

Ref. London Borough of Merton's Local Plan 2020

Some comments on the above:

-) Maybe the Local Plan is not the appropriate place but I cannot see any mention of how London Borough of Merton (LBM) plans to deal with the flytipping and littering that, from personal experience and looking at social media, blights Merton in general and Mitcham in particular.

-) I strongly support the conversion of the Suez Benedict Wharf site to residential accommodation. However, I have serious concerns that the future development will be over-densely populated, built too high and not recognise the local history and conservation area. This is a great opportunity to create an exceptional development in Mitcham.

-) Whilst I understand that Wimbledon is the jewel in Merton's crown and therefore benefits all Merton residents, the approaches and language used in the Wimbledon policy compared to those in the Mitcham one seem stronger and much more positive, e.g.

-) **Mitcham**
 -) *To improve the overall environment of Mitcham town centre by providing quality shopfronts, new homes, good transport links.*
We will do this by:
 - a. *Increasing the footfall and spend in the town centre, improving the quality of shops and services;*
To me, these are just words and give no real clue as to how LBM will increase the footfall and improve quality. I know it has improved the town centre but has that increased footfall or improved the quality of the shops and services?

 -) *Ensuring that development conserves and enhances the historic environment, for example, around Cricket Green, Canons House and Mitcham Common;*
Great but nowhere near as strong as the equivalent for Wimbledon (see the first example below).

 -) *3.2.1. The focus for the next 10 years for Mitcham will be to encourage more people to use the town centre for socialising, leisure and shopping. Greater footfall will lead to greater spend, which will help boost local businesses.*
Next 10 years? I have lived here for around 20 years and have not seen much change in this period so what will LBM do differently?

 -) Where is the strong mention of Mitcham Cricket Club especially at this critical time for it when councillors and MP have signed up to supporting it? The fact that the report states it is the oldest played-on cricket ground in the country, rather than the world, says something about LBM's knowledge, review process and attitude towards Mitcham.

 -) Compared to the Wimbledon policy, there is very little emphasis on the points of interest within Cricket Green (as per Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage's audio trail, etc.).

) **Wimbledon**

-) *Conserving and enhancing the quality of neighbourhoods within the neighbourhoods through Conservation Area character protection, and by supporting incremental development that respects the character and heritage assets within the area;*

Surely this strong wording applies to Mitcham as well.

-) *3.6.11. Developers who look to build in Wimbledon must demonstrate a commitment to quality and design. Great contemporary design and materials that reflect, respect and enhance the historic buildings is encouraged.*

Surely this strong wording applies to Mitcham as well.

-) *3.6.4. A fundamental theme throughout the workshops, landowners' forums, responses to planning applications, community feedback and general participation in civic life has been the desire to improve the look and feel of Wimbledon town centre and the quality of the experience people have there, commensurate with the Wimbledon / SW19's international reputation. The Wimbledon area has a rich historical significance with high quality neighbourhoods and open spaces including Wimbledon Common. The town centre itself has pockets of well-loved and well-designed buildings but also parts that do not reflect the quality of the surrounding area.*

Does the strong sentiment here not also apply to Mitcham?

What workshops and landowners' forums are they having in Wimbledon?

Do we have them in Mitcham?

-) *3.6.2. In 2017 FutureWimbledon workshops led to the creation of 10 priorities for Wimbledon town centre that people considered should be explored:*

Was there a FutureMitcham workshop?

-) *3.6.11. Developers who look to build in Wimbledon must demonstrate a commitment to quality and design. Great contemporary design and materials that reflect, respect and enhance the historic buildings is encouraged.*

Surely this strong wording applies to Mitcham as well.

-) *3.6.18. Wimbledon town centre accommodates the majority of major office development in the borough, presenting as an attractive location for investment in south-west London. There are two distinct clusters of office development around Wimbledon Bridge and Worple Road, and a developing cluster east of the station along The Broadway. We will continue to support the development of major offices in these locations.*

Could Mitcham not also be promoted as an attractive location for business? After all, it has excellent transport links too – Mitcham Eastfields, tram to/from Wimbledon/Croydon, Mitcham Junction and its Thameslink connections, wide range of bus routes in the town centre.

Out of interest, what are the next steps for the Local Plan?