

## **Sutton & Wandle Valley Ramblers**

I am writing on behalf of Sutton & Wandle Valley Ramblers to object to the inclusion of a proposal for the construction of a new access road from Carshalton Road to the Willow Lane industrial estate (Proposal TN17/Policy T6.9).

Sutton & Wandle Valley Ramblers are the largest local recreational walking group with some 500 members mainly drawn from the London Boroughs of Sutton and Merton. One of our primary purposes is to promote access for walkers to the green environment and to defend and enhance the public right of way network. The proposed new access road would degrade the experience of those using the public right of way network in this particular area.

In our view there would be a significant number of negative consequences if Proposal TN17 were to be implemented. They are as follows:-

1. disruption to and degradation of the path network as a result of the proposed new road cutting across the line of the Tramway Path public footpath
2. damage to the character/appearance/integrity of the Metropolitan Open Land through losses of natural features.
3. ecological damage to the Site of Importance for Nature Conservation through losses of habitat.
4. ecological damage to a green corridor as a result of the addition of the road, which would act as a barrier to the movement of plant and animal species.
5. adverse impact on the Wandle Country Park through replacement of natural features with artificial elements, together with traffic noise,

vibration and air pollution.

It is clear that there would also be a severe adverse impact on the residential environment of the houses in Aspen Gardens through traffic noise, vibration, air pollution and visual harm.

The area lies within a "sustainable transport corridor" which runs along the Wandle Valley and includes Mitcham Common. It is disappointing that the draft plan is largely lacking in specific proposals to improve sustainable transport options for this part of the corridor, and instead focuses on a specific non-sustainable transport proposal. There are important sustainable transport opportunities for improving access to the Willow Lane Estate, which are not picked up as proposals in the plan. These include better footpath connections from the two Tramlink stations to the Industrial Estate, and a foot/cycle bridge to link Poulter Park (LB Sutton) and Bennetts Hole (LB Merton), over the river Wandle.

The argument put forward for the construction of the road is to improve vehicular access to the Willow Lane estate and to increase the development potential in that estate. There does not seem to be anything in the draft Plan which explains in detail the inadequacies of the existing road accesses to this estate (eg practical problems, and how the proposed road would solve them). In the event that this harmful proposal is proceeded with, some limited mitigation could be achieved by the removal of motor traffic from the northern part of Willow Lane (from the Tramlink railway bridge to the A237), with this area being given over to pedestrians and cyclists.

Footpath Secretary, Sutton and Wandle Valley Ramblers