

Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions – 3 August 2022

Matter 4: Tall Buildings

N:B - This session will take forward the discussions held at Stage 1 focusing particularly on the material to be produced by the Council following the Inspectors' initial directions at that stage i.e.:

Issue (i): Is the Plan's approach to tall buildings grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics, in general conformity with the London Plan, and are the Plan's policies relating to tall buildings effective?

N:B – Questions relating to the specific Tall Building aspects of site allocations CW2, Mi1, Mi16 and Wimbledon Town Centre are included in Matter 8.

Q1. What work has been undertaken since Stage 1 in respect of the wording of Policy D12.6? Would proposed MMs ensure that the policy is clearly written and unambiguous, consistent with national policy, and in general conformity with the London Plan?

Council response:

- 4.1 A full review of the Tall Buildings policies and relevant sub area policies and site allocations that refer to tall buildings in respect to wording was undertaken. Working alongside Historic England, amendments were made to the Tall Buildings Policy that better aligns the policy with the London Plan and national policy, resulting in a more effective policy. These changes have been highlighted in Q2.
- 4.2 Modifications to the Strategic Heights Diagrams are proposed to retain the measurement of metres and remove the measurement of storey heights to improve clarity. This is supplemented with supporting text that demonstrates indicatively what metres equate to in storey heights subject to land use.

Proposed modifications:

Strategic Heights Diagrams, Colliers Wood Town Centre, Morden Regeneration Zone and Wimbledon Town Centre.

[Removal of 'X storeys']

Additional supporting text after 12.6.2

Storey heights will differ across different land uses as well as different methods of construction. The table below provides indicative building heights based on residential and commercial uses.

<u>Building storeys</u>	<u>Indicative residential building height (metres)</u>	<u>Indicative commercial building height (metres)</u>
<u>-</u>	<u>(3.2m floor to floor)</u>	<u>(4.0m floor to floor)</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>3.2</u>	<u>4.0</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>6.4</u>	<u>8.0</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>9.6</u>	<u>12.0</u>
<u>4</u>	<u>12.8</u>	<u>16.0</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>16.0</u>	<u>20.0</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>19.2</u>	<u>24.0</u>
<u>7</u>	<u>22.4</u>	<u>28.0</u>
<u>8</u>	<u>25.6</u>	<u>32.0</u>
<u>9</u>	<u>28.8</u>	<u>36.0</u>
<u>10</u>	<u>32.0</u>	<u>40.0</u>

Q2. Has a statement of common ground been produced with Historic England on the consolidation of the heritage aspects within the examination evidence base?

Council response:

- 4.3 Yes, the Council has worked collaboratively with Historic England to agree a revised Statement of Common Ground in response to comments raised during the Stage 1 hearings. The proposed modifications and reasons set out below have been agreed and captured in the Statement of Common Ground that is appended to this document.

Proposed modifications:

D12.6 (part 2) criterion a, b and c

The council will generally support tall building in those locations set out in part 1 of this policy where:

- a. Their massing, bulk and height are appropriately sized and located and demonstrate they ~~do not undermine~~ take into account local character and heritage assets and their settings through townscape analysis of short, mid and long views, ~~taking into account individual and cumulative effects.~~
- b. They ~~enhance~~ avoid harm to the setting and significance of ~~/or relationship with~~ neighbouring heritage assets.
- c. They are of ~~exceptional~~ exemplary design and architectural quality.

Additional criterion D12.6 (part 3)

Adequate information demonstrating how the proposals comply with all the criteria within section 2 of this policy, and within the London Plan policy on tall buildings to ensure that the proposal have considered visual, townscape and heritage impacts.

Amend D12.6 supporting text 12.6.5

Merton's Borough Character Study SPD provides more detail of different character areas within the borough and a framework for character-led tall buildings that highlights good practice design approaches. ~~gives holistic guidance on best practice design approach on tall buildings. highlighting the importance of a sites suitability and sensitivity.~~

Additional criterion after D12.6 supporting text 12.6.8

Tall buildings should be part of a positive strategy for the historic environment and avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets and their settings. In line with the London Plan, proposals resulting in harm will require clear and convincing justification, including what alternatives were explored and what public benefits outweigh the harm.

Q3. What are the main outcomes and implications for the plan of the consolidated evidence base? Are any further MMs proposed and if so, are they necessary to make the plan sound and would they be effective in doing so?

