

# Borough Plan Advisory Committee

**Date: 01 May 2013**

Agenda item: 3

Wards: all

## **Subject: Sites and policies plan – summary of consultation results and actions on sites**

Lead officer: Director for Environment and Regeneration, Chris Lee

Lead member: Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration, Councillor Andrew Judge

Forward Plan reference number: 1218

Contact officer: Future Merton strategic policy and research manager, Tara Butler

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### **Recommendations:**

1. That Members note the content of the report and advise whether or not the proposals to review the final plan (set out in paragraphs 2.11, 2.15 and 2.19) are appropriate
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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. Once adopted in 2013, Merton's *Sites and Policies Development Plan Document* (DPD) will replace the remainder of the Unitary Development Plan 2003. It will provide detailed planning policies and allocate sites for new development.
- 1.2. Merton's Proposals Map is being revised at the same time, which will designate land for specific uses.
- 1.3. The final round of community engagement took place over six weeks between 16 January and 27 February 2013. This was in addition to detailed consultation with local councillors which took place on various issues from October 2012 to the end of February 2013.
- 1.4. This report updates Members on the potential development sites, the responses received on development sites and any changes that are being proposed.
- 1.5. Councillors will receive the final plan recommending its submission to the Secretary of State at meetings between 26 June (Borough Plan Advisory Committee); Cabinet (01 July 2013); full Council (10 July 2013)

## **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. Seven months of public consultation took place during 2012 on the draft *Sites and Policies Plan* in two stages from January-May and from June to July 2012. This most recent six-week consultation was the third stage on the *Sites and Policies Plan*.
- 2.2. The consultation was publicised in a variety of ways:

- Leaflets were circulated to residential and business premises around potential development sites. The spread of the leaflets was in proportion to the size of the site. The largest circulation was around Wimbledon Greyhound Stadium, where approximately 4,500 leaflets were distributed to addresses in Merton and Wandsworth, initially 400m from the site boundary and increasing along transport routes and to encompass the logical continuation of streets.
- e-mails / letters to community groups, residents associations, civic societies, business groups and other organisations in Merton
- Meeting community groups
- Publicity via business forums
- Meetings were offered to councillors in all wards and were held with councillors covering all but one ward.

2.3. Extensive comments have been received from councillors on a number of matters relating to their wards. These comments, and the actions from these comments, are summarised in Appendix A.

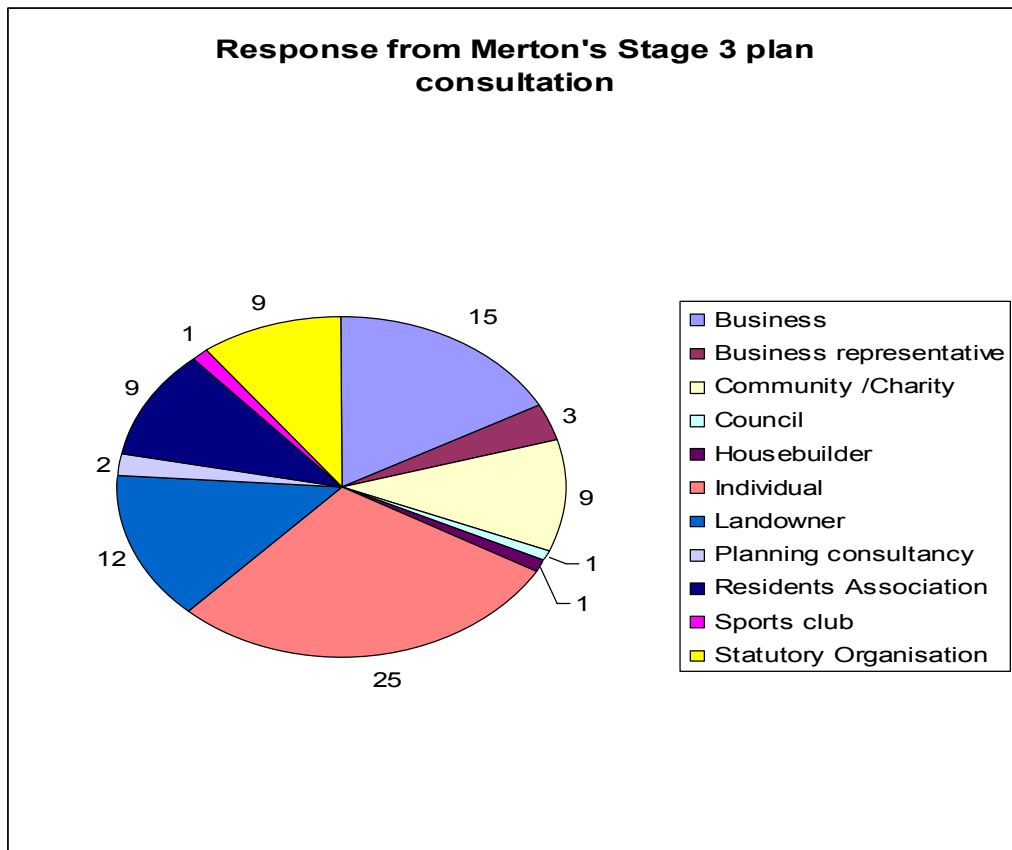
2.4. Perhaps not surprisingly after 9 months of public consultation in less than two years, the comments received at the stage 3 consultation were generally very detailed.

