Local Development Framework
Sites & Policies Development Plan Document (DPD)

Call for Sites Consultation

From 15th July – 9th September

www.merton.gov.uk/LDF
Following the recent adoption of Merton’s Core Planning Strategy, we are starting preparation of a Sites & Policies Development Plan Document (Sites & Policies DPD). As illustrated in figure 1 below, we are at the early stages of development for the Sites & Policies DPD, and we are currently at the ‘Call for Sites’ Stage.

As part of the ‘Call for Sites’ stage, we invite landowners, developers and other interested parties to suggest sites likely to have potential development or redevelopment between 2011 - 2026. By engaging at this stage of the consultation process you will be able to submit proposals for consideration for site allocation(s), for future use or development of land such as:

- Housing;
- Employment;
- Retail;
- Leisure;
- Community uses;
- Art, culture and tourism; and,
- Mixed use development.

Also, at this stage we invite you to highlight any development management issues for consideration as part of preparation of the development management policies, which will form part of this Sites & Policies DPD. Suggestions could include proposed policies to guide the design of shop frontages and change of use.

Submitted sites and proposals should have a reasonable prospect of coming forward in the period up to 2026.

Please use the following link to access Merton’s Local Development Scheme 7th Edition (July 2011) which provides information on the progress and status of future Development Plan Documents or Supplementary Planning Documents and details of the various stages of the preparation, examination and adoption of Development Plan Documents:

To participate please return this form, with a map clearly identifying the boundary of the site, by Friday, 9th September 2011.

Before completing this Site Identification form, please refer to the guidance notes which are detailed in Section D: ‘Call for Sites’ Questions and Answers and Section E: Guidance Note for the ‘Call for Sites’ Consultation.

One form only should be completed for each site to be considered.

In circumstances where groups or organisations share a similar view as to the future development or use of a site, it would be helpful if one submission could be made. It would also be useful if the group/organisation state how many people the submission is representing and how the representation was authorised.

Please submit your response electronically: ldf@merton.gov.uk

Alternatively you can return the representation form by fax or post:

London Borough of Merton,
Strategic Planning and Research,
Future Merton Team,
Civic Centre, 12th Floor,
London Road,
Morden,
SM4 5DX

Fax: 020 8545 4160

Submitting your responses via email does not restrict you to office hours and is also friendly to the environment.

For further information regarding this consultation stage or to request additional forms please contact the Strategic Planning and Research Team on 020 8545 4141/3837. Forms can also be downloaded from: www.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning.htm.

This form is available on Merton’s website to download both in PDF and Word Format.
Please fill in all the sections (if known) in the Sites Identification Form. Please **tick** (√) where appropriate. Information marked with an asterix (*) is required information and should be filled in.

### Site Identification Form: Part 1

#### Your details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(i) Your Name*</th>
<th>Paula Stratford</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Company/ organisation (if relevant)*</td>
<td>Blue Sky Planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| (iii) Address* | Bourne House  
475 Godstone Road  
Caterham  
County/City: Surrey  
Postcode: CR3 0BL |
| (iv) Telephone number* | 01883 621057 |
| (v) Email* | pms@bluskyplanning.co.uk |
| (vi) I am an/a……………..(please tick the relevant box)*: | Owner of (all or part of) the site:  
Land agent:  
Developer:  
Registered social landlord:  
Planning consultant: √  
Local resident:  
Community Group: |
| (vii) If acting on behalf of a client please inset their name, address and contact details*: | Name: LaSalle Investment Management  
Address: One Curzon Street  
London,  
Postcode: W1J 5HD  
Telephone number:  
Email: |
| (viii) Please insert the name, address and contact details of the site owners*: | Name: HSBC Bank Pension Trust (UK) Limited  
Address: c/o Agent  
Postcode: |
| (ix) Does the owner(s) support your proposal(s) for the site*: | Yes: √  
No: |

