

ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION DEPARTMENT  
Chris Lee – Director



Ruthlyn Black

Email: request-27076-  
4ce988e0@whatdotheyknow.com

London Borough of Merton  
Merton Civic Centre  
London Road  
Morden SM4 5DX

Direct Line: 020 8545 4149  
Fax: 020 8545 4105

My Ref : ES/BS/28534  
Please Ask For: Samantha Footman  
Your Ref:

Date: 22 February 2010

Dear Ruthlyn Black

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - INFORMATION REQUEST

Your request for information has now been considered and the information is attached.

If you have any queries or concerns then please contact me.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please contact the

Information Governance Manager  
The London Borough of Merton, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, SM4 5DX  
or e-mail [data.protection@merton.gov.uk](mailto:data.protection@merton.gov.uk).

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

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Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 01625 545 700  
[www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

*Samantha Footman*

Samantha Footman  
Business Performance Team

**COUNCILLOR WILLIAM BRIERLY**

Cabinet Member for Planning and Traffic Management  
(Conservative, Cannon Hill Ward)

*Home address:*  
100 Parkway  
London  
SW20 9HG



London Borough of Merton  
Merton Civic Centre  
London Road  
Morden SM4 5DX

*Mob:* 07852 974 829  
*Tel:* 020 8545 3425 (Civic Centre)  
*Fax:* 020 8545 4075 (Civic Centre)

11 January 2010

Boris Johnson - Mayor of London  
Transport Strategy  
PO Box 65064  
London  
SE1P 5GE

Dear Boris Johnson

**London Borough of Merton's response to Draft Mayor's Transport Strategy revised (DMTSr) October 2009**

With reference to the above, Merton Council welcomes the opportunity to view your Draft Transport Strategy and provide comments towards the final version. Merton has three key areas of concern set out in this letter:

1. Areas of concern that directly impact on Merton's vision for 2030.
2. The impact on the future of outer London.
3. General comments about the quality of the document.

**1. Areas of concern that directly impact on Merton's vision for 2030.**

Merton Council is currently developing a Local Development Framework (LDF). This sets out the plan for how Merton's physical landscape will develop by 2030.

The 2030 vision for Merton is that it will have become a highly desirable destination, known for its high quality environment, thriving economy and transport links, with excellent services and facilities that fully support the needs and aspirations of local people whilst adapting to changing climates.

Merton is committed to:

- The regeneration of Mitcham and Morden Town Centres;
- Maintaining and enhancing Wimbledon as the borough's main centre;

- Realizing the potential of Colliers Wood aspiring for its recognition as a District Centre;
- Supporting the role of local centres such Raynes Park in the local economy.

Morden and Mitcham currently have under performing economies, growing populations and are key areas for the housing and redevelopment requirements of the London Plan. To encourage regeneration including business investment we need to focus on the following:

- Optimising land use to provide high quality and profitable residential, commercial and leisure sectors;
- Improving local employment prospects and changing the social mix;
- Improving local town centres blighted by the severance and dominance of heavily congested strategic roads that do not perform well and will continue to deteriorate without adequate investment.

Both Mitcham and Morden town centres are characterised by low value, low productivity commercial sectors that represent fantastic opportunities for regeneration. Addressing the shortcomings of the transport infrastructure could be the catalyst for the wider investment needed to regenerate these town centres.

To deliver this Merton considers its partnership with the GLA and TfL vital.

The LDA recently recognised the development potential of Morden in their 2009 publication "7" and we concur with the findings. Morden Town Centre in particular is reasonably well served by public transport with potential achievable linkages to the cycle super highway with close proximity to large areas of green space. There is significant potential for linkage to the existing tram system, since the line which links Wimbledon and Croydon runs in close proximity to the edge of the town. Therefore, with the appropriate investment to address the limitations of the current layout of the transport infrastructure, it will be well placed to become an exemplar sustainable town. This will enable Merton to play a lead role in the delivery the Mayor's objectives, including:

- Supporting economic development and population growth;
- Enhancing the quality of life for all Londoners;
- Improving transport opportunities for all Londoners;
- Reducing transport's contribution to climate change and improve its resilience.

With this in mind, our first impression of the DMTSr is one of disappointment that it does not provide any information on how Merton as an outer London borough is to deliver the improvements to the transport environment it requires to achieve even in part its 2030 vision.

