

**Committee: Street Management Advisory**

**Date: 30<sup>st</sup> January 2013**

Agenda item:

Wards: Figges Marsh

**Subject: Mitcham Town Centre Regeneration Scheme (1)**

**Lead officer:** Chris Lee, Director of Environment & Regeneration

**Lead member:** Councillor Andrew Judge, Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration

Forward Plan reference number:

**Contact officer:** James McGinlay, Head of Sustainable Communities Ext 4154

**Technical Enquires:** Ashley Heller, Project Manager Ext 4675

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**Recommendations:**

That the Street Management Advisory Committee considers the issues detailed in this report and recommends that the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration:

- A. Notes the content of this report and the issues set out related to the implementation of a town centre improvement scheme in Mitcham
  - B. Notes the outcome of the informal consultation conducted in November/ December 2012 on the issues raised and officers response to them in relation to the broad scheme proposal
  - C. Notes the considerations related to the procurement, implementation and legalities associated with the scheme and the steps officers are taking to ensure these issues are appropriately addressed as part of the project
  - D. Agrees that the proposed outline design concepts as set out be developed and taken forward to further public consultation in the timescales set out
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**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report informs the Street Management Advisory Committee of the background and progress to date on a town centre improvement project for Mitcham.
- 1.2. It sets out the main issues related to the scheme, representations received by stakeholders / members of the public and officers' suggested response to them in the context of project delivery. The report also proposes an outline scheme design to take forward for further consultation and possible implementation
- 1.3. This report also sets out a procurement and implementation strategy to ensure delivery of the scheme in line with funding conditions and timescales.

## 2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Despite its clearly defined identity and historical continuity, Mitcham Town Centre has suffered gradual decline since at least the 1960's. The fundamental causes of this decline are likely to be multifaceted but may include housing policy, impact of out of town and supermarket retail on local independent shops, the increasing traffic dominance relating to Mitcham as a 'through route' and the consequent 'knock on' effects on business confidence in the area. In addition the long term absence of a rail station close to the town centre reduced perceived accessibility and therefore the attractiveness of the area as a residential commuter location which has helped drive regeneration in nearby areas such as Tooting and Streatham.
- 2.2. The council has - for at least the last 25 years - recognised this decline and investigated solutions to address it. While it is not the purpose of this paper to offer a detailed analysis of earlier initiatives, it is instructive to summarise a number of points which have relevance to the current project.
- 2.3. Initially, a key focus of interest was the reduction of traffic congestion levels in the town centre. In context, it was long recognised that the A23 route (Streatham to Croydon) was a congestion 'hot spot' and Mitcham was detrimentally impacted by this. The Department of Transport did, until the early 90's have a paper scheme to extend the M23 to Streatham running through Mitcham. However this scheme had already become unfeasible by the time of the building of the Holborn Way bypass in the early 1990's.
- 2.4. The objective of the bypass was clear. By removing traffic, the London Road 'high street' would become more attractive and accessible for pedestrians and given the level and type of traffic currently using Holborn Way, it would be difficult to criticise this concept even though it has not resulted in the desired rejuvenation of the retail core.
- 2.5. By 1999 (less than 7 years since the completion of Holborn Way) alternative strategies were being considered to reintroduce more activity to London Road that had been lost since the pedestrianisation
- 2.6. A number of studies took place over the next 4 years
  - LPAC Town Centre Health Check Survey (LBM, 1999)
  - Mitcham Town Centre Capacity Study (WS Atkins in association with Drivers Jonas, May 1999)
  - Mitcham Urban Village – A Plan for the Future (2000)
  - Mitcham Urban Village Consultation Programme (Town Centre Limited, July 2001)
  - Mitcham Urban Village Street Environment Study (Urban Initiatives, August 2002)
  - Mitcham Urban Village Transportation Improvements (JMP Consultants, September 2003)

- Mitcham Town Centre – Urban Design Brief (Space Syntax, February 2005)
- 2.7. The studies unsurprisingly identified many of the concerns relating to the town centre which have informed the current scheme under development, in particular, the poor accessibility issues especially for pedestrians and cyclists.
  - 2.8. The Mitcham Urban Village concept (formed at a time of the property boom) was focused on new developments (housing/ live work/ retail) to create a restored town centre. This was to be supported through environmental and traffic management proposals, an upgraded Fair Green and significantly reduced traffic capacity on surrounding roads.
  - 2.9. Additionally in 2003, separate proposals by JMP Consultants were developed for a bus based regeneration scheme in which south bound only buses were allowed into London Road complemented by a new bus station on the corner of Holborn Way and Upper Green West. These proposals were taken to relatively advanced stage of detail with consultation showing 63% of people in favour of the bus link and 72% in favour of the bus interchange. The council subsequently approved the scheme on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2003.
  - 2.10. Despite this approval, the scheme was not implemented, due to emerging plans for the comprehensive redevelopment of the town centre, which would have significantly impacted on the road layout. However, this development approach did not receive sufficient local support and was therefore never approved, although the borough continued to adopt a development led strategy for regeneration of Mitcham as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document Development Brief published in 2006.
  - 2.11. In parallel to this strategy a number of smaller scale interventions were implemented to promote the town centre, upgrade the environment and restore business confidence. These included
    - Relocation of the Market and clock tower
    - A dedicated Town Centre Manager and the creation of the Mitcham Means Business branding
    - Public realm improvements to the Fair Green, including new planting
  - 2.12. In 2008 a Living Streets Pedestrian Audit carried out prior to the opening of Eastfield Station still identified poor accessibility around the area as a major concern and barrier to movement.
  - 2.13. The opening of Eastfield Station did nevertheless facilitate significant investment in upgrading the key walking route to the station via St Marks Road and the Laburnum Estate, which was completed in 2009.
  - 2.14. More recently in 2011/12 a public realm, bus access and loading scheme was implemented on Upper Green East. This work addressed specific issues related to the layout and operation of the area.
  - 2.15. In summary, the scope of initiatives has moved away from large scale road based solutions, through to developer led regeneration and finally to smaller scale incremental measures. These initiatives, while each well

considered, have not either individually or cumulatively resulted in the significant enhancement to the prospects for the town centre.