To use (√) - highlight, copy and paste.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Site details:</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| (i) Site Address*: | Land on Corner of Weir Road/Durnsford Road  
Wimbledon  
London  
Postcode: SW19 |
| (ii) Grid Reference: (e.g.) |  |
| (iii) Site area (hectares)*: | 1.69 ha |
| (iv) Current use (please specify last use if vacant)*: | Offices partly vacant, Homebase retail unit, associated car parking, electricity sub stations |
| (v) Suggested use(s)*: | Hotel, A3 Use, residential |
| (vi) Relevant Planning History (please tick which is relevant for your site)*. | Pre-application advice: √  
Planning Application Submitted:  
Planning Application Decision Received: |
| (vii) Relevant Planning History reference number[s]: | MER1294/85  
01/P0772  
01/P1644  
03/P2195  
09/P1556/NEW  
87/P0762  
88/P0755  
89/P0928  
89/P1389  
90/P0284  
94/P0846  
96/P0182  
97/P0985  
98/P0023  
98/P0329  
99/P1848  
MER101/71  
MER17/73  
MER17/73(D)  
MER17/73A  
MER267/74(0)  
MER623/75  
MER630/74  
MER705/75  
WIM903 |
### Additional Information to help assess the site:

| (i) Are there any factors which might pose barriers to the availability and or development potential of the site: | Land in other ownership must be acquired to bring this site forward for development:  
Current use needs to be relocated:  
Physical constraints (e.g. access, topography, trees, other):  
Issues with viability (e.g. lending availability, contamination & other financial implications):  
Restrictive covenant exists: |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Please provide comments/ information to explain how you could/ intend to address these issues identified above:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Level of developer interest:</td>
<td>Interest from Travelodge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| (iv) Please indicate the approximate timescale for availability*: | 0-5 years: short-term  
Up to 2016  
6-10 years: medium term  
Up to 2021  
10-15 years: long term  
Up to 2026 |
| (v) Please provide comments/ information to explain why you chose this timescale for you site’s availability*: | Over the next 5 years we have been advised that:  
- Adare Intellidata Ltd will vacate their part of the ground floor on 21 May 2012 (due to their rental commitment at £8 per sq ft which is well above the market rent for these premises).  
- Gerrard Chauffer Hire Ltd may vacate their part of the ground floor at the expiry of their two leases on 29 June 2013 (due to the rental commitment at £11.40 per sq ft which is well above the market rent for the premises).  
- The first floor may let for a short period at unfavourable terms, similar to the second floor letting to United Response.  
- United Response are likely to vacate the second floor at their tenant only break option in April 2015 due to the condition of the building as a whole.  
- The third floor is likely to remain vacant due to its poor physical condition.  

On the basis of the above we consider the future prospects for the provision of jobs at Vantage House is very limited.  

The site extends to approximately 1.69 ha and comprises a Homebase DIY store, located to the north-east of the site, a four storey office building constructed in the 1970’s, known as Vantage House, located to the south-east of the site, car parking for customers of the Homebase store and Vantage House together with electricity sub-stations located to the south and east of the site.  

A site location plan identifying the subject site is attached and edged red.
• The second floor was let to a charity named United Response, in the first week of April 2010. It is important to note that the letting was implemented on a non-commercial rate simply to offset the costs incurred by the landlord in holding the property. This clearly shows that there is no real market demand for the accommodation.

• The third floor is currently vacant and in a poor physical condition.

Whilst the site is located within the North Wimbledon Strategic Industrial Location (SIL) it is important to note that the surrounding land use are not industrial in nature. In particular to the west of the site fronting Durnsford Road there is a two storey terraced residential houses, to the south of the site there is a new development comprising 570 residential flats, known as Reynolds Gate.

Immediately to the north of the new flats, located off Brickfield Road there is an established travellers community. To the east of the site fronting Weir Road there is an existing waste transfer station which has recently been granted planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of an enclosed waste recycling facility.

