

**London Borough of Merton:  
Hot Food Take-aways Research**

**May 2013**

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# 1 Introduction:

- 1.1 Since 2008 the Future Merton Team has been working on updating Merton's Local Plan to fully replace the adopted **Unitary Development Plan (UDP)** [2003].
- 1.2 In July 2011, Merton adopted its **Core Planning Strategy** which superseded some of Merton's UDP policies and council officers are currently working on the council's **Sites & Policies Plan and Policies Map**. Once adopted Merton's new development plan will be the London Plan, Merton's Core Planning Strategy, South London Waste Plan (2012) and the Sites & Policies Plan and Policies Map, therefore fully replacing Merton's UDP.
- 1.3 *Subsection F of 'Policy DMR5: Food and drink/ leisure and entertainment uses'* of the emerging Sites & Policies Plan proposes that:

“Proposals which result in an over-concentration of hot food take-aways (A5 uses) will not be permitted as this would detract from the ability to adopt healthy lifestyles”.
- 1.4 In the justification text to this policy, although it is recognised that food and drink uses can provide a positive contribution to the evening economy in Merton, there is concern regarding the impacts of the over-concentration of hot food take-aways (A5 uses), particularly on Merton High Street, the London Road (Mitcham) and Streatham Road.
- 1.5 For this reason, it is proposed that planning permission will not be permitted for hot food take-aways (A4 uses) where there is ‘an over concentration’ in areas. Generally ‘an over-concentration’ of hot food take-aways would be the development of more than three hot food take-aways in a shopping parade of 10 consecutive shops.
- 1.6 The purpose of this research paper is to examine the evidence supporting Policy DMR5 of Merton's emerging Sites & Policies Plan and to explore if further policy is required to restrict the number of hot food take-aways near primary and secondary schools.

## **2 Definition of Hot Food Take-aways:**

- 2.1 The definition of hot food take-away, Use Class A5 under the Use Class Order, is defined as an establishment whose primary business is for the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.
- 2.2 Often there is confusion as to whether a premises is a café, restaurant or hot food take-away. Cafes and restaurants are within a separate Use Class – A3 Use Class. It is usually when a proposal is submitted as a planning application to a local authority showing the proposed layout of such premises, will a guide be provided as to whether the proposal falls within the A3 or A5 Use Class.
- 2.3 In determining the main use of the premises, consideration is given to:
  - The proportion (%) of space designated for food preparation and other servicing in relation to designated customer circulation space.
  - The number of tables or chairs to be provided for customer use.
- 2.4 For example, though McDonalds is often perceived as a hot food take-away (A5 Use Class), under the Use Class Order definitions they can be within the A3 Use Class if they provide seating for customers on the premises.
- 2.5 When submitting a planning application, applicants are required to demonstrate to the council that the proposed use would be the primary business activity. Examples of hot food take-aways include fried chicken shops, fish and chip shops and kebab shops and other fast food businesses.

### 3 Role of the ‘local authority’:

- 3.1 This section looks at national, regional and local policies and guidance to explore, if there is an issue with the concentration of hot food take-aways, the role of local authorities and how they can help with tackling this issue.

*National guidance:*

- 3.2 The Department of Health’s White Paper **‘Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for public health in England’ (2010)** sets out the government’s commitment to protect the population from serious health threats, helping people to live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives and improving health of the poorest.
- 3.3 Paragraph 2.5 makes clear that businesses must take more responsibility for the impact of their practices on people’s health and wellbeing. To reduce the causes of ill health, the government aims to work collaboratively with business and voluntary sector through the ‘Public Health Responsibility Deal’ initiative. This ‘Responsibility Deal’ deals with food, alcohol, physical activity, health at work and behaviour; dealing particularly with reducing salt, providing better information for consumers about food and the promotion of more socially responsible retailing and consumption of alcohol.
- 3.4 In 2011, the Department of Health published **‘Healthy Lives, Health People – Update and Forward’** which states that public health will now be part of the local authority under a New Service called Public Health England. This service will aim to tackle issues such as obesity.
- 3.5 The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published public health guidance **‘PH42 – Obesity: working with local communities’ (Nov 2012)**. The guidance aims to support effective, sustainable and community-wide action to prevent obesity, and with adults and children being overweight. A sustainable community-wide approach to prevent overweight and obesity issues involves a set of integrated services and actions delivered by many organisations including the NHS, local authorities and community services.
- 3.6 One of the key recommendations is that health and wellbeing boards should ensure tackling obesity is one of the strategic priorities of their Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and that this strategy should be informed by a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

*Regional Guidance:*

- 3.7 The **Mayor's Health Inequalities Strategy** (2010) highlights that there has been a significant increase in the number of local authorities that have adopted more stringent guidance to deal with the issue of hot food take-aways and the increasing concerns regarding the links between hot food take-aways and obesity.
- 3.8 The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health's '**London Healthier Catering Commitments Project Guidelines for Boroughs on operation of the scheme**' (2011) sets out how the healthier catering commitment (HCC) for food businesses operating in London will be delivered. In order to be eligible to use the HCC logo, a business must meet the four essential criteria, meeting eight criteria in total. For businesses that fry food, they must meet an additional three essential criteria. Businesses are also encouraged to sign up to meeting other optional criteria. The criteria cover the main areas of healthier frying, reducing salt and sugar, increasing carbohydrates, health promotion and access to fruit or vegetables. All criteria have been designed to be simple to operate.