- 2.16. Whilst the previous initiatives have not had the required transformational impact, recent changes peripheral to the town centre itself (both negative and positive) ensure that the imperative for real improvement remains. These include:
- The opening of Mitcham Eastfield Station;
  - The construction of a number of large housing developments on the periphery of the town centre;
  - The opening of a large supermarket on the edge of the town in Western Road;
- 2.17. The council's Future Merton (FM) team, in reviewing the earlier initiatives, and considering the current funding opportunities has formulated a holistic approach to addressing the issues in Mitcham. The principles of this approach are: -
- Ensuring that physical and community focused measures are 'joined up'
  - Being mindful - rather than reliant - on commercial development potential
  - Concentrating on elements of the environment for which the council has direct responsibility for and the ability to change
  - Focusing on accessibility and business viability and understanding the relationship between the two.
- 2.18. To achieve this strategy FM has created a single branding (Rediscover Mitcham) under which a package of funding has been brought together to achieve a transformational level of change.
- 2.19. Rediscover Mitcham integrates 3 types of initiatives – improving accessibility, supporting business and the community and upgrading the public realm.
- 2.20. The main principle of the scheme is that by increasing the accessibility and attractiveness of the Fair Green and London Road, overall activity will increase, which will, in turn, support businesses and engage the local community in their town centre.
- 2.21. The business and community initiatives are delivered under the auspices of the Mayors Outer London Fund (OLF). The OLF initiatives are grouped under 5 headings:
- Shop fronts**
- Improve the perception and feel of the shopping offer, attract further custom and additional business to the centre.

### **Market regeneration**

- Create a vibrant and coherent market with a unique selling proposition to attract visitors specifically to Mitcham

### **Business support**

- Retain and grow businesses to make a more viable town centre, taking advantage of the fact that rental values are competitive in comparison to neighbouring town centres.

### **Marketing and communications**

- Improve the image of Mitcham as a hub for local initiatives to attract shoppers and visitors and help create a sense of place/identity especially for young people

### **Community engagement**

- Improved community cohesion and ownership of regeneration projects through an exchange mechanism, with community needs placed at the heart of regeneration activities

In addition, two of the OLF activities specifically integrate with the wider physical accessibility improvement initiatives. These are:

### **Open space improvements**

- Enhance spaces that the community can use safely and host events to boost business and activity

### **Public Realm improvements**

- Coordination of OLF funding with wider public realm funding streams to ease movement and aesthetic quality of the public realm within the town centre, and to neighbouring areas

2.22. The OLF initiatives that are intended to facilitate accessibility improvements are further supported by the wider physical enhancement plans to the town centre. These improvements have specific objectives:

- **to improve access** to Mitcham town centre, specifically the Fair Green primarily for pedestrians and buses but also for cyclists, short term parking and servicing for businesses
- **to reduce car dominance** by reprioritising the way road space, is used and the area feels, increasing space for pedestrians, improving bus facilities and enhancing the quality of the public realm
- **to introduce more pedestrian activity** to Mitcham Town Centre by reducing severance
- **to upgrade the public realm** by improving the design and visual appearance of the area

2.23. To achieve these objectives a programme of work, with 5 distinct phases, has been developed, with each phase focusing on a specific geographical area determined by a broad assessment of key accessibility issues, as well as achievability within the project timescale and budget. These are summarised in Figure 1