It can be demonstrated from the above that the site is surrounded by residential and other non-industrial uses. In addition despite the site's allocation as a SIL it has never been used for industrial purposes on the basis that the site is currently used for retail purposes and a four storey office building. It is relevant to note that most of the offices within the wider SIL provide ancillary accommodation to the primary industrial and warehousing uses.

Vantage House

With regard to the physical nature of the existing office building it is considered that it is economically obsolete. This is on the basis of the following factors:

• The first and third floors do not have functional air conditioning units;
• The building has asbestos issues to resolve;
• The lifts need replacing;
• Given the age and style of construction, the building is expensive to run and suffers from poor sustainability issues;
• The M & E services are in need of replacement;
• All of the windows need replacing;
• This type of office building is inappropriate for the location as a town centre location is more appropriate;
• The floor plates do not meet modern standards;
• It does not offer an appropriate image for modern occupiers.

We consider that if Vantage House remains in its current use, it is likely that it will remain largely vacant with the occasional letting at nominal uneconomic rents, to avoid the empty rates liability which we understand amounts to circa £120,000 per vacant floor, per annum as well as general upkeep of the services which are approaching the end of their economic lives.

With regard to the retail employees at the Homebase warehouse these are technically non B Class jobs.

Marketing of the Existing Site

We have been advised that Vantage House has been marketed over many years and attach a copy of the current marketing details. Vantage House has been on the market since the mid 1990’s. It is being marketed by Nick Coughlan of Coughlan Evans (on a continual basis for the last 15 years), Tim Wilkinson of Hargreaves Gygnell (since 2008) and Jones Lang Lasalle (since August 2009). We consider that this cross section of letting agents is entirely appropriate for a property such as Vantage House since it incorporates specialists in the office sector, H&G, specialists in South West London and an international firm, Jones Lang Lasalle.
Although lettings have occurred (Adare Intellidata Ltd downsizing from the third floor to part of the ground floor and United Response taking the second floor), they are on uneconomic terms and have only been achieved to help mitigate the outgoings (such as empty rates).

The relocation was also driven by the poor visible condition of the third floor. The existence of these lettings does not show that the property has a market for which there is an unfulfilled need. Clearly the building has been properly exposed to the market and this has been demonstrated over a period of 15 years that it is not required to meet the needs of occupiers in the area.

The Homebase unit is in use as a retail warehouse and has not, therefore, been marketed.

**Summary**

It is evident that the subject site is not used for industrial purposes and in terms of its location it is situated on the southern edge of the Strategic Industrial Location. The site does not portray the characteristics of the wider industrial area located to the north of the site and given its existing use it is considered that the site effectively compromises its allocation as a Strategic Industrial Location.

Despite comprehensive marketing since the 1990’s, Vantage House is 50% vacant with 25% occupied by lease at a net effective rent of only £3.30 per sq ft until 2015 and 25% occupied at between £8 and £12.52 per sq ft with leases ending in May 2012 and June 2013. Occasional lettings on uneconomic terms cannot demonstrate an unfulfilled need for such accommodation in this area. Moreover Vantage House cannot achieve market rental due to; its age and character, the poor condition of the accommodation, its situation adjacent to an industrial estate and location next to residential areas. It is our view that Vantage House is economically obsolete and will only be required for very limited job opportunities.

It is considered that protected policies towards maintaining industrial land have been formulated on research and evidence drawn from an entirely different market context. This should be recognised and “compromised” site should be considered for mixed use redevelopment to meet the wider aspirations of the London Plan and Merton’s Core Strategy and Emerging Development Plan documents.
Site Identification Form: Part 4

Development Management Policies:

(i) Please provide information on any issues that could be considered and addressed by development management policies:

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2011)

The main thrust behind the NPPF is to promote sustainable economic growth. Paragraph 7.3 states that investment in business should not be overburdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations. Furthermore local authorities should support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate requirements not anticipated in the plan and to allow rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.

