COLLIERS WOOD

3.16 The designation of Colliers Wood Area of Opportunity in the 1996 UDP has brought forward the development of Opportunity Sites. However the Plan did not adequately reflect the range and scale of retail and other uses now appropriate for an Urban Centre. The designation of Colliers Wood as an Urban Centre recognises its unique character, need for environmental enhancement and that it does not fall within the existing retail hierarchy, in relation to Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden town centres. The emphasis will be on promoting a more balanced mixed use development of the remaining sites, making the most of its unique historic links and accessibility by public transport, together with area regeneration. The 1996 UDP boundary is considered to be too broad, and therefore a more limited core area boundary has been defined on the Proposal Map to promote regeneration objectives. Strategic Policy ST. 8 relates to this.

The key objectives for Colliers Wood Urban Centre are:

(i) Diversification of uses;
(ii) Promotion of investment in key sites;
(iii) Improved accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists;
(iv) Environmental improvements;
(v) Promotion of regeneration initiatives.

Objectives

3.17 To provide a framework for the preparation of more detailed planning policies to guide development and improvement in the area the following objectives have been set:

(i) To encourage and guide a regeneration programme within the Colliers Wood Urban Centre, which reflects the aspirations of the local community. More detailed improvements are contained within a Management Action Plan, which has been prepared by consultants on behalf of Groundwork Merton, English Partnerships and the Council in consultation with local stakeholders.

(ii) To promote a balanced mixed use development of residential, community, leisure, recreation, tourism, shopping and employment facilities of benefit to Merton as a whole.

(iii) To develop a programme of environmental and traffic management measures to ensure that the area benefits from, and is not adversely affected by, any new developments.

(iv) To encourage private sector investment in the provision of substantial new social and environmental improvements of benefit to the local communities.

(v) To upgrade access to and within the area, in particular by public transport improvements and improved conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.
(vi) To control the scale of development such that it is consistent with existing and/or proposed transport infrastructure and services, and to minimise the impact on surrounding areas.

(vii) To provide a high quality urban design which integrates the Colliers Wood Urban Centre with surrounding areas and enhances the townscape and landscape of the area generally.

(viii) To ensure that development within the area properly relates to that proposed for Merton town centres.

(ix) To protect and enhance the ecological and heritage features within the area.

(x) To support residential development in particular affordable housing, in association with the commercial proposals and to create genuine mixed use schemes.

POLICY CW.1: COLLIER'S WOOD URBAN CENTRE

WITHIN THE COLLIER'S WOOD URBAN CENTRE NEW DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS AND NEW FACILITIES WILL BE EXPECTED TO CONTRIBUTE TO REGENERATION OF THE AREA FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

(i) BY PROVISION OF MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS ON SUITABLE SITES, OR
   RESIDENTIAL, COMMUNITY, LEISURE OR OFFICE USES ON OTHER SITES, OR

(ii) BY PROVISION OF NEW HOTEL FACILITIES WITH ACCESS TO ASSOCIATED LEISURE AND SOCIAL FACILITIES BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE REQUIRED AS PART OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS. THE LEVEL OF IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE RELATED IN PROPORTION TO THE SCALE AND NATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL PROPOSAL.

Justification

3.18 The 1999 Town Centre Capacity Study identified that there had been a large increase in the amount of retail uses within Colliers Wood since the UDP was adopted in 1996. Colliers Wood now contains a number of stand alone, car-bourne retail warehouse developments as well as the existing independent retailers along the high street. The future role of Colliers Wood is to address the imbalance of retail compared to other uses. There is a need to regenerate the area to improve local facilities, housing, employment and environmental conditions which will create a more sustainable development of the area.

3.19 Colliers Wood has lost approximately 2,000 industrial jobs and 12 hectares of employment land over the past 20 years, mainly from the Savacentre, Tandem Centre and Connollys sites. The adopted UDP identifies business accommodation as being an element required in the proposal sites within Colliers Wood. Colliers Wood, although not a town centre, is very accessible by public transport. The Council considers places which are well served by public transport as the best location in the borough for the development of larger units of office space. Due to its accessibility by public transport, Colliers Wood is also seen as a good location for the development of larger units of office floorspace. Developments for larger office spaces in Colliers Wood will be
considered as exceptions to Policy TC1 which seeks to direct all large town centre uses to the three town centres of Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden, due to its very good public transport accessibility.

3.20 Colliers Wood has suffered in recent years from the increase in traffic which has been attracted to the area by the large scale retail developments. This has resulted in a general neglect of Colliers Wood High Street and Merton High Street as well as the area surrounding the large development sites. Environment improvements will improve the quality of the living and working environment for people in Colliers Wood. Contributions towards environmental improvements will be required as part of development proposals within Colliers Wood.