2.5. 87 responses were received containing more than 600 separate issues to research and consider for the *Sites and Policies Plan* and maps. The Wimbledon Society provided feedback on more than 200 separate issues across the whole document. Other examples of extensive and detailed comments include close to 100 separate points raised by Merton Cycling Campaign (on sustainable transport issues relating to planning policies, sites and land designations) and the Wimbledon Park Residents Association also provided extensive comments (on Wimbledon Greyhound Stadium).

2.6. The council also received a petition with 128 signatories for Site 41 Kingston Road opposite Lower Downs Road, stating that the site should be part of a roundabout. This brings the total number of responses on this site to 133.

2.7. Points were raised across a huge range of issues – from the clearance of vegetation in back gardens to the financial viability of development to the need for new tram stops.

2.8. The pie chart below summarises the source of the responses received. Please note it does not contain the source of all of the petitioners who responded to the consultation. As nine residents associations and one Civic Society responded to the consultation – representing more than 2,000 people – residents were by far the largest source of comments on the draft plan.



**2.9. Responses on policies**

2.10. Most of the responses received on policy matters were from residents associations, community groups, councillors and other organisations that had already responded to earlier consultations and provided a high level of detail.

2.11. The largest number of issues raised was on open space, retail and town centres and design. Officers are investigating each of the points raised, are preparing schedules of changes.

2.12. Officers are investigating each of the issues and, where amendments are being made, amending the policies in red text for Members to consider and advise on. Officers are also preparing a schedule of changes, setting out each point received and the proposed action from it so that everybody can see what has happened to their comments and how they have influenced the plan.

2.13. As both the amended policy document and the schedule of changes are very long (currently running to more than 300 pages just for the policies), a review does not easily fit in the context of one meeting. To help with the review, officers advice is that:

- The amended policy document is left the Members rooms to review over a two week period.
- The schedules of changes can be printed or e-mailed to BPAC members to assist with the review.

- Councillors advise on any specific issues or responses they would like information on.

#### 2.14. **Responses on potential sites**

- 2.15. All responses are available to view online via Merton Council's website:  
[http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/planningpolicy/ldf/sites\\_policies\\_dpd/sites\\_policies\\_stage3.htm](http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/planningpolicy/ldf/sites_policies_dpd/sites_policies_stage3.htm)

- 2.16. Please note that this represents the number of letters / e-mails received, not the number of points raised on each site.

