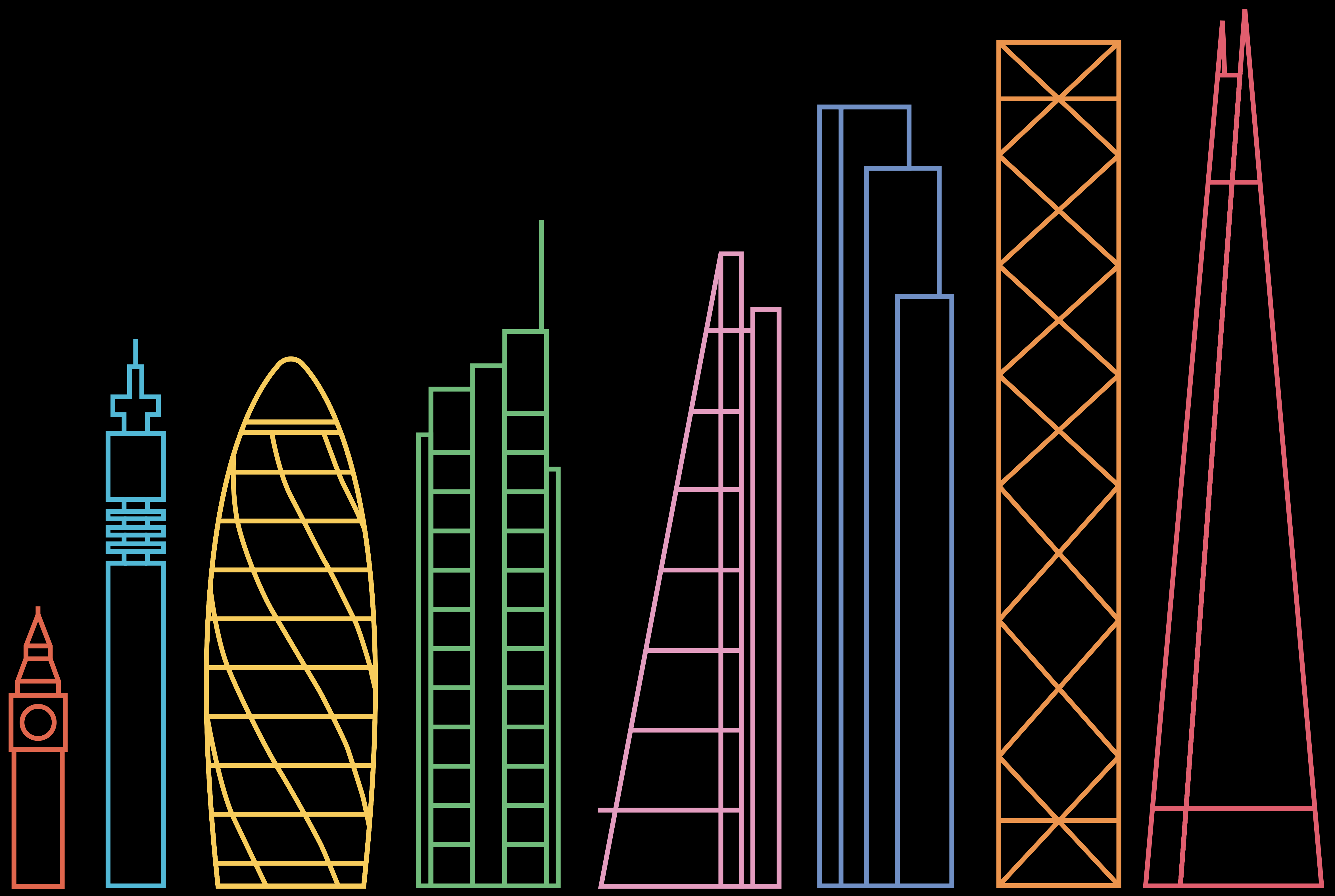

LONDON TALL BUILDINGS SURVEY 2022

The NLA London Tall Buildings Survey is an annual publication, developed with research partner Knight Frank, presenting unique up-to-date data and analysis of London's tall buildings pipeline. The report is part of the year-round NLA Tall Buildings programme, bringing together industry experts and the public to discuss one of the capital’s most debated topics.

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Foreword

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New London Architecture (NLA)*

This report was launched in the NLA's temporary gallery in Stratford, one of a series of stops that the New London Model will make as it tours different parts of the capital while the city is in post-Covid recovery mode.

We chose Stratford because this year Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park celebrates the 10th anniversary of the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games which accelerated development and regeneration in the area. When the 2012 Olympics were awarded to London the site consisted of old railway lands, low rise sheds and giant heaps of scrap.

Today, it is a thriving and dense mixed-use neighbourhood with a cluster of tall buildings which announces its success far and wide on the local skyline. This reflects not only Games-driven growth but also the policies of the London Plan and the densification of Opportunity Areas right across the capital.

These areas are easily picked out on the NLA's model: groups of taller buildings in White City, Elephant and Castle, Greenwich Peninsula and in the City of London reflect a sea change in the shape of the city.

The tall buildings policy in the latter part of the 20th century was to scatter them across the landscape—sometimes as urban markers but often randomly as sites became available.

More recently they have been clustered around areas with good transport connections, creating a series of peaks across the otherwise low-rise city.

Whether or not we are going to see a reduction in the number of new towers in the future, the face of London has already changed irreversibly over the past two decades, and with a further 500 or so to come those changes will be even further reinforced.


