

Future Merton
London Borough of Merton
12th Floor Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Our ref: SL/2006/100135/SL-03/SB1

Your ref: Email

Date: August 27, 2013

ldf@merton.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: London Borough of Merton Local Plan: Merton's Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Map (part of Merton's Local Plan)

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above document which we received on July 16, 2013. We welcome policy *DMF1-support for Flood Risk Management* and are pleased to note that our comment from the previous consultation: *that all development proposals must have regard to Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)* has been incorporated.

Most of the allocated sites except for sites 37, 70 in Flood Zone 3a/3b; and site 5 in Flood Zone 2 are outside of the fluvial floodplain. Although we supported the comments inserted on page 124 in regard to Policy DM F1 in our previous representation, the comments have been inserted in the wrong column which may cause some confusion because it would appear to suggest that 'More Vulnerable' development can be permitted in Flood Zone 3b if it supports London Borough of Merton's wider objectives and can be shown to result in an overall reduction in flood risk. Whilst this may be appropriate in largely developed areas like Merton, there has been no precedent for this approach elsewhere and it's contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, which restricts Flood Zone 3b to Essential Infrastructure/Water Compatible development only.

To avoid any confusion and setting a precedent for development within the functional floodplain, the comments would only fit on Flood Zone 3a column not Flood Zone 3b column which is the functional flood plain.

The web based Planning Practice Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework Table 1: *Flood zones* and Table 3: *Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone 'compatibility'* explains on *Zone 3a - high probability* that appropriate uses would include the more vulnerable uses and essential infrastructure should only be permitted in this zone if the Exception Test is passed. The inserted text would fit in Flood 3a and be in line with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 100 which states inter -alia that "*Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere*". This is the case with sites 37 (Wimbledon Greyhound Stadium) and 70 (Haslemere Industrial Estate). It's in our interest for sites such as Wimbledon Greyhound Stadium to be redeveloped if redevelopment can provide an overall reduction in flood risk.

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We would advise the council to review the SFRA to re-examine the extent of FZ3b. It may be the case that these sites should never have been designated Flood Zone 3b in the first place – which the SFRA did without consideration of the existing development (businesses/residences on site)

In our initial response (SL/2006/100135/SL-01/PO2), we noted that these sites are not suitable for residential development and that we do not believe that any mitigation measures can address the issues associated with the functional floodplain and the critical drainage areas. We had a meeting with the council planners to map way forward and also pre-application discussions with both the council and consultants concerning the redevelopment of the Wimbledon Greyhound Stadium site for continued sporting/recreation use.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

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