Moreover, paragraph 75 states that planning policies should avoid the term protection of employment land or floorspace, and applications for alternative uses of designated land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses.

With regard to business requirements paragraph 29 states that local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of business needs within the economic markets operating in and across their area. To achieve this they should work closely with the business community to understand their changing needs and identify and address barriers to investment, including viability.

Turning to development management paragraph 54 states that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever practical to do so.

Planning Policy – PPS4

PPS4 requires a positive and constructive approach towards planning applications for economic development and that planning applications that secure economic development should be treated favourably. It advises that existing site allocations for economic development should be reassessed, particularly if a single or restricted uses, against the policy set out in PPS4. It also states that if a site is not likely to come forward for economic development during the plan period, or if there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated economic use, the allocation should not be retained, and wider economic uses or alternative uses should be considered.

PPS4 advises local planning authorities to adopt a positive and constructive approach towards planning applications for economic development, and that planning applications to secure economic growth, should be treated favourably. Moreover local planning authorities should weigh up market and other economic information to take account of any longer term benefits, such as job creation, improved productivity and wider benefits to the local economy.
The London Plan (July 2011)

The site forms part of the wider North Wimbledon Strategic Industrial Location as defined in the London Plan Policy 2.17 seeks to promote, manage and where appropriate protect the SIL’s as London’s main “reservoirs” of industrial and related capacity, including general and light industrial uses, logistics, waste management and environmental industries, utilities, wholesale market and some transport functions. It states that planning decisions in SIL should be refused unless inter alia Part D development proposals within or adjacent to SIL’s should not compromise the integrity or effectiveness of these locations in accompanying industrial type activities.

SIL’s comprise preferred industrial locations and industrial business parks which have been identified to ensure that London provides sufficient quality of sites in appropriate location and to meet the general business, industrial, warehousing and waste management needs.

It is argued that the site is not and never has been used for industrial purposes and the fact that it is used for retail and offices purposes, clearly comprises its inclusion within the SIL designation. Furthermore it is considered that the existing site does not form part of the existing “reservoir” of industrial capacity and has not been used for industrial purposes.

Merton Unitary Development (Adopted October 2003)

Policy E3 seeks to protect sites that fall within an identified industrial area. Although the site does fall within the industrial allocation it has not been in an industrial use since at least 1987.

Policy E3 advises that any specific range of uses will be permitted which comprise general industrial use (Class B2), uses for storage and distribution (Class B8) and in certain cases uses following research or development with expansion of established office use. The existing retail use of approximately 35% of the site was originally permitted in 1971.

Within the industrial areas identified on the proposals map it is expected that they will for a range of uses permitted by Policy E3 when sites or premises, including non-conforming uses such as retail warehousing, become available.

It is clear that the site does not function as an industrial site and its loss will not impact on the objectives of the UDP, London Plan and Adopted Core Strategy.

Core Strategy

The Core Strategy was adopted in July 2011. Policy CS 12 relates to the Economic Development and Part A supports the development of a diverse local economic basis by encouraging the increased provision of the overall number and range of jobs, particularly in the commercial business sectors (including the provision of business, leisure, retail, creative, cultural and “green” jobs).

Part B of the policy encourages and supports the provision of employment that results in higher levels of productivity, gross values added, and hence remuneration.

Part C seeks to ensure that there is an adequate supply of viable and appropriate sites and premises for employment use in locations which minimise need for travel by private car while meeting the needs of business by inter alia;

ii) Protecting and managing the designated Strategic Industrial Locations and maintaining and improving locally significant industrial sites; ensuring that they contribute towards business, industrial storage and distribution functions. It is important to note that the subject site does not and has not contributed towards the business, industrial storage and distribution functions.

However, paragraph 20.14 states that whilst it is the Council’s intention to protect and
wherever improve quality of the Borough’s SIL’s it will inter alia ask for diversity in commercial circumstances.