*Local Guidance:*

- 3.9 One of the main priorities for **Merton's Sustainable Community Strategy also known as the Community Plan (2009 – 19)** [Community Plan] is to tackle imbalances between different parts of Merton; which requires area based solutions towards improving quality of life. The Community Plan highlights that:
  - 35.9% of adults are overweight, and 19.8% are obese (2006) with 10.9% of children in reception being obese, and 21.3% of children in Year 6 (2007/08).
  - 21.6% of adults take moderate intensity sport or active recreation for at least 30 minutes continuously at least three times a week. Merton has the seventh highest proportion of sports club membership in London (31.2%). 46.4% of the adult population is classed as physically inactive (2006).
  - 92.1% of Merton's 5-16 year olds spend at least two hours a week on high quality school sport (2007/08).
- 3.10 Despite recent successes with improving the health of young people, Merton still faces significant challenges. 24.4% of four and five year old children who started school in September 2007 were overweight or obese compared with a national figure of 27.7% (based on children aged between 2 to 10 years). 34.3% of children in Year six were recorded as being obese or overweight. It is stated that if this rate of obesity continues into later life there is a cause for concern, as obesity in adolescence is associated with increased morbidity and mortality in adult life.
- 3.11 It is stated that the Healthier Communities Thematic Partnership agreed to invest 'Choosing Health' funding into reducing obesity, harm from alcohol and improving mental health and well-being.
- 3.12 The Community Plan is delivered through Merton Partnership. The delivery plan for the Community Plan is the Local Area Agreement (LAA). A key action: CYP1: Improve

the Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People by Implementing Merton's Obesity Action Plan by the Primary Care Trust, Merton Council and the Schools and Children's Trust.

- 3.13 Merton recently published its '**Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013/14 (HWS)**' [2013]. This strategy is the mechanism by which Merton Health and Wellbeing Board establishes preventative priorities, address identified needs and set out outcomes for collective action. This strategy is informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- 3.14 The Health and Wellbeing Board is a partnership of local councillors, council officers, Merton clinical commissioning group, healthwatch and representatives of the health and voluntary sector. It is intended for a detailed Delivery Plan to be developed with specific goals, actions and expected achievements to meet the outcomes. For example, some outcomes include preventative approaches such as tackling childhood obesity to prevent future illness and to increase the proportion of people achieving a healthy weight and participating in the recommended levels of physical activity.
- 3.15 It is highlighted that circa 1 in 5 adults in Merton are obese but in some parts of the east of the borough this rises to 29%. Overweight and obesity is often associated with deprivation and costs the NHS in Merton circa £50 million annually.
- 3.16 Average levels of physical activity in Merton is lower than both nationally and regionally, with only 1 in 10 residents taking part in enough activity to benefit them health wise. Moreover, tackling obesity is complex having behavioural, genetic, environmental and social factors. It also involves a wide response from families, promotion of healthy food choices, building physical activity into our daily lives and having safe open space to exercise. Progress has been made locally with support for people who are overweight. This includes management programmes and the 'Livewell service'.
- 3.17 From the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, Sutton and Merton's Public Health team became part of their respective local authorities. As part of their work, they are currently working on a "**Sutton and Merton Responsibility Deal**" which includes the Public Health Team working with business who serve hot food to show the owners how they can serve their food more healthy. The Public Health Team uses the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health's "London Healthier Commitments Project Guidelines for Boroughs on the operation of the scheme" (2011) to provide businesses that operate in the London boroughs' of Merton and Sutton with the HCC logo.
- 3.18 Although this project is voluntary for businesses to sign up too; the Public Health Team are currently exploring how they could encourage more businesses to sign up.
- 3.19 National, regional and local guidance states that if there are issues with residents being overweight and obese, local authorities should work in partnership with other key stakeholders to improve health and well-being. The council supports this principle. In accordance with national guidance, they are a number of projects and initiatives already being undertaken by various teams in the council and other delivery partners to reduce obesity and overweight issues and to improve and promote healthy lifestyles.

## **4 The role of planning policy:**

- 4.1 In addition to the council, key stakeholders and other organisation tackling issues such as obesity in Merton, this section looks at national, regional and local planning policies and guidance to explore whether a planning policy could be created to support healthy lifestyles should evidence warrant this.

