(paragraph 1.17) 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 PPG.6. 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.
Justification

3.28 Due to the decline in local shopping facilities, which is a trend throughout London, these frontages no longer justify designation for retail use. To avoid vacancy and decay, and to retain a mix of uses needed by the local community they are considered to be suitable for a wide range of local services and businesses, including: local health facilities such as health centres, doctors and dentists, community and religious centres; A3 uses such as cafes and bars; local small business premises (A2 and B1 use); car/bicycle hire or sales, leisure and entertainment (D1 and D2 uses) such as fitness clubs, sports clubs, social clubs and similar uses.

3.29 These premises provide opportunities for a range of local facilities and employment opportunities to serve nearby residents and for new and small businesses to locate, and Council policy is to support such uses (see also Policy E.12). In addition they relieve designated retail frontages from the pressure for change of use away from retail use by providing alternative locations. In considering the suitability of particular uses regard will be given to any possible adverse impacts on nearby residents, parking and traffic implications to ensure that satisfactory provision is made where necessary. Proposals for Food and Drink uses should be consistent with Policy S.8 and advice in Supplementary Planning Guidance for A3 uses. Proposals for vehicle uses should be consistent with Policy S.9. In residential areas where there is no proven demand for non residential uses consideration will be given to a residential use. Where the premises have been vacant for an extended period of not less than 2 years, and their unsuitability for non residential use has been confirmed as a result of full and proper marketing of the premises at reasonable prices, then the Council will consider residential use.

POLICY MU.2: NON DESIGNATED SHOPPING FRONTAGES:
UPPER FLOOR USES
WITHIN NON-DESIGNATED SHOPPING FRONTAGES, THE CHANGE OF USE OF UPPER FLOORS FROM RESIDENTIAL USE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:

(i) THE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION CANNOT BE IMPROVED TO FORM INTERNAL ACCOMMODATION OF A REASONABLE SIZE AND STANDARD;

(ii) ACCESS TO UPPER FLOORS IS INADEQUATE OR UNSAFE AND CANNOT BE IMPROVED;

(iii) THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT IS SO POOR AS TO BE UNSUITABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL USE.

Justification

3.30 Considering the substantial amount of vacant or under-utilised upper floors along non designated shopping frontages, a great potential exists for creating housing principally for those in housing need, upgrading the environment and contributing to economic and social revival and diversity. Financial assistance from Central Government and Council funding may be available for this purpose. To realise this potential for housing the Council will accept minimal or zero parking when residential use is proposed. Policy guidance for residential use in designated shopping frontages is set out in policy TC13.
This seeks to protect and promote residential use in these areas.

3.31 Separate access to upper floor dwellings should ideally be provided off the street but the Council acknowledges that a significant proportion of upper floor dwellings are served by rear access. In such instances improved safety and security should be sought through, for example, better lighting; further guidance on this issue is contained in a Supplementary Planning Guidance Note entitled Safety and Security. In some cases the viability of a ground floor business may depend on the use of an upper floor or part of an upper floor. In these cases a non residential use could be permitted.

POLICY MU.3: NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN NON DESIGNATED SHOPPING FRONTAGES

IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN NON DESIGNATED SHOPPING FRONTAGES A RANGE OF APPROPRIATE USES WILL BE PERMITTED AT GROUND LEVEL, WITH RESIDENTIAL ON THE UPPER FLOORS.

Justification

3.32 To encourage sustainable patterns of living and to provide a wide range of facilities and employment close to where people live, it is considered that non designated shopping frontages and units provide good opportunities for new development to achieve these aims. Often these frontages have good access to public transport services and local residents can easily reach these facilities by means other than the car. Minimal or zero parking will be accepted in connection with any residential uses. This would be an efficient use of land as promoted by PPG3 and contributes to the Government objectives for meeting housing targets.

3.33 As indicated in Policy MU.1 a very wide range of uses can be suitably located in the frontages, and the upper floors present opportunities for low cost affordable housing, especially non family housing. In some locations development in these frontages may be suited to high density development where they meet the criteria set out below in Policy HP4.

POLICY MU.4: LIVE / WORK DEVELOPMENT

THE COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER FAVOURABLY PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIVE / WORK UNITS EXCEPT IN CORE SHOPPING FRONTAGES AND DESIGNATED INDUSTRIAL AREAS. THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA WILL BE APPLIED:

(i) SITES PROPOSED FOR LIVE / WORK DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT EXCEED 0.5 HA.

(ii) THE WORK-SPACE ELEMENT OF EACH UNIT SHOULD OCCUPY THE WHOLE GROUND FLOOR AND BE WHOLLY SEPARATE FROM THE RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION.

(iii) THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT LAND FOR LIVE / WORK PURPOSES WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED WHERE THERE IS NO DEMAND FOR BUSINESS USE ON THAT LAND.