We note through the delivery and monitoring section of the policy that redevelopment of SIL’s for any of these .B1(b), B1(c), B2 and B8 will be subject to the adoption of a planning brief as a supplementary planning document to amend the Core Strategy. Again we would reiterate that the site is not in use for any of the above uses and does not comply with the SIL criteria.

The site does not function as an industrial site and it is unlikely that an industrial use will come forward for this site in the future. In addition, there is currently an oversupply of industrial land in the borough.

(ii) If you are not already on our consultation database, and you would like to receive information on the progress of Merton’s Sites & Policies DPD and other LDF consultations, please **tick** below as to your preferred method of contact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email:</th>
<th>Telephone:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to improve our service and meet different customer needs we monitor all aspects of service delivery. Please help us to meet this aim by completing the monitoring section of this form. All information given voluntarily will be kept confidential and processed anonymously.

These questions do not relate directly to the subject matter we are contacting you about; however they help us ensure that we communicate appropriately with all our customers. Thank you, in advance for your time.

Are you: Male [ ] Female [ √ ]

What is your age group?

15 or Under [ ] 25 – 29 [ ] 40 – 44 [ √ ] 55 - 59 [ ] 70 – 74 [ ]
16 – 19 [ ] 30 - 34 [ ] 45 – 49 [ ] 60 – 64 [ ] 75 or over [ ]
20 – 24 [ ] 35 – 39 [ ] 50 – 54 [ ] 65 – 69 [ ]

Do you consider that you have a disability? Yes [ ] No [ √ ]

How would you describe yourself? (tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asian or Asian British</th>
<th>Black or Black British</th>
<th>Chinese and other ethnic group</th>
<th>Mixed Ethnicity</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi [ ]</td>
<td>African [ ]</td>
<td>Chinese [ ]</td>
<td>White &amp; Asian</td>
<td>Gypsy/Roma/Traveller [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian [ ]</td>
<td>Caribbean [ ]</td>
<td>Korean [ ]</td>
<td>White &amp; Black Asian</td>
<td>White-English [ √ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani [ ]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White &amp; Black African</td>
<td>White-Irish [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil [ ]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White &amp; Black Caribbean</td>
<td>White-Scottish [ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any other background (please specify in the box):

What is your faith / belief?

Buddhist [ ] Christian [ ] Hindu [ ] Jewish [ ] Muslim [ ] Sikh [ ]

Any other faith / belief (please specify in the box):

Equalities Monitoring (Optional)
The ‘Call for Sites’ Consultation is an eight week formal consultation period (from 15th July to 9th September 2011). Interested parties can suggest sites in the borough for development or for change of use; these sites should have a realistic prospect of being developed by 2026.

What is the Sites & Policies Development Plan Document (DPD)?

The Sites & Policies DPD will form part of Merton’s Local Development Framework. Once adopted, the Sites & Policies DPD will replace existing ‘saved’ policies and specific site allocations in Merton’s adopted Unitary Development Plan (2003).

The Sites & Policies DPD will set out the general approach to development; the use of land and buildings in the borough and to provide guidance for development management to support the effective delivery of planning decisions and allocate sites in Merton. The Sites & Policies DPD and the accompanying Proposals Map will allocate land for development and for particular uses. The Proposals Map will be revised each time a DPD with spatial expression is produced.

How should I respond to this Call for Sites Consultation?

Should you wish for us to consider a site within the LB Merton, please complete and submit a 'Site Identification Form' which is provided in Section B of this consultation document and a map clearly identifying the site boundary. At this initial assessment phase, there is no threshold (for instance, no minimum or maximum site size) restricting sites that would be considered, although we will reserve the right to place a threshold on sites that will be included in the Sites & Policies DPD in the future.

How will the information I have submitted be used?

Submitted sites and the accompanying information will be reviewed and assessed objectively by the council against the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy and consistency with the overall spatial strategy, to evaluate if these sites should be potentially included in the Sites & Policies DPD. Only appropriate and deliverable sites will be taken forward in the Sites & Policies DPD.

