



London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
Planning Services
Civic Centre
44 York Street
Twickenham
TW1 3BZ

17 March 2025

Dear Sir or Madam,

Representations to the Local Plan Proposed Main Modifications Consultation

On behalf of Sainsbury's Supermarkets Limited (SSL), we write in response to the Proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan consultation prepared by the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames (the Council) following the recent Local Plan Examination.

We have reviewed the schedule of the Proposed Main Modifications. We are pleased to see that some of our previous representations to the Local Plan Regulation 19 and Regulation 18 consultations in respect of emerging site allocations at SSL's St Clare's Superstore (Site Allocation 4) and their Richmond Superstore (Site Allocation 30).

However, there are still some matters that need to be reconciled in adopted Local Plan.

Draft Site Allocation 4 - Car Park for Sainsbury's St Clare's, Uxbridge Road, Hampton

Main Modification 9:

SSL acknowledge the reference to London Plan parking standards, and support the recognition that the re-provision of parking spaces for the existing supermarket is necessary.

Main Modification 10:

SSL supports the proposed change from a 20% to 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement within Policy 39: BNG and the site allocation wording. This aligns with the Environment Act as suggested in our Regulation 19 stage representations (attached for ease of reference).

SSL are also pleased to see the alignment of Policy 39: BNG requirements with the national requirements under Main Modification 66, amending the minimum requirement to 10%.

Site Allocation 4 Car Park for Sainsbury's, Hampton, first bullet point:

In our previous representations to Regulation 18 and 19 consultations, we were supportive of the allocation's removal from the MOL land designation and the re-provision of the car park and Petrol Filling Station (PFS).

However, we requested that the allocation remove reference to 100% affordable housing provision within the first bullet point of the allocation requirements and recommended that the affordable housing levels set out in draft Policy 11 should apply to the site.

Unfortunately, the Proposed Modification do not make this adjustment and so the plan does not reflect the Local Plan evidence base, or the Inspector's findings. We strongly suggest that the Council reconsiders this as the Plan will be unsound for the following reasons.

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The draft allocation continues to state that “the exceptional circumstances” justifying the MOL release are set out under Policy 11 to meet the identified affordable housing needs of residents and, therefore, any future development scheme coming forward for this site should deliver 100% on-site affordable housing.

In short, the drafting states that the development of the site for affordable housing is the ‘exceptional circumstance’ justifying the site’s removal from MOL. This is simply not correct. The tenure of the residential units has nothing to do with the exceptional circumstances justifying removal from MOL. The exceptional circumstances which demand the site’s removal from MOL is the fact that it is an existing foodstore car park and Petrol Filling Station (PFS). Clearly the site does not fulfil any of the strategic objectives of MOL set out in London Plan at paragraph 8.3.1:

- to protect and enhance open spaces;
- improve quality of life; and
- contribute to the City's green infrastructure, providing spaces for recreation, heritage, biodiversity, and health benefits.

Furthermore, the Council’s evidence base provides the justification for the removal of the site from MOL. The ‘Metropolitan Open Land Review Annex Report’, dated 26th August 2021, prepared by Arup, identifies the Sainsbury’s car park site as forming part of MOL ‘Parcel 1’ which is known as ‘Longford E and Schools’. Against the London Plan MOL criteria the northern tip of Parcel 1, where the Sainsbury’s car park is located, scores weakly.

For criterion 1: ‘contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area’ this part of the parcel is noted as being “completely eroded and therefore scores weak (1)”.

For criterion 2: ‘includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, the arts and cultural activities, which serve either the whole or significant parts of London’ this part of the parcel is noted as being the “developed northern tip and inaccessible Longford River corridor offers no open-air facilities”.

For criterion 3: ‘contains features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiversity) of either national or metropolitan value’ there is no public access or public right of way, but the Longford River is designated as a SINC and so the parcel scores weak moderate (2) for this criterion. Sainsbury’s car park and PFS clearly have no features or landscapes of national or metropolitan value.

For criterion 4: ‘forms part of a strategic corridor, node or link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria’ the site is noted for “hard standing in the northern tip is likely to provide no wildlife value”.

Overall, the Parcel 1 is considered to meet its MOL purposes, but the Report states that: “The developed northern tip and the northern part of the Longford River performs weakly against all MOL criteria” and “it is recommended the MOL status of the developed northern part of the parcel, and the northern part of the Longford River without adjacent green space is considered further”.

