

From: Jennifer Peters [mailto:Jennifer.Peters@london.gov.uk]  
Sent: 23 January 2014 11:35  
To: Valerie Mowah  
Cc: Jonathan Finch; Tara Butler; Hermine Sanson  
Subject: RE: Proposed amendments to policy DM H3 (support for affordable housing) - Merton's Public Examination Hearing - Matter 5

Hi Valerie,

I can confirm that the Mayor supports the removal of para 2.42 as proposed below.

Kind regards

Jennifer Peters

From: Valerie Mowah [mailto:Valerie.Mowah@merton.gov.uk]  
Sent: 23 January 2014 11:17  
To: Jennifer Peters  
Cc: Jonathan Finch; Tara Butler  
Subject: RE: Proposed amendments to policy DM H3 (support for affordable housing) - Merton's Public Examination Hearing - Matter 5

Hi Jennifer,

Many thanks for your prompt response, the contents of which have been carefully considered. Further to our useful telephone conversation this morning, and to improve clarity, it is proposed that para 2.42 be removed in its entirety as follows:

~~“There is a wide variation in market rents in Merton. Homes with a rent of up to 80% of market rent could prove unaffordable to applicants in housing need, particularly those needing family-sized homes. In dealing with individual planning applications the council will have regard to a number of considerations including evidence and other material considerations that do not constitute planning policy such as Merton’s Housing Strategy, and Merton’s Interim Policy Statement on Affordable Rent (07 November 2011) and the Council’s Merton’s draft Tenancy Strategy (January 2013) (November 2012). In accordance with Merton’s Housing Strategy, the council will only support new housing schemes in Merton where average rent levels across all bed sizes do not exceed 65% of market rent, unless registered providers can demonstrate exceptional circumstances. Affordable rent levels for any bed size must not exceed 80% market rent or 65% for larger homes with three or more bedrooms. Affordable rent for all re-let conversions should not exceed 65% of market rent.~~

I would be most grateful if you could confirm that the Mayor supports the proposed amendments to policy DM H3 by return e-mail.

Kind regards

Valerie Mowah  
Principal Spatial Planner  
Environment and Regeneration  
Future Merton  
Tel: 0208 545 3053  
[www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk)

From: Jennifer Peters [<mailto:Jennifer.Peters@london.gov.uk>]  
Sent: 23 January 2014 10:15  
To: Valerie Mowah  
Cc: Jonathan Finch; Tara Butler  
Subject: RE: Proposed amendments to policy DM H3 (support for affordable housing) - Merton's Public Examination Hearing - Matter 5

Hi Valerie,

Thanks for the update. Unfortunately the proposed amendments do not address the Mayor's concerns. The Mayor's concern with the original drafting was that the text could be used to essentially introduce rent caps via the backdoor by referencing the housing documents in planning policy; this would not be in conformity with the London Plan 2011, consolidated with revised early minor alterations October 2013 and could constrain affordable housing delivery. The Mayor therefore suggested that should be made clear in the text that these documents are not planning policy. The additional wording proposed does not provide this clarity as it suggests that the documents will always have material weight in a decision. We therefore suggest the wording below:

"There is a wide variation in market rents in Merton. Homes with a rent of up to 80% of market rent could prove unaffordable to applicants in housing need, particularly those needing family- sized homes. In dealing with individual planning applications the council will have regard to ~~a number of considerations including evidence and other material considerations that do not constitute planning policy such as~~ Merton's Housing Strategy , and Merton's Interim Policy Statement on Affordable Rent (07 November 2011) and the Council's ~~Merton's draft~~ Tenancy Strategy (January 2013) where these support implementation of strategic policy, including London Plan policy to maximise affordable housing provision.

Kind regards

Jennifer Peters

From: Valerie Mowah [<mailto:Valerie.Mowah@merton.gov.uk>]  
Sent: 22 January 2014 16:23  
To: Jennifer Peters  
Cc: Jonathan Finch; Tara Butler  
Subject: Proposed amendments to policy DM H3 (support for affordable housing) - Merton's Public Examination Hearing - Matter 5

Hi Jennifer,

I hope this e-mail finds you well.

In response to the Mayor of London's correspondence dated 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014 located at the following

link: [http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/planningpolicy/ldf/sites\\_policies\\_plan/site\\_37\\_r027\\_gla\\_17-01-2014.pdf](http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/planningpolicy/ldf/sites_policies_plan/site_37_r027_gla_17-01-2014.pdf) the Council proposed the following amendments to the Inspector at Merton's Public Examination Hearing on this matter today (matter 5):

Policy DM.H3 *Support for affordable* housing, page 55 justification paragraph 2.42 of the submitted Plan (SP4.1) would be amended to read:

~~"There is a wide variation in market rents in Merton. Homes with a rent of up to 80% of market rent could prove unaffordable to applicants in housing need, particularly those needing family- sized homes. In dealing with individual planning applications the council will have regard to a number of considerations including evidence and other material considerations that do not constitute planning policy such as Merton's Housing Strategy , and Merton's Interim Policy Statement on Affordable Rent (07 November 2011-) and the Council's Merton's draft Tenancy Strategy (January 2013) (November 2012). In accordance with Merton's Housing Strategy, the council will only support new housing schemes in Merton where average rent levels across all bed sizes do not exceed 65% of market rent, unless registered providers can demonstrate exceptional circumstances. Affordable rent levels for any bed size must not exceed 80% market rent or 65% for larger homes with three or more bedrooms. Affordable rent for all re-let conversions should not exceed 65% of market rent.~~

In Merton's opinion the Inspector was supportive of the proposed amendments. I would be most grateful if you could confirm that the Mayor supports the proposed amendments to policy DM H3.

Your response by return e-mail, at your earliest convenience would be most gratefully appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries on this matter.

Kind regards

Valerie Mowah  
Principal Spatial Planner  
Environment and Regeneration  
Future Merton  
Tel: 0208 545 3053  
[www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk)

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