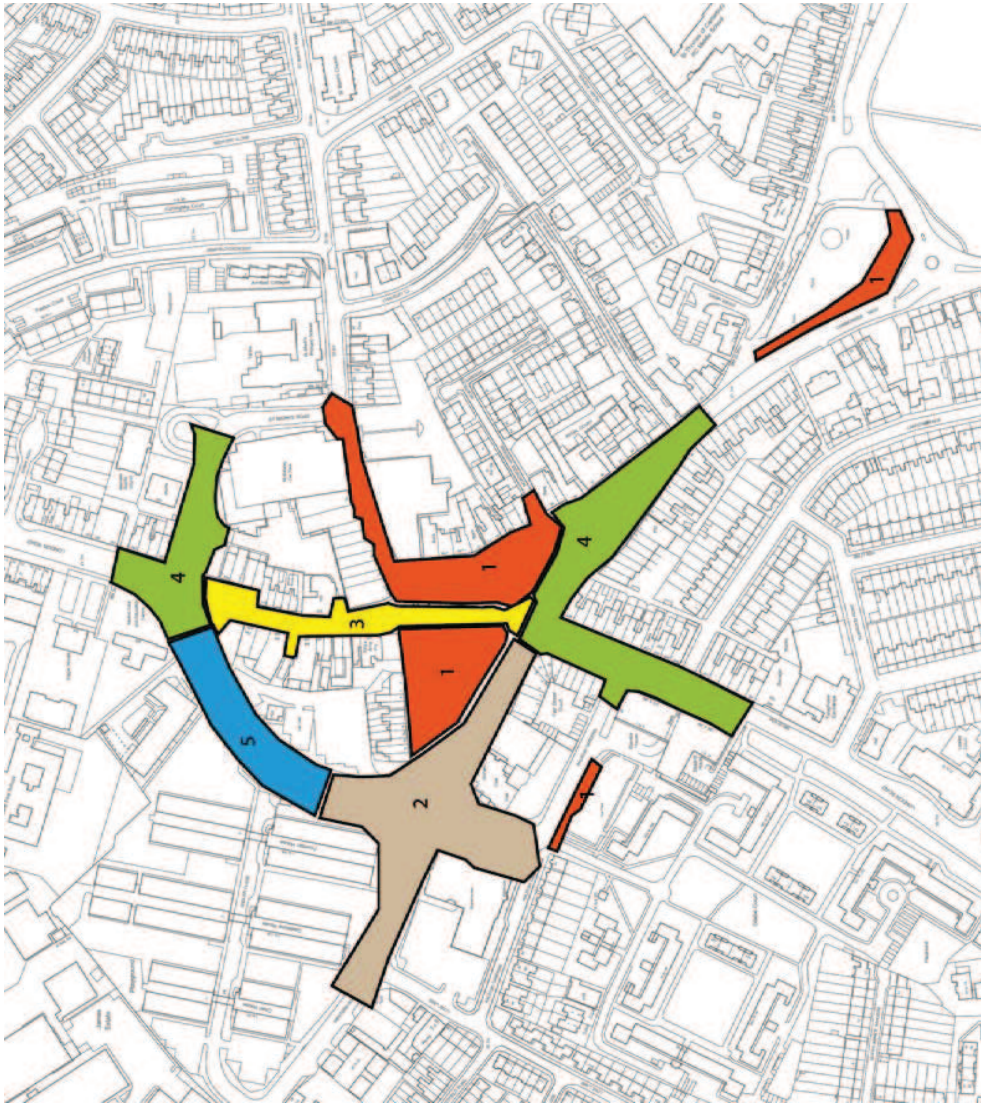


Figure 1 – Overall Phasing Rediscover Mitcham

- 2.24. **Phase 1** encompasses the Fair Green and Majestic Way. This area has been phased first due to the minimal impacts on the road network of works in this area as well as the wider project benefits of a quick, clear and demonstrable physical improvement to the heart of the town centre. This will increase confidence in the council's commitment to achieving real improvements thereby supporting many of the business and community activities. In addition Phase 1 would incorporate the creation of a new bus standing facility in Raleigh Gardens which will facilitate the relocation of bus route 200 in Phase 2 and also a gateway improvement to Three Kings Piece to improve accessibility and leisure opportunity..
- 2.25. Phase 1 places a strong focus on reinvigorating the existing market space with the possible provision of new stalls and weather protection and lighting to improve operation of the market as well as increasing its physical presence in the area.
- 2.26. The iconic Clock Tower would be relocated during Phase 1. There is the opportunity to relocate the Clock to its original position before its move due to the market relocation or to an entirely new location. Local people should have a key role in determining this.
- 2.27. **Phase 2** focuses on the Western Road/ Holborn Way junction which represents a key severance point between the town centre and the areas immediately to the west of it. This severance will be accentuated by new development on Western Road including the ASDA superstore and the housing development on the Old Gas Works site. Upper Green West is also included in Phase 2 as a major through route in the town centre. Cycle improvements within the area will also be a key priority.
- 2.28. **Phase 3** contains the pedestrianised area of London Road. This area runs through the centre of the Fair Green and is an important access point to local facilities, as it runs through the centre of the shopping area and branches off to Majestic Way.
- 2.29. One of the key concepts proposed within Phase 3 is the introduction of a 2 way bus lane through this pedestrian area. The bus lane proposal has proved to be a highly discussed topic in local workshops and community group meetings, although, as set out in Section 5, it remains widely popular amongst the general public. The main objections to the bus lane proposal are
- It will split the Fair Green in half and create a busy road where now there is peace and quiet;
  - It will be dangerous for pedestrians;
  - It will not achieve benefits for the town centre.
- 2.30. It is clear that introducing buses into the Fair Green will have some disbenefits in terms of noise. However the design of the Fair Green itself can reduce the impact of noise from all sides, for example through the use of plantings/ features/ trees, to reduce the intrusion of traffic.
- 2.31. The Fair Green is not used currently as a park like space for most of the year; as such it is questionable if providing 2 genuine park like spaces

(with seating, lighting, paths, and amenity) will be an overall disbenefit to the town centre.

2.32. In general, as set out above, the ethos of the proposals is to recognise the need to balance objectives. Mitcham benefits from significant open space in its immediate vicinity. However the town centre itself must also operate effectively as a town centre (retail, access, safety, community integration etc) and the overriding prioritisation of ‘peace and quiet’ needs to be considered within this context. Moreover the proposals actually result in an increase in green space rather than a reduction as the following demonstrates.

2.33. The Historic, Existing and Proposed layouts have been compared according to three different methods:-

- Registered Town Green

This compares the current area registered as Town Green with the area proposed to be re-dedicated as Town Green.

- Extent of Green

This compares the Historic, Existing and Proposed areas of what effectively makes up the Fair Green – what is likely to be perceived as the ‘Fair Green’. This includes the area used for the market and internal footpaths, but excludes the footpaths outside the buildings surrounding the green.

- Landscaping

This compares the Historic, Existing and Proposed areas of soft landscaping. This includes internal paths but mainly excludes paths surrounding landscaping. On the Proposed area, the path on the south side has been included. This is to account for the adjacent segregated cycle lane, which is not included in the calculation, and is not for general use by pedestrians.

The areas are shown in the **Table 1** below.