Council response:

- 4.4 The council has reviewed Policy D12.6 'Tall Buildings' and propose modifications to part 2 and part 3 of the policy to improve effectiveness. These are also captured in the appended revised Statement of Common Ground with Historic England.
- 4.5 With the proposed modifications, it is in the councils view that the tall buildings policies are sound and consistent with the Framework and in general conformity with the London Plan ([Document 0D32](#)).
- 4.6 Although the Framework ([Document 0D20](#)) does not specifically acknowledge tall buildings, para 125(a) states that plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. Merton's Tall Buildings Policy achieves this by identifying specific localities that are likely appropriate for tall buildings that are underpinned by robust evidence at a borough scale, such as the Character Study SPD ([Document 12D1](#)) and also at a site specific scale, such as the Estates Local Plan ([Document 0D25](#)), the Future Wimbledon SPD ([Document 9D1](#)) and specific planning applications for relevant site allocations. Where there is no relevant planning application, such as site allocation Mi16 (Mitcham Gasworks), sites identified suitable for tall buildings are either at pre-application stages or captured within the Future Wimbledon SPD.
- 4.7 Merton's policies manage tall buildings to specific areas only. This is not only to conform to the London Plan Policy D9 that states 'Based on local context, Development Plans should define what is considered a tall building for specific localities in Development Plans...', but also to respond to Merton's defining characteristics and to reflect local character and design preference as per para. 127 of the Framework. The council recognise the role tall buildings have in the borough to contribute to housing, and therefore these specific locations have been selected due to their suitability for tall buildings, such as they would cause

less harm to heritage assets, they offer a high PTAL or that their visual impact is considered.

- 4.8 The Housing Delivery Study's ([Document 11D6](#)) consultation results demonstrate local preferences. 9% of 1766 respondents agreed that building upwards/taller was appropriate for new homes, whereas 61% of respondents thought small underused sites were more appropriate. Therefore, the policies within the Local Plan reflect this preference to provide a clear locations where tall buildings are appropriate, using a reinterpreted minimum tall building definition from the London Plan and minimising the possibility for applicants to deviate from policy by limiting flexible policy wording. An example of a more flexible approach can be found in LB Brent's Local Plan where they state *'There might however also be circumstances where the quality of design of a development and its impact on character is such that taller buildings in these locations could be shown by applicants to be acceptable'* or Lambeth's Local Plan where they state *'Outside the locations identified in Annex 10 or as identified in site allocations, there is no presumption in favour of tall building development. Should tall buildings be proposed outside the locations ... the applicant will be required to provide a clear and convincing justification and demonstrate the appropriateness of the site for a tall building having regard to the impact on heritage assets, the form, proportion, composition, scale and character of the immediate buildings and the character of the local area (including urban grain and public realm/landscape features) and ensure points (a) (i) - (vi) are met.'*
- 4.9 It is in the council's view that the approach taken by Brent and Lambeth is not suitable for Merton's defining characteristics and therefore no modification has been made to use a similar approach taken by other London Boroughs. More detail is given in Q4 of this Matter.
- 4.10 However, outside of the localities identified in D12.6 'Tall Buildings' part a, development will be considered under 21m in height, circa 6 storeys. As demonstrated in the Borough's Character Study SPD ([Document 12D1](#)) the overall prevailing height of every ward within the borough is between 2-3 storeys. Therefore, this definition still allows sites to be up to twice the height of

the borough's prevailing height. This allows sites to be optimised using a mid-rise and higher density approach. Merton's Small Sites Toolkit SPD ([Document 12D2](#)) promotes this and provides best practice design guidance on how small sites can be optimised whilst using a design-led approach and remaining in character of the borough, ensuring developments are sympathetic to local character and history, while not preventing or discouraging change, such as increased densities as per para. 130c of the Framework.

- 4.11 Therefore, with the modifications made to the wording of Policy D12.6 part b to be more effective, the council's view is that the plan is sound. It is positively prepared, justified by a robust evidence base of varying scales, effective over the plan period and consistent with national policy.

Q4. Policy BD2 of the Brent Local Plan has been referred to in statements and earlier hearing sessions –

Q4a. Have the Council given any further consideration to the approach taken in that Plan?

Council response:

4.12 The council has reviewed Brent's Policy BD2 in light of the Stage 1 hearings and have referred to it in Q3 and the following questions.

