

[REDACTED]

From: Matthew Hyde [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 February 2018 10:55
To: Londonplan
Subject: Draft New London Plan

Dear Mr Khan,

I have lived all my life in the London Borough of Merton, have recently tried to gain planning permission for a new build, so feel I am in a good position to pass comment on your proposals for the new London Plan. From some people within Merton there has been considerable pushback against the revised targets you have given for housing however I personally welcome them and also question whether they even go far enough.

Merton as a borough is anti development from the residents right up to the planning department. Swathes of land sit unused as people battle with the council for years and years while people of my age and generation are completely priced out of the housing market particularly around Wimbledon where I grew up. Most people I knew from school have been forced to move away and as a father to 2 young Children I am keen to stay close to my parents as I want them to enjoy a close relationship with their grandchildren. Making homes available first to actual born and bred Londoners would be a good start to the housing crises.

From my personal experience the planning system needs completely overhauling, and decision making stripped away from local authorities and decided on an independent basis. Central government issues building guidelines and nationally described space standards, which are adopted by your London Plan. Why is it that the London Borough of Merton is allowed to then ignore those guidelines and set their own standards with local policy documents which they use to over rule planning decisions? Areas like private amenity space should all be set as a level playing field and boroughs like Merton not allowed to ignore guidelines set by City Hall or Westminster. It leaves a crazy situation where a build would be allowed 2 miles south by Sutton, or 2 miles North by Wandsworth, but yet Merton are allowed to reject the proposals at a local level.

I welcome your proposal to make better use of inefficient land such as plots at the end of existing terraces, or other small infiltration sites. Especially when land and housing is at such a premium. My personal proposal was to replace an old garage with a new end of terrace house yet Merton refused the project. This being despite the house at the opposite end of the street already having done a near identical build. In that situation again Merton made life difficult and it was following an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate that the build went forward. Making those appeals however takes considerable time and cost - It is almost far too easy for these local council planners to say "no" and force people to appeal. Again it is why I think stripping the local authority of those powers would be a good thing, or at the very least stopping this practice of writing their own local policy to over rule what comes down from above.

Wimbledon has so much potential, and I sincerely hope that the Crossrail 2 project gets the go ahead. Again I do not understand the objections to the works around Wimbledon, as for me personally the town centre has long been destroyed by poor local planning decisions and Crossrail would provide the opportunity to rip down some disgusting buildings and plan the town centre in a much better way. I am fed up of the old 'Nimby' types around here that want no progress or redevelopment so I sincerely hope that your full London Plan gets the go ahead and Merton do need to provide the extra homes each year. It is a borough with plenty of capacity, fantastic transport links so makes total sense to make the most of the precious land available.

Thank you for reading my submission in support of the proposals for Merton. I would be more than happy to discuss or provide any further information either from the point of view of someone who has lived here my whole life, or as someone who has tried to build a new home recently and seen first hand how difficult the council make it for small developments like mine. I sincerely hope that once this plan is put in place it starts to get a grip of the crazy proper market so by the time my children are grown up the dream of home ownership will be realistic for an ordinary person again and not just rich bankers.

Regards,
Matthew Hyde



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