*National Guidance:*

- 4.2 The aim of the **National Planning Policy Framework (2012) [NPPF]** is to achieve sustainable development; which means achieving growth whilst ensuring that better lives currently would not result in worse lives for future generations.
- 4.3 The NPPF states that there are three elements to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental, which are planning roles that are mutually dependent on each other. Included as part of the social role of the definition of sustainable development; is the need to create a high quality environment with access to local services and facilities to reflect the community's needs and supports its health, social and cultural well being.
- 4.4 Furthermore, the NPPF sets out 12 core planning principles which should underpin both plan making and decision taking. One of these core planning principles is to: “take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social, community and cultural wellbeing, facilities and services for all”.
- 4.5 Paragraph 171 states that local planning authorities:
- “should work with public health leads and health organisations to understand and take account of health status and needs of the local population, including expected future changes, and any information about relevant barriers to improving health and well-being.”
- 4.6 The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications. The NPPF asserts the primacy of the statutory Local Plan in making planning decisions.

*Regional Guidance:*

- 4.7 The **London Plan (2011)** is the spatial development strategy for Greater London. The London Plan provides an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social considerations across the Greater London Area up to 2031. The London Plan is the context within which the boroughs set their local development plans and planning decisions. All London boroughs' local plans must be in general conformity with the London Plan and its policies guide decisions on planning.
- 4.8 It is clarified in *Policy 3.2: Improving health and addressing health inequalities* of the London Plan that boroughs should:
- Work with key partners to identify and address significant health issues facing their area and monitor policies and interventions for their impact on reducing health inequalities.
  - Integrate planning, transport, housing, environmental and health policies to promote the health and wellbeing of communities.
- 4.9 The justification text to this policy recognises that the living environment can either have a negative or positive impact on the health of a population. For instance good housing, employment and a good start in life call help to reduce health inequalities at the local level and vice versa. It is also stated that the planning system can play a key role in promoting health and reducing health inequalities.
- 4.10 Paragraph 3.11 of the London Plan makes clear that the detailed design of neighbourhoods, in addition to other complimentary measures such as developing local policies to address concerns over the development of fast food outlets close to schools, is highly important for health and wellbeing.

*Local Guidance:*

- 4.11 **Merton's Core Planning Strategy (2011)** provides the local strategy planning framework for Merton; setting out strategic objectives and policies for the development and use of land for a 15 year period following adoption.
- 4.12 It is recognised in the Core Planning Strategy that there is great diversity and significant differences in the composition of communities throughout Merton. Multiple problems relating to poor economic prospects, low educational attainment, poor health and lower incomes are more frequent in eastern parts of the borough. It is clarified that these inequalities in terms of access to jobs and services including housing choices, healthy lifestyles and learning opportunities need to be reduced.
- 4.13 The Core Planning Strategies Strategic objectives, upon which the planning policies are formed, are guided by Merton's Sustainable Community Strategy (Community Plan) and adopted London Plan including:

- Strategic Objective 2: To promote social cohesion and tackle deprivation by reducing inequalities by promoting socially mixed, sustainable, vibrant, safe and healthy communities especially where there are areas of deprivation.
- Strategic Objective 5: To make Merton a healthier and better place for people to live and work in or visit by improving public health and well-being including working in partnership to deliver health facilities and to promote healthy lifestyles.

- 4.14 Therefore, should there be evidence showing that hot food take-aways are abundant or there is a large concentration of these uses near schools for instance, Merton could consider creating a new policy to prevent the over proliferation of hot food take-aways to support healthy lifestyles.
- 4.15 By introducing a new policy to restrict the over concentration of hot food take-aways in Merton would contribute already to the 'holistic approach' being undertaken by the council and other organisations to tackle issues with obesity and residents being overweight in the borough. Also, as already mentioned in this report, as hot food take-aways (A5 Use Class) have a separate Use Class, a planning policy could easily be implemented and monitored.

## 5 Other Boroughs:

- 5.1 There are a number of London local authorities who had concerns with the number of hot food take-aways in their boroughs' including Barking & Dagenham, Newham, and Waltham Forest. This section provides a summary of how these local authorities dealt with their concern arising from the number of hot food take-aways in their boroughs'.

### *London Borough of Barking & Dagenham*

- 5.2 The London Borough of Barking & Dagenham, at the time of publishing its Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) [2010], had 187 hot food take-aways. Although it is recognised that hot food take-aways contributed to the mix of uses in town centres, it is considered that these A5 uses were dominating the local retail food offer. It is further clarified that the abundance of hot food take-aways displaced other shops and food options, limiting choice as well as access to fresh and nutritious food. Also, it was felt that the clustering of hot food take-aways detracted from the primary retail function of the town centre/ neighbourhood parade and impacted upon their vitality and viability.
- 5.3 As a response to addressing the health impacts of hot food take-aways, the council produced a SPD as part of a strategic approach to tackling the borough's obesity problem, particularly childhood obesity. This SPD was produced as part of a broader strategy to tackle obesity and to reduce the proliferation of fast food take-away shops around schools, parks and youth amenities in the borough.
- 5.4 The SPD provides guidance as to where hot food take-aways can locate in the borough; they cannot locate within 400m of a primary or secondary school known as the exclusion zone and there is a restriction placed on the location of these uses. For example, the new hot food take-away must be located in a town centre, no more than 5% of the units within the centre or frontage can be within A5 use and less than two non A5 uses can located together. If a proposal for a hot food take-away is deemed appropriate, £1,000 will be sought via Section 106 agreement to be spent towards tackling childhood obesity in the Borough to encourage physical activity.
- 5.5 In tandem with this guidance the council and its partners are implementing a number of initiatives to help reduce obesity amongst the borough's residents.