4.13 After further consideration, the council do not think this approach is appropriate for Merton as outlined in Q3. More detail is given in Q4b on the comparison between Brent and Merton.

Q4b. Are the circumstances and context comparable?

Council response:

- 4.14 Brent's circumstances and context is different to Merton's in both existing and strategic terms. Although Merton and Brent are considered outer London boroughs, their defining characteristics and approach to growth differs.
- 4.15 When considering tall buildings, a site's suitability and sensitivity must be evaluated as set out in Merton's framework for character-led tall buildings in the Character Study SPD ([Document 12D1](#)).
- 4.16 When comparing Merton and Brent's sensitivity, such as heritage assets and conservation areas, Merton is roughly 5.6km² smaller than Brent, however it has 6 more conservation areas that are more geographically spread across the borough therefore more of the borough is considered sensitive to tall buildings compared to Brent. As stated in Brent's 'Tall Building Strategy', a relatively small part of Brent is protected as Conservation Areas; the majority of them are within the south-eastern corner of Brent' which is contrary to Merton.
- 4.17 Also stated in Brent's 'Tall Building Strategy' the average height of buildings ranges between 10.1m and 19m, circa 3-6 storeys. This is substantially taller than Merton where all wards are between 2-3 storeys. Therefore, there is a difference in the existing character between both boroughs which would effect the likely visual impact of a tall building. This is reflected in the definitions for tall buildings where Merton's definition of 'tall buildings in the borough are defined as a minimum of 21m from the ground level to the top of the uppermost storey' reflects their prevailing height of 2-3 storeys and Brent's definition of 'A tall building is one that is more than 30 metres in height above ground level' reflects their taller prevailing height of 3-6 storeys.
- 4.18 In terms of suitability, such as proximity to Town Centres and good PTAL, Brent has 17 town centres that are spread across the borough, and many are linear parades. Merton has 5 concentrated town centres that are more focussed. Town centres are a key consideration when considering the appropriate locations for tall buildings.

4.19 It's also worth noting that Brent has three defined Opportunity Areas that relate to existing large scale development projects with tall buildings. Wembley and Collingdale both have completed tall buildings that define their character and Old Oak and Park Royal has a designated Local Planning Authority, Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation. In Merton, the three town centres that are appropriate for tall buildings, Wimbledon, Morden Regeneration Zone and Colliers Wood all sit within Merton's Opportunity Area. However, they are much smaller sites with more fragmented land ownership.

4.20 After considering and evaluating Brent's circumstances and context, it is clear that there are significant differences between the London Boroughs of Brent and Merton.

Q4c. Would a similar approach in the Merton Local Plan be justified by the evidence base and would it achieve general conformity with the London Plan?

Council response:

4.21 A similar approach would be justified by the evidence base. Albeit, Brent Council produced a Tall Buildings Strategy paper that tests multiple sites to inform their policies, whereas Merton uses a variety of evidence at varying scales as justification, as highlighted in Q3.

4.22 However, the council believes that a policy approach similar to Brent would not comply with the Framework. Merton's approach is clear about design expectations (para. 126), grounded by the boroughs defining characteristics (para.127) and sympathetic to local character and history... while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation of change (such as increased densities)(para. 130c).

.

Q4d. If taken forward in this Plan would a similar approach assist in the objective of ensuring that the Plan provides a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land (per paragraph 119 of the Framework)?

Council response:

4.23 It is in the council's view that a similar approach to Brent would not assist any further than the current policies with proposed modifications.

4.24 The current policy allows for the optimisation of sites across the borough under 21m. It is in the council's view that this provides an opportunity for development to deliver homes whilst allowing developments to be design-led and in keeping with the defining characteristics of the borough. Within Merton's tall buildings definition, developments have the potential to be twice the height of the prevailing heights in the borough, subject to other policy considerations. It is worth noting that Brent's prevailing height is taller than Merton's, therefore their definition of 'A tall building is one that is more than 30 metres in height above ground level' reflects this.

4.25 Providing flexibility within the policy may have a negative effect by being unambiguous to decision-takers and may delay the speed of applications.

4.26 Merton Character Study SPD ([Document 12D1](#)), Small Sites Toolkit SPD ([Document 12D2](#)) and Future Wimbledon SPD ([Document 9D1](#)) all promote effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions as per para. 119 of the Framework and help implement the policies within Merton's Local Plan to ensure developments are design-led and optimised. Strategic Policy D12.1 directly refers to para.130 of the Framework within its supporting text stating 'Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks.'