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Executive summary

583 tall buildings in the pipeline - down **1%** from 587 in 2020

109 schemes are now under construction, but starts are down **15%** on the five-year average

26 of London's 33 boroughs have a tall building pipeline. We are seeing a continued shift towards outer London, with **88** tall buildings in zones 3-4 and **41** in zone 5

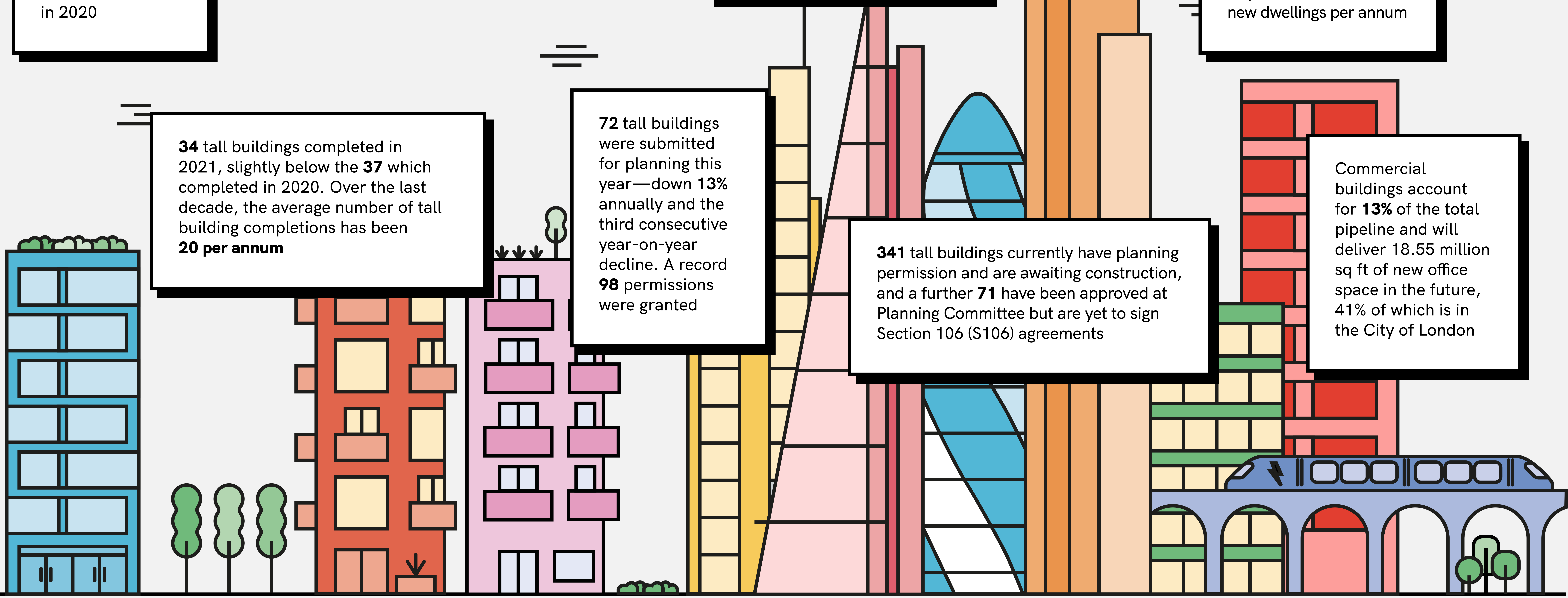
More than **88,000** new homes are estimated across the entire tall buildings pipeline, or just under two years' worth of housing need based on GLA requirements of **52,000** new dwellings per annum

34 tall buildings completed in 2021, slightly below the **37** which completed in 2020. Over the last decade, the average number of tall building completions has been **20 per annum**

72 tall buildings were submitted for planning this year—down **13%** annually and the third consecutive year-on-year decline. A record **98** permissions were granted

341 tall buildings currently have planning permission and are awaiting construction, and a further **71** have been approved at Planning Committee but are yet to sign Section 106 (S106) agreements

Commercial buildings account for **13%** of the total pipeline and will deliver 18.55 million sq ft of new office space in the future, 41% of which is in the City of London



PIPELINE

Overview

There are signs of a slowdown of tall buildings in London. The pipeline of 20 storey-plus buildings in the capital contracted 1 per cent year-on-year in 2021, while the number of new planning applications put forward by developers and new construction starts—bellwethers for the state of the market—came in lower than long-term trends.

A slowing is not entirely unexpected; a combination of the uncertainties created by the pandemic, rising build costs, new safety measures, environmental regulations and increased affordable housing obligations in recent years have imposed greater scrutiny on high-rise development.

However, despite the slight decline in the overall pipeline, this year's figures should not be interpreted as the end of tall building in London. The survey points to a record level of planning permissions being granted last year, up 26 per cent on 2020, and the number of completed projects was robust. Context is also key. The future pipeline may have contracted slightly, but it remains significant. In total, there are 583 tall buildings proposed or approved with 109 of those currently under construction, 28 per cent and 19 per cent higher than back in 2016 respectively.

As we have noted in previous surveys, what is coming through the planning system and out of the ground, is increasingly across the outer London boroughs, in zones 3, 4 and 5, as well as for the Build to Rent sector, mirroring the trend in the wider new-build housing market. Commercial buildings account for 13 per cent of the total pipeline.