The evidence base is the justification and demonstration of an exceptional circumstance to allow the site’s removal from the MOL. The site’s designation as MOL is a historical oversight and needs to be rectified regardless of the future development of the site.



Clearly, the Council has considered the Sainsbury's car park and PFS further and decided to remove it from MOL because it is developed and serves no MOL function. It has nothing to do with whether the site can meet the need for affordable housing, and it is disingenuous to state that it does.

In addition, the requirement for 100% affordable is not sufficiently justified, nor is it likely to be viable, and it is contrary to the draft Policy 11 on affordable housing, which does not require 100% affordable housing. As such the reasoning for the site being removed from MOL designation should be reworded, emphasising that the MOL removal is due to the site's existing use as foodstore carpark and petrol filling station.

The allocation wording should reflect Policy 11: Affordable Housing, as it is proposed to be amended by Main Modification 49.

Draft Site Allocation 30 - Sainsburys, Lower Richmond Road, Richmond

Main Modification 25:

SSL acknowledge the alignment of the site's PTAL rating with application 19/05/FUL, and do not have a particular objection to the amendment of the PTAL score to 4 (good), other than to note that the site does benefit significant public transport links, including several bus stops that are located on site including the Manor Road/Sainsburys stop and Richmond/Manor Road stop. In addition, the site is a 4-minute walk from North Sheen Railway Station.

More importantly, it is noted that the proposed Main Modifications do not include reference to ensuring provision of adequate servicing areas and operational land to ensure that future commercial uses on site can operate efficiently without impediment. SSL continue to reiterate that it is vitally important that the allocation wording is updated to include a requirement to provide adequate servicing areas.

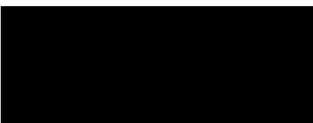
Summary

In summary, if SSL cannot satisfactorily and feasibly trade their stores, the sites will simply not be brought forward for development. SSL strongly encourage the Council to review the wording of the first bullet point of proposed Allocation 4, rewording the reasoning for the site being removed from MOL designation and removing reference to 100% affordable housing requirement. The current wording makes the draft Plan unsound.

With regards to proposed Allocation 30, SSL continue to reiterate the importance of including text requiring adequate servicing areas within the allocation wording, which has not been proposed as a modification at this stage.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to context me or my colleagues, Arabella Fraser or Hamish Dean.

Yours faithfully,



Sean McGrath

Director

cc : Bruno Moore, SSL



APPENDIX A: SSL REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION RESPONSE



London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
Planning Services
Civic Centre
44 York Street
Twickenham
TW1 3BZ

24 July 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

**REPRESENTATIONS TO THE RICHMOND LOCAL PLAN ‘THE BEST OF OUR BOROUGH’
(REG. 19) DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION**

On behalf of Sainsbury’s Supermarkets Limited (SSL), we write in response to the consultation of the new Local Plan prepared by the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

We have reviewed the Regulation 19 draft version of the new Richmond Local Plan. We are pleased to see that part of our previous representations to the Regulation 18 consultation in respect of emerging site allocations at the St Clares Superstore (Site Allocation 5) and the Richmond Superstore (Site Allocation 29), dated 21 January 2022, have been addressed.

However, there are still outstanding matters that have not been addressed that need to be reconciled in future versions of the emerging Local Plan.

Draft Site Allocation 4 - Car Park for Sainsburys, Uxbridge Road, Hampton

In our previous Regulation 18 representations we were supportive of the allocation’s removal from MOL land designation and the reprovision of the car park and Petrol Filling Station (PFS).

However, we requested that the allocation remove reference to 100% affordable housing provision and recommended that the affordable housing levels set out in draft policy 11 should apply to the site.

Unfortunately, the current draft allocation remains unchanged and we strongly suggest that the Council reconsiders this as the Plan will be unsound for the following reasons.

Firstly, the draft allocation still states that “the exceptional circumstances” justifying the MOL release are set out under Policy 11 to meet the identified affordable housing needs of residents and, therefore, any future development scheme coming forward for this site should deliver 100% on-site affordable housing.

In short, the drafting states that the development of the site for affordable housing is the exceptional circumstance justifying the site’s removal from MOL.

This is not correct. The tenure of the residential units has nothing to do with the exceptional circumstances justifying removal from MOL. The exceptional circumstances which allow the site's removal from MOL is the fact that it is an existing foodstore car park and PFS.