	Town Green	Extent of Green	Landscaping
Historic	N.A.	4,112m <sup>2</sup>	2,906m <sup>2</sup>
Existing	3,777m <sup>2</sup>	5,551m <sup>2</sup>	4,504m <sup>2</sup>
Proposed	4,436m <sup>2</sup>	5,653m <sup>2</sup>	3,737m <sup>2</sup>
Extg-Prop Diff.	+659m <sup>2</sup>	+102m <sup>2</sup>	-767m <sup>2</sup>

2.34. As can be seen the extent of the green increases under the current proposal but also there is a very significant increase in protected ‘town green’ which secures the future of the space for current and future residents in Mitcham

2.35. Under the proposed scheme, there will be an extension of pavement space around the Fair Green area together with a small loss of green if the existing footpath were replaced with a bus lane and pavement. However, this loss would be mitigated by new green space close by – In particular, a significant extension of pavement space could be achieved



at the intersection of Upper Green West and Holborn Way as well as an increase in green space due to the narrowing of Upper Green West. An important objective of the proposals is to ensure no net loss of green area.

- 2.36. In addition, careful design of the Fair Green can improve its usability through provision of seating, better lighting and paths and the perception of increased safety due to the higher pedestrian activity aided by the bus stops immediately adjacent.
- 2.37. While the importance of retaining the green is an essential and fundamental element of the proposal, the vitality of the town centre is also of importance as is the quality, usability and attractiveness of the green space. Mitcham benefits from significant green space both immediately to the south and north (Mitcham Common and Figges Marsh) and the Fair Green has a dual function as a green space and part of a functioning suburban town centre. The objectives of the Rediscover Mitcham scheme are to achieve a balanced approach to maintaining the benefits of the green while ensuring that local shops and services are given every opportunity to succeed as along with ensuring that the transport connectivity in Mitcham reflects the needs of the local population.
- 2.38. In terms of safety the design itself will need to take into account issues such as safe crossing points, lighting, speed control and signage.
- 2.39. There are a number of examples of buses using an area generally perceived to be 'pedestrian priority' for example, St Johns Road Clapham, Barking town centre, Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire, Hackney Mare Street and Oxford city centre. There is no evidence that accident rates are significantly impacted due to the entry of buses into pedestrian area however the specific design and operation of the bus lane would need careful assessment. It is highly likely that a 20mph zone would be in place for any roadways within the Fair Green envelope.
- 2.40. The pictures below show a 'shared space' concept however given the frequency of services in Mitcham, the need to ensure bus reliability and the impacts on visually impaired people, it is envisaged that buses in London Road would use a more traditional clearly defined carriageway space. As can be seen from examples below, there are a number of means of integrating buses into areas with significant pedestrian footfall.



- 2.41. Clearly there is greater potential challenges in terms of road space replacing a pedestrian only zone; however the existing pedestrian zone is used by vehicles currently (for example parking, market access, loading activities). A road like design with limited formalised traffic access can be designed to promote safe use by both drivers and pedestrians.
- 2.42. The possible relocation of buses into Mitcham results in an average frequency of 90 buses per hour during peak times or a bus every 40 seconds. However in practice buses are likely to be spaced irregularly with significant periods of low bus activity even during the peak hour
- 2.43. The objective of the bus lane proposal is to reintroduce activity to the London Road pedestrianised area and to Fair Green. Based on London Buses figures approximately 5995 people board and alight buses each working day on stops which could be relocated to the new bus lane. This provides potential for up to 1,348,875, additional pedestrian journeys through the Fair Green each year (based on 225 working days pa.) This excludes weekend usage. People walking to and waiting, alighting and walking from bus stops in the Fair Green area are potential customers of shops and a revitalised market that currently do not exist.
- 2.44. Recent TfL research into travel patterns and spend in town centres concludes that those who take a bus or walk to town centres contribute the highest proportion of monthly spend in town centres. Whilst the spend per visit (£32) is lower than car users, this higher overall monthly spend is due to the higher frequency of visits by bus and on foot. This pattern of monthly spend by mode has remained consistent over time.
- 2.45. A map of local bus stops also suggests that there will be minimal disbenefit for existing shops

**Figure 2 – bus stop locations around Mitcham**



The main effects of relocating bus stops to Fair Green are on stop G which is located close to Iceland, C and D which is located next to Lidl and stop H which is on Upper Green West on the Fair Green. However, both Lidl and Iceland will benefit from the improved pedestrian links across Western Road and also already benefit from their own car parks.

- 2.46. For stops A and B (London Road) which serves north and south bound routes 127,152,201,264,270 there may be some negative impact in terms of passengers relocating to Fair Green. However, the extent of this would need to be assessed through monitoring and, to some extent, these impacts could be mitigated through the improved pedestrian linkages across St Marks Road better linking London Road.
- 2.47. A summary of impacts by route and stop is set out below in Table 2

Table 2 – Bus Stop Impacts of Bus Lane Proposal						
Bus Route	STOP C (to close)	STOP D (to close)	STOP E (to remain)	STOP G (to close)	STOP H (to close)	FAIR GREEN
127	NB service relocated to Fair Green				SB service relocated to Fair Green	
152		WB service relocated to by Lidl car park			SB service relocated to Fair Green	
200				New stop provided on Raleigh Gardens*		
201		NB service relocated to Fair Green			SB service relocated to Fair Green	
264	NB service relocated to Fair Green					SB service to gain additional stop on Fair Green
270	NB service relocated to Fair Green					SB service to gain additional stop on Fair Green
280	NB service relocated to Fair Green				SB service relocated to Fair Green	
355	NB service relocated to Fair Green					SB service to gain additional stop on Fair Green
S1			Service being rerouted to run north			Rerouted service will stop on Fair Green
118	Service stops not affected by proposed changes					

\* As a short term measure it is proposed to provide the 200 bus service with a new stop and stand in front of Raleigh Gardens car park. As part of a later phase of the project it is also intended that the 200 service will be routed to terminate and start on Fair Green – either with a layover stand on St. Marks Road or for the service to extend further north from the town centre.

