

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Councillor Andrew Judge



London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

020 8545 3424
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22 March 2024

Planning Inspectors Mr Fort and Mr Aston.

Via future.merton@merton.gov.uk

Dear Mr Fort and Mr Aston

Merton's Local Plan – post hearings consultation.

Thank you for the proposed modifications and for all your work to date.

By exception I would request two changes:

MM33 3.1.18, MM39 and MM44

I would ask you to reinstate the phrase "*Britannia Point should remain the pinnacle building in the town centre in terms of height. This can then form the basis for a coherent group of buildings that relate well to each other in terms of scale, massing, form and architecture*" which can be found at paragraphs 3.1.18 (reference MM33), and twice in Site Allocation CW2 Land South of Britannia Point (references MM39 and MM44). Such reinstatement was supported the Council's Development and Planning Applications Committee.

In this respect I also endorse the response of the Colliers Wood ward councillors to Merton's Local Plan post hearings consultation (attached as Appendix A).

Policy T16.4, paragraph f

I also endorse the following recommendation from the Council's Development and Planning Applications Committee: part-f amended to include bike hire scheme clubs to also benefit in the same way as car clubs.

Regards,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andrew Judge'.

Councillor Andrew Judge
Councillor Tenants' Champion LB Merton
Cabinet Member for Housing and Sustainable Development
Email: Andrew.Judge@merton.gov.uk

Appendix A – representation from Colliers Wood ward councillors in response to Merton’s Local Plan post hearings consultation, March 2024

G J Fort and R J Aston
C/O FutureMerton,
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Dear G J Fort and R J Aston,

As the Planning Inspectors tasked with examining Merton’s Local Plan, we are writing to ask you to reconsider one of your amendments. In the original Local Plan, Merton placed a pinnacle for building heights in Colliers Wood as the current Britannia Point, a limit that has subsequently been removed.

We are writing to ask you to reinstate the phrase “Britannia Point should remain the pinnacle building in the town centre in terms of height. This can then form the basis for a coherent group of buildings that relate well to each other in terms of scale, massing, form and architecture” which can be found at paragraphs 3.1.18 (reference MM33), and twice in Site Allocation CW2 Land South of Britannia Point (references MM39 and MM44).

This sentiment is not just shared by the councillors for Colliers Wood, but [also over 800 residents who have signed our petition too](#). We believe that at nineteen stories tall, the current tower is already fundamentally out of keeping with the local character. Visible from as far as Streatham and Sutton, the tower dwarfs over the area and dominates the skyline. An additional tower built adjacent to this would only further erode the low-rise setting and nature of Colliers Wood.

Of course, Britannia Point is not going anywhere, nor will plans to develop housing on the plot of land adjacent, known as CW2. Considering the need for homes in London, constructing them on that site is common sense. What however isn’t common sense is building something there even taller than the current tower.

It’s this that has led to hundreds of residents speaking out. We are proud of our community. It’s the people who live here and raise their families here that make it what it is. Of course, we do not wish to see the neighbourhood never change at all, but local residents should be able to have reasonable requests listened to, especially when it would create a structure that would tower over the community for decades. We are not saying that nothing should be built there; that site remaining a coach park for the rest of time is in no one’s interest. But building something on that site even taller than the already existing tower would only serve to further undermine what makes Colliers Wood special.

It will rob homes, as well as our local primary school, of sunlight, and further worsen the already extreme wind impacts felt around the tower by pedestrians and cyclists. We have recently been contacted by a resident who was blown down by the winds at the site. No one should feel scared walking around our town centre because of the presence of a soaring tower that imperils their safety. Another tower would only heighten this risk.

Instead, Merton’s housing needs should be met through a balanced proposal across the borough that helps to enhance and respect the local character and environment of our communities while contributing

to our need for homes. Reinstating the existing Britannia Point as the pinnacle of height for any new buildings is an obvious and unambiguous way to achieve this.

We hope you will reconsider your amendment to Merton's Local Plan to ensure that cap building heights at the current Britannia Point remains the pinnacle building height and help to protect our community both now and for decades to come.

Yours sincerely,

Laxmi Attawar, Caroline Cooper Marbiah and Stuart Neaverson