

**Robert Yuille**  
**C/O Pauline Butcher,**  
Programme Officer,  
Future Merton Team,  
London Borough of Merton,  
Civic Centre, Morden Road,  
Morden,  
SM4 5XD

**Our ref:** PDU/LDF24/LDD04/  
JP01

**Date:** 17 January 2014

Dear Robert,

**Merton Council Local Development Framework: Proposed submission of Sites and Policies Plan and Policy Maps – Affordable Housing.**

Following discussions with your programme officer and the council, I would like to provide clarification with regards to the Mayor's position on the proposed affordable housing policy DM H3 and the forthcoming Examination in Public.

The Mayor found previous drafts of Merton's proposed affordable housing policy as not in general conformity with the London Plan because the justification text sought to cap affordable rent levels (see consultation response dated 27<sup>th</sup> February). The post submission amendments to the justification of DM H3 address the Mayor's concerns by removing the references to capping affordable rent levels.

The new text reads:

*"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 Merton's Housing Strategy and Merton's draft Tenancy Strategy (November 2012)."*

The Mayor is concerned that the borough's approach should not compromise the delivery of affordable rent in addressing need for affordable housing. By including the above text the borough should not constrain delivery of this product. Subject to this, the proposed wording is considered to be in general conformity with the London Plan. The final amendment the Mayor has sought (see response to matters dated 13<sup>th</sup> December) is an acknowledgement in the text that Merton's Tenancy Strategy and Housing Strategy do not constitute planning policy. The council have agreed to add such an acknowledgment.

In light of; the amendments to DM H3, the council's agreement to the above and recent discussions with the council, the Mayor no longer feels it is necessary to send a representative to the Examination in Public.



If you would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Stewart Murray**  
Assistant Director - Planning

cc Richard Tracey, Merton London Assembly Constituency Member  
Nicky Gavron, Chair of London Assembly Planning and Housing Committee  
Planning Casework (London), DCLG  
Colin Lovell, TfL

