

London: The Compact City – a vision for 2033

Richard Rogers' acclaimed exhibition at the Royal Academy this summer devoted a room to his latest ideas for the evolution of London



London's population has grown by more than two million people over the past two decades and all indications show that it will have grown by another two million by 2033. Compact development is the only strategy for absorbing this growth in a sustainable way.

With 600 individual localities, London is a polycentric city. This urban structure is particularly appropriate for a compact city. Each locality should have a focus for public life, with reinigorated public spaces, civic amenities and opportunities for

interaction between people, goods and ideas.

Completing the transport network will link the many centres, increase opportunities for individuals and improve connectivity throughout the city. Areas with the best connectivity will see the strongest growth.

Adopting high design standards will intensify existing localities and develop vibrant, mixed localities on London's large swathes of post-industrial land.

More homes, jobs and opportunities for leisure, learning



Lord Rogers of Riverside

Map 1



Map 2

and exchange, all linked by better transport networks, will make London a fairer and more dynamic city.

London, the compact city, can absorb two million more people within its existing footprint while improving the quality of life for all its citizens. There is no need to encroach on the Green Belt. A more intense, just, open-minded, enjoyable and sustainable city is within our reach.

Compact development is the only sustainable way forward for London. 'London: The Compact City' has five main strategies:

- Retrofit and intensify the city's 600 localities – 'build London on London'
- Reclaim the high streets to exploit their potential as mixed-use local centres
- Grow the transport network to expand and increase areas of high connectivity
- Develop brownfield sites, especially along the eastern riverbanks
- Protect the Green Belt and strengthen the city's network of green and public spaces

Pressures on London [Map 1]

By 2033 London will have 2,000,000 more citizens, needing:

- 250,000 more school places
- 1,000,000 more homes

- 1,000,000 more jobs
- 50 per cent more capacity on public transport
- Retrofit and intensify London's 600 localities: build London on London [Map 2]

London's character derives from being an amalgamation of 600 individual localities, each with its own personality and its own potential. This structure of localities is particularly appropriate for compact growth. Intensifying each locality will allow it to provide everyday needs with easy access.

This structure also makes London unique. The history and ever-changing character of its populations gives each centre its own identity and the capacity to develop its own future. The variety between localities reflects the diversity of their inhabitants and gives each locality its own identity.

No single locality dominates and each can develop in the most appropriate way for the people it serves.

Reclaim our high streets: the nuclei for growth [Map 3]

London's 600 miles of high streets should provide the most important public spaces in the 600 localities – the equivalent of piazzas in Italian cities.

We need to reclaim the high streets for public use, with new types of buildings for health, leisure and learning, and new opportunities for working and shopping.

Reinvigorated high streets will be the core of 'polycentres', major urban hubs that provide strategic services and opportu-