- 2.48. In addition to greater pedestrian numbers in Fair Green, there are direct public transport benefits of the proposal by improving bus to bus interchange, reducing bus journey times and thereby increasing practical frequency to key locations. This further promotes Mitcham's attraction as a commuter town which is promoting growth in the local housing market.
- 2.49. There are also existing operational concerns with some of the bus stops that could potentially be removed by the new bus lane, in particular bus

stop H which requires buses to pull across 2 lanes of traffic on Upper Green West

- 2.50. There is no certain way of regenerating town centre and clearly it is not being suggested that all of the potential new journeys will result in new spend, however increasing visitor numbers is always a key objective. In the case of Mitcham increasing visitor numbers may encourage new and existing shops to improve their retail offer. It is also of relevance to note that improving bus access to the town centre will also improve access to employment, training and education for local residents thereby improving the social inclusion in the area.
- 2.51. **Phase 4** relates to junctions and roads immediately surrounding the Fair Green to the south and north including Upper Green East and at the opposite end of the pedestrian area, St Marks Road junction with London Road and Holborn Way. These areas represent important gateways into Mitcham, but are also traffic sensitive, which partly explains the decision to phase them toward the latter stages of the project thereby helping to ensure that movement issues associated with traffic management during construction are minimised
- 2.52. **Phase 5** whilst within the master plan, falls outside the funded Rediscover Mitcham project. This phase addresses the wider Holborn Way by pass which bounds the town centre and is a key strategic route but also a severance point. Progression of Phase 5 is more closely linked to future commercial development coming forward but is built on land in council ownership.
- 2.53. The development of final proposals based around the area within phases 1 to 4 is linked to funding opportunities and constraints, technical assessment approval processes and the overall project delivery strategy. The timetable for the project delivery is set out in section 5 below.
- 2.54. As set out in 2.25, Phase 1 offers the first opportunity for physical improvements to take place. However in order to take advantage of this opportunity the early design stage for Phase 1 has been carried out without the full understanding of the possible design constraints which may become apparent in Phase 2 – 4. Consequently the design proposals which have been worked up to date are relatively generic and adaptable to a number of scenarios that may occur in Phases 2 – 4.
- 2.55. The design proposal for Phase 1 has been developed after extensive consultation (see section 5 and Annex 1 for a full analysis of the consultation). To date the consultation has been undertaken in 3 stages:
- - Stakeholder engagement – a range of discursive meetings with key local stakeholders to establish to broad parameters of the project.
  - A wide scale public engagement exercise based on the Rediscover Mitcham brochure (attached as a supporting

document) in which 25,000 leaflets were distributed across the CR4 postcode and which a number of broad concepts for Phase 1 Fair Green were set out.

- A series of workshops in Mitcham town centre to address the broad design outline of the Fair Green and also specific issues related to accessibility for mobility impaired people in the area.

2.56. In broad terms the consultation demonstrates support for a set of coherent proposals which amount to more than simply a public realm upgrade scheme in Mitcham. This consultation gives a clear 'direction of travel' which enables officers to develop a specific set of proposals for further consultation in spring 2013. However there is also recognition that more detail will need to be provided to the public - which a further consultation will achieve.

2.57. However subject to consultation and further approval in outline terms main elements of the project that will be taken forward are as follows

- **Phase 1 – Fair Green, Majestic Way**
- Objectives - Retaining the traditional feel of the Fair Green, better integrate it into the surrounding town centre, make it more accessible for all, ensure it remains a community hub and event space, support businesses surrounding the Fair Green, increase the prominence of gateways into the town centre.

#### **Proposed measures to be taken forward for further consultation**

- A traditional park like space to be created on the Fair Green including footpaths, appropriate lighting (both functional and ambient), seating, appropriate railings
- Upgraded paving or where possible reusing existing paving.
- A community hub (such as a performance space or bandstand) which will facilitate and support community events.
- A revitalised market square with weather protection and lighting to allow greater utilisation of the area in terms of times of operations, to offer weather protection and to provide a greater presence for the market to help attract more diverse stalls
- Move the clock tower to ensure that it reflects the priorities of the new design and to investigate the concept of improving the feature status of the clock tower (e.g. by creating a bespoke plinth) and taking the opportunity to refurbish the mechanism and reinstall the lights and generally restore
- To provide a one-way, traffic calmed circulatory road with associated loading and short term parking bays along the edge of Fair Green (East and West). This will be accessed by an entrance on Upper Green East using the existing entrance onto Montrose Gardens and a new exit onto Upper Green West
- A temporary relocation of bus stop H on Fair Green to allow for wider scheme implementation.

- A new appropriately designed 'boardwalk' to run along side/ over Three Kings Piece to better connect the town centre to Mitcham Common and to improve the functionality, attractiveness and gateway status of the area as a leisure location
- A key concern within the consultation is the provision of a public toilet. It is recognised that a conventional toilet facility is unlikely to be sustainable in financial terms. In addition there is a 'community toilet scheme' which although underused could be promoted more effectively. However officers would consider it prudent to research affordable options for some form of limited toilet provision (for example coin operated part time facility) as this would support visitor numbers to the town centre. A more detailed recommendation can be brought forward as part of the further consultation. The location of such a facility would need further consideration but could fall within the Phase 1 boundary.
- **Phase 2 - Western Road and Upper Green West Junction**
- Objectives – to reduce the actual and perceived separation and disconnection created by this junction, improve crossing facilities, reduce traffic dominance, increase pedestrian space, to improve pedestrian links to Western Road area.

