

COUNCILLOR ROSS GARROD
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
(Labour, Longthornton Ward)



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Dear Mr Boff,

Thank you for your letter highlighting the London Assembly's recent motion on solar panels on listed buildings. We have considered Kensington and Chelsea's approach with interest, and it seems to fit for a unique borough that has a wealth of historic designations. In particular, their approach to placing solar panels on rear facing elevations works well for their particular type of stock. In Merton, we have a flexible approach to solar panels on listed buildings, and we are happy to look at solar panels on either rear elevations, or indeed we go further and allow certain types of solar slates and tiles on front elevations also. Our stock is significantly different from that in Kensington and Chelsea, and therefore their approach would not be suitable or appropriate for all of our Grade II listed buildings. We do think that Kensington and Chelsea's standard guidance is helpful, and having looked at this, we are investigating creating clearer guidance on rules for installing solar panels on all buildings, grade II listed and locally listed included.

We are also keen to see how the London Assembly can support more collaborative cross-London working on reducing carbon from existing buildings. Merton's climate strategy and action plan and [Year 3 delivery plan](#) demonstrates that the vast majority (74%) of Merton's carbon emissions are from the buildings in the borough; this will be similar for other boroughs. We are keen to work jointly on retrofitting across as many of London's homes as possible, not just listed buildings. For example, all outer London boroughs share a common housing type 1920s/ 1930s Metroland suburbia. If we could even get a common approach to efficiently and successfully retrofitting those types of homes it would make a substantial difference to the thermal comfort of many Londoners, be replicable across other English urban areas and save carbon. Some of our recent work includes:

- Working with 18 other London boroughs on finding the best approach to reducing carbon from new buildings through new planning policy. We are about to publish the results, which support Merton's ambitious

carbon savings policies in our new local plan and will support very similar policy approaches across the other 18 boroughs.

- We are also currently working with the five South London Partnership boroughs on a “retrofit roadmap”. This will be an app that will show householders what can (or cannot) be done to their homes, and whether it would require planning permission locally to encourage residents to retrofit their homes.
- We’re supporting Clarion, Haig, Moat and other boroughs in applying for social housing decarbonisation funds for their homes and low income households via the GLA’s Warmer Homes programme.

We will continue to work on retrofitting many more typical homes for Londoners and working across London to do this as efficiently as possible. I would be very happy to have a further discussion with yourself to see how the London Assembly might look to help support more of this type of work.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ross Garrod'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Ross' and the last name 'Garrod' clearly distinguishable.

Councillor Ross Garrod
Leader of the Council