What will happen when I submit a response form to this consultation?

Information provided will be used to inform the Sites & Policies DPD and other DPD(s) which form part of the council’s emerging Local Development Framework. We are aware that some of the information that we are requiring is commercially sensitive, therefore this information will not be passed onto third parties and only used for strategic planning purposes.

What happens next?

We may contact you after the consultation period to discuss your submission(s); as we may require further information and/or to invite you to a consultation workshop or meeting. As detailed in Figure 1: Merton’s progress with the Sites & Policies DPD, the next stage will be another Public Consultation on the draft DPD, which will take place between January and March 2012.
Sites put forward for consideration should be submitted on the Site Identification Form which is located in Section B of this consultation document. This form is available for download in both PDF and Word format from Merton’s website. Maps clearly identifying the site boundary (ordinarily the boundary edged in ‘red’ colour font) should be submitted with the Site Identification Form. **We will only accept sites for consideration that are submitted for consideration via this Site Identification Form.**

In addition to the Site Identification Form, if it is felt that additional information needs to be submitted, this should be provided in no more than 5 sides of A4 paper. Should we require further information, we will contact you.

Although we appreciate that you may not have all the required information for the site, the more detailed information you can provide us with, will help us to effectively appraise and consider the site’s suitability for inclusion in the Sites and Policies DPD.

**We cannot accept anonymous or confidential submissions**, as we may need to contact you in the future; for further information and/or to invite you to attend consultation workshops. You may prefer to use an agent to act and submit site proposals on your behalf. Agents, for example, would include a planning or surveying consultant, architects, solicitors, estate agents and a family member.

Submitted sites should not have planning permission for development unless a new and different proposal is likely in the future.

There should be a reasonable chance that the site(s) submitted will become available for (re)development in the period up to 2026.

Sites submitted should be located within the London Borough of Merton administrative area. However if any sites submitted cross Merton’s administrative boundary into a neighbouring local authority area, we would also need to know the full extent of these sites.

Sites proposals put forward for future development or change of use will not necessarily be selected for inclusion in the Sites & Policies DPD.
Vantage House
1 Weir Road
Wimbledon Park

Air Conditioned Offices To Let
1,600 to 16,639 sq ft with additional
39 on site car parking spaces.

Description
Vantage House provides a purpose built
office complex partially refurbished to
provide good quality air conditioned
accommodation with access via a
spacious, impressive and modern
reception area. The floors are available in
open plan or can be divided to provide
various suites from 1,600 sq ft.

Amenities
- Air conditioning
- Full access raised floors
- 2 X 7 person passenger lifts
- Suspended ceilings with recessed lighting
- Modern reception area
- Excellent natural light
- Carpeting
- Male/Female cloakrooms
- Kitchen & Shower facility
- On site parking

Terms
The premises are available to let on a new
lease for a period by arrangement. Rent rates
and service charge upon application.

Viewing
Inspections can be arranged via joint agents.
Location
Vantage House occupies a prominent position at the junction of Durnsford Road and Weir the south of Wimbledon Park. Communication Wimbledon Park (District Line) is the closest underground the premises providing good access into Central London via Earls Court. Haydons Road (mainline sta close by providing services into Wimbledon and London Bridge and out to the national rail network.

A number of bus routes service the area including the 156 which links central Wimbledon with Vaux Clapham Junction.

Map

Interactive Map

http://www.vantagehousesw19.co.uk/location.htm

20/03/2012
Accommodation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Floor</th>
<th>sq ft</th>
<th>sq m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>10,380</td>
<td>964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd: United Response</td>
<td>LET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st: Easy Office</td>
<td>4,659</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground: Gerrard Chauffeur, Adare</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16,639</td>
<td>1,544</td>
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</table>

Floor Plan

Typical floor plan. Not to scale.