

Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

For the benefit of Mitcham Cricket Green
Conservation Area and its environs

REDEVELOPMENT OF 226 LONDON ROAD FOR 30 FLATS

**Application number 16/P3513
November 2016**

1. Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage takes an active interest in the future of the Cricket Green Conservation Area and its environs. We are the civic society for this part of Merton and part of the wider civic movement through membership of the national charity Civic Voice.

2. We have been involved in the future of the land and buildings at 226 London Road because of their significance for Mitcham town centre and the implications for the neighbouring Grade 1 listed Eagle House, gates, piers, walls and railings. The treatment of this site has the potential to set an important precedent for heritage conservation across the Borough.

3. We were shocked by some earlier proposals for the site involving demolition of the locally listed building and the development of poorly designed, oversized, "could be anywhere" flats that owed nothing to the local context. We recognised the revised proposals earlier in 2016 (Ref 16/P0312) as a flawed but improved scheme. Nevertheless we shared the view of Merton's Design Review Panel that it had "*significant shortcomings*" warranting a RED verdict.

4. We recognise the latest proposals with reduced dwelling numbers and an improved frontage as further improved. Nevertheless, we do not consider the plans acknowledge their location adjacent to two Grade I listed buildings/structure sufficiently and continue to conflict with the development plan in key respects.

5. The locally listed building at 226 London Road makes a significant and positive contribution to Mitcham town centre. It is a well-proportioned building with important historic associations that adds to Mitcham's sense of place and identity. We welcome retention of the bulk of the building, including its important frontage to London Road, in the revised plans. We also welcome the reduced height and bulk and improvements to the landscaping and the frontage to London Road.

6. Notwithstanding these improvements we believe there are further changes that are needed to make this development acceptable and consistent with relevant development plan policies. We object to the proposals on the following grounds:

- Significant harm to the setting of Eagle House – comprising two of only three Grade 1 listed structures in Merton (placing it in the top 2.5% of all listed structures in the country) in direct conflict with Policy CS2i and CS14 – as a result

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of the visual intrusion and poor location of the services and storage alongside the Grade 1 listed boundary wall and railings

- Inensitive building line which ignores pre-application advice to avoid "*one massive overpowering block*" and the support from the Design Review Panel for a "cranked" approach
- Cramped one bedroom flats in the converted locally listed building that will provide poor quality living conditions.

7. We believe that any development on this site should also include a contribution to the long term maintenance of the Grade 1 listed wall and railings to Eagle House and provide appropriate access. Any works should be undertaken to the highest conservation standards. Long term plans for the management and watering of landscaping and trees on the site should also be a condition of any future planning consent.

8. We conclude that without further modifications this proposal will lead to substantial harm to the significance of important national heritage assets and that it is in conflict with adopted development plan policies CS2i, CS14, DM D1, D2, D3 and D4.

9. We ask that the revised plans are considered by the Design Review Panel.