

### **London Borough of Merton**

### **Sites and Polices Development Plan Document**

### **Consultation Response March 2012**

### **Site Proposal 53 – Brook House, Cricket Green, Mitcham**

These comments are submitted on behalf of Lionsgate Properties, the freehold owners of Brook House and follow the initial response to the Council from the Call for Sites Consultation that took place between July and September 2011.

Since that time, planning permission has been granted (11/P2839) on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012 for the change of use of the property to class D1 educational use. Those specific proposals were however submitted and pursued by a third party without the endorsement of Lionsgate Properties and do not represent the owners aspirations for the site.

In the process of determining that application however, the issue of the loss of employment space was considered in detail and the results of the marketing activity in attempting to let the property for B1a use over a number of years was presented as part of the application submissions.

Those failed attempts confirm Lionsgate Properties own separate marketing advice in respect of the property, in that this building in this location is unlikely to realise any B1a use in the future.

As a consequence, Lionsgate Properties believe that this position should now be fully recognised and embraced through the emerging LDF process and any reference to B1a as a future use (even as part of a mixed use redevelopment) should be omitted from the site proposals.

Lionsgate Properties preferred future use for the property remains residential (class C3).

In addition to this however, Lionsgate Properties also recognise that a combination of the building configuration, location and further marketing advice make this a suitable location for a hotel (class C1).

Such a use, within close proximity to Mitcham town centre, is regarded as a strategic opportunity that could improve both the profile and “offer” of the area.

The Sutton and Merton PCT proposals for their Birches Close (site 21) and Wilson Hospital (site 20) land holdings provide a clear and unambiguous strategy for the provision of a Local Care Centre in the area and for dealing with any surplus land in their control as a consequence.

With such a clear strategy in place, Lionsgate Properties cannot agree that the mere proximity of Brook House to the Birches Close site provides, as the Cricket Green

Grouped Sites section of the DPD seems to suggest, an opportunity for a combined approach/redevelopment.

Such an approach, by introducing different landowners that do not have common goals, immediately creates greater uncertainty potentially leading to, at the very best, much delayed deliverability or the very real possibility of the abandonment of proposals.

For these reasons Lionsgate Properties cannot agree that the grouping together or linking of the Cricket Green sites provides any greater benefits to the area in terms of future land use proposals or the provision of facilities over the individual pursuit of the sites as currently proposed by the two separate landowners.

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