



**RAVENSBURY GARAGES REDEVELOPMENT**  
**A response by Wandle Valley Forum to London Borough of Merton**  
**Application number 16/P1968**  
**June 2016**

*Wandle Valley Forum was established in 2005 and is the primary consultative forum on Wandle Valley issues for the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust; the London Boroughs of Wandsworth, Merton, Sutton and Croydon; Greater London Authority and other statutory bodies*

1. Wandle Valley Forum has reviewed the proposals for redevelopment of this important site for flats. We have considered the proposals in the context of the Wandle Valley Forum Charter (<http://bit.ly/27Yal2m>) and existing development plan policies..

2. This is a significant location immediately adjacent to the River Wandle and Ravensbury Park and the Wandle Trail, within the Wandle Valley Regional Park and on the site of important industrial archaeology. This was a key location for the textile bleaching and printing industry, including the site of the Ravensbury printing works. The Wandle Valley Forum Charter identifies a need for development to *“leave space along the river bank, support public access, encourage a naturally functioning river and respect the Wandle’s local character.”* We are also guided by para 21.13 of Merton Council’s Core Strategy which states that:

*“development within 400 m of the Wandle Valley Regional Park boundary will be required to consider its relationship to the park in terms of visual, physical and landscape links, to ensure that new development enhances the accessibility and attractiveness of the park. Our aspiration is to ensure the arrangement of buildings within new developments complement the existing green corridors and prevent disjointed pedestrian and cycle accessibility, removing physical barriers such as railings and built form that disrupt continuity and access into and around the park.”*

3. We are concerned by the proposal impact on the following grounds:

- a scale of development which will overlook and impact negatively on Ravensbury Park, diminishing the experience of walking along the Wandle in a secluded green corridor, in conflict with Policies CC13, CS14 and DM D2 – we consider a three storey development to be the maximum possible in this location unless the scheme is set back much further from the boundary of the green corridor
- a risk of reopening proposals for a new foot crossing over the Wandle at this point which would damage its character and diminish the river landscape
- the need for extensive archaeological studies prior to any development being undertaken to increase understanding and avoid damage to this key industrial site

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

- the need for a full and accurate arboricultural assessment before permitting any works which addresses the errors identified by Friends of Ravensbury Park in the information provided
- the lack of published evidence that the development will not have a damaging impact on bats (a protected species) in a known feeding area
- a need for conditions to curb external lighting being installed by residents after occupation which will impact negatively on the adjacent wildlife corridor and sensitive nightscape
- a need for conditions to ensure the improved visual relationship between the Wandle corridor and the Ravensbury estate which will result from use of railings along the boundary is not subsequently obscured by residents.

#### About Wandle Valley Forum

Wandle Valley Forum brings together people and organisations that care for the River Wandle and its diverse network of open spaces. We provide support and an independent voice for over 80 community groups & voluntary organisations and for everyone who shares a passion for the Wandle. Wandle Valley Forum monitors planning applications for developments which impact on the special qualities and character of the Wandle Valley. We make representations on developments which raise Valley-wide issues by reason of their strategic significance or potential to set a precedent.