- 2.17. Appendix B to this report summarises the responses received on each site. Appendix C to this report contains the amended potential development sites. Given the size of these appendices, Members are welcome to provide feedback to officers by 10 May 2013

- 2.18. The graphs at the end of this report illustrate the number of responses received on each site. The council also received a petition with 128 signatories for Site 41 Kingston Road opposite Lower Downs Road, stating that the site should be part of a roundabout. This brings the total number of responses on this site to 133.

#### 2.19. **Responses on land designations (Policies Map)**

- 2.20. As with planning policy matters, most of the responses received are on detailed site boundary changes. Officers are reviewing these changes on a site by site basis and will provide recommendations to councillors.

- 2.21. As set out in paragraph 2.11 of this report, officers are seeking Members recommendations as to how this review should be conducted given the very large volume of information that this review will generate. Officers propose that any changes from the existing published document be passed to BPAC councillors on a ward-by-ward basis to review.

- 2.22. Councillors feedback on each ward and officers' recommendations are contained in Appendix A to this report

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. Not relevant for the purposes of this report.

### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. Merton's Sites and Policies DPD was started in July 2011 and since then has been through three stages of public consultation over a total of more than eight months:

- 4.2. July-September 2011 – **Stage 1 Call for sites** to encourage respondents to submit sites for potential redevelopment, issues to be considered for new detailed planning policies and potential land designations on the Proposals Map

- 4.3. January-May 2012 – **Stage 2 Preferred options** for approximately 20 detailed planning policies, approximately 50 potential sites and Proposals Map changes

- 4.4. June-July 2012 – **Stage 2a Preferred options continued** for an additional 15 sites suggested at Stage 2, three detailed planning policies and some Proposals Map amendments.
- 4.5. January-February 2013 – **Stage 3 Towards a final plan**
- 4.6. The next stage will be the final draft of the plan, which will be submitted to the Secretary of State and be examined in a public hearing by an independent planning inspector.

## **5 TIMETABLE**

5.1. The next steps are as follows:

- 26 June 2013 – Borough Plan Advisory Committee review the final plan and advise Cabinet
- 01 July 2013 – Cabinet consider the final plan for submission to the Secretary of State
- 10 July 2013 – full council are recommended to resolve the final plan for submission to the Secretary of State
- July-September – pre submission publication of the final plan
- End September – submission of *Sites and Policies Plan* to the Secretary of State

5.2. At submission, the Secretary of State will appoint an independent planning inspector to examine the plan at a public hearing. The Planning Inspectorate has informed the council that an inspector will be appointed and a date set for the hearing only on submission of the plan.

## **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. Resources for this work can be met from the Future Merton budget.

6.2. The Planning Inspectorate has informed the council that an inspector will be appointed and a date set for the hearing only on submission of the plan, and that the Inspectorate is operating with reduced resources. This may impact on the timings of the plan once it has been submitted to the Secretary of State.

## **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Act (2004)) and associated Regulations brought about a stepped change in the way development plans were prepared, intending to make the planning system more responsive and involve communities throughout the preparation process.

7.2 Government reviewed the 2004 Act and associated Regulations, bringing in the Planning Act 2008 and amendments to the Regulations (Town and Country Planning (Local Development (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and subsequent Town and Country Planning (Local Development (England (amendments) Regulations 2009

7.3 The Localism Act 2011(the Act (2011) and the associated Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 has brought about further significant changes to the planning system. These changes are aimed at making the planning system less complex and more accessible, and to promote sustainable growth.

7.4 The processes that must be followed in preparing a local plan are set out in the Acts, Regulations and in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

## **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. An equality impact assessment is carried out and published alongside the DPDs.

## **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

## **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. The recommendations in this report to extend the timetable arises from the risk management log for the *Sites and Policies* and *Proposals Map DPDs*.

## **11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

- Appendix A – councillors comments received and officers actions
- Appendix B to this report summarises the responses received on each site.
- Appendix C to this report contains the amended potential development sites.

