



DATE VALLEY SCHOOL SHELTER – retrospective planning application

**Application number 16/P0124
February 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. We have been closely involved in the development of the new Character Study, the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and numerous development proposals in the area. The Cricket Green Charter (<http://mitchamcricketgreen.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/cricket-green-charter.pdf>) establishes our approach to development and change in the area and was developed in partnership with the London Borough of Merton, the local community and our local councillors.
2. Date Valley School is located in Mitcham Court, a locally listed building that makes an important contribution to the character of Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area. This contribution is in relation to Mitcham Court itself and its role as part of an assemblage of buildings that fringes Mitcham's historic cricket ground and greens. Its role is recognised in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.
3. Any development in this area needs to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area and respect the locally listed building. It also needs to be consistent with development plan policies CS14 (Design) and DM D1, D2 and D4 among others.
4. We have reviewed this application in the light of the Cricket Green Charter, development plan policies and its impact on the Conservation Area. It is particularly unfortunate that this is a retrospective application for development which Date Valley School has not yet obtained permission. We are also conscious of the refusal of a similar retrospective planning application for a bike shelter at the former Vicarage on Church Road which has now been removed. The fact that this development has taken place means we can review its impact and this is illustrated in the photographs below.
5. The shelter is unobtrusive when viewed from Cricket Green and sits calmly in the townscape, with the backdrop of modern flats behind it. We do not consider its impact from this perspective to be significant. The situation is more problematic when viewed from London Road or from Chatsworth Place. From these perspectives the shelter is visually prominent and disrupts views of Mitcham Court and the view across to the cricket ground and green spaces behind. These are important views, including the first glimpsed view of the cricket ground and unfolding open space when entering the Conservation Area from Mitcham town centre.

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6. We conclude that this structure detracts from the Conservation Area and is in conflict with the development plan policies identified. This impact could be significantly reduced by lowering the height of the shelter so it sits more easily in relation to the boundary wall. This can be achieved without diminishing its function. Without this change we believe the structure is in conflict with adopted development plan policies and will cause material harm so we urge refusal of planning consent.