

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY ACT 2007

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### COMMENTARY

#### Part 6: Housing

##### *Section 28: The London housing strategy*

68. This section inserts into the GLA Act 1999 new provisions requiring the Mayor to prepare a London housing strategy. The section sets out what the strategy should contain, which includes recommendations affecting housing funding decisions for London. It specifies the circumstances under which the Secretary of State may intervene in the production of the strategy.
69. *Subsections (1) and (2)* apply to the London housing strategy the provisions (as amended) of section 41 of the GLA Act 1999 (except subsection (9) – see below). Section 41 of the 1999 Act makes provision which applies to the Mayor's statutory strategies. It requires the Mayor to have regard to certain matters in preparing or revising those strategies, and to follow certain procedural steps. Section 42 lists the persons he is required to consult in preparing or revising a strategy.
70. *Subsection (3)* of the section exempts the Mayor from the requirement, set out in section 41(9) of the GLA Act 1999, to set targets within the London housing strategy which are not less demanding than targets and objectives set nationally. This exception has been put in place in acknowledgement that, for housing, local circumstances might mean that national targets have different effects in different regions.
71. *Subsection (4)* of the section inserts 4 new sections after section 333 of the GLA Act 1999 - sections 333A to 333D.
72. The new section 333A places a requirement on the Mayor to prepare and publish a London housing strategy and sets out in broad terms what the strategy should contain. In particular, it requires the Mayor to:
- assess housing conditions and identify housing needs in Greater London;
  - put forward proposals and policies to promote the improvement of those housing conditions and the meeting of those needs;
  - state the measures that he will encourage other bodies and persons to take for that purpose, and
  - make a statement as to his “spending recommendations” to the Secretary of State and the Housing Corporation for housing for Greater London.
73. The “spending recommendations” are to relate to funding for housing from central government for a period specified by the Secretary of State. The new section sets out what the recommendations are to contain and, in particular, crossrefers to new section 333D(1) (duty of the Housing Corporation to have regard to recommendations). The section requires the Mayor, when preparing the strategy, to have regard to guidance

*These notes refer to the Greater London Authority Act 2007  
(c.24) which received Royal Assent on 23 October 2007*

from the Secretary of State and the effect of the strategy on regions adjoining Greater London. New section 333A(8) also requires him to consult the Housing Corporation and bodies he deems to be representative of registered social landlords when preparing or revising the strategy, in addition to the statutory consultees listed in section 42 of the GLA Act 1999.

74. New section 333B requires the Mayor to provide the Secretary of State with a copy of the London housing strategy prior to publication. It gives the Secretary of State the period of six weeks in which to direct changes to the strategy where it conflicts with national policy on housing or where it will have an adverse effect on regions adjoining Greater London. In the event of such a direction, the Mayor must comply with it before the London housing strategy can be published. The Secretary of State can only issue a direction under this section after consulting the Mayor.
75. New section 333C sets out arrangements for the Secretary of State to require a revision to all or part of the London housing strategy once it is published. This is to allow for changes in national policy or levels of funding – for instance as a result of a more recent Spending Review. Again the Secretary of State can only require a revision after consulting the Mayor.
76. New section 333D places a requirement on the Housing Corporation, when exercising its functions of giving grants under sections 18 and 27A of the Housing Act 1996, to have regard to the London housing strategy. The section also requires local housing strategies (defined in the section) of local housing authorities in Greater London to be in general conformity with the London housing strategy. This will enable the Mayor to challenge boroughs whose local housing strategies are significantly out of alignment with the policies and aspirations set out in the London housing strategy.
77. *Subsection (5)* of section 28 provides a power under which the Secretary of State may direct the Mayor to submit a draft London housing strategy by a specified date. This will allow the Secretary of State to ensure that the funding recommendations which form part of the London housing strategy are agreed in line with the timetables for the funding decisions to which the recommendations relate. *Subsection (6)* provides that the Secretary of State can only set such a date after consultation with the Mayor.