### *London Borough of Newham*

- 5.6 The London Borough of Newham produced a briefing note '**LB Newham: The Health impacts of hot food take-aways in Newham and planning policy's role in the prevention of ill health and obesity**' to justify policy in their Local Plan which seeks to promote healthy lifestyles, reduce health inequalities and create healthier neighbourhoods. This briefing note is supported by evidence in the 'Food Outlet Mapping' (July 2010).
- 5.7 As at July 2010, there were 258 hot food take-aways in the borough. Evidence undertaken by the borough suggests that there are links between obesity and the

abundance of hot food take-aways, particularly in areas of socio-economic deprivation. The council, supported by Newham's Public Health Directorate of NHS East London and the City, considered that due to the over-concentration of take-aways in the borough, that there was a role for the planning system to reduce the development of new hot food take-aways.

- 5.8 It is highlighted that as well as their impact on town centres and the local environment, take-aways were of particular concern due to their propensity to serve unhealthy food, particularly deep fried food and other food which is mainly composed of high density carbohydrate and 'bad' fats and lacking vitamin and fibre content. In addition to this, take-away food is often sold with sugar-heavy fizzy drinks which, when combined with a high fat diet, contribute to obesity and is one of the main causes leading to the development of diabetes.
- 5.9 *Policy SP2: Healthy Neighbourhoods* of Newham's Core Strategy (2012) states clearly that development proposals will need to take into consideration the cumulative impact of A5 uses. In the justification text, based on research conducted by the borough, it is recommended that a 400m exclusion zone to be put around secondary schools.

#### *London Borough of Waltham Forest*

- 5.10 At the time of writing their '**Hot Food Takeaway SPD**' (2009), the London Borough of Waltham Forest had 241 hot food take- aways.
- 5.11 The SPD stated that when the council are considering whether a proposed hot food take-away would result in an overconcentration, regard will be given to the number of hot food take-aways in the immediate area and proximity to each other. Moreover that new hot food take-aways would be resisted within 400m of the boundary of an existing school, youth centre facility and park boundary.
- 5.12 Waltham Forest's adopted Core Strategy (2012) refers to the Hot Food Takeaway SPD (2009) with regards to guidance preventing the over concentration of hot food take-aways in the borough. Furthermore, Policy DM24 of the draft Development Management Policies (2012) proposes further policies to restrict the development of new hot food take-aways in Waltham Forest.
- 5.13 In 2010, **Waltham Forest's Annual Monitoring Report** showed that there was a reduction of 47 hot food take-aways since the implementation of this policy. In the following years 2011 and 2012 permission was granted for 10 new hot food take-aways only.
- 5.14 Hence, where the over proliferation/ concentration of hot food take-aways became a concern to a local authority, local NHS or to other stakeholders, policies were created in either Development Plan Documents or planning guidance to restrict the development of new hot food take-aways in their boroughs.

## **6 Merton's Research:**

- 6.1 To identify if Merton requires a policy to prevent the over concentration of hot food take-aways and/ or to introduce a policy to restrict the number of hot food take-aways near primary and secondary schools; officers examined planning records to identify how many hot food take-aways currently operate in Merton and whether there has been a significant increase in the number of hot food take-aways in Merton in the last few years.

### *Primary Research*

- 6.2 Merton completes an Annual Shopping Survey, where a member of the Future Merton Team record changes in the location and number of shops, restaurants, cafes, public houses, hot food take-aways, financial and business services throughout Merton. This survey has been carried out every year since 2004 and gives a comprehensive record of change in Merton.
- 6.3 Furthermore, since 2008 the Future Merton Team has been working on updating Merton's Local Plan (adopted Core Planning Strategy and emerging Sites & Policies Plan) to fully replace the adopted Unitary Development Plan (2003). Throughout the preparation of these local plan documents, Merton has undertaken numerous public consultations where residents, developers and other key stakeholders responded. Some of these responses submitted included comments regarding hot food take-aways and concerns regarding the perceived proliferation of these uses on Merton's high streets and near primary and secondary schools<sup>1</sup>.

### *Secondary Research*

- 6.4 As detailed in Section 4: Role of the 'local authority', in Merton's Community Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy, statistics shows the number of residents being classed as obese and overweight in Merton and clarifies the money that the local NHS requires annually to deal with this issue alone. These documents also set out clearly how the council aims to reduce obesity and overweight issues in Merton as it was identified as a problem in the 'Joint Strategic Needs Assessment'.

### *Research Findings*

- 6.5 In 2012, officers carried out extensive research on hot food take-aways in Merton as these type of uses were highlighted by Councillors, residents and other key stakeholders in consultations as a concern. This analysis is provided in table 1 and Figure 1 overleaf.
- 6.6 Table 1 provides detailed analyses of the number of hot food take-aways located in each designated town centre and in areas located outside of town centres.

