



DEVELOPMENT OF FORMER WANDSWORTH GASWORKS
A response by Wandle Valley Forum to planning application 2022/3954
April 2023

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 proposals for the development of the former Wandsworth Gasworks for residential and other uses rising to 30 storeys in the context of the Wandle Valley Forum Charter (<http://bit.ly/27Yal2m>), the London Plan, Wandsworth Council's existing and emerging Local Plan and Masterplan and the Key Principles (http://www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk/uploads/5/8/4/3/58438085/wandle_delta_-_draft_spd_mar_21.pdf) we developed for the Wandle Delta as part of the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document. This is an important and sensitive site alongside the Wandle and located in a key position between Wandsworth Town Centre and the Thames
3. Our principle interest lies in the impact of the proposals on the Wandle, its wildlife and public enjoyment of the river, including the Wandle Trail. We object to the proposals as presented and ask that the following considerations are addressed:

Excessive height – we find proposals for the development of 30 storey blocks so close to the Wandle unconscionable. They are entirely out of character and in clear conflict with the Wandle Delta Masterplan. The buildings would neither be located in a Town Centre nor clustered with similar buildings and would make a negative contribution to local character and context. The plans for 12 storey blocks adjacent to the Wandle are also in conflict with the more sensitive requirements of the Masterplan

Access and permeability – the need for new links between Wandsworth Town Centre and the Thames is a strategic priority we identified in the Wandle Delta Masterplan. This site provides a critical opportunity to provide new links and fails to do so. Armoury Way remains a physical barrier and any improvement in east/west access is thwarted by land not included in the application

Wandle Trail – we welcome the potential for improved access along and across the Wandle and the increased area of public realm and landscape investment is welcome. The provision of more substantial green margins as well as public paths will be critical to success. We are also concerned that the proposals are not accompanied by a management plan and in perpetuity investment to ensure the standards are maintained into the future. The investment should also address the management of the Wandle Trail to avoid conflicts between users, with pedestrians taking priority and adoption of a code similar to that used by [Canal and River Trust](#). The scheme should bring wider improvements to the Wandle Trail, including wayfinding and interpretation and this should all include the Wandle Valley

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

Regional Park visual identity. The quality of the design of the new bridge is everyday and a missed opportunity to create a significant and resonant landmark which increases public engagement with the river. While welcome we believe the improved public realm and access along the river is fundamentally compromised by the adjacent development. This will be visually intrusive and result in significant shadowing for much of the day with negative consequences for both people and wildlife. We are also concerned by the impact on the local microclimate, especially wind speeds exceeding comfort levels

Inadequate public engagement - we have welcomed the opportunity to meet with the prospective developers but there has been no meaningful engagement on the strategic planning issues raised by the proposals. Our engagement has led to a project of marginal importance, engaging local schools in a project relating to the public realm alongside the river. We believe the proposals fail to "*demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community*" as required by the National Planning Policy Framework in order that they can "*be looked on more favourably than those that cannot*" (paragraph 132).

4. In conclusion, we object to the planning application on these grounds and would welcome the opportunity to work with the applicant to ensure more appropriate development comes forward for this site.