



DEVELOPMENT AT BRITANNIA POINT, COLLIERS WOOD
A response by Wandle Valley Forum
November 2020

1. Wandle Valley Forum provides support and an independent voice for 140 community groups, voluntary organisations and local businesses and for everyone who shares a passion for the Wandle.
2. We have considered the emerging plans for the development of the land south of the “Britannia Point” tower in the context of the Wandle Valley Forum Charter (<http://bit.ly/27Yal2m>). This is a prominent site near to the Wandle and Wandle Park and with a significant influence on pedestrian connectivity and links in the area.
3. We have reviewed the material made available for an online public consultation. We are concerned at the limited nature of the material which has been published, especially considering that Merton Council’s Design Review Panel has considered detailed designs for an earlier iteration of the plans in a closed session. The consultation information fails to address the significant visual impact of the proposals or give a proper sense of the height, scale and mass of the proposed development.
4. In considering how the plans are taken forward we ask that the following considerations are addressed:
 - Opportunities to improve public access to and through the site are maximised; including links across Priory Retail Park to Merton Priory Walls and the Pickle and onward to Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills, connections to the Wandle Trail and links to Colliers Wood underground station – a development of this scale through have a transformative impact on connectivity and permeability well beyond the site boundary, including the problematic local road system
 - Active ground floor uses are provided which create a place to linger – this will require provision of a significant anchor space for community use, a high quality public realm, community growing space, reduced intrusion from traffic and creation of an appealing microclimate without undue shadow or wind shear
 - Both light pollution and shadowing of Wandle Park and the Wandle is avoided and any application is accompanied by an appropriate level of information to confirm this is the case, including an assessment of the impact on wildlife
 - A full visual impact analysis is undertaken with detailed information of the scheme’s viewshed provided – the existing 19 storey tower is prominent in distant views from many parts of the Wandle Valley and beyond and the impact of a larger scheme and multiple towers need to be fully assessed

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Please respond to Chair, Wandle Valley Forum, c/o 43 Bramcote Avenue, Mitcham CR4 4LW

- Independent visual assessment of the impact of multiple towers, including the potential of others on nearby sites in Colliers Wood, to enable a proper understanding of the cumulative impact of creating a new cluster of towers in a borough where none currently exist
- A full assessment of the impact of water run-off and sewerage on the Wandle is provided confirming no negative impacts
- A significant contribution to the resilience of the Wandle Valley in the face of climate change and growing levels of air pollution through delivery of sustainability standards that anticipate future expectations and requirements
- A commitment to a full archaeological investigation of the site delivered through a non-standard planning condition that requires a comprehensive and detailed approach in light of the exceptional significance of Stane Street which runs by the site
- 100% provision of at least dual aspect flats, in accordance with the new London Plan, and significant provision of homes for social rent that provide truly affordable homes

5. Our initial assessment is that a substantially reduced scale, height and mass of development could be appropriate for the site that is much less dominant than currently proposed and much more sensitive to the needs of the local community and its location in the Wandle Valley.

6. We should welcome the opportunity to inform the future development of the scheme before it is presented as a planning application.