The council's own evidence base provides the justification for the removal of the site from MOL. The 'Metropolitan Open Land Review Annex Report', dated 26th August 2021, prepared by Arup, identifies the Sainsbury's car park site as forming part of MOL 'Parcel 1' which is known as 'Longford E and Schools'. Against the London Plan MOL criteria the northern tip of Parcel 1, where the Sainsbury's car park is located, scores weakly.

For criterion 1, 'contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built-up area' this part of the parcel is noted as being "*completely eroded and therefore scores weak (1)*".

For criterion 2, 'includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, the arts and cultural activities, which serve either the whole or significant parts of London' this part of the parcel is noted as being the "*developed northern tip and inaccessible Longford River corridor offers no open-air facilities*".

For criterion 3, 'contains features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiversity) of either national or metropolitan value' there is no public access or public right of way but the Longford River is designated as a SINC and so the parcel scores weak moderate (2) for this criterion.

For criterion 4, 'forms part of a strategic corridor, node or link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria' the site is noted for "*hard standing in the northern tip is likely to provide no wildlife value*".

Overall, the Parcel 1 is considered to meet its MOL purposes, but the report says "*however, the developed northern tip and the northern part of the Longford River performs weakly against all MOL criteria*" and "*it is recommended the MOL status of the developed northern part of the parcel, and the northern part of the Longford River without adjacent green space is considered further*".

This evidence base document is the justification and demonstration of an exceptional circumstance to allow the site's removal from the MOL.

The site's designation as MOL is a historical oversight and needs to be rectified regardless of future development. In addition, the requirement for 100% affordable is not sufficiently justified, nor is it viable, and it is contrary to the draft policy 11 on affordable housing, which does not require 100% affordable housing.

We also requested to remove all references to requiring 20% biodiversity net gain (BNG). The references should be amended to require 10% BNG, in accordance with The Environment Act 2021.

The draft site allocation has also retained a 20% measurable (BNG) requirement towards restoring the Longford River wildlife corridor in accordance with the Richmond Biodiversity Action Plan.

While the Richmond Biodiversity Action Plan seeks a net gain of specific habitats it does not specify 20%. The 20% requirement comes from emerging Policy 39 which seeks 20% BNG. This is double the requirement sought through the Environment Act 2021 and there is no justification as to why double the statutory requirement is sought. Previously, we stated that emerging Policy 39 is unsound. Policy 39 should be amended to reflect the requirements of the Environment Act. The



allocation should also be amended to refer to 10% BNG to align with the requirements of the Environment Act and to ensure the viability of future development.

Draft Site Allocation 30 - Sainsburys, Lower Richmond Road, Richmond

Our previous Regulation 18 representations stated that the draft allocation should include a requirement to provide adequate car parking provision and servicing areas. We are pleased to see that the Regulation 19 draft includes a requirement to provide adequate car parking in line with London Plan standards. However, we reiterate that the site allocation should state the need to provide adequate servicing areas and operational land as well. This is to ensure that future commercial uses on site can operate efficiently and without impediment.

In summary, it is vitally important that the draft allocation is updated to include a requirement to provide adequate servicing areas.

Summary

In summary, the proposed allocations of the two Sainsbury's sites (Draft allocations 4 and 30) are still unacceptable as drafted. The current wording makes the Plan unsound.

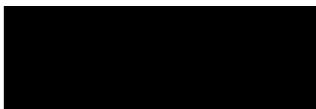
Moving forward, the emerging Local Plan for submission should include the following:

- Allocation 4 – Reword the reasoning for the site being removed from MOL designation. The current wording is not correct and is misleading as it ties removal from MOL with future housing provision which is not the case. MOL removal is due to the site's existing use as a foodstore car park and petrol filling station.
- Allocation 4 – Remove reference to 100% affordable housing requirement and replace with affordable housing levels set out in draft policy 11.
- Allocation 4 – Remove reference to 20% BNG. The requirement for BNG should reflect Policy 39, which itself should be amended to require 10% BNG, in accordance with The Environment Act 2021.
- Allocation 30 – include reference to provision of adequate servicing areas and operational land.
- Policy 39 should be amended to refer to BNG of 10% in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.

We trust that these proposed amendments will be incorporated in the next iteration of the Local Plan. Sainsbury's are a major investor and employer in the Borough, and we hope that the council will take this opportunity to engage constructively with them.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully



Anna Stott

AS