

From:
To: [Future Merton](#)
Cc:
Subject: Merton draft Local Plan Main Modification - Places for London response
Date: 22 March 2024 15:24:23
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[TfL Places Reps - Merton Main Mods - 22 Mar 24.pdf](#)

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find attached our representations in respect of the draft Local Plan Main Modifications consultation.

We would be grateful for confirmation that you have received our representations and that they will be passed to the Inspector for consideration.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss any of the matters raised.

Kind regards

Planning and Development Manager (Feasibility and major projects)



Places for London
The TfL Property Company

placesforlondon.co.uk

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Places for London
Property Development

Victoria Station House
191 Victoria Street
London SW1E 5NE

placesforlondon.co.uk

planningconsultation@tfl.gov.uk

Date: 22 March 2024
Our ref: TfL/Places/VSH/RS/LBM MM Reps
Your ref:

Future Merton Local Plan
London Borough of Merton
Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
SM4 5DX

By email: future.merton@merton.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

MERTON'S DRAFT LOCAL PLAN – PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS REPRESENTATIONS BY PLACES FOR LONDON

Places for London ('Places') is pleased to provide its views on the Council's proposed Main Modifications following the recent EiP and Inspector's Post Hearing Letter. Please note that the views expressed in this letter and attachments are those of Places in its capacity as a significant landowner and developer only, and do not form part of the Transport for London (TfL) corporate / statutory response. Our colleagues in TfL Spatial Planning will provide a separate response to this consultation in respect of TfL-wide operational and land-use planning / transport policy matters as part of their statutory duties.

Places for London

Places is TfL's new and financially independent property company, formerly known as TTL Properties and TfL Commercial Development. We provide space for over 1,500 businesses in TfL stations and railway arches, as well as on London's high streets. We are working to develop TfL's surplus and / or under-used land to deliver new homes and jobs in highly sustainable locations, and to create excellent places to live, work and play which are sensitive to local needs and communities, and which are accessible to all.

We have previously responded (as TfL Commercial Development and TTL Properties) to the Issues and Options consultation (January 2018), the Regulation 18 stage 2 (January 2019), Regulation 18 (January 2021) and the Regulation 19 draft policies consultation (September 2021). Our current representations should be read alongside our previous responses.

We are pleased that Places has a very good working relationship with Merton Council and in May 2022 we entered into a signed Statement of Common Ground ([Examination doc ref: ODI3p](#)). Our comments below reference this document.

Main Modifications

Generally, we consider the draft Plan to be positively prepared and sound, except for areas where we have raised concerns in respect of the Main Modifications below.

MM35 – Site Allocation CW1, Design and accessibility guidance

Previous versions of the Local Plan stated that site allocation CW1:

“may be required to make provision for docking areas for cycle/ scooter hire schemes”.

Places previously commented that a requirement for site allocation CW1 to include a docking area is considered overly onerous given the scale of the site. It is noted that the main modification now specifies that:

“Consideration should be given to the feasibility of providing publicly accessible secure cycle parking and / or docking areas for cycle or scooter hire schemes on this site at ground level, either as part of any development or if development does not take place.”

This wording is considered more responsive to the site context and provides more clarity than the previous wording, as such this amendment is supported.

MM49 – Site allocation CW4, Design and accessibility guidance

Previous versions of the Local Plan stated that site allocation CW4:

“may be required to make provision for publicly accessible cycle storage hub or docking”.

Places previously commented that a requirement for CW4 to include a docking area is considered overly onerous given the scale of the site. It is noted that the main modification now specifies that:

“Redevelopment of the station should make provision for an appropriate amount and type of cycle storage for commuters and/ or provision of docking stations for cycle/scooter hire schemes in proximity to the public highway.”

As per our previous response at Regulation 19 and to Matter 8, a requirement for this site to provide cycle storage and/or a docking area is considered overly onerous given the scale and constraints of the site. It is suggested that the wording is amended to the following, which is consistent with other similar sites:

“Redevelopment of the station should make provision for Consideration should be given to the feasibility of providing an appropriate amount and type of cycle storage for commuters and/ or provision of docking stations for cycle/scooter hire schemes in proximity to the public highway.”