(iv) LIVE / WORK UNITS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IN INDUSTRIAL / BUSINESS PREMISES OR ON EMPLOYMENT LAND WHERE B2 (GENERAL INDUSTRIAL) USES OR OTHER OPERATIONS HAVE PRODUCED AN ENVIRONMENT UNSUITABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.
3.34 The policy has been framed to address a gap in the policy framework of the UDP created by the absence of policy to deal with the growing demand for live/work units in the borough. Live/work units are seen as part of the continuum of employment—generating development extending from the use of a room in a dwelling, through live/work units to serviced workshop/studios to self—contained B1 premises and industrial units. Sites considered suitable for live/work development are important in terms of “seed-bed” capacity and are in short supply. However, some locations will not be suitable for the residential element of live/work unit development, especially where there are employment uses in the locality which could be detrimental to residential amenities or cause nuisance to the residents.

3.35 Government planning policy guidance, especially draft revised Regional Planning Guidance for the South—East (RPG9), “Strategic Guidance for London Planning Authorities” (RPG3, May 1996), General Policy and Principles (PPG1), Housing (PPG3), Industrial and Commercial development and Small Firms (PPG4) and Transport (PPG13) recognise the important contribution mixed—use, sustainable forms of employment generating development can make to achieving an urban renaissance, stimulating competition and promoting local economic health. Accordingly, planning authorities are encouraged to promote mixed—use patterns of development, especially those linking housing and employment, and those which encourage a range of business premises to be developed for alternative forms of development where business use has ceased or where there is no demonstrable demand for its resumption. RPG3 specifically advises Boroughs to formulate policies to increase the supply of live/work units.

3.36 The London Development Agency strategy (2000) and Urban White Paper (2000) support the adoption of policies designed to foster new and traditional economic activities, economic diversity, sustainable development and the reuse of obsolete buildings and vacant land. Local authorities are specifically encouraged by Government to review, vacant business and industrial premises/land and adopt a flexible approach to bringing such property back into productive use as soon as practicable without detracting from residential amenities.

3.37 Strategic policy ST11 ( “Mixed Use Neighbourhoods”) seeks the creation of mixed use sustainable neighbourhoods which balance the provision of housing, employment and community support facilities. The “Economic Development Strategy for Merton and Action Programme (2000-2001)” stresses the importance of protecting the local economy by safeguarding industrial land from loss to other uses, the provision of sites and premises throughout the borough to facilitate job retention and creation as well as increasing the rate at which new businesses are established in sustainable working environments.

3.38 Accordingly, the use of employment land outside designated industrial areas for live/work development will only be permitted where there is no demand for business use of that land. The applicant (for planning permission) will require to demonstrate the lack of demand. The applicant will be required to include evidence viz. newspaper or journal cuttings, estate agents’ letters etc, that the land has been the subject of a full and proper marketing exercise for this purpose for three years at reasonable prices. The Council will wish to be satisfied that the availability of the land was brought to the attention of the Council at the earliest opportunity and will monitor the economic impact of this policy. Further information on this policy and its application is available in the SPG“Live/Work Development”. 
Some locations will not be suitable for the residential element of live/work unit development especially where there are employment uses in the locality which could be detrimental to residential amenities or cause nuisance to the residents. It will also be important that the residential element does not prejudice those employment uses in terms of their expansion, adaptation or change in those uses.

HOUSING

HOUSING PROVISION

Government planning guidance, including that in revised PPG3, 2000, and in Strategic Planning Guidance for London, seeks to ensure that everyone should have the opportunity of a decent home and that there should be greater choice of housing and social integration. New housing should contribute to improving the quality of urban life and make a significant contribution to promoting urban renaissance.

Planning policies should provide sufficient housing, and guidance in PPG3 indicates how this could be achieved by Councils. This includes an emphasis on recycling urban land, promoting mixed use development and socially mixed communities, reducing parking and, where appropriate, increasing densities and creating more attractive residential environments.

POLICY HP 1: HOUSING TARGET

Provision will be made to accommodate the 430 additional homes annually from the following sources:

(i) Allocation of new land for housing

(ii) Re-use of underused or vacant land and buildings not allocated or required for other purposes

(iii) Previously developed land

Schedule 1 and the proposals map identify the sites allocated for housing and mixed use purposes. On sites allocated for residential only, planning permission will not be granted for non-residential uses, other than for the accommodation of community facilities ancillary to a residential area.

The Government requires that targets are set for the number of additional housing units which should be provided in the period of the Plan and to monitor their provision. For this Plan the period is 2001-2011. Revised Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) which was published in March 2001 provides targets up to 2016 which rolls forward the RPG3 targets to the new Plan period. These targets should be regarded as minimum ones. Policy ST.11 provides the strategic context for housing provision in Merton.