

Wandle Industrial Museum - response to Merton Council Jan18

Good afternoon,

Herewith please find a response from the Wandle Industrial Museum.

1. The Wandle Industrial Museum, supported by The London Borough of Merton and presently based in the Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area, was founded in 1983 to preserve, store, and interpret the heritage and history of the industries and people of the River Wandle. It is a fully accredited museum, staffed by a team of dedicated volunteers, and maintains a unique and growing archive and collection of exhibits, providing a valuable educational resource for the Borough.

2. From this standpoint we believe an important part of the Local Plan should be to recognise and capitalise upon the extraordinarily rich industrial heritage of the Wandle in Merton, as an asset which has the capacity to enrich the lives of residents, their children and visitors to the Borough alike. While Merton can boast individual major attractions such as Wimbledon Tennis, soon the new Football Stadium (itself on the Wandle), and now the International Music Festival, there are other established cultural and heritage events and venues along the River which are far less well-known outside the Borough, for example Wimbledon Bookfest, Mitcham Carnival, Wandle Fortnight, and at least three continuously active theatres. The Local Plan is a golden opportunity to be explicit in supporting and promoting these as a comprehensive whole.

3. We believe there is a major opportunity to upgrade access to, signage of and connection between the many heritage sites in Merton and Mitcham (Chapter House, Precinct Wall, Liberty Site, Morris Site, Nelson Site, Surrey Iron Railway Route, Wandle Trail, Deen City Farm, Morden Hall, Ravensbury Mill, Watermeads, The Canons, Mitcham Cricket Green and, not least, the Wandle Industrial Museum itself) to create a distinct heritage hub and visitor attraction, threaded with high quality pedestrian routes, parks, planting and landscape, and with the proper presentation and preservation of historic buildings.

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