



**MITCHAM SOCIETY**

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## **Mitcham Society Submission to Merton Council**

### **Draft Third Local Implementation Plan (LIP3)**

**April 2019**

Mitcham Society has a vision for Mitcham town centre as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Village, with its focus on what remains of Fair Green, and extending to Figges Marsh, Three Kings Piece and onwards to the Canons, Cricket Green and its various greens, and Mitcham Common.

#### **Recognising Mitcham as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Village**

Overarching all our comments are the following principles, all based on the desire to ensure Mitcham is recognised as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Village. All new work should:

- Recognise, value and protect the village character of Mitcham
- Seek to enhance and strengthen the village character of Mitcham
- Actively promote and support Mitcham as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Village
- Actively discourage development, built or otherwise, which –
  - o Disrupts or damages the existing elements which characterise Mitcham Village
  - o Detracts from the continuation of a village feel in Mitcham
  - o Over urbanises
  - o Removes Green Spaces
  - o Prioritises the 'generic' over the local, special and unique

Transport investment and streetworks have a crucial role to play in realising this ambition for Mitcham as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century village.

#### **The role of LIP3**

At its web site Merton Council summaries the LIP3 in the following way

(<https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/transport-strategy/lip3>):



*Mertons' (sic) Third Local Implementation Plan (LIP3) is the Council's main transport strategy and sits alongside the Council's Local Plan and other future strategies.*

*The LIP3 contains an overview of the challenges and opportunities in delivering the Mayors' (sic) Transport Strategy within Merton; a set of borough transport objectives; a short and longer term delivery plan and a series of targets set by Transport for London that we are working towards achieving.*

## **Quality of the consultation documents**

We were surprised to see the initial release of the consultation document using maps embedded in the main body of the document which were illegible. As integral parts of the consultation this made it impossible to respond.

Following this being brought to Merton Council's attention the consultation document was re-released with larger/higher definition copies of all the maps appended. However:

- We were not made aware of this second release – we are not clear whether the re-release was made widely known
- There was no extension of the consultation deadline to reflect the fact that the initially released document was not fit for purpose
- Some of the maps in the newly released document still have legibility issues, notably:
  - o Figure 12 Controlled parking zones – notably the legend, text inside circles on the map and street names are illegible
  - o Figure 15 Existing and proposed on-street Electric Vehicle Charge Point locations (2018) – notably the legend and descriptive text inside the many marked circles on the map are illegible
  - o Figure 17 bus frequency – notably much of the text on the map is illegible

The quality of the text in the document is exceptionally poor. There are multiple spelling errors of place names (for example 3.98 p45 'Figges March', 2.42 p19 and 3.124 p53 'Rayne's Park') and many other errors of syntax, spelling and punctuation. This goes beyond errors and grammatical mistakes to the point where it is sometimes impossible to understand the true meaning of what is being proposed.

We are concerned that this document was not put through a thorough editing and approvals process.

Overall we do not believe this consultation document to be fit for purpose. It should be withdrawn, revised and reissued.

## Policies and other comments

**2.48 - “During the lifetime of LIP3 the following aims will apply..... Redefine the way our streets are laid out and used so as to encourage the take-up of more active and healthier lifestyles where people feel confident to walk and cycle in safety”**

We welcome this aspiration.

However, the recent Rediscover Mitcham programme included the formation of a new road along Upper Green East and Upper Green West which have opened up access to the village centre to car traffic.

The addition of new ‘short term’ parking bays on both Upper Green East and Upper Green West encourage car journeys to the village centre.

The increased presence of cars is reducing public confidence in walking around the village centre.

Cars bring air pollution into the village centre, including right alongside the Tag Elezz café where people sit outside to drink coffee. They also considerably detract from the visual amenity and appearance of the space – what should be a pleasant space with grass, a café and a market square is surrounded by what is effectively a car park.

Recommendations:

- Make Upper Green East and Upper Green West pedestrian zones
- Remove all ‘short term’ parking bays from the Village centre
- Install more cycle parking in the village centre

## 3.10 Cycling

Point 3.10 is accompanied by a map – *Figure 10 – Potential cycle paths in Merton*. A legible copy of this map is at the end of the document.

- Shared use path on town green along Commonside West. We do not support this take of registered Town Green. The cycle path should use Commonside West road, with a reconfiguring of the roundabout at Commonside West/Cedars Avenue/Croydon Road/Carshalton Road to provide far safer use for both cyclists and pedestrians entering and exiting in all directions. There should be no take of green space to achieve this.
- Pedestrian phase across Windmill Road. We support this and would advocate an all stop phase that will cater for a diagonal crossing for cyclists and pedestrians.

### 3.14 and 3.16 school travel plans

The aspirations in the consultation document to enforce school travel plans is laudable.

However we have no evidence that school travel plans are enforced at present. We have much evidence of car traffic around schools overwhelming residential streets, and little faith in Merton Council's enforcement teams to address the problem. We want to see more than aspiration in this document – we want to see evidence of precisely how Merton Council will enforce travel plans for existing schools and ensure any new travel plans are fit for purpose and enforceable.

Recommendations:

- Revise this document to include clear detail on how Merton Council will
  - o Enforce existing school travel plans
  - o Ensure that new school travel plans are fit for purpose and enforceable
  - o Undertake substantial analysis of the effect of traffic on residential streets around schools and take action to remedy all issues including, but not only, air quality, fly parking and congestion

### 3.101 Buses

The Rediscover Mitcham programme introduced a 'bus street' through the heart of Mitcham village centre. Mitcham Society's air quality monitoring revealed that air quality has been substantially reduced here as a result.

The table below shows our 2018 air quality monitoring results:

	Date test put in place	Hours of test	Average $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
<b>Outside Mitcham Islamic Centre on bus street</b>	15/05/2018	840	65.3
<b>In a tree outside Tag Elezz cafe</b>	15/05/2018	840	42.4
<b>Barnard Marcus , Commonsides West</b>	15/05/2018	840	44.8
<b>Lidl, Western Road</b>	15/05/2018	840	55.0
<b>Outside former Pound Store London Road (opposite Langdale Avenue)</b>	15/05/2018	840	56.2
<b>Lamp post at Junction of Holborn Way and Upper Green West</b>	15/05/2018	840	34.3
<b>At Three Kings Pond, Commonsides West</b>	15/05/2018	840	50.1

Our 2016 measurements below predate the bus street:

	2016 Average $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	2018 Average $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
<b>In a tree outside Tag Elezz cafe</b>	32.51	42.4
<b>Lamp post Holborn Way</b>	31.23	
<b>Outside Mitcham Islamic Centre on bus street</b>		65.3

Air quality has been reduced in Mitcham village as a direct consequence of development supported in large part by funding granted from Transport for London. TfL has contributed directly to a significant reduction in air quality. Merton Council should do all it can to reverse the situation.

Recommendations:

- Lobby TfL to ensure a move, in the shortest time frame possible, to the least polluting buses on all routes that run through Mitcham village

### 5.51 School part time road closures

We understand the aspiration to reduce car use that lies behind this initiative.

We are concerned that it will simply displace cars to residential streets surrounding schools, many of which already experience great difficulty with school vehicles.

Recommendations:

- Accompany these initiatives with clear plans to protect surrounding streets from displaced vehicles
- Engage fully with residents in surrounding streets to ensure their views and needs are taken into account