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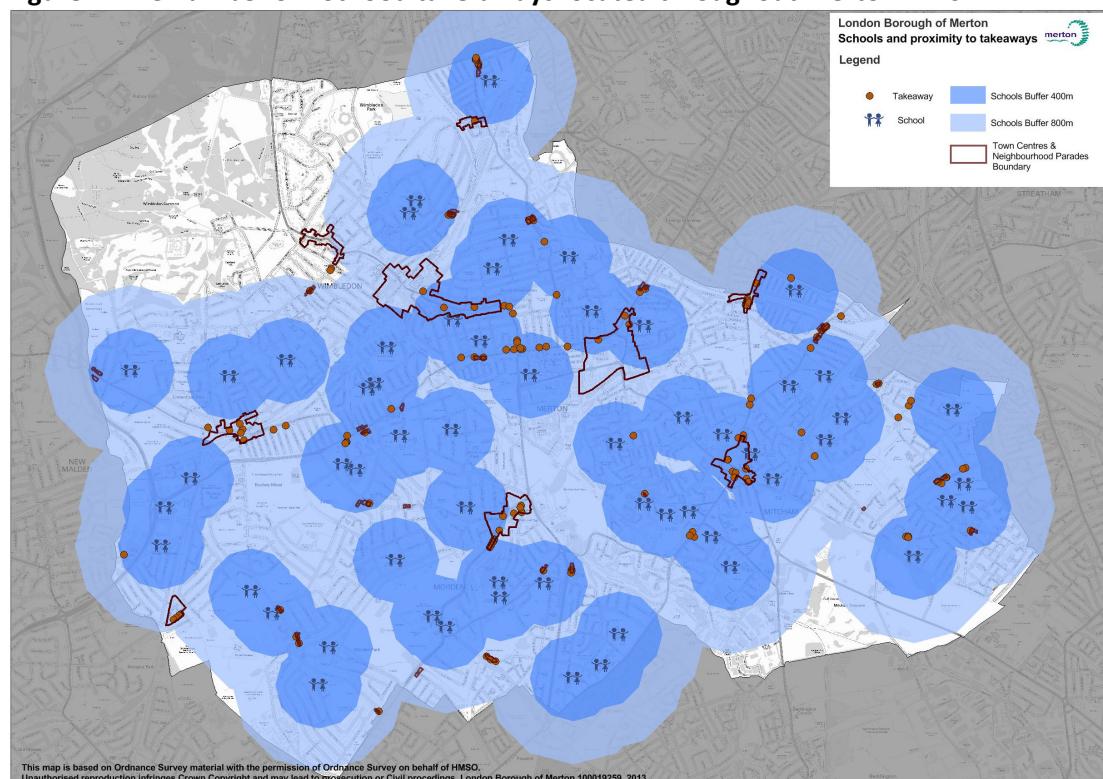
<sup>1</sup> To view comments received throughout the preparation of Merton's Local Plan, please view the Core Planning Strategy Consultation Statement (2010) and the Sites & Policies and Policies Map (2013).

**Table 1: The number of hot food take-aways located throughout Merton between 2009 and 2012.**

Locations in Merton	2009	2010	2011	2012	2012%
Arthur Road Local Centre (38 units)	1	1	1	1	2.6%
Colliers Wood Urban Centre (142 Units)	7	8	7	7	4.9%
Mitcham Town Centre (185 units)	11	11	11	11	5.9%
Morden Town Centre (154 units)	11	12	13	13	8.4%
Motspur Park Local Centre (26 units)	3	3	3	3	11.5%
North Mitcham Local Centre (59 units)	7	6	6	6	10.2%
Raynes Park Local Centre (76 units)	4	4	5	5	6.9%
Wimbledon Town Centre (261 units)	2	3	3	3	0.4%
Wimbledon Village Local Centre (127 units)	0	0	0	0	0%
Outside Town Centres	89	91	87	84	8.2%
Total	135	139	136	133	6.1%

- 6.7 Figure 1 below illustrates spatially where the hot food take-aways in Merton are located. Also officers put a radius of 400 metres (5 minutes walking distance) and 800 metres (10 minutes walking distance) around all schools in Merton to identify if there is an issue with the over concentration of hot food take-aways located near schools.

**Figure 1: The number of hot food take-aways located throughout Merton in 2012.**



6.8 The research conclusions are:

- Hot food take-aways are located throughout Merton and are not overly concentrated in any one town centre, though there is concern with the impacts of the over concentration of hot food take-aways particularly in Merton High Street, the London Road (Mitcham) and Streatham Road. These concentrations can be seen in Figure 1 above.
- Hot food take-aways represent only a relatively small proportion (always less than 11.5% though usually close to 8%) of the total number of shops in each centre.
- There has not been a significant change in the number or location of hot food take-aways over the past 4 years.
- The evidence would suggest that there is no issue with the over proliferation of hot food take-aways near primary and secondary schools.
- Since 2011 the council has consulted upon the proposed policy set out in Section 1 and a number of representations were received in support of this policy. In addition to this, some respondents recommended that Merton's proposed policy should go further by restricting the number of new hot food take-aways locating near schools and by allowing no more than two hot food take-aways locating next to each other.

