



EXPANSION OF MELROSE SCHOOL – ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONS
Application number 20/P2184
October 2020

1. These representations follow receipt of the Heritage Assessment for the development associated with the expansion of Melrose School. This assessment is a requirement of Merton Council's Planning Applications Validation Checklist (adopted May 2018) for all developments in a Conservation Area and was omitted when the planning application was submitted.

2. We have reviewed the Heritage Assessment and do not share its conclusion that *"the proposed scheme would have no physical impact on the Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area"*. It is notable that the Heritage Assessment addresses neither the impact of significant tree felling nor the urbanisation of a significant area of open land in making its assessment. These are fatal flaws, especially given the importance attached to the open character of this part of the Conservation Area in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. This states that for the Church Road character area south of Church Road *"the built form is much more open, with large footprint buildings set in open grounds, reminiscent of the open space that remained there until relatively recent years"* and that *"trees make an important contribution to the character of the area and also contribute to environmental quality by mitigating the effects of traffic noise and counteracting the effects of pollution..... The trees on the south side of Church Road between Vicarage Gardens and Lower Green West are a major feature of the conservation area contrasting with the more urban character prevailing on of the north side of the road."* The Heritage Assessment is incomplete and its conclusions flawed for the lack of consideration given to these important aspects of the Conservation Area.

3. The Heritage Assessment is also flawed in stating that *"the nearest heritage asset is the nationally designated remains of a 14th century chapel archway that was built as part of Hall Place and stands on the adjacent Cricket Green School site"*. The reality is that there are two designated heritage assets closer to the site - 60, 62 & 64 Church Road and the Vicarage of Sts Peter and Paul. Both are Grade II listed. This is a basic and unforgivable error and undermines the credibility of the whole assessment. It also means that the Heritage Assessment is flawed for not addressing the impact of the development proposals on these designated heritage assets.

4. These representations supplement our earlier comments on the scheme which remain valid. We believe planning permission should be refused and an alternative approach brought forward which develops less of the site and does not conflict with Policies CS13, DM D1, DM D2, DM D4 and DM O2 or harm the Conservation Area. We ask that these representations are uploaded to Planning Explorer.

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