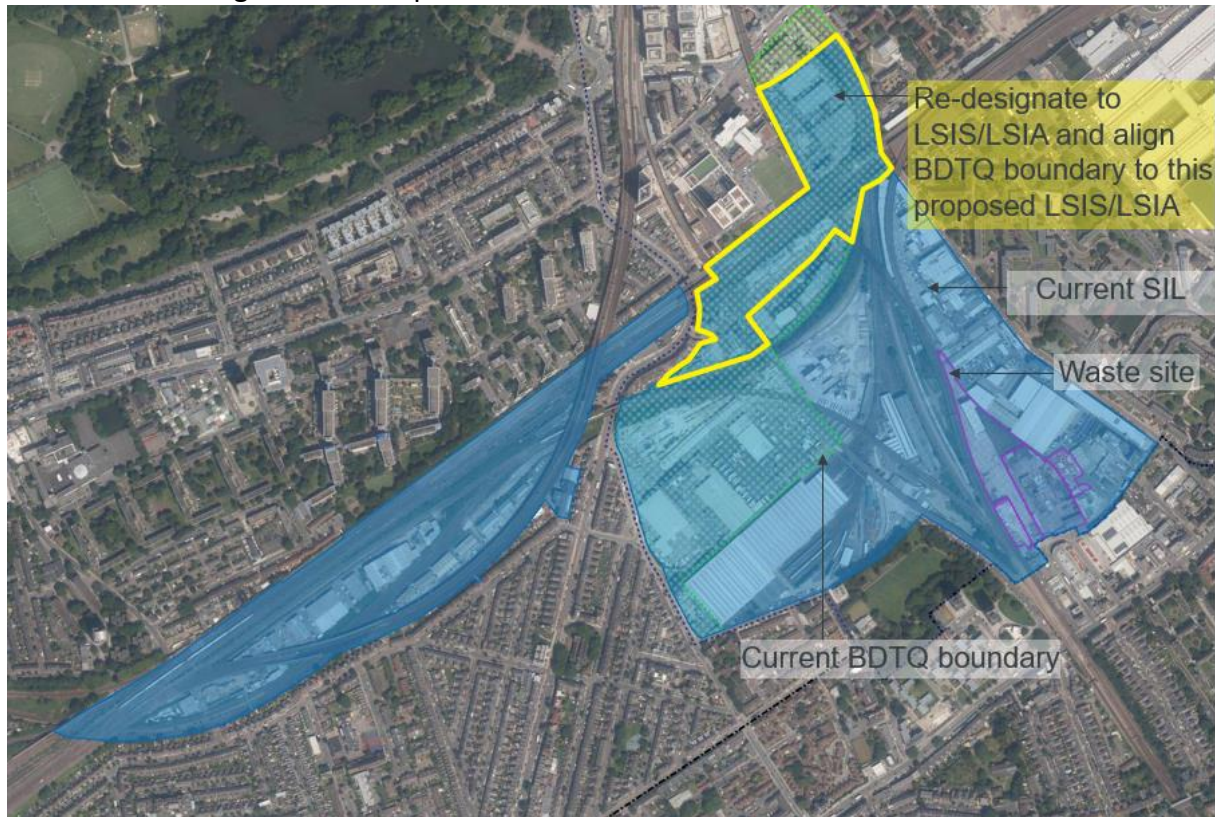
Cc: Leonie Cooper, London Assembly Constituency Member
Sakina Sheikh, Chair of London Assembly Planning Committee
National Planning Casework Unit, DLUHC