6.9 Research of other boroughs' found that the LB Newham had some of the highest number of hot food take-aways of those local authorities researched, though had one of the lowest number of hot food take-aways per person ratio.

6.10 As detailed in Table 2 below, Merton has one of the lowest numbers of hot food take-aways and the least number of hot food take-aways available per person out of the boroughs' researched.

Table 2: Number of Betting Shops in Comparison to Other London Boroughs

London Boroughs	No. of Hot Food Take-aways	Population	Ratio
Barking & Dagenham <sup>2</sup>	187	182,838	1: 977.74
Lambeth <sup>3</sup>	247	311,783	1: 1,262.27
Merton <sup>4</sup>	133	201,640	1: 1,516.10
Newham <sup>5</sup>	256	310,460	1: 1,212.73
Waltham Forest <sup>6</sup>	241	248,140	1: 1,029.63
Wandsworth <sup>7</sup>	220	299,347	1: 1,360.67

<sup>2</sup> Source: ONS revised estimates (2002- 2010) and SPD (2010).

<sup>3</sup> Source: Census 2013 results and Brief (2013).

<sup>4</sup> Source: Census 2013 results and Annual Shopping Survey (2013).

<sup>5</sup> Source: ONS revised estimates (2002- 2010) and Brief (2010).

<sup>6</sup> Source: ONS revised estimates (2002- 2010) and SPD (2009).

<sup>7</sup> Source: ONS revised estimates (2002- 2010) and Freedom of Information Request (2009).

## **7 Creating a Policy:**

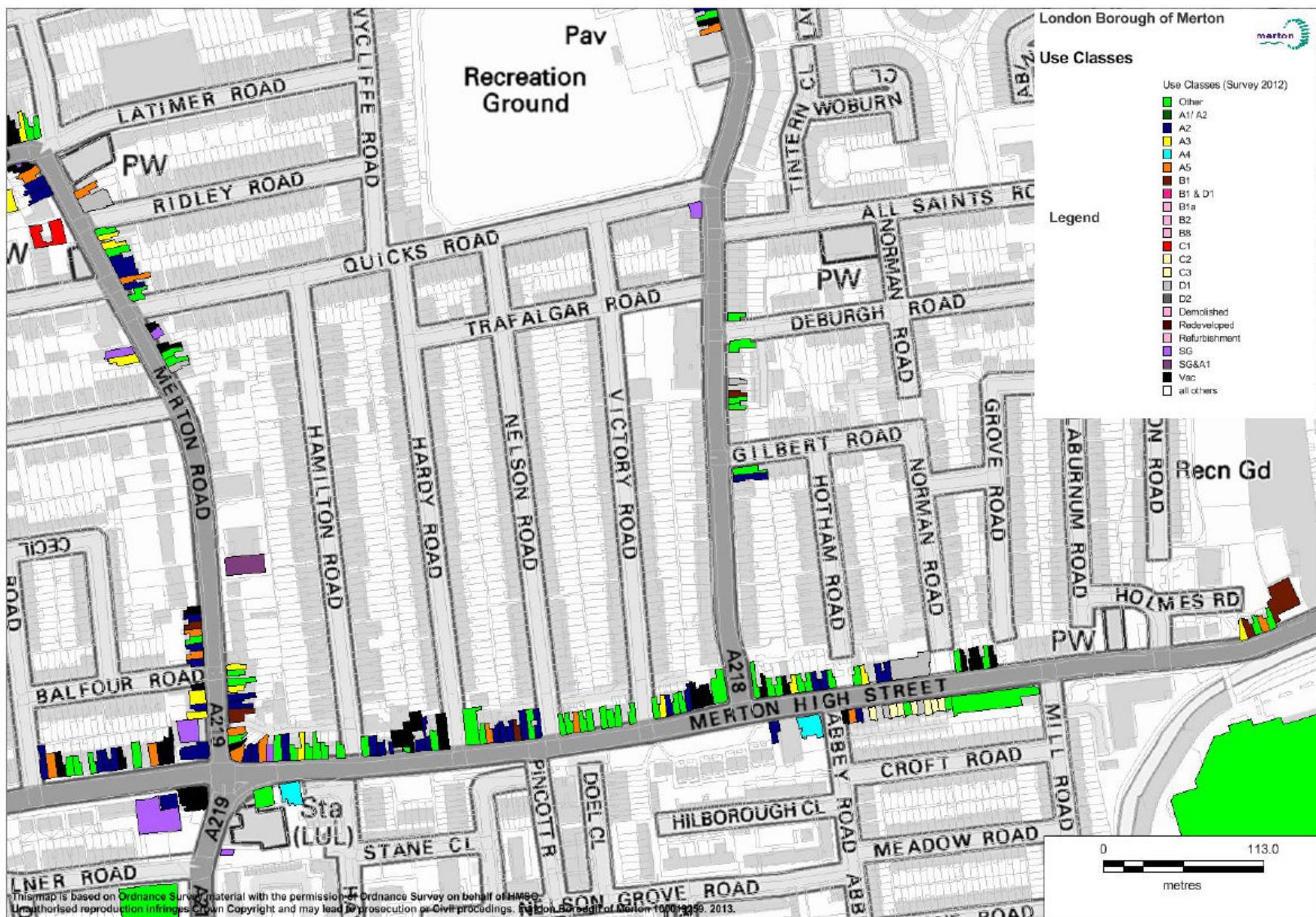
- 7.1 Paragraph 1.2 to 1.4 sets out the council's proposed policy to restrict the overconcentration of hot food take-aways on Merton's high streets. This policy is supported by the council's evidence which shows that there is concern with the concentration of hot food take-aways in Merton High Street, the London Road (Mitcham) and Streatham Road.
- 7.2 The concentration of hot food take-aways may prevent local residents having more choices when purchasing more healthier food options, particularly if the number of hot food take-aways were to increase in future in these areas. For this reason, and based on an analysis of commercial uses present in these areas (as illustrated in Appendix A to C), it was decided that new hot food takeaways should not be permitted if there were more than 3 hot-food take-aways in 10 commercial units.
- 7.3 By helping to restrict the number of hot food take-aways in Merton's high streets, this policy helps to ensure that residents have access and choice between a wide range of retail services and facilities including access to healthier food options. This policy, in addition to the holistic approach that Merton council together with other organisations is already undertaking such as the 'healthier catering commitment', will help improve opportunities for healthy lifestyles and tackle obesity issues in the borough.
- 7.4 National planning policy, such as 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for public health in England (2010 and 2011), PH42: Obesity: working with local communities (2012) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), strongly supports this approach.