3.21 New development should have regard to Urban Design policies, particularly Policies BE.16 Urban Design; and BE.22 Design of New Development.

3.22 To address the imbalance of uses within Colliers Wood, many of the sites identified on the Proposals Map have been designated for mixed use development. The mixed use sites are aimed at providing a wide range of uses and local facilities. In particular, there is a need for additional residential, community, employment and leisure uses within Colliers Wood to improve the range of facilities available and to create a more sustainable environment by reducing the need to travel outside the area for these facilities. Higher density housing is seen as a key element in mixed use sites, which are well served by public transport and would be an important aid in the regeneration of Colliers Wood. Colliers Wood is also seen as an appropriate location for larger scale office developments, due to its accessibility by public transport. Colliers Wood will be able to provide the services and facilities for people who work in the area.

**POLICY CW.2: SITES 1CW AND 2CW**

SITES 1CW AND 2CW SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS KEY SITES ON WHICH DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ARE REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE A BALANCED MIX OF USES WITHIN COLLIERS WOOD URBAN CENTRE.

**Justification**

3.23 The future of site 2CW is of fundamental importance to the regeneration of Colliers Wood and the creation of a more sustainable form of development. This is the last remaining major site for redevelopment and in principal provides the opportunity for a mixed use development comprising mainly residential, with leisure, craft market, B.1, tourism, community, cultural, and heritage/nature conservation uses. It is considered that the site offers potential for mixed use development with an element of residential use adjacent to Merton Abbey Mills. The Council will work with the landowner/developer in preparing planning briefs and development proposals for the site.

3.24 The household survey which formed a key part of the town centre study, found that 79% of Colliers Wood residents were dissatisfied with leisure and entertainment facilities in the area. This view is consistent with earlier research and led to the designation of the 2CW site in the 1996 adopted plan. This plan therefore includes an element of leisure in the mix of uses, in accordance with the advice in PPG 6.
as this type of site, when combined with other existing Colliers Wood developments, which are well served by public transport, appears to satisfy the out-of-centre development test of PPG6. Other UDP policies for Colliers Wood and Transport indicate how pedestrian access to adjoining sites and to public transport should be improved to maximise access by means other than by car and to increase the ability for single trips to serve several purposes.

3.25 A proactive approach by the Council will also be adopted to the development of the 1CW site. In consultation with the landowners, a planning brief will be prepared for mixed use development comprising mainly residential and B1, with community facilities, public open space and a transport interchange. Provision for improved transport, integrated use of car parks, pedestrian access and environmental enhancement will be sought as part of the development proposals for both sites to improve the linkages between them.

POLICY CW.3: TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

WITHIN THE COLLIERS WOOD URBAN CENTRE NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE EXPECTED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE INTEGRATED CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK SCHEME PREPARED BY THE COUNCIL, WHERE THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WOULD AFFECT OR IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE NETWORK.

Justification

3.26 The scale of development within Colliers Wood has placed pressure on the existing transport infrastructure. New developments will be required to provide improvements to the infrastructure which will support the proposed development. Borough cycle and pedestrian networks should extend to Colliers Wood in phase with redevelopment proposals as they are implemented in accordance with borough cycling and pedestrian policies. Further guidance is given in Chapter 6 Integrated Transport and Planning.

3.27 The proposed Merton Tramlink will improve the public transport accessibility into Colliers Wood and a transport interchange is proposed outside Colliers Wood Underground station which will improve connections between bus, tube and Tramlink journeys. Controlled Parking Zones are proposed which will reduce the problem of commuter parking around Colliers Wood station. Alternatives to car-based transport will be encouraged through the implementation of additional footpaths and cycleways linking Colliers Wood station and interchange to the developed sites.

MIXED USE FRONTAGES

POLICY MU.1: MIXED USE FRONTAGES; GROUND FLOOR USES

IN SHOPPING FRONTAGES NOT DESIGNATED IN THE UDP, CHANGE OF USE OF THE GROUND FLOOR WILL BE CONSIDERED FAVOURABLY FOR A WIDE RANGE OF LOCAL COMMUNITY, SERVICE, HEALTH, LEISURE AND BUSINESS USES, WHERE IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THE PROPOSAL WILL HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTS AND ROAD SAFETY AND DOES NOT CREATE SIGNIFICANT CAR PARKING PROBLEMS. PERMISSION FOR RESIDENTIAL USE WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED BUT ACCESS TO POTENTIAL UPPER FLOOR RESIDENTIAL USE SHOULD BE ENSURED.