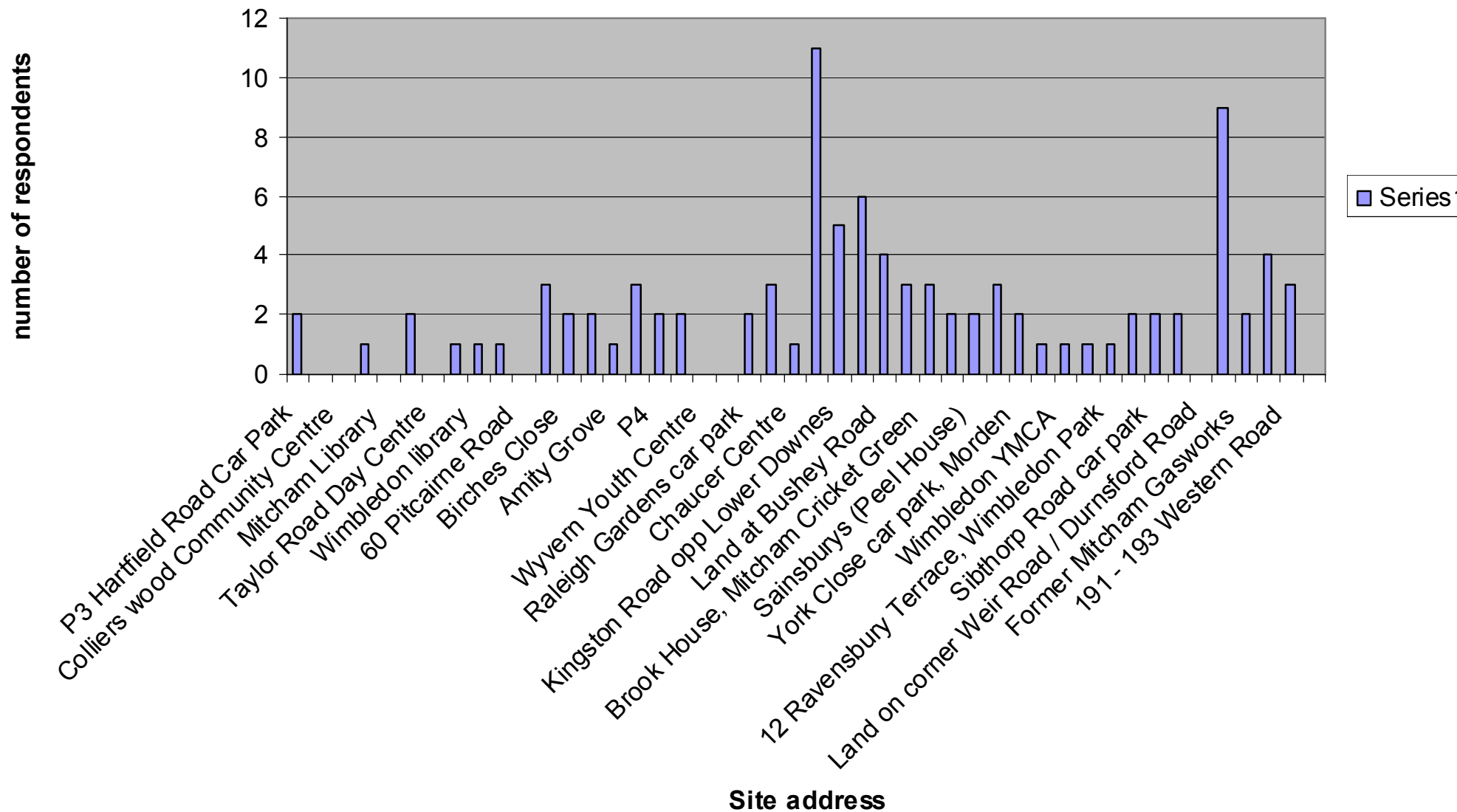
## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. National Planning Policy Framework – March 2012

12.2. Merton's Sites and policies Plan (draft)

12.3. Responses received to public consultation

### Stage 3: number of respondents per site (not including Kingston/Lwr Downes petition - 128 signatories)



**Stage 3: number of respondents per site including Kingston/Lwr Downes petition - 128 signatories)**