## **8 Conclusion:**

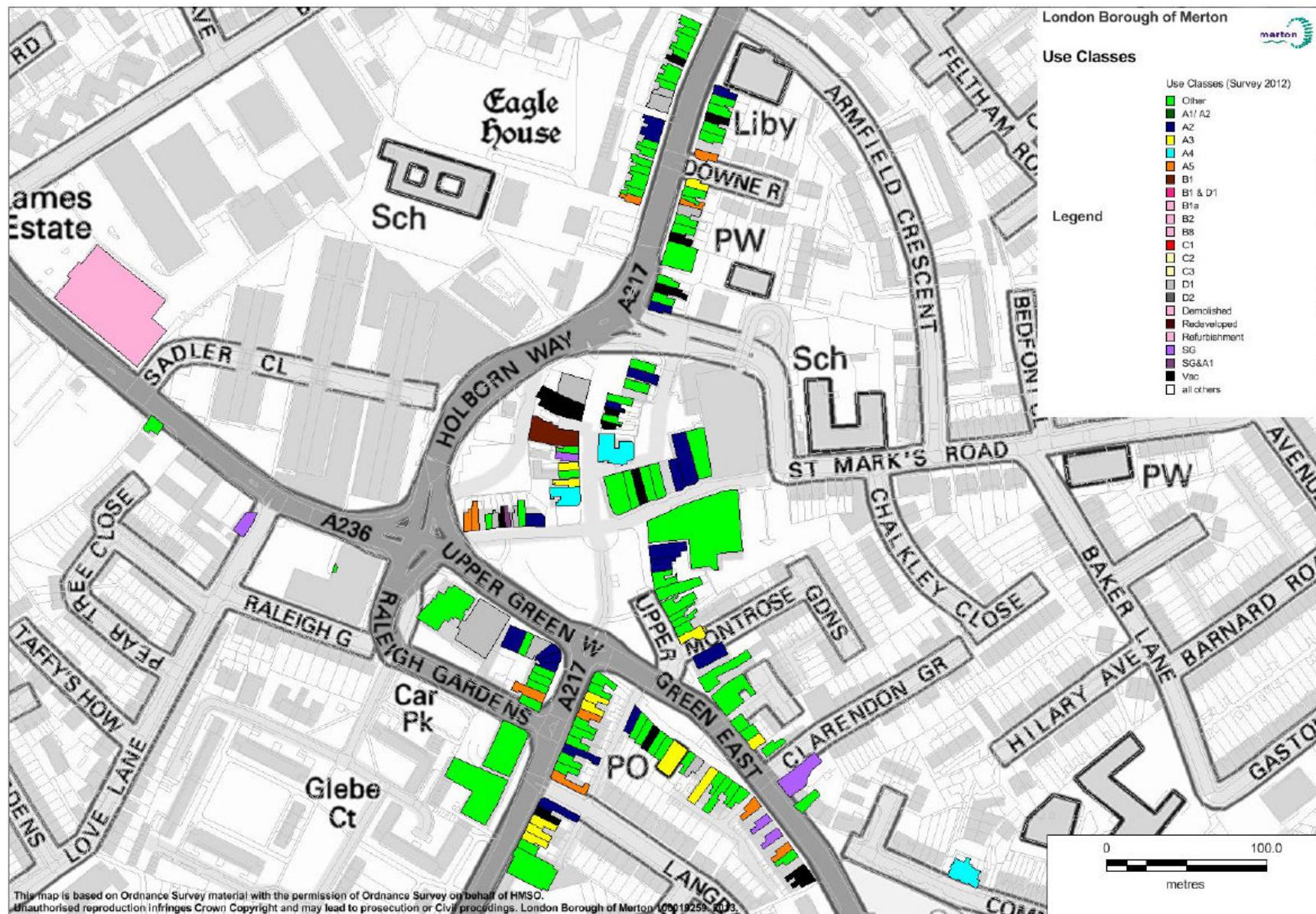
- 8.1 Council officers have proposed a hot food take-aways policy as detailed in Section 1, to prevent the over concentration of hot food take-aways on Merton's high streets. Also to ensure that residents have access and have choice between a wide range of retail services and facilities including access to healthier food options.
- 8.2 Despite representations received from consultations on Merton's Sites & Policies Plan suggesting that our proposed hot food take-aways policy should restrict the location of new hot food take-aways near schools, our research would not support this policy.
- 8.3 The council will aim to monitor the development of new hot food take-aways in Merton and their location as part of our Annually Authority Report (AMR). To note, monitoring hot food take-aways each year will be subject to council resources.