Appendix

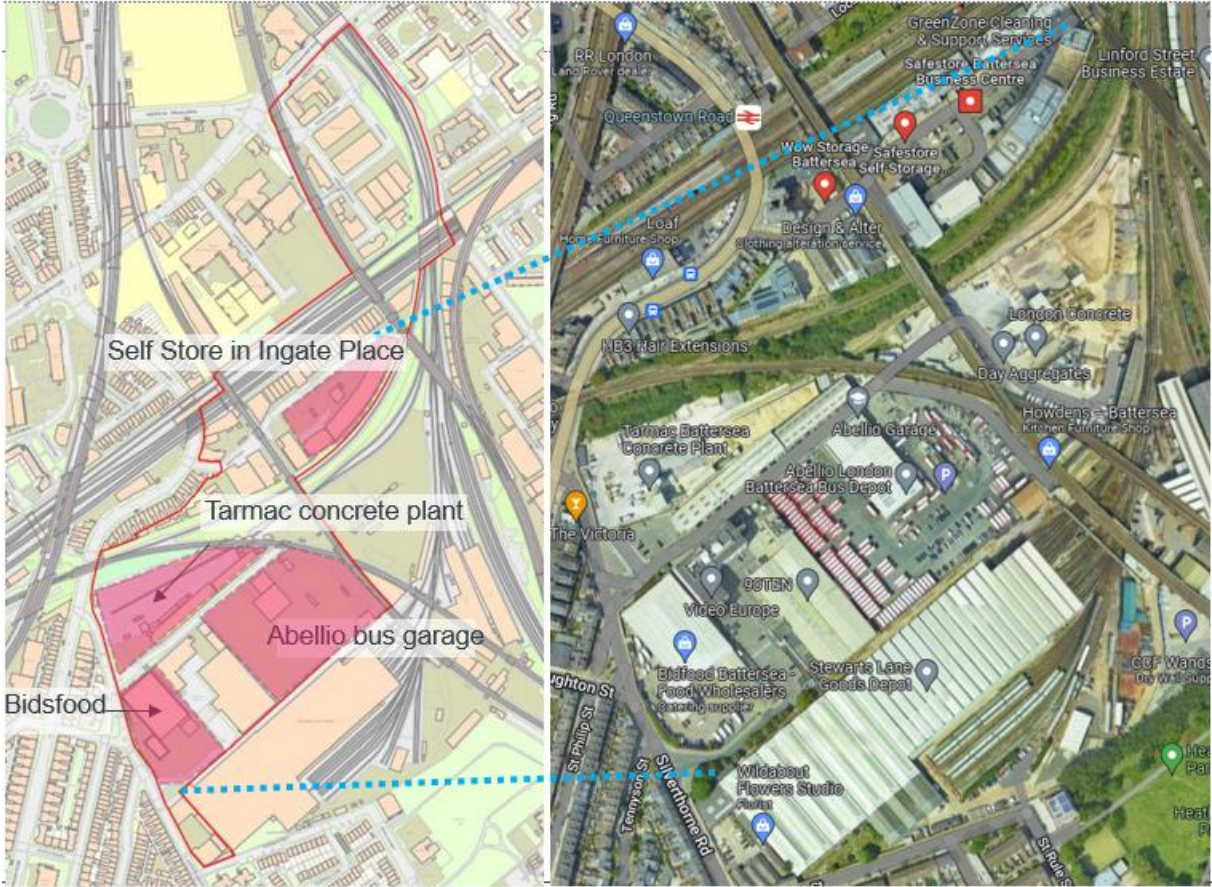
Main Matter 1: Figure 1 showing the kind of uses proposed as part of planning applications



Main Matter 1: Figure 2 for Proposal 1 and 2



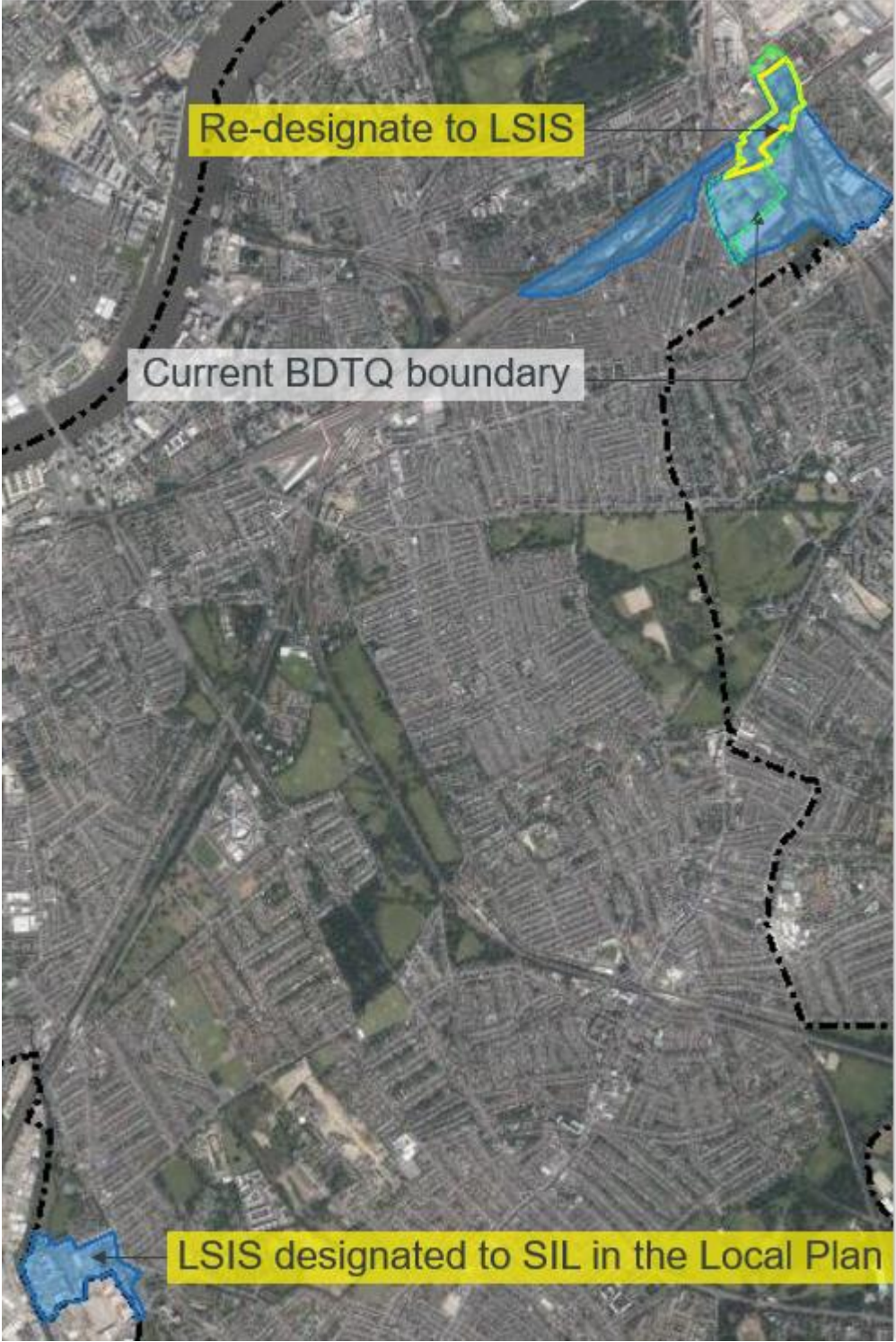
Main Matter 1: Figure 3 provides context of existing uses in SIL that Mayor proposes to retain as SIL



Current Local Plan BDTQ Boundary

Google map view of southern portion of BDTQ

Main Matter 1: Figure 4 showing Summerstown LSIA that is designated as SIL in the local plan and the proposal to re-designate portion of the Queenstown Road SIL to LSIS/LSIA which may create a balance of SIL supply in Wandsworth



Main Matter 1: Figure 5 showing where the WLP proposes to meet identified industrial need that has a significant overlap with Article 4 directions

