



**DEVELOPMENT OF KINGS ARMS SITE**  
**Application number 20/P2579**  
**October 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 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. We ask that these representations are made available online through Planning Explorer.

2. The proposals for development of the Kings Arms site will impact on one of the most prominent locations in one of Mitcham's two historic centres, overlooking Fair Green and making a major impact on the village streetscape. The Kings Arms is a locally listed building and it overlooks a registered Town Green. The future of this site is important for the standards it sets and the precedents that are established.

3. We are disappointed by the lack of engagement prior to submission of this planning application with no pre-application discussions with Merton Council and no involvement of the local community. National planning policy states that "*applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot*" (NPPF, paragraph 128). No opportunity to "*work closely*" has been taken and the planning application should not be looked on "*more favourably*" as a result.

4. We have considered the plans in the context of the Cricket Green Charter and development plan policies. We support the representations made by the Mitcham Society.

5. We support mixed use development in Mitcham village centre. This should not be at the expense of existing community and commercial uses and the proposals result in a

**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**

29% reduction in the public house (Kings Arms) and a 14% reduction in other town centre uses (Café Rose) for the creation of what is being marketed as 28 high end "studio suites" in a house in multiple occupation. The proposed studio rooms will be a new residential concept for Mitcham and the development should not result in the loss of any public house use (now sui generis) or Class E use in the village centre.

6. Our primary concern relates to the scale and design quality of the proposals and their detrimental impact on the locally listed Kings Arms, the streetscape of Mitcham village centre, and the registered Town Green (designated as Open Space where Policy DM O1 states development in proximity "*will only be acceptable if the visual amenities of the MOL or designated open space will not be harmed by reason of siting, materials or design*"). These concerns include:

- Overdevelopment of the site creating an unbalanced development form and the appearance of a bloated new building and blank five storey brick elevation in the key short and medium distance streetscape elevations visible from Fair Green – the Kings Arms and adjacent White Lion of Mortimer should remain Mitcham village centre's premier buildings and not be overwhelmed by this scale of new development
- A significant and damaging impact on the integrity and identity of the Kings Arms as a locally listed building, including:
  - loss of the visual gap between the Kings Arms and neighbouring buildings to the west above the eaves as viewed from Fair Green – impacting negatively on the "*soft skyline*" which is identified by the applicant as an "*observation and inspiration*" in the Design Statement (p12)
  - significant visual intrusion damaging the key elevation facing Fair Green caused by a glazed ground floor extension which has the incongruous appearance of an extended bus shelter and blocks views of the detail and interest in the locally listed building – we strongly dispute the claim made in the Design and Access Statement that there will be "*minimal alterations to the external appearance of this building*" (para 4.15) and that the new glazed extension will "*provide a stunning feature to compliment [sic] the ornate Victorian architecture of the public house*" (para 6.34) given the impact will be to compete with and obscure the very character of the locally listed building
  - loss of the silhouette of the locally listed building as viewed from Fair Green as a result of the major development of the adjacent site resulting in a loss of its individual identity
- The potential of the substantial, low level, roof above the glazed extension to the Kings Arms as a stimulus for anti-social behaviour

7. We believe planning permission should be refused and an alternative approach brought forward which does not conflict with Policies CS13, DM D1, DM D2, DM D4 and DM O1.