



CHAPTER 01A **INTRODUCTION**

Stage 3: publishing the new Local Plan and Policies Map

- 1.1.1. The council believes that this is the right plan for the borough and wishes to adopt it as part of the council's Local Plan. Before doing this, the council has to submit it to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent planning inspector.
- 1.1.2. If you have comments on any issues within the policies, site allocations or land designations that you would like the inspector to consider at their independent examination of the plan, please let us know in writing (post or e-mail) between Thursday **22nd July and Monday 6th September 2021** using the details below:

Via Merton's website www.merton.gov.uk/newlocalplan

Email: future.merton@merton.gov.uk

Post:

FutureMerton
London Borough of Merton
Civic Centre
London Road,
Morden SM4 5DX.

- 1.1.3. You are also invited to state if you would like to attend any examination hearings on Merton's new Local Plan and policies maps or if you would like to be notified when these documents are adopted.

Introduction

- 1.1.4.**
- 1.1.5.** The Local Plan sets out the council's statutory planning policy framework for the borough. This plan sets out the level of growth which needs to be planned for in Merton and identifies where that growth should be located and how it should be delivered. The policies set out in the plan will be used to determine planning applications in the borough. The Local Plan must be read as a whole document. The placement of the topic chapters and the policies within the chapters is no reflection on their importance or weight – it does not stand for a hierarchy.
- 1.1.6.** The Local Plan covers a range of matters including the number of new homes and employment provision needed and where they should be located. It also sets out policies for the protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, the provision of supporting infrastructure for growth and other policies to manage change in local areas including town centres, industrial areas neighbourhoods and the borough generally.
- 1.1.7.** This plan will be used to promote, shape and manage growth in Merton for the next 15 years. Policies in the plan set out how the council will seek to achieve an appropriate balance between physical, social, economic and environmental protection in Merton for the benefit of all residents and stakeholders.
- 1.1.8.** Together with the London Plan and the South London Waste Plan (once adopted), the Local Plan will form the Statutory Development Plan under section 38 of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.

National Policy

- 1.1.9.** Local Plans must be consistent with the national policy set out within the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#). The NPPF sets out the principles and objectives that are required to underpin approaches to plan-making and development management. Central to this, within the NPPF is the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” that establishes in general terms that:
- Local Plans should positively seek to meet the development needs of their area and meet objectively assessed needs (such as housing growth) unless the harm of doing so would demonstrably conflict with the NPPF itself; and
 - Decision-taking should see that proposals that accord with development plans are approved without delay, and where plans are silent or out-of-date on an issue, permission should be granted for development.

- 1.1.10.** In accordance with the NPPF (para 20), the key strategic priorities that the local plan must address must include the following:
- a. Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development.
 - b. Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat).
 - c. Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
 - d. Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 1.1.11.** [The London Plan](#) is the statutory Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London prepared by the Mayor of London (“the Mayor”) in accordance with the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended) (“the GLA Act”) and associated regulations. Within the London Plan, the Mayor sets out designations, planning policy requirements, targets and instructions that boroughs must include in their Local Plans.
- 1.1.12.** The Local Plan must also be in ‘general conformity’ with the London Plan, and where appropriate, take account of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). The Mayor of London produces other strategies to sit alongside the London Plan.
- 1.1.13.** The afore mentioned statutory planning documents set out what mitigation measures are needed and if, any assessment(s) is needed to assess the potential impact such as environmental of a proposed development. Therefore it is not necessary to have the same policy at local level.

Neighbourhood Plans

- 1.1.14.** Neighbourhood Plans are plans prepared by the community which set out the detailed planning policies and proposals for their specific area. Policies and proposals within Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the local plan.
- 1.1.15.** At the time of writing (July 2021) the council has just taken a decision on PlanWimbledon’s proposal to form a neighbourhood forum for their proposed neighbourhood area of Wimbledon. More information can be found on Merton’s website: [Neighbourhood plans \(merton.gov.uk\)](https://www.merton.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/neighbourhood-plans)

Merton Local Plan contents

Strategic Objectives: guided by consultation feedback, Merton's Sustainable Community Strategy (known as the Community Plan) and the London Plan 2021

- 1.1.16. **Strategic policies** are borough-wide policies, which set out Merton Council's strategy to work with local people, businesses and key stakeholders to improve neighbourhoods and create new opportunities for the future.
- 1.1.17. **Development policies** gives further detail that is needed to deliver the strategic policies.
- 1.1.18. **Site allocations:** Site allocations sets out land use requirements for sites that will contribute to the borough's growth.
- 1.1.19. **Policies Map:** The Policies Map shows planning designations where specific planning policies are applied.
- 1.1.20. Merton produces an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) every year that analyses how our planning policies are performing. [Local Plan \(merton.gov.uk\)](https://www.merton.gov.uk) Once this Local Plan is adopted the AMR will monitor the new policies.

Previous consultation on Merton's Local Plan and Policies Maps

- 1.1.21. Three stages of consultation have already taken place in developing Merton's new Local Plan and policies map:
- A "[call for sites](#)" [Stage 1 public consultation](#) took place between October 2017 and January 2018. This was the first stage, asking general questions about what sites or what policies the Local Plan might contain. Over 1,000 responses were received
 - A [Stage 2 draft Local Plan public consultation](#) took place between October 2018 and January 2019. It contained draft policies, potential sites for allocation and land designations (e.g. town centre boundaries) Approximately 240 respondents raised over 1,500 separate points.
 - A [Stage 2a draft Local Plan public consultation](#) took place between 13th November 2020 to 1st February 2021. Although the consultation finished on 1st February 2021, the council continued to accept responses after the consultation date in recognition of the difficult situation people are going through with Covid19 and that the sustainability appraisal document was not visible without password protection online until 4th January 2021 due to an IT issue.

What happened to my comments?

- 1.1.22. Thanks to everyone who took the time to respond to the three earlier consultations on sites, planning policies and the Policies Map.

- 1.1.23.** All the comments received are available on [Merton Council's website in the New Local Plan section](#).
- 1.1.24.** Your comments have helped to inform the sites, policies and maps in this document, which have been amended following your feedback, local research and national and regional policy changes.

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Please be aware that this Local Plan does not contain a chapter 8.