## **Appendices**

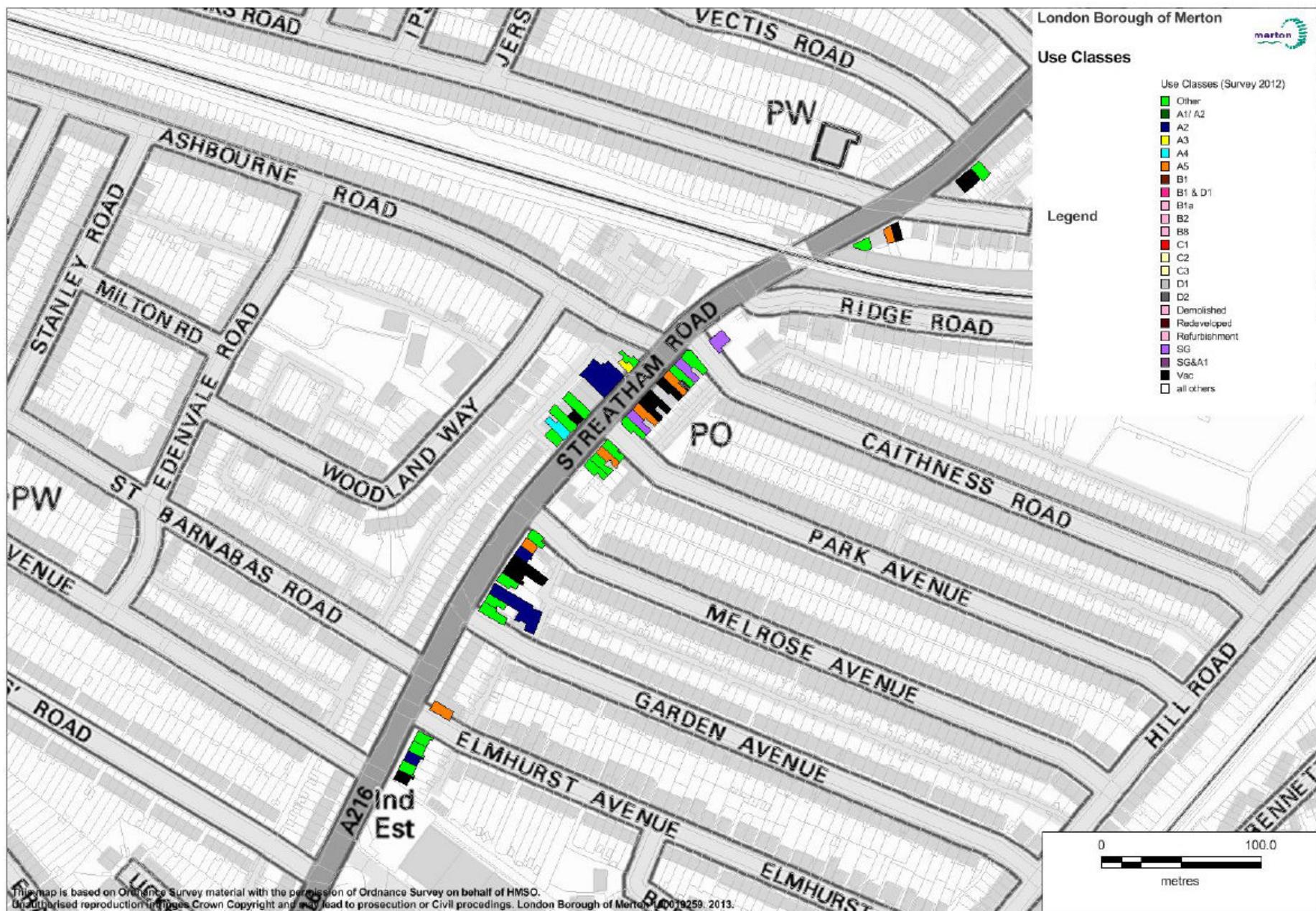
## Appendix A: Merton High Street, Colliers Wood.



## Appendix B: London Road, Mitcham.



## Appendix C: Streatham Road, Mitcham.



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