

Merton Local Plan – Stage 1 Hearings Closing Session and Inspectors’ Closing Remarks

23 June 2021

NB this is not a verbatim note, but reflects points covered.

1. The purpose of this session is to give some indication of the next steps in the process and to deal with any procedural questions that the Council may have.
2. None of this should be taken as pre-judging the contents of the final Report which will take into account all relevant matters and representations.
3. Following the closure of the Stage 1 Hearings we will be reflecting on the evidence received thus far, and the discussions held over the past few weeks to inform our approach to the next phase of the examination, and the Stage 2 hearings due to take place in October.
4. For our part, we will consider whether any soundness or legal compliance issues relating to the matters so far discussed, that have not already been identified during the course of the hearings, could be resolved by main modifications to the Plan, or whether additional work may be necessary in order to justify the approach. If relevant, we intend to communicate these issues in a timely way in a post-hearings letter. Our aim is that any such letter would be with the Council before the end of July and would be publicly available and published on the website in the normal way.
5. The ball would then be in the Council’s court in terms of how it might wish to take forward any recommendations that we might make.
6. We also intend to publish Matters, Issues and Questions and any associated documents relating to the Stage 2 hearings in a timely fashion to ensure that the Council and other participants have an adequate opportunity to respond to these.

Inspectors’ Closing Remarks

7. Finally, we would like to thank Carmel Edwards for the efficient and effective work she has done and continues to do as our Programme Officer.
8. We would also like to thank the Council for their timely responses to our various requests, for accommodating these sessions – both in-person and virtually, and for their positive, proactive and solution-orientated approach to the discussions.
9. We also thank all representors who participated for their time and input.
10. The Stage 1 Hearing Sessions are now closed.

R J Aston
INSPECTOR

G J Fort
INSPECTOR