



**DEMOLITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTIAL BLOCK AT JUSTIN PLAZA 2**  
**Planning application 19/P4193**  
**April 2020**

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. Our approach to development and change in the area is established in the Cricket Green Charter which was refreshed in 2019 with the support of London Borough of Merton and local councillors (<https://mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk/cricket-green-charter/>). The Charter has been acknowledged in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Cricket Green. 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. We ask that these representations are made available online through Planning Explorer.
2. We have reviewed the proposals to demolish the existing Justin Plaza 2 office building and construct a six storey residential block for 18 flats in the context of the Cricket Green Charter and development plan policies.
3. Our primary concern is that the site is located off London Road in a sensitive view corridor that frames the view of Mitcham cricket pavilion from the historic cricket ground and defines its relationship with the neighbouring Grade II listed Burn Bullock. The Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan identifies Cricket Green (a registered Town Green) as "*the most important open space within the conservation area*" and identifies both mature trees and "*wider street views of the groups of buildings which act as the backdrop when viewed across the open spaces*" as the key contributors to its setting. The space between the cricket pavilion and Burn Bullock and the silhouette of Mitcham cricket pavilion against the sky as part of this backdrop make an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. As these images show it is already diminished by the impact of the existing Justin Plaza buildings and redevelopment of Justin Plaza 2 should avoid any further harm.

**General enquiries: [info@mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk](mailto:info@mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk)**  
**Web site: [www.mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk](http://www.mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk)**  
**Twitter: @MitchamCrktGrn**

**Registered Office c/o MVSC, Vestry Hall, 336/338 London Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3UD**  
**Company registration no. 04659164 Charity registration no. 1106859**



4. The applicant has not provided details of the impact on this key view and it has not been addressed in the pre-application advice provided by Merton's officers. Our own assessment is that the additional height and mass of the building will further erode the quality of this view and thereby cause harm to the Conservation Area. The increased height of the planned residential block will be prominent above the roofline of the cricket pavilion as it will exceed the height of the neighbouring Justin Plaza building, and so cause harm. Any new building should be of a height and scale that sits in front of and does not project above the existing Justin Plaza. This is achieved by the current four storey office building.

5. We acknowledge that the existing office building is of limited architectural merit and relates poorly to the much altered Justin Plaza building following its conversion to residential use. We recognise that conversion from office to residential use is now permitted development and that there is a risk that conversion in this case would not address the poor quality of the existing building. Nevertheless our preference is for the retention of employment uses in the London Road backlands which provide for important light industrial and other employment uses that are protected by Policy DM E3 for scattered employment sites. In this case we believe the development should be mixed use with at least the ground floor in office or light industrial use. The reported lack of interest in the current office building is influenced by both the poor quality of the existing building and its management. Other office accommodation in the area is occupied. No evidence has been provided by the applicant of the site having been marketed for the required 30 months to demonstrate lack of demand. We would expect this evidence to be submitted with the planning application. A new building could provide business accommodation to a higher standard.

6. We support the design intent to better relate the new Justin Plaza 2 to the altered Justin Plaza. This is largely achieved with regard to the material and finish of the new building but not in its overall scale and height. The new block should be subservient to Justin Plaza. This will also reduce the impact on the key view from the Conservation Area.

7. We object to the proposed development of Justin Plaza 2 because of its negative impact on views from the Conservation Area and conflicts with development plan policies CS2, CS14, DM D1, DM D2, DM D4 and DM E3. We ask that planning permission is refused.