THE FUTURE OF LONDON

WE NEED WELL-DESIGNED, FACTORY-PRODUCED, FAST BUILD, HIGH PERFORMANCE NEW HOUSING ON BROWNFIELD SITES

WE NEED FOUR NEW LIGHT BRIDGES ACROSS THE UPPER THAMES, AND THREE NEW BIKE-FRIENDLY CABLE CARS IN THE DOCKLANDS

WE MUST FIGHT FOR MANY MORE PUBLIC SQUARES, PARKS AND CITY SPACES ON THE GREEN GRID

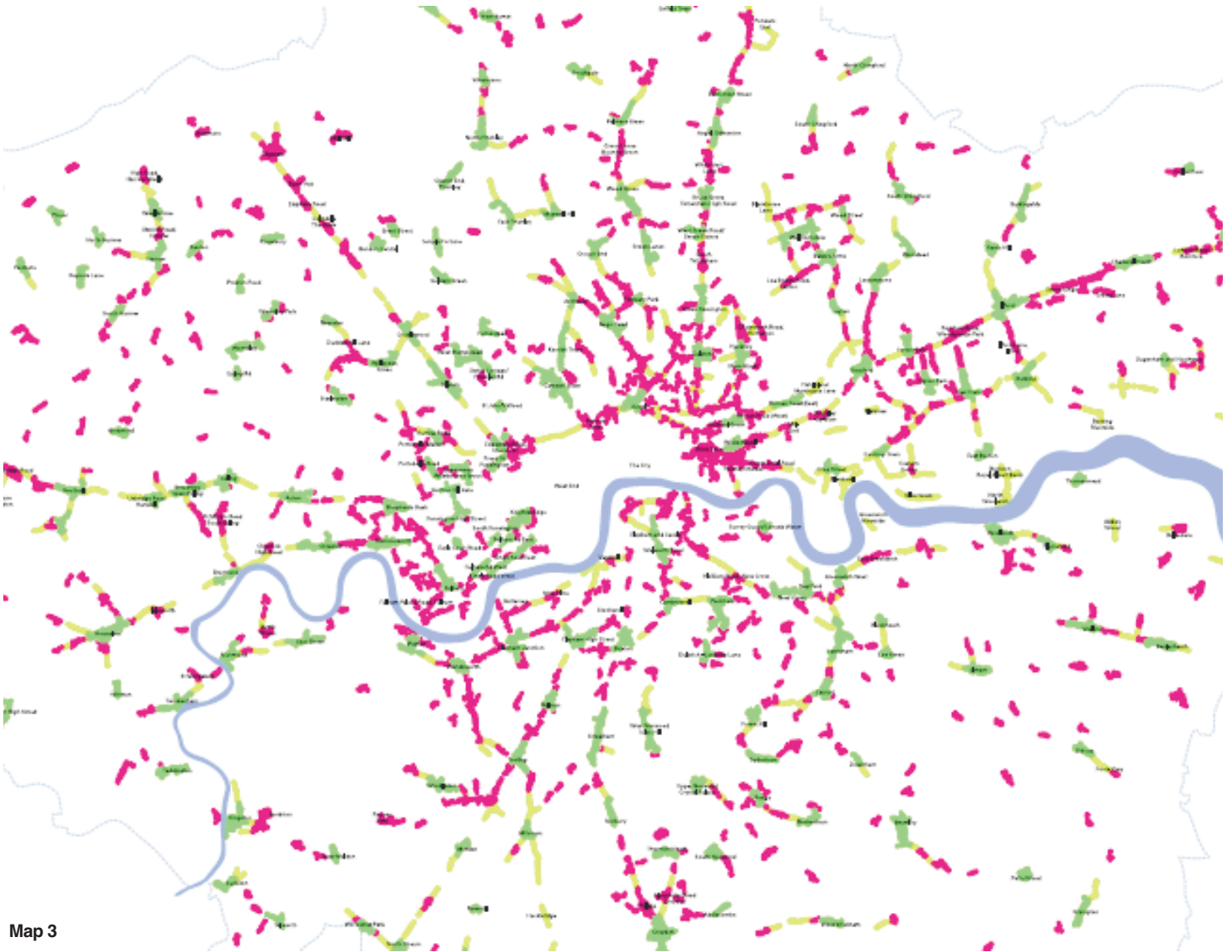
WE NEED FIVE NEW TUBE LINES AND THE CROSSRAIL ORBITAL TO LINK LONDON'S POLYCENTRES

LONDON MUST GO ELECTRIC – SMALL ELECTRIC CITY CARS, ELECTRIC BIKES, TRIKES AND RICKSHAWS

WE MUST PLANT ONE MILLION MORE TREES ON LONDON'S STREETS TO LINK THE GREEN GRID AND ADD TO THE SEVEN MILLION TREES IN GREATER LONDON

WE NEED INTELLIGENT ADAPTABLE GREEN BUILDINGS THAT COLLECT SOLAR ENERGY

WE NEED A MAJOR NEW ROAD TUNNEL LINKING NORTH AND SOUTH LONDON



Map 3

nities, as well as being strong employment and residential clusters.

Grow the transport network: strengthen connectivity [Map 4]

Connectivity creates opportunity. It allows all its citizens to participate in the benefits of the whole city, wherever they live and work.

Better connectivity will rebalance London more evenly. The emphasis should be on new networks that incorporate the under-served east into the systems that currently focus on the City and the West End.

Connectivity is essential to make individual local centres the polycentres of a large city. This map reads like a CGI scan of London's connectivity. It indicates the effect on connectivity of planned improvements in rail, bus and Tube networks.

Orange indicates areas with high connectivity (multiple bus, Tube and rail connections).

Hatched orange and blue indicate areas with medium connectivity.

Dark blue indicates areas with moderate connectivity.

Light blue indicates areas with poor connectivity.

White indicates areas of open space.

A revolution in personal mobility, including new forms of micro-vehicles, will further increase connectivity beyond the planned improvements shown in this map.

Build mixed-use developments on brownfield sites

London has 3,600 hectares of brownfield (derelict but previously developed) land.

This is enough for 500,000 homes at medium density. The supply of brownfield land replenishes itself – as sites are developed, more become available as industry abandons them.

We need a strategy that creates vibrant mixed communities on these sites, with high design standards to create new types of homes, workplaces, civic buildings and public spaces.