MMI9I: New paragraph below II.7.4

It is noted that the following wording has been inserted in the supporting text section of the Built to Rent policy:

“A clawback mechanism will be applied in accordance with London Plan policy and national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Build to Rent to protect the value of affordable housing provision that is withdrawn if housing units in Build to Rent blocks are converted to another tenure after the expiry of the covenant period.”

It does not appear that the reference to 'after the expiry of the covenant period' is in line with the London Plan 2021 which defines the Built to Rent Clawback as follows (pg. 499):

"A payment to the relevant Local Planning Authority for the provision of affordable housing in the event that the Built to Rent Covenant is broken through the sale of units out of rented tenure within the covenant period."

This London Plan definition refers to 'within the covenant period' rather than after the expiry of the covenant period, and so it is suggested the policy is amended to ensure consistency with the London Plan.

MM239 and MM249: Policy DI2.6 Tall Buildings, and supporting text

We support the addition of the following text which creates a sensible approach to management of tall buildings within a wider context:

'In instances where an applicant is proposing the redevelopment of a site immediately adjacent to the tall building boundaries and clusters identified in the Strategic Height Diagrams, Local Design Guides or Design Codes may be used as part of a robust design-led approach to demonstrate the appropriate stepping up of heights above or below those stated and avoid abrupt transitions in building heights.'

However, we note that Colliers Wood is not referenced in the areas where tall buildings are acceptable and has been removed from the map identifying areas appropriate for tall buildings, but it is not clear why it has been removed. In paragraph 3.1.18 and Site allocation CW2 it is noted that this site may be an appropriate location for tall buildings. As such the map of appropriate locations for tall buildings should be reinstated to show Colliers Wood as a location suitable for tall buildings given London Plan Policy D9: Tall buildings which requires that boroughs should determine if there are locations where tall buildings may be an appropriate form of development and any such locations and appropriate tall building heights should be identified on maps in Development Plans.

MM67, MM73, MM84 – Policy N5.1, Site Allocation M04 and supporting text

These policies now note that where sites are considered to be large sites (0.25 hectares or above) that they should have regard to the vision, objective and principles set out in the Strategic Development Framework and where they do this, they can be brought forward at any time in the plan period.

The Statement of Common Ground between Places (previously TfL Commercial Development) and LB Merton states that:

Both parties agree that, to enable incremental development that assists the delivery of comprehensive regeneration and avoids fragmented development and suboptimal densities in this highly accessible location, all proposals within the Morden Regeneration Zone will be expected to support the vision as set out in the site allocation M01. Clarity regarding the use of the phrase 'comprehensive regeneration' is improved with proposed additional modification AM5.7 (Ref. 0D4b) to paragraph 5.1.18, which introduces the sentence: "References to comprehensive regeneration in this policy, refer to the nature and scale of the regeneration and not a delivery method." and the inclusion of the phrase "and landowners are strongly encouraged to work together" to this paragraph, as main modification MM5.1b, will ensure that the plan is positively prepared.

This reflects the nature of the opportunity here which needs an element of comprehensive development in order to maximise the potential of the town centre. It is not considered that the policy should be so specific in terms of site size, this could incentivise sites being brought

forward in different phases to avoid having to factor in a more comprehensive approach. Even smaller developments could have an impact on the ability of the wider area to deliver optimised and comprehensive development which realises meaningful regeneration of the town centre. It is felt that the previous wording provided a suitable balance between enabling individual sites to come forward where they were ready if other sites weren't at that stage and sites being progressed for development in isolation that could stymie wider development potential.

Concluding Remarks

We understand that these submissions will be forwarded by the Council to the Inspector. We hope that they are helpful and look forward to continuing our dialogue. If you need any further information or would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We would be grateful to receive confirmation that you have received this letter.

Yours faithfully

Planning Manager
Places for London

CC.