



Chapter 01c. **Urban development objectives and vision**

Urban development objectives

1.3.1. The strategic objectives apply to the whole of Merton and provide a framework for the Local Plan, acting as stepping stones to deliver the Spatial Vision. Consultation responses, Merton's Community Plan and the London Plan (2021) have guided Merton's strategic objectives.

Strategic objective 1: tackling climate change

1.3.2. To make Merton an exemplary borough in mitigating and adapting to climate change, reducing pollution, developing a low carbon economy, consuming fewer resources and using them more effectively.

1.3.3. We will achieve this by:

- a. Ensuring that development in Merton minimises its energy use by encouraging local efficient energy generation, achieves the highest possible environmental standards and is designed to adapt to, and reduce the effects of, climate change.
- b. Minimising energy demand, water use and greenhouse gas emissions, maximising renewable energy generation and prioritising re-use of existing building materials where possible to minimise resource use and waste.
- c. Being resilient to the future impacts of climate change in order to minimise vulnerability of people and property; this includes the risk of flooding, water shortages, subsidence and the effects of overheating.
- d. Promoting a circular economy to ensure that resources are kept in use at the highest level possible for as long as possible in order to consume fewer resources and minimise waste.
- e. Applying the waste hierarchy to ensure that waste is minimised, re-used and recycled, and residual waste is disposed of sustainably in the right location using the most appropriate means.
- f. Supporting sustainable energy infrastructure to produce energy more efficiently and utilise energy from waste.
- g. Promoting the retrofit of existing buildings for improved energy performance and greater connections with renewable and decentralised energy.

Strategic objective 2: supporting resilience

- 1.3.4. To support those who live, work and study in Merton in resilience and recovery, to create the conditions for growth and to direct the benefits of this growth so it best meets the needs of Merton's communities.
- 1.3.5. We will achieve this by:
- a. Building more well-designed new homes, particularly affordable homes that meet the needs of households on the council's waiting list and help address the housing crisis.
 - b. Requiring new homes and buildings to be sustainable, significantly reducing carbon emissions and residents' energy bills, towards achieving Merton's net-zero carbon target in Merton's Climate Change Strategy.
 - c. Supporting investment in high streets and business areas, providing a platform for businesses and jobs recovery after COVID-19 and beyond.
 - d. Protecting and improving the borough's parks and ensuring public access to formerly private open spaces. Improving access to nature and leisure facilities, including opportunities for sport, physical activities, play and relaxation to help boost people's physical and mental health.
 - e. Supporting the existing and future successful development of our town and neighbourhood centres, while adapting to changes in their role and how people shop.

Strategic Objective 3: places for people

- 1.3.6. To provide new homes and infrastructure within Merton's town centres and residential areas, through physical regeneration and effective use of space.
- 1.3.7. We will achieve this by:
- a. Delivering quality new homes, associated infrastructure and social facilities that respect and enhance the local character of the area, in places with good public transport access. ;
 - b. Delivering social and community services and infrastructure to support new homes through new development and the effective use of space.
 - c. Providing a choice and mix of homes which are accessible, adaptable and sustainable, which apply high quality design standards to meet the needs of Merton's diverse communities.

- d. Ensuring that development makes the most efficient use of brownfield land and that it is designed at the optimum density, considering site context, connectivity by walking, cycling and public transport and access to amenities and services.
- e. Requiring major development proposals to maximise the positive impacts and minimise adverse impacts on physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- f. Working with key stakeholders such as our local Metropolitan Police Service 'design out crime' officers and planning teams, Emergency Planning Authority and British Transport Police to identify community safety needs, policies and sites required for their area and support provision of necessary infrastructure to maintain a safe and secure environment.

Strategic objective 4: good growth

1.3.8. To create the conditions for growth, ensuring it takes place in the most appropriate and sustainable locations, minimises the impacts of development, and to direct the benefits of this growth so it meets the needs of Merton's communities for homes, jobs and services, and preserves and enhances the borough's unique character and appearance.

1.3.9. We will achieve this by:

- a. Supporting a diverse local economy and promoting a commercially viable, thriving mix of premises, including shops and services, business and industrial uses that increase jobs and services available to local people.
- b. Promoting and supporting the successful development of the growth areas (Opportunity Area and Morden (Regeneration Zone) and to ensure that all development is supported by necessary infrastructure and maximises the opportunities and benefits for the local and surrounding communities and the borough as a whole.
- c. Supporting sustainable growth of the visitor economy for the benefit of local communities and promoting the borough as an attractive and inviting place to visit and enjoy.
- d. Encouraging and supporting low carbon behaviour in local businesses such as improving the energy efficiency of their buildings, maximising renewable energy generation, promoting sustainable and active travel, working with their supply chains to provide low carbon products and services, and minimising waste.
- e. Enhancing the learning environment to improve access to education, training and jobs.
- f. Maximising opportunities for employment and local businesses, focusing on Merton's town centres and main employment areas along the Wandle Valley.

Strategic objective 5: place plans and the 20-minute neighbourhood

- 1.3.10. To promote a high quality urban and suburban environment in Merton, providing reliable, quality local services in accessible, well designed neighbourhoods.
- 1.3.11. We will achieve this by:
- a. Encouraging low carbon and healthy lifestyles in line with Merton's net-zero carbon target by promoting walking and cycling.
 - b. Using Transport for London's (TfL) Healthy Streets Approach to prioritise health in planning decisions.
 - c. Supporting town centres and neighbourhood parades to boost the shops and services within them, working with businesses and residents to manage the changing nature of how we shop and use deliveries.
 - d. Delivering community services and infrastructure to support new homes through new development and the effective use of space.
 - e. Ensuring that development makes the most efficient use of land that is designed at the optimum density, considering site context, connectivity by walking, cycling and public transport and access to amenities and services.
 - f. Encouraging improvements to public transport, including quality and connectivity of transport interchanges, supporting the use of Smart City technology in the public highway and in co-ordinating deliveries.
 - g. Conserving and enhancing the unique historic environment, heritage and cultural assets.

Spatial vision

1.3.12. By 2037/38 Merton will have:

- a. Made progress towards becoming net-zero carbon by 2050 in partnership with other organisations and, importantly, with our residents.
- b. Continued to grow the borough's low carbon and circular economy.
- c. Minimised greenhouse gas emissions and ensured resilience from overheating, flooding and other the impacts of climate change.
- d. Improved community health and wellbeing and reduced health and income inequality within the borough and the disparities between the east and west of the borough.
- e. Provided new homes meeting the needs of communities - especially more affordable homes for households on the council's waiting list.
- f. Created attractive, safe and secure '20 minute' neighbourhoods to live, work, and socialise.
- g. Created new and improved existing neighbourhoods with a range of mixed tenure homes while respecting the local character of each area.
- h. Improved air quality, minimised noise, flood risk and other polluting impacts, and reduced carbon and water demands by minimising detrimental impacts from development.
- i. Improved access to our unique rich heritage and historic environment for all, while encouraging innovations in building technology.
- j. Achieved a shift in travel behaviour towards more people walking and cycling, particularly for short journeys.
- k. Improved interchange between transport modes and incorporated innovative solutions to manage deliveries and the highway network for all users.
- l. Continued to develop sustainable growth across Merton and in our growth areas for all.
- m. Have protected and improved access to the borough's Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), parks and open spaces, and have protected and enhanced biodiversity and areas of nature conservation.