

# Whichelow. C

## DRAFT SITES AND POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This document raises several questions, as follows:

- The need for additional housing is not explained. Local MP Stephen Hammond says, contrary to what some believe, 'there are no targets and no requirements' in terms of providing additional housing.
- Local amenities are already insufficient for the current population (lack of school places, overstretched health services, inadequate public car parking etc) yet no provision is suggested for the increased population which will result from additional housing. It would be irresponsible and reckless to proceed regardless.
- If high-rise blocks are permitted, particularly in close proximity to existing buildings of architectural merit (e.g. Wimbledon library), it will profoundly alter the character of the borough. The existing character of the borough is part of the reason people want to live here in the first place.
- Increased population density will result in increased traffic congestion, which is already barely tolerable, and additional demand for parking. Coupled with the fact that the plan is to build over the existing public car parks this makes no sense.
- If adequate parking is not available in local shopping centres such as Wimbledon, shoppers will go elsewhere, and because they will have to go in and out of Merton to reach those other shopping centres we will still have the traffic congestion but without our local shops being used.
- In cases where an amenity is to be lost the report suggests that it could be sited elsewhere, though it is not suggested where this could be. It is crucial that the alternative site is found before there is any attempt made to close the existing amenity.
- Although this document is potentially one of the most important ever to be produced by Merton Council and its suggestions potentially so radical and far-reaching it does not seem to have been sufficiently publicised. The majority of people I know have never heard of it. Indeed, when I went to get a copy from Crown House even the people on the reception desk had never heard of it. To ensure a valid public response it needs to be properly publicised and the deadline for representations put back.