Statement of Common Ground between London Borough of Merton and Historic England

On Stage 2 Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions: Matter 4 'Tall Buildings'

This revised Statement of Common Ground is in response to Matter 4 'Tall Buildings' of the Inspectors' Stage 2 Matters, Issues and Questions.

These follow the attendance from both parties at Merton's Local Plan Stage 1 Examination Hearings on Matter 13 'Tall Buildings' on 22nd June 2022 where the Inspectors raised questions on the suggested modifications that are captured in the [Statement of Common Ground between London Borough of Merton and Historic England](#), Appendix 1. This Statement of Common Ground supersedes the Stage 1 version appended.

The page and paragraph numbers within this document are based on [Submitted Document 0D1 Merton's Local Plan Stage 3 Regulation 19 July 2021](#) and [LBM05 Merton's Local Plan incorporating proposed modifications dated 20 May 2022](#).

Areas of agreement

Historic England and Merton Council are committed pro-actively managing the development of tall buildings and recognises the need for positive action. It is agreed that the plan must address tall buildings, including in the context of heritage.

Both parties agree to recommend the proposed main modifications to the Planning Inspectors.

Proposed Modifications:

MAIN MODIFICATION

p.408 (0D1) or p.418 (LBM05)

Amend D12.6 (part 2) criterion a, b and c

The council will generally support tall building in those locations set out in part 1 of this policy where:

- a. Their massing, bulk and height are appropriately sized and located and demonstrate they ~~do not undermine~~ take into account local character and heritage assets and their settings through townscape analysis of short, mid and long views; ~~taking into account individual and cumulative effects.~~
- b. They ~~enhance~~ avoid harm to the setting and significance of ~~/or relationship with~~ neighbouring heritage assets.
- c. They are of ~~exceptional~~ exemplary design and architectural quality.

Reason: to set a positive strategy for the historic environment and effectiveness, and to better align with the language of the NPPF, London Plan and statutory obligations of legislation – Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990

MAIN MODIFICATION

p.409 (0D1) or p.419 (LBM05)

Additional criterion D12.6 (part 3)

Development proposals for tall buildings should be supported by:

- a. Adequate information demonstrating how the proposals comply with all the criteria within section 2 of this policy, and within the London Plan policy on tall buildings to ensure that the proposal have considered visual, townscape and heritage impacts.

Reason: to align with London Plan policy D3 and to set a positive strategy for the historic environment.

MAIN MODIFICATION

p.411 (0D1) or p.425 (LBM05)

Amend D12.6 supporting text 12.6.5

Merton's Borough Character Study SPD provides more detail of different character areas within the borough and a framework for character-led tall buildings that highlights good practice design approaches. ~~gives holistic guidance on best practice design approach on tall buildings. highlighting the importance of a sites suitability and sensitivity.~~

Reason: to align with London Plan policy D3 and to set a positive strategy for the historic environment.

MAIN MODIFICATION

p.411 (0D1) or p.425 (LBM05)

Additional criterion after D12.6 supporting text 12.6.8

Tall buildings should be part of a positive strategy for the historic environment and avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets and their settings. In line with the London Plan, proposals resulting in harm will require clear and convincing justification, including what alternatives were explored and what public benefits outweigh the harm.

Reason: to align with London Plan policy D9 C. part D and to set a positive strategy for the historic environment.

Signatories

Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon.

Signed for London Borough of Merton by:

Name - Tara Butler

Job Title – Deputy Manager, Future Merton

Signature - 

Date – 21 September 2022

Signed for Historic England by:

Name – Katie Parsons

Job Title – Historic Environment Planning Adviser

Signature – 

Date – 21st September 2022

Appendix 1

Superseded Stage 1 Statement of Common Ground on Tall Buildings between
Merton Council and Historic England.

Dated 13th June 2022

Statement of Common Ground between London Borough of Merton and Historic England

On draft policies D12.6 *Tall Buildings*

The comments below follow submission of [Hearing Statements](#) from both parties including proposed main modifications relating to Matter 13, Tall Buildings on 25th May 2022 and a duty to cooperate meeting 23/05/22.

Appendix 1, attached, sets out Historic England's position on the Council's revised modifications relevant to Matter 13. The amendments generally make improved references to heritage, individual assets, and the need to reinforce and respect local character. However, some additional amendments are recommended.