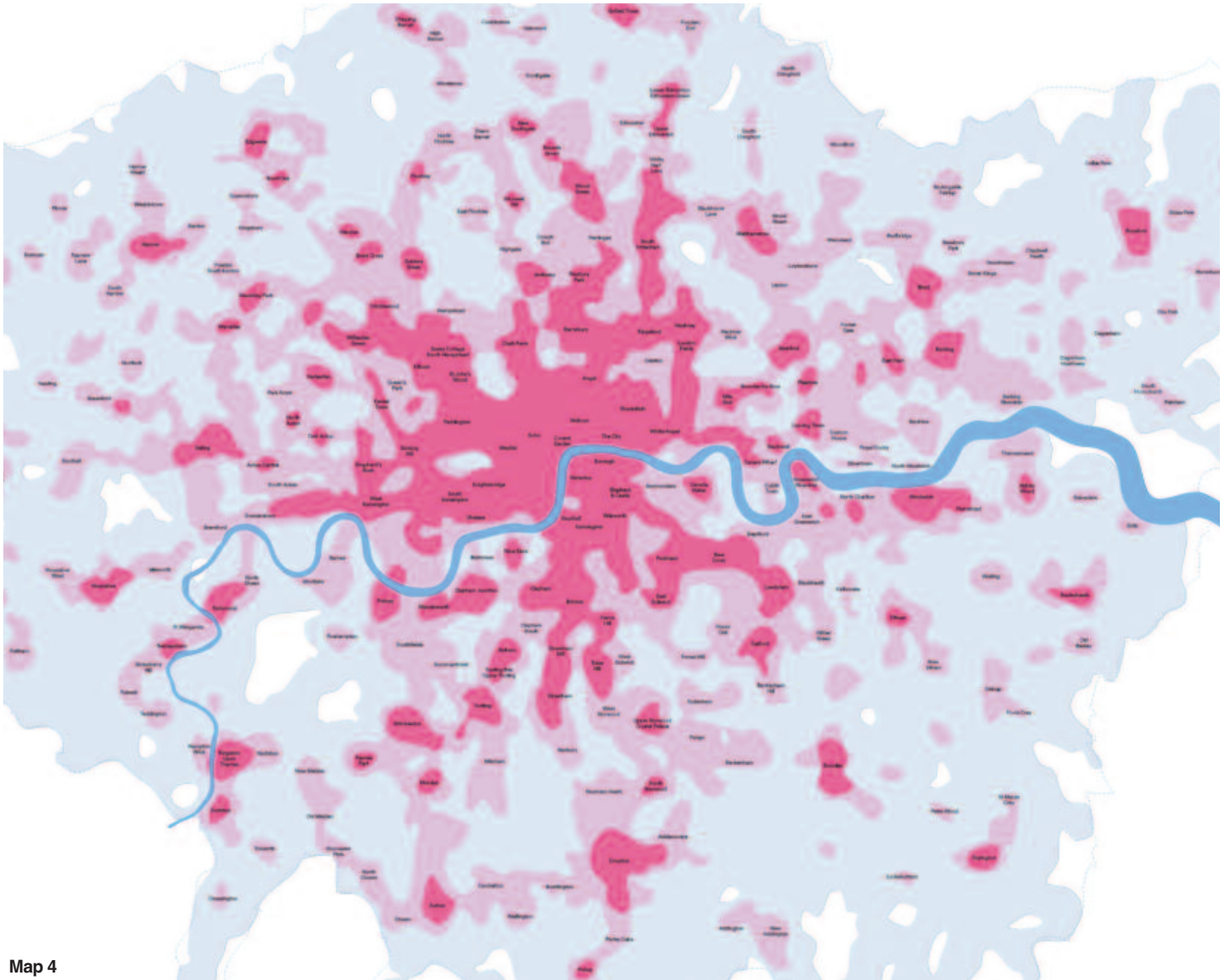
When connected to the rest of the city by new and improved transport networks, these localities will balance access to housing, education, work and leisure more fairly across the city.

Protect the Green Belt and reinforce the network of green and public spaces within the city

The Green Belt is an amazing resource for Londoners. It must be protected from development and access to it must be improved. Greater intensification demands more and better public space.

London's network of green and public spaces should be linked to form a 'green grid' across the whole city.

This 'green grid' will offer every citizen a bench near his or her front door, a tree within view, a park within a few minutes' walk and access to the cycle networks across the whole city. ■



Map 4

Grow the transport network: strengthen connectivity

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Connectivity is essential to make individual local centres the polycentres of a large city.

This map reads like a CGI scan of London's connectivity. It indicates the effect on connectivity of planned transport improvements, in rail, bus and underground networks.

Purple will be areas with high connectivity (multiple bus, tube and rail connections). Pink will be areas with moderate connectivity.

Light blue will be areas with poor connectivity.

White are areas of open space.

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