**Proposed measures to be taken forward for further consultation**

- Reduce crossing distances on each existing arm of the junction including removal of the left turn only lane from Western Road to Holborn Way and replace with a straight ahead/ left turn lane.
- Remove bus route 200 from its current standing position to a temporary new facility on Raleigh Gardens in order to facilitate an increase in pedestrian space and reduce size of junction.
- Move the stop for bus route 152 to Western Road adjacent to Lidl Car Park.
- Introduce a new direct crossing from Upper Green West (Iceland area) to Fair Green.
- Narrow Upper Green West from 3 to 2 lanes of eastbound traffic and to create a new short stay parking/ loading bay on Upper Green West outside Iceland.
- Improve access through this junction for cyclists particularly approaching from the west and east directions
- Upgrade the fabric of the public realm in the area.
- **Phase 3 – London Road pedestrian zone**
- Objectives – to create an accessible and well used route into the Fair Green supporting the retail and market facilities in London Road/ Majestic Way and the Fair Green, promote secure use of the town centre throughout the day and night, improve direct links in and out of the town centre.

#### **Proposed measures to be taken forward for further consultation**

- To consider and offer to the public for consultation a 2-way bus and cycle lane proposal through the pedestrian area on London Road and to design this lane in a manner that integrates into the wider objectives and the Fair Green open space (e.g. in terms of the width of the lane which would be minimised, the design of kerbs and stops, the lighting and paving) and shelters
- To upgrade crossing facilities at the 2 ends of the London Road pedestrian areas to both improve pedestrian facilities and facilitate the movement of buses into and out of the area.
- Upper Green East/West – facilitate bus movement into Fair Green which would involve the creation of a ‘contra flow’ bus lane. running from the junction of Raleigh Gardens northbound toward Fair Green.
- Simplify crossing movements for pedestrians and address pedestrian over crowding.
- Integrate junction redesigns into wider town centre ‘public realm’ enhancements through paving and lighting upgrades.
- **Phase 4 – Upper Green East and Fair Green South side, St Marks Road**
- Objectives – to improve pedestrian movement across this road better linking local facilities, facilitate safe cycling, facilitate movement into and out of Fair Green

#### **Proposed measures to be taken forward for further consultation**

- To move existing pedestrian crossing to opposite post office therefore better linking Upper Green East shops with Fair Green
- Where possible to achieve any possible pavement widening on Upper Green East to promote access to Three Kings Piece
- St Marks Road – reduce the crossing widths and simplify crossing movements by reducing the size of the junction and removing unnecessary pedestrian islands. Create a bus entry/exit movement to London Road North.

#### **Phase 5 – Holborn Way**

- Objectives – to reduce the feeling of traffic dominance of this road and to provide a boulevard accessing Mitcham town centre not only an urban heavily trafficked through route, promote access to Sibthorpe Road car park and to improve the operational effectiveness of this car park, facilitate longer term development opportunities

#### **Proposed measures to be taken forward for further consultation**

- To make small changes to the alignment of Holborn Way to straighten it up and to increase the space available for Sibthorpe Road car park



- To create a new “T” junction from Sibthorpe Road car park onto Holborn Way and to remove the existing in and out access to the car park
- To create a new crossing point on Holborn Way
- To design the public realm in Holborn Way to better reflect a balanced status of access route and through route (e.g. through use of trees, planting, central reservation and lighting upgrades)

2.58. These proposed measures are summarised in Figure 3 and represent a direction of travel and would be subject to change through the ongoing design process, the public consultation and the constraints due to technical challenges such as the impact on traffic congestion and the impact of underground utility costs.



St Marks Road Junction improvement

Possible Bus Standing facility for 200 St Marks Road

Bus only entrance/exit to pedestrian area

New bus stops in London Road

New circulatory road Upper Green

Upgraded Market Square

New park space in Fair Green

New junction for bus entry/exit onto London Road/ Upper Green

New pedestrian crossing opposite post office

Contra flow bus lane London Road

Upgrade to Three Kings Piece area

Urban Boulevard on Holborn Way

New crossing opportunities Holborn Way

New junction for entry to Sibthorpe Road Car Park

New pedestrian friendly junction at Western Road

Move 200 bus stand to new location

Bus standing facility Raleigh Gardens

Cycle lane Fair Green

Additional pedestrian space at key locations

Public realm upgrade – lighting, seating, paving, declutter throughout

- 2.59. A key consideration around the viability of any final scheme proposal will be the maintenance impacts. These issues will include
- the identification of materials/ furniture which are readily available, sustainable and affordable.
  - the consideration of impact of location on maintenance issues (e.g. visibility, potential for accidental damage, etc).
- 2.60. Currently the maintenance arrangements around the Fair Green area are shared between the Waste, Traffic & Highways and Open Spaces teams. This could result in some confusion as to specific responsibilities.
- 2.61. A major objective of Rediscover Mitcham will be ensuring that interventions maintain their qualitative edge over time. To that end as project client, Future Merton would seek to agree with each relevant department a clear set of responsibilities for each area and items such as the clock tower.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. **Do nothing:** As set out above the current viability of the town centre in the town centre has been identified as a concern for a number of years and a number of proposals have been put forward but none taken forward to fruition. Given the funding available, the decision to do nothing would recognise that the council has no role to play in the physical regeneration of Mitcham.
- 3.2. **Widen the scheme:** There have been investigations as part of earlier initiatives into fundamental realignments of the road network in Mitcham, including the removal of the existing one-way system. Whilst this scheme has merits as part of town centre redevelopment it is likely to require changes to property lines and therefore without a facilitating development, would involve council acquisitions of private property. This would not be achievable within the current budget of Rediscover Mitcham and moreover without a commercial development on line, it would be difficult to justify losing existing local businesses in order to achieve what is effectively a road based scheme.
- 3.3. However although Rediscover Mitcham does not facilitate removal of the gyratory equally it does not reduce the viability of future changes or make it less feasible.
- 3.4. There is also a recognition within the scheme design objectives, that there remain aspirations to encourage appropriate development within Mitcham and that the existing project should not limit the potential for these projects.
- 3.5. As such the Rediscover Mitcham scheme supports future development opportunities through ensuring that the public highway changes do not impact development sites and in fact support them by, where possible, extending the available development space. At the junction of Raleigh Gardens and Upper Green West the removal of bus route 200 will create a future development site in council ownership and at the junction of Holborn Way and Upper Green West the extension of footway space will

also allow for a future development site in council ownership should these achieve the necessary permission.