The page and paragraph numbers within this document are based on [Submitted Document 0D1 Merton's Local Plan Stage 3 Regulation 19 July 2021](#) and [LBM05 Merton's Local Plan incorporating proposed modifications dated 20 May 2022](#).

Areas of agreement

Historic England and Merton Council are committed pro-actively managing the development of tall buildings and recognises the need for positive action. It is agreed that the plan must address tall buildings, including in the context of heritage.

Both parties agree to recommend the proposed main and additional modifications to the Planning Inspectors

Suggested Modifications:

MAIN MODIFICATION page 408 (0D1) or page 418 (LBM05), amend criterion between D12.6 (new part 2)(b)

D12.6 (new Part 2).(b) *They enhance the setting and significance of ~~for relationship with~~ neighbouring heritage assets.*

Reason: to set a positive strategy for the historic environment and effectiveness, and to better align with the language of the NPPF, and statutory obligations of legislation – Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990

MAIN MODIFICATION Page 409 (0D1) or page 418 (LBM05), Criterion A

Adding to D12.6 (new Part 2) Criterion (a).

Their massing, bulk and height are appropriately sized and located and demonstrate they do not undermine local character and heritage assets and their settings through townscape analysis of short, mid and long views, taking into account individual and cumulative effects.

Reason: to set a positive strategy for the historic environment and effectiveness, and to align with London Plan Policy D9 part 4a regarding cumulative harm.

MAIN MODIFICATION Page 410 (0D1) or page 419 (LBM05), insert additional criterion D12.6 (3)

Justification paragraph between 12.6.6 and 12.6.7

12.6.6 Not all tall buildings need to be iconic landmarks. If tall buildings form a cluster or in close proximity to others, they should not compete and their composition must be considered.

NEW PARA Tall buildings should be part of a positive strategy for the historic environment and avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets and their settings. In line with the London Plan, proposals resulting in harm will require clear and convincing justification, including what alternatives were explored and what public benefits outweigh the harm.

12.6.7 Applicants should be prepared to provide 3D digital models to analyse how their tall buildings are placed within the context of the borough and beyond, assessing cumulative impacts of both existing and permitted, but not yet completed, schemes.

Reason: to align with London Plan policy D9 C. part D and to set a positive strategy for the historic environment.

Suggested modification

Insert new paragraph after 12.6.7

NEW PARA All proposals for tall buildings must take a design-led approach and be accompanied by adequate information demonstrating how the proposals comply with all the criteria within section 2 of this policy, and within the London Plan policy on tall

buildings, to ensure that the proposal has positive visual, townscape and heritage impacts.

This modification, in the context of the totality of the plan, provides an additional layer of heritage protection to ensure that adequate information, which demonstrates how applicants have considered criteria A, B, and C of Merton's Local Plan policy D12.6 (new Part 2) is provided upfront. In the first instance more evidence and testing would be completed at plan-making stage and so this modification is warranted as it provides a better policy justification for decision makers who may need to request further information to make a sound decision at application stage. It is also helpful for applicants and provides clarity as to what is expected in terms of demonstrating that they have taken a design-led approach.

Reason: to align with London Plan policy D3 and to set a positive strategy for the historic environment.

Amend:

12.6.5 Merton's Borough Character Study provides more detail of the different character areas within the borough. ~~gives holistic guidance on best practice design approach highlighting the importance of a site's suitability and sensitivity.~~

Reason: to align with London Plan policy D9 B, and to set a positive strategy for the historic environment.

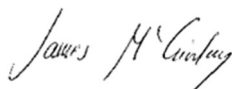
Signatories

Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon.

Signed for London Borough of Merton by:

Name -

Job Title –



Signature -

Date – 13th June 2022

Signed for Historic England by:

Name – Katie Parsons

Job Title – Historic Environment Planning Adviser

Signature -

Kate Pinner

Date – 25 May 2022

Appendix 1. HE comments on proposed modifications dated 20th May 2022 – Matter 13

Consistent use of terminology (in [LBM04 - Proposed Additional Modifications to Merton's Local Plan dated 20 May 2022](#))

