

## BOROUGH PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11 JUNE 2009

7.15 TO 9.30 PM

**PRESENT:** Councillor Richard Chellew (chairman), Councillors John Bowcott, David Dean, Philip Jones, Ian Munn and Geraldine Stanford.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Chris James (Interim Spatial Policy Manager), Pip Howson (Principal Transport Planner), Christine Mackee (Transport Planner), Susanne Wicks (Democratic Services Officer)

### 1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ian Munn declared an interest in item 6 on the agenda, as he is a Mitcham Common Conservator. Councillor Geraldine Stanford declared an interest on item 6 on the agenda, as she is a trustee of the Merton Priory and the Colour House Theatre.

### 2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Jonathan Warne.

### 3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR 2009/10

It was moved by Councillor Geraldine Stanford, seconded by Councillor Philip Jones and unanimously

RESOLVED: that Councillor Ian Munn be nominated vice-chair of the committee for the municipal year 2009/10.

### 4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 OCTOBER 2008

RESOLVED: That the minutes are agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

### 5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

#### **Item 6: Wandle Valley Regional Park – Progress Report**

Councillor Ian Munn expressed concern about the consultation being carried out by Groundwork Merton regarding Wandle Valley Regional Park, and about the governance arrangements of the Park. Pip Howson undertook to provide members with a contact at Groundwork Merton, and with an update on the current position, and details of how members will be involved in the consultation. Chris James advised that the Leisure and Greenspaces Manager (Doug Napier) is currently working with London Borough of Wandsworth and Councillor Diane Neil Mills in order to clarify governance issues.

6 THE CORE STRATEGY OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Chris James drew members' attention to the letter from AFC Wimbledon which had been sent to the Leader of the Council. Members noted the content of the letter and wholly supported the aims of the club, but considered that the core strategy supports the club's aims, and that further detailed representation should be made during the public consultation stage.

The Committee considered Policy 6 and Policy 8 which had been revised following suggestions from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The recommendations arising from their discussion are shown in the list of recommendations at the end of this minute.

Chris James introduced the core strategy, and gave details of the local and national context. He led the Committee through each of the policies, and their suggested amendments and recommendations are shown below.

**Merton's vision and objectives** Councillor Ian Munn noted that the portrait of the borough (page 13 onwards) does not mention the Tramlink network or Mitcham Eastfields Station. He also pointed that paragraph 6.16 does not mention Cricket Green, which is the second largest conservation area in the borough.

Councillor Geraldine Stanford suggested that mention should be made of Merton Priory in paragraph 6.8.

**Policy 1** Chris James undertook to refine the list of local centres using the UDP as a basis so that North Mitcham is more accurately defined.

**Policy 3** With regard to town centres, Chris James undertook to incorporate a paragraph about the importance of promoting small independent shops in the borough.

Councillor Geraldine Stanford suggested that paragraph 14.45 should also mention Figges Marsh and Three Kings Piece, as well as Cricket Green and Mitcham Common.

**Policy 7** Councillor Philip Jones pointed out that the reference to Victoria Crescent, on page 83, should be deleted, as it no longer exists.

**Policy 9** Councillor Ian Munn suggested that the Merton Rule should be more explicitly mentioned in the opening statement, to make it clear that it will be extended.

**Policy 12** Chris James undertook to include a list of significant parks in paragraph 19.3, to include The Canons, Ravensbury Park and John Innes Park.

Chris James undertook to rewrite the paragraph at the top of page 119, regarding open space to improve the wording.

**Policy 13** Pip Howson undertook to supply a definition of "affordable housing" in the

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document.

Councillor Philip Jones pointed out that there is a discrepancy between the figures provided in paragraphs 20.17 and 20.25, and requested that this is corrected.

**Policy 16** Councillor Ian Munn suggested that the first bullet point on page 143 should be reworded, to include the use of public transport.

Councillor Ian Munn pointed out that paragraph 21.9 is unfinished, and that Dover House, mentioned in paragraph 21.28, is no longer vacant.

Councillor Geraldine Stanford expressed the view that there should be an additional section on tourism in the borough, which would fit well into Policy 16.

**Policy 20** Councillor Philip Jones highlighted the issue of land purchase in the bullet point on supporting the expansion and provision of schools. This matter was discussed in depth, and a recommendation made to Cabinet.

Committee members thanked Chris James and all of the officers on the work done to complete the draft core strategy.

RESOLVED: The Borough Plan Advisory Committee approves the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework, subject to the following amendments agreed with the Spatial Policy Manager, and the recommendations shown below:

1. With regard to Policy 6 (Wandle Valley), the Borough Plan Advisory Committee suggests an additional bullet point be included in the policy to say:

*“Protect archaeological sites and enhance Wandle Valley Conservation Area and raise awareness of this heritage including Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills.”*

And that the supporting text includes the following:

*“The site now contains visible and buried remains of Merton Priory, including a purpose built Chamber housing the foundations of the Chapter House of the Priory, as well as a number of objects associated with the original building. The Merton Abbey Mills site contains a wealth of visible remains, including: two early industrial buildings originally associated with the fabric printing works of Edmund Littler and Liberty & Co, and the site of the design workshops and works of William Morris, founder of the Arts and Crafts movement.*

*Although much of the site of Merton Priory has been redeveloped, the chamber and the surrounding area generally provides a resource for research, education and inspiration by virtue of its historic value and connections.”*

2. That a detailed map of the Wandle Valley Regional Park be included in the Local Development Framework, which would include a wider area, particularly

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in the Cricket Green area.

3. With regard to Policy 8 (Design), the Borough Plan Advisory Committee suggested the following amendments for tall buildings and conversions:

*“Protecting the valued low rise suburban character of the borough by resisting the development of tall buildings where they will have a detrimental impact on this character. Tall buildings may however be considered in the centres of Morden, Wimbledon and Colliers Wood on a case by case basis where they can be justified in terms of compatibility with the local setting and their impact on the wider context. Elsewhere in the borough, tall buildings may not be suitable, however, they will be considered in exceptional circumstances where they can be justified in a townscape analysis as part of a design and access statement.*

*Encouraging well designed housing in the borough by resisting the conversion of existing single dwellings into two or more smaller units of accommodation which provide inadequate internal and external amenity space, and where it would result in an adverse impact on the suburban characteristics of the streetscape.”*

However, in respect of tall buildings in Morden, Wimbledon and Colliers Wood, officers were asked to reconsider whether these locations are appropriate for tall buildings.

4. That Cabinet recognise the challenge faced by this Authority with regard to the potential future expansion of schools, due to the need to provide extra places, and to the wish to take advantage of the next tranche of Building Schools for the Future funding, that Policy 20 should also include an additional reference to enable land purchase if this supports educational provision.

5. That **Recommendation C** of the report to Cabinet be amended to read:

*“That Cabinet recognise that this authority’s intent to protect to protect public open space may be compromised by open space policies L5 and L6 of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), and accord more weight to the current and emerging London Plan and the latest Government guidance on open spaces in determining applications”.*

6. That Cabinet ensure that the Spatial Planning Team has sufficient resources now and in the future in order to enable them to complete the Local Development Framework within the requisite timetable.

- 7 REVISION OF MERTON'S LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Report received and noted.