

Just Space Economy and Planning

Statement of Intent as at 28 November 2013 (provisional and subject to change)

Just Space Economy and Planning aims to build capacity within the Just Space network to participate in and influence the development of planning policy in London on economic issues. This has been particularly challenging for Just Space members in the past, despite the efforts of the network to support this work through various discussions over the past three years. A particular problem faced by groups and individuals wanting to participate in statutory planning consultations in relation to economic issues in London has been the dominance of groups such as London First and the City of London. Many other sources of knowledge about London's economies exist, both within communities and universities. Just Space Economy and Planning is seeking to connect up these forms of knowledge, supporting participation in planning on economic issues in London by a greater diversity of groups and interests.

Just Space Economy and Planning is presently focusing on the following issues:

- **The targeting of growth:** Opening up the targeting of London's growth to greater public debate, asking questions such as whether such growth is sustainable; what sort of growth we might want and why; and exploring different growth scenarios.
- **The loss of employment land:** Exploring the ways in which present planning policies and practices supporting the conversion of employment land to housing risk damaging London's economy through shrinking the stock and raising the costs of employment space.
- **The nature and role of affordable workspace:** Addressing the lack of understanding and evidence base about the nature and role of affordable workspace within planning policy in London.
- **Job quality:** Exploring the potential role of public authorities including planning authorities in delivering *quality* jobs, as a response to the overwhelming focus on quantity.
- **Involvement of businesses and communities in planning:** Working to support the involvement of a greater diversity of voices within businesses and communities in planning on economic issues, in particular in order to make connections between usually-separated housing, transport, environmental and economic policies.

Just Space Economy and Planning participants hold different views about the role of planning policy in London's economic development, and the possibilities to participate in it. While the group is committed to engaging in statutory consultation processes on the London Plan, for example, many participants are sceptical about the usefulness of this in light of the regularity with which London Plan policies are disregarded and breached. Others are focused on challenging the economic assumptions that underpin the Plan, regardless of impact, in order to demonstrate that London First and the City of London do not represent the only interests in London's economy. Regardless of strategies and tactics, many participants feel that it is imperative to build other ways of thinking about London's economy and planning, in order to meet the challenges of social, environmental and economic sustainability in the long term.

Currently, Just Space Economy and Planning's main activities are bi-monthly seminars; termly public lectures; and a community conference, planned for Spring 2014. We are also developing our communications and publishing activity. To get involved, join our mailing list (jseconomy@googlegroups.com), check out our blog (<http://justspace.org.uk/category/economy-and-planning/>), join our Facebook group (Just Space Economy and Planning), follow us on twitter ([#JustSpace](https://twitter.com/JustSpace)), and come along to our events. The group relies on the time, enthusiasm and interest of participants, so there are plenty of opportunities to get involved in organizing activities.