				HE comments
AM1.9	14	3 rd para under 'Density and mixed uses'	In accordance with the London Plan 2021, taller buildings are one form of high-density development that can be appropriate in some the locations identified in this plan, subject to excellent design, good public transport accessibility and impact on existing character, heritage and townscape. ...	Agree This provides additional clarity and overcomes our concerns in this respect of terminology
AM1.9	93	Site Allocation CW2, Approach to tall buildings	A mixed-use redevelopment within the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape and based on the principle of the existing Britannia Point being the pinnacle height of a family of buildings of varying height, forming a coherent cluster that enhances the wider Colliers Wood area.	Agree This provides additional clarity and overcomes our concerns in this respect of terminology
AM1.9	121	Site allocation Mi1, Approach to tall buildings	The size of the site allows for a masterplanned approach which could contain taller buildings...	Agree This provides additional clarity and overcomes our concerns in this respect of terminology
AM1.9	161	Site allocation Mi16, Approach to tall buildings	A mixed-use redevelopment of the site could include taller buildings...	Agree This provides additional clarity and overcomes our concerns in this respect of terminology
AM1.9	202	Site Allocation Mo4, Design and accessibility guidance	In accordance with the Strategic Heights Diagram for the Morden Regeneration Zone a plan-led approach (MM3.1), taller buildings would be acceptable in this town centre site, to ensuring the best use of this land that benefits from excellent public transport accessibility.	Agree This provides additional clarity and overcomes our concerns in this respect of terminology

AM1.9	233	Site Allocation RP3, Approach to tall buildings	The size of the whole site RP.3 allows for a master planned approach which could contain taller buildings...	Agree This provides additional clarity and overcomes our concerns in this respect of terminology
AM1.9	383	12.2.5	The design of new buildings, particularly taller buildings, on sites in close proximity to designated open spaces and MOL needs to consider the amenity, quality and use of the open space.	Agree This provides additional clarity and overcomes our concerns in this respect of terminology

AM9.1	267	Wimbledon Policy N9.1 part e	Respecting views from Wimbledon Hill through the town centre and beyond, with taller developments set at St George's Road , away from the historic core, located around the station, St George's Road, Hartfield Road and Broadway East .	Agree We note the additional explanation provided by the Council regarding the retention of the word 'taller' in Policy N9.1 part e – the Council consider it to be appropriate, because in this context 'taller developments' is referring to an approach or strategy, rather than the defined criteria of a 'tall building'. This explanation resolves our concerns. Ideally this explanation might be referenced in the supporting text of the plan to provide clarity for readers and decision makers to justify the exception.
-------	-----	------------------------------	---	---

Site Allocations (in [LBM03 - Proposed Main Modifications to Merton's Local Plan dated 20 May 2022](#))

				HE comments
--	--	--	--	-------------

MM3.2	93	Site Allocation CW2, Approach to tall buildings	<p>A mixed-use redevelopment within the site could include taller (AM1.9) buildings subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape and based on the principle of the existing Britannia Point being the pinnacle height of a family of buildings of varying height, forming a coherent cluster that enhances the wider Colliers Wood area.</p> <p><u>The Strategic Heights Diagram for the Colliers Wood Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this. However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings'</u></p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM4.2	146	Site Allocation Mi11 Raleigh Gardens car park, Approach to tall buildings	<p>Approach to tall buildings: Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Site is not appropriate for a tall building.</p>
MM4.3	159, 161	Site Allocation Mi16 Mitcham Gasworks Western Road, Indicative site capacity (p 159), Approach to tall buildings (p161)	<p>Indicative site capacity: 200-400 <u>Around 650 new homes</u></p> <p>...</p> <p>Approach to tall buildings: A mixed-use redevelopment of the site could include taller buildings <u>of up to 10 storeys</u> subject to consideration of <u>design policies, along with a replacement telecoms mast on top of the tallest building. impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape.</u></p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM9.3	281	Site Allocation Wi2	<p>Approach to taller buildings.</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD. <u>The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</u></p> <p><u>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.</u></p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM9.3	288	Site Allocation Wi5	Approach to tall buildings.	Agree

			<p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD. The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</p> <p>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.</p>	<p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM9.3	290	Site Allocation Wi6	<p>Approach to tall buildings.</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD. The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</p> <p>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM9.3	299	Site Allocation Wi9	<p>Approach to tall buildings.</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD. The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</p> <p>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>

			have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.	
MM9.3	302	Site Allocation Wi10	<p>Approach to tall buildings.</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD.The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</p> <p>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM9.3	305	Site Allocation Wi11	<p>Approach to tall buildings.</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD.The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</p> <p>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM9.6	308	Site Allocation Wi12	<p>Approach to tall buildings</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings <u>of up to 10 storeys subject to consideration of impacts on existing character and townscape.</u> subject to consideration of impacts on existing character and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments' and D12.6 'Tall buildings'.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM9.3	311	Site Allocation Wi13	<p>Approach to tall buildings.</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>

			<p>parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD. The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</p> <p>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.</p>	
MM9.3	314	Site Allocation Wi15	<p>Approach to tall buildings.</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD. The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</p> <p>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>
MM9.3	318	Site Allocation Wi16	<p>Approach to tall buildings.</p> <p>Development of the site could include taller buildings subject to consideration of impacts on the setting of the adjacent listed building, existing character and townscape and in line with the height parameters set out in the Future Wimbledon SPD. The Strategic Heights Diagram for Wimbledon Town Centre, in D12.6 'Tall buildings', sets out the height limits for this.</p> <p>However, all building heights will be subject to consideration of impacts on existing character, heritage and townscape in accordance with policies D12.3 'Ensuring high quality design for all developments', D12.5 'Managing heritage assets' and D12.6 'Tall buildings' and have regard to the Future Wimbledon SPD.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The policy is clearer and added heritage considerations are supported.</p>

**Draft Statement of Common Ground between
London Borough of Merton and
St William Homes**

**On draft policies D12.6 and Mi16 of the
Merton Local Plan Review**

This Statement of Common Ground replaces the previous statement of common ground between Merton Council and St William, which is withdrawn.

Areas of agreement

- The inclusion of Mi16 within draft Policy D12.6 relating to tall buildings is agreed where this enables high quality design and residential amenity and the site to be delivered.
- The updated evidence on high quality design and residential amenity demonstrates that a range of heights of up to a maximum of 9 storeys would be acceptable that responds in an appropriate manner to the site's existing context, subject to consideration of design policies.
- The evidence includes the inclusion of a telecom mast on top of the tallest residential building as a replacement of the existing telecoms mast on the Gasworks site (currently on site at c.65metres high). The replacement telecoms mast needs to be located on top of the tallest building in order to provide a clear signal.
- That factual amendments are made to update reference to the gasholder, which was demolished in early 2022

Proposed edits to wording ([from pages 159 to 161 of Merton's Local Plan Regulation 19 July-September 2021](#))

Mi16 Mitcham Gasworks:

Design and accessibility guidance:

The site had outline planning permission for a major residential and employment scheme. The residential element has been delivered over 5 years ago (Hay Drive etc). However, the employment part of the permission (which extended onto the site surrounded by the red line, reaching Western Road) lapsed in July 2012. The ~~site's potential uses, and layout is currently constrained by the~~ gasholder ~~that stood~~ on the corner of Western Road and Portland Road ~~was demolished in early 2022. Although the gasholder is no longer used, it has not been officially decommissioned. The landowners are proposing it decommission but until that time development within the vicinity of the gasholder is currently subject to restrictions set out in the Health and Safety Executive's land use planning method (PADHI) which limits the potential for residential led mixed use development until the gasholder is decommissioned.~~

~~The site is subject to a Hazardous Substance Consent (HSC). An application for the continuation of this HSC was granted in 2002 (Ref: 02/P1493). The decommissioning the site and the cancellation of the HSC requirements to enable the redevelopment of the site.~~ The site accommodates two electricity sub stations, an operational gas Pressure Reduction Station (PRS) and above ground gas mains stemming from the historic installation use. A 65metre large ~~redundant gasholder and~~ telecoms mast are is found to the north of the site on the SGN ~~(Southern Gas Networks)~~ owned land. The site would require decontamination due to its earlier use.

Indicative site capacity: 500 - 650 new homes

Approach to tall buildings: A mixed-use redevelopment of the site could include taller buildings of up to 9 storeys, subject to consideration of design policies, along with a replacement telecoms mast on top of the tallest building.

Signatories

Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon.

Signed for London Borough of Merton by:

Name – Tara Butler

Job Title – Deputy Manager, Future Merton

Signature - 

Date – 21.09.2022

Signed for on behalf of St William Homes by:

Name – CRAIG MILES

Job Title – LAND DIRECTOR

Signature - 

Date – 21/09/2022

