



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Matthew Pennycook MP
*Minister of State for Housing and
Planning*

**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**
4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Inspector Bridgwater and Inspector Phillips
Planning Inspectorate

25 June 2026

Dear Inspector Bridgwater and Inspector Phillips

I am writing to you in relation to the emerging City of London Local Plan (the City Plan).

As you are aware significant concerns were raised at examination about the City Plan's potential impact on the Tower of London and its World Heritage Status.

Under the protocol established in 2019 by the then Secretary of State I had advance sight of your report following main modifications consultation on the City Plan. It was apparent to me from that report that you made commendable efforts throughout the examination to assess the heritage impacts of the City Plan's proposals. However, given the Tower of London's unquestionable importance as an internationally renowned World Heritage site, I consider that further scrutiny of the issue through the examination of potential alternative approaches is needed. My aim here is to seek reassurance that the City Plan does everything it can to protect the Tower adequately against the risk of unsuitable or harmful development whilst not unduly restricting economic growth.

In light of these circumstances, I have considered the options available to me under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the 2004 Act), including exercising the Secretary of State's powers of intervention.

Section 20(6A) of the 2004 Act provides the Secretary of State with the power to direct an Inspector:

"(a) ... not to take any step, or any further step, in connection with the examination of the development plan document, or of a specified part of it, until a specified time or until the direction is withdrawn;

(b) require the person—

(i) to consider any specified matters;

(ii) to give an opportunity, or further opportunity, to specified persons to appear before and be heard by the person;

(iii) to take any specified procedural step in connection with the examination"


Pursuant to the powers in s.20(6A) of the 2004 Act I am directing you in respect of the City Plan as follows:

1. **Per s.20(6A)(a): Not to issue your report in respect of the City Plan;**
2. **Per s.20(6A)(a): Not to consider any other matter in respect of the City Plan, with the exception of the specific matter highlighted in the direction in point 3 below;**
3. **Per s.20(6A)(b)(i): To consider the alternative proposal for the tall buildings contours proposed by Historic England, and to specifically assess the economic and heritage impacts of that proposal in contrast to the economic and heritage impacts of the tall buildings contours currently at Figure 15 in the City Plan, and to consider which of the two proposals strikes the most appropriate balance between protecting heritage assets and not unduly restricting economic growth.**
4. **Per s.20(6A)(ii): As part of point 3 above, to hold a further hearing session(s) to allow the parties that made representations in relation to heritage and tall buildings policies to appear and be heard.**
5. **Per s.20(6A)(iii): Following the hearing session(s) directed under point 4 above to prepare written findings in the form of a post-hearings letter.**

The above directions will remain in force until withdrawn by the Secretary of State.

Given the importance of up-to-date local plans, I expect the above directions to be actioned urgently to avoid undue delay to the adoption of the City Plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Pennycook', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew Pennycook MP
Minister of State for Housing and Planning