- 3.6. **Fundamentally alter the objectives of the scheme:** The scheme is primarily conceived and funded as a holistic town centre regeneration scheme. This approach therefore integrates different objectives (outputs). However, this also impacts on the focus and balance of the measures (inputs). For example a scheme that was entirely based on accessibility objectives would potentially have a different design approach. Similarly a scheme that was entirely focused on public realm improvements may also differ in terms of fundamental concepts. An obvious specific example would be achieving a balance between the unique open space benefits offered by the Fair Green and the Fair Green as the heart of the town centre. The design ethos presumes that both objectives are important and therefore accepts that there is an element of compromise between the two.
- 3.7. An alternative approach would be to focus entirely on the improvement of the open space as an 'end in itself' however this does not address the cycle of decline. It is highly unlikely that an improved Fair Green will, alone, result in significant improvement to the viability of the town centre. Whilst the Fair Green may be a destination to some, unless it is integrated into a more attractive and accessible town centre as a whole it will become an underused area as local people continue to visit elsewhere.

#### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. Given the phasing, scale and scope of the scheme consultation is a key element. Consultation outcomes are summarised in Appendix 1
- 4.2. The consultation process has 5 stages in total, 3 of which have been completed to date
- 4.3. **Stage 1** was an informal consultation to establish the broad outline of the project. This has included a stall at Mitcham Carnival in June 2012, followed by a range of informal meetings with stakeholders such as local ward Members, the Mitcham Community Forum, Friends of Mitcham Common, Mitcham Business forum and council officers. In addition as part of the Outer London Fund community empowerment work stream, London Sustainability Exchange were employed to create a community panel to involve local residents in the early awareness raising for the project. Specific proposals were not raised at this stage but a number of potential priorities and issues were discussed.
- 4.4. **Stage 2** was a wider dialogue process setting out very broad concepts and using the local issues identified in Stage 1 as a starting point. Framed as a 'problem – solution' discussion, the objective of this stage (which included the distribution of 25,000 brochures and a Fair Green Roadshow (over 3 days) which was visited by approximately 300 peoples), was to establish local priorities on which to base more detailed design. A brochure is provided a supporting paper to this report.
- 4.5. The brochures were distributed with the winter edition of My Merton to all properties in the CR4 postcode. There were some concerns reported

back of delivery failures. Additional copies of the brochure were left in the town centre as well as being made available on the Merton Council internet site, with a link directly from the home page.

- 4.6. **Stage 3** was a set of contacts with stakeholders and local residents dealing with design specifics for each phase. This was implemented through a series of workshops held between 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> January. The summary of these workshops is included in Annex 2. The workshops saw 36 local people give up to 3 hours each discuss the connectivity around Mitcham, key concerns and opportunity and also to discuss the potential for events to be held on the Fair Green.
- 4.7. These workshops set out a number of priorities in the area
- Mitcham is in need of improvement, and a focal point
  - has a market that needs to be made more of (with varied goods and a wider offer)
  - needs more planting and better use of redundant spaces (e.g. car parks)
  - needs better lighting, and easier traffic flow through the centre
  - has potential, and many people who are willing to help
- 4.8. In relation to the Fair Green a number of key design pointers were identified from the workshops. The role of Fair Green as a park (place) a through route and a focus for the town centre was raised by many in the workshops as a three-part function of what many perceive to be the 'heart' of Mitcham town centre. There is a need to obtain balance between these three functions: people want a place that has better shops, a better market, better linkages and places to sit.
- 4.9. This leads to some clear principles for the design team to take forward:
- The Fair Green cannot be conceived purely as a village green
  - The Fair Green must connect the town centre
  - There must be a community function/facility in the green
  - The green must retain its 'green and pleasant' feel
  - Mitcham Town Centre is a wider area: do not consider Fair Green in isolation
- 4.10. It should be noted that many perceive the town centre as wider than simply the Fair Green, and that this notion of a more unified approach to linking up the various parts of Mitcham (including the Canons, Cricket Green and Figges Marsh) needs to be reflected in design analysis and delivery with regard to public realm improvements in Mitcham.
- 4.11. **Stage 4** will be a further consultation on the final proposals for. This consultation will be held in April 2013. The form and extent of this consultation will broadly follow that of Stage 2 including a mail out to all residents in the CR4 postcode.
- 4.12. Stage 5 recognises that certain elements of the scheme will also require statutory consultation under the Traffic Management Order making process as set out in section 7.

- 4.13. In addition to council led consultation specific changes to bus routing and stopping arrangements would be consulted upon separately by TfL Buses as part of their route change procedure in which all users of the route were given the opportunity to comment on bus route changes.

## 5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. Given that the project objectives are fundamentally linked to regenerating Mitcham, it is appropriate that a challenging but achievable timescale is in place. It must also be considered that in Mitcham the absence of delivery on earlier major scheme proposals increases the likelihood of 'consultation fatigue' and broader cynicism about the councils determination to deliver real change. This suggests against a long period of inaction and the project has been framed in this context.

- 5.2. The overall project timescales are set out in Table 1

Milestone	Description	Target Completion Date
Identify outline design concepts	A number of broad ideas which can be offered to the public for further input	September 2012
Complete Project Set Up	Agree all necessary project management structures and processes	November 2012
Carry out informal priorities dialogue	Wider public consultation on refined outline design	November/ December 2012
Agree concept design for Fair Green	Reflecting public dialogue outcomes a concept design produced and approved	January 2013
Agree outline design concept for road layout Phase 2/3/4	Reflecting public dialogue outcomes final design produced still subject to technical sign off from TfL	March 2013
Carry out scheme consultation	Conventional consultation on Scheme	April 2013
Technical Assurance	Achieve necessary technical assurances for Phases 2,3,4	July 2013
Implementation	Construct Fair Green Phase 1	August to December 2013
Implementation	Construct Western Road/ Upper Green West Phase 2	January to June 2014
Implementation	Construct London Road/ Upper Green East Phase 3 & 4	September 2015
Completion	Completed scheme returned to highway maintenance	September 2015

- 5.3. In very broad terms the main practical timing concern is the need to ensure that financial spend is contained within appropriate financial years linked to funding

- 5.4. Although any physical works are not likely to be particularly complex in themselves, construction will be constrained due to the very busy location which will require careful planning and traffic management.
- 5.5. From the above, It is clear that the period from February 2013 to July 2013 is of crucial importance as within this timescale it will be necessary to achieve a degree of certainty over the design for the final scheme and consult upon it, prior to construction of Phase 1. This will ensure that Phase 1 can be constructed with knowledge of how it will fit into the wider scheme and which design option is to be built.
- 5.6. It is intended to update the Street Management Advisory Committee on the progress of this work in May 2013.

## 6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

The project is funded through multiple streams as set out below in the table below.

**Table 3 – Budget profile**

Source	Description	Amount £	Notes
OLF	Mi3: Open Space Improvement	£80,000	Soft landscaping
OLF	Mi4: Public Realm Improvement	£280,000	Hard landscaping
TfL (LIP)	Allocation for Mitcham Town Centre (Corridors, Neighborhoods & Supporting Measures)	£320,000	Year1 2012-13
TfL (LIP)	Allocation for Mitcham Town Centre (Corridors, Neighborhoods & Supporting Measures)	£280,000	Year 2, 2013-14
LBM (Capital)	Future Merton capital funding allocation for "gyratory removal"	£1,500,000	Agreed

Source	Description	Amount £	Notes
LBM (S106)	ASDA – “Environmental Contribution” (Town Centre)	£180,000	Agreed
LBM (S106)	ASDA - “Environmental Contribution” (late payment fine)	£3,988	Agreed
LBM (S106)	ASDA – “Sustainable Transport” (Western Road)	£70,000	Agreed
LBM (S106)	ASDA – “Sustainable Transport” (late payment fine)	£1,550	Agreed
LBM (S106)	Mitcham Gasworks – “Sustainable Transport” (@ £500 per unit)	£143,000	Maximum approximate
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£2,858,538</b>	
<b>MAJOR SCHEME</b>		<b>£2,900,000</b>	
		<b>£5,758,538</b>	

- 6.1. Major Scheme funding is a key element of the funding mix. TfL Major Schemes are conceived as ‘holistic’ step change type improvements to a town centre which integrate accessibility, public realm and regeneration objectives. The Major scheme approval process is defined in a number of approval gateways. In December 2012, Mitcham achieved ‘Step 1’ approval which unlocked £300k of the £2,900,000 set out above. As the final design and project delivery plan for the scheme develops, further gateway approvals will be unlocked.
- 6.2. The approval process is also linked to the TfL business case process. In effect this means that the wider benefits of the improvements are measured and estimated in economic and transport terms. This business case process focuses the scheme design on accessibility as well as ‘urban realm’ upgrades which while positive are not likely to have major economic benefit in themselves.
- 6.3. Based on early outline concept estimates the nominal allocation of budget by work activity is set out in Table 4



<b>Project Management</b>	£425,000
<b>Project Development</b>	£125,000
<b>Phase 1</b>	£895,000
<b>Phase 2</b>	£1,000,000
<b>Phase 3 and 4</b>	£3,313,538

- 6.4. The outline estimates for the early design concepts are positive in terms of affordability, but significant contingency is built in due to the potential for cost increases and in particular the issue of utility diversions.
- 6.5. Given the scale of the scheme and the requirement of the TfL Major Scheme programme, it is likely that the value of works will be in excess of the European Union procurement limits of £4,348,350
- 6.6. Phase 1, given the required timescales would be excluded from the 'package of works' and would likely be carried out via the boroughs term contract arrangements. However Phases 2 to 4/5 may be offered competitively to a pre approved list of contractors on the TfL London Highways Alliance Contract or similar framework agreement.
- 6.7. In order to deliver the Rediscover Mitcham project, an internal project team has been established incorporating Future Merton as project sponsor and client with officers from Future Merton and Traffic and Highway Services working together in a project team. A Project Board incorporating the Head of Sustainable Communities, Head of Street Scene and Waste, Traffic & Highways Services Manager, Future Merton Manager and Placemaking & Public Realm Manager has been established for overall governance purposes.
- 6.8. Where required, specific external resources can be drafted in on ad hoc basis to assist in technical areas. Some examples are:
- Assessing the traffic management impacts of changes to the road layout and traffic movements
  - Designing a new market layout and weather protection
  - Reviewing the scheme to ensure that the accessibility needs of mobility impaired people are taken fully into account

## **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. This scheme is carried out either on public highway or on public land and appropriate permissions will need to be sought to ensure that works are implemented in line with legal requirements.

- 7.2. Where – exceptionally – any improvements are made to private buildings or land, the full consent will be required from the responsible third party and a legal agreement entered into in terms of the scope of works and other conditions.
- 7.3. Some of the Fair Green following