



UPWARD EXTENSION OF 18 COMMONSIDE WEST
Planning application 19/P0544
March 2019

1. Mitcham Cricket Green Community & 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 Merton Local Plan, Borough Character Studies, the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and numerous development proposals in the area. We have worked with the London Borough of Merton and our local councillors to produce the Cricket Green Charter which establishes our approach to development and change in the area and has been acknowledged in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Cricket Green (<http://mitchamcricketgreen.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/cricket-green-charter.pdf>). We have also contributed to production of the Merton Heritage Strategy as a member of the Merton Heritage Forum. We are members of The Canons Steering Group delivering a £5m Lottery funded project and also undertake practical projects, organise walks and run Mitcham Heritage Day and Community on the Green.

2. 18 Commonside West is a small block of flats designed in a contemporary style and facing Three Kings Piece, a registered town green. We contributed to the design development of the scheme in 2012 and 2013 and recognise the distinct contribution which the completed building now makes, sitting easily within its context (see photo). We consider it a much more successful scheme than the nearby redevelopment of 22 Commonside West which is both poorly finished and unnecessarily bulky. The poor quality of some of the finishing and detailing of 22 Commonside West has been the subject of recent correspondence with Merton officers.



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3. We have considered the new proposals for a rooftop extension in the context of the Cricket Green Charter, the Conservation Area and Merton's development plan.

4. We share the view expressed in the delegated report from 2013 granting planning permission for the existing building that it has *"been designed so that the height of the proposed two-storey building respects the height of the adjacent 1930s houses"* and that *"the scale of development is considered in keeping with and respecting the surroundings"*.

5. This is in marked contrast to the new proposals which show a fundamental lack of respect for their context. The scheme is much higher and does not relate well to the 1930s houses and would be incongruous in its setting. It is disingenuous to suggest that the scheme responds well to 22 Commonsides West when this was constructed later and is, in our view, a much less successful scheme. We believe the ambition for securing a more vertical element to help emphasise the horizontal impact of the building can best be achieved through the detailing of its finishing, such as the vertical seams in the proposed zinc cladding, rather than through increased building height.

6. We consider the proposals to be in conflict with development plan policies CS2, CS14, DM D1, DM D2, DM D3 & DM D4 and to fail to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area and ask that they be refused.