The draft document does not reflect the dynamism of the "Way to Go" and is a weighty and dysfunctional document that causes confusion rather than clarity.

Merton is particularly concerned by the lack of information on the following:

### **Gyratories**

Although the Mayor identifies the efficiencies of gyratories as an issue within the document, there is no clear indication of when addressing this will be prioritised. Merton is surprised that with the Mayor's smoothing traffic theme he has not identified this as a priority.

In particular Merton would like to know that the Mayor recognises that both Morden and Colliers Wood have dysfunctional gyratories that are part of TfL's network and that he acknowledges the need for their shortcomings to be addressed ideally with a delivery target. (Merton also holds ambitions to remove the gyratories in Mitcham and Wimbledon town centres although these are outside of TfL's network).

### **The Tram**

The Mayor acknowledges that one of the most successful improvements to London's public transport network is the tram in south west London, with an evidence base to demonstrate modal shift away from the private car.

Extending the tram as part of an orbital transport network is particularly important to Merton, in particular the following proposals:

- Sutton to Tooting Broadway via Mitcham Town Centre;
- Sutton to Wimbledon via Morden Town Centre;
- New tram stop at Willow Lane to serve the Willow Lane Industrial Estate;
- New tram stop at Wandle Way.

The only improvements proposed in DMTSr to Tramlink are for maintenance, renewals, upgrades and capacity enhancement, not extensions.

Merton feels this fails to take advantage of the proven potential and lower development costs compared other major public transport projects.

### **Morden Tube Station**

London Borough of Merton would like TfL to consider re-designating Morden Tube Station to become Zone 3. We believe there is a sound business case for this to support regeneration in the town centre.

## **Funding**

With no end in site within the DMTS<sub>r</sub> for the transport needs of Central London the gap between the quality of outer London transport infrastructure and that in central London is never going to be bridged and is in fact likely to get worse.

To fill this obvious gap Merton feels the Mayor needs to ask central government for a separate funding pot for outer London transport infrastructure.

For example the minimum transport infrastructure needs for Merton to realise even part of its potential for regeneration would estimate as follows:

- Morden Town Centre (including gyratory) - £10 - 12 million
- Mitcham Town Centre (including gyratory) - £8 - 10 million
- Wimbledon Town Centre (including gyratory) - £8 - 10 million
- New tram stops at Willow Lane and Wandle Way - £8 million

Merton's only significant transport funding is the LIP at £3million per annum average which, after accommodating our statutory responsibilities, will be inadequate for the delivery of these five key projects in the life of the MTS. This is particularly relevant as we are unlikely to attract the type of development that would generate significant third party funding.

## **2. Comments that impact on the future of outer London**

Merton would like to say that we are pleased to see the Mayor's proposals on the following:

- The Mayor's promotion of common service standards across London's rail network.
- The Mayor's consideration of Crossrail 2 (Chelsea – Hackney Line).
- The Mayor's announcement of the improved capacity on the Thameslink routes.
- The Mayor's commitment to upgrading the Northern and District Lines.
- The Mayor's commitment to cycling.

However, Merton would like to see the following:

- The importance of transport to regeneration in South London in particular has not been adequately addressed.
- Stronger emphasis on the tram.
- Stronger emphasis on walking.
- Clearer message on the future of bus services in outer London. There is concern about mixed messages about buses. The bus is the most vital element of public transport in outer London. The

Mayor has separately announced reductions in certain bus services (if this is based on patronage it will have the larger negative impact on outer London).

- The inclusion of the Wandle Trail as a strategic walking route.
- A firmer commitment to orbital routes including bus, tram and rail.
- Clarity on the future of the Thameslink loop and its services.
- Community Transport is covered in just two paragraphs which does not reflect the growth in ageing population who will need increasing access to this facility.

### **3. General comments about the quality of the document**

Other areas for improvement in the quality of the document include the following:

- There are too many policies. We question their validity as the London Plan contains policies and we believe these do not need to be duplicated.
- There is a lack of clarity of the role of how Boroughs should deliver the plan.
- The evidence base would be better placed in an appendix.
- We would also suggest that proposals be rationalised and combined where possible, for example air quality and climate change proposals mostly duplicate each other.
- We also believe that Climate Change should be elevated to be the overarching theme as it is the key achievement required for London.

We look forward to receiving your response to our concerns.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor William Brierly**  
**Cabinet Member for Planning and Traffic Management**



**Councillor Diane Neil Mills**  
**Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration**