

1 February 2021

Future Merton team
London Borough of Merton
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing in response to the Stage 2 a Draft Local Plan consultation. My comments relate to policy reference N3.1 Colliers Wood.

3.1.1 include Myrna Close nature reserve (old railway line)

3.1.4 The area around Colliers Wood tube station, between the tower and the tube station, is much improved but very grey and bleak. There are a few trees but no earth around them, no way for a guerrilla gardener to make it greener. I would ask that plans for greening this area are included – it would greatly improve the first impression of visitors to Colliers Wood and add in a small way to improving air quality. Hedges, trees, anything planted into actual earth that will absorb some of the pollution. Planters may look good initially but they have to be maintained and watered regularly and are not the best solution. An even more expensive option would be to have a living green wall on the side of the tower block or the Holiday Inn.

Including this as an aim would be in line with the London Plan which, unlike the Merton Local Plan, covers greening of all urban spaces and not only developments. (Policy G5 Urban greening 8.5.2 of the London Plan)

3.1.8 I fully support a move towards traditional street formats in the retail parks. Large stores attract even more traffic.

3.1.11 I fully support the decision not to increase the retail offer.

3.1.18 I agree that it is better to provide high density housing on brownfield sites than to encroach on green space. Nevertheless I would ask that the sentence that was in the previous iteration of the plan “Britannia Point should remain the pinnacle building in the centre in terms of height.” be reinstated, one or two towers of lower height would still increase housing in the borough, with less of a detrimental effect on the area.

Indeed I would ask that 10 storeys be the maximum height for any further developments. Increased building height is associated with increased efficiency (and hence lowering of emissions) during the use phase of the building’s lifecycle. However, buildings exceeding circa 10 storeys are complex engineering feats, typically requiring dramatically inflated quantities of energy-intensive materials like performance steel and concrete due to the disproportionate strain caused as height

increases. As such, these buildings often have unacceptably high embedded energy and carbon, that will take decades to be offset by efficiency gains.

I would like to make one general point. Colliers Wood has many ugly buildings: the retail parks, the Holiday Inn, the housing blocks. Some of these are recent developments. In Merton Park or Wimbledon, where the buildings are generally of high quality design, developments have to fit in with the general standard of buildings in the area. I do not understand why this has to apply in Colliers Wood. Would it not be possible to set a new high standard of design to improve the environment here and enable residents to take more pride in their area?

My comment on the plan overall is that measures to tackle the climate emergency need to be as ambitious as possible. I welcome the work that the council has put in to this so far and hope that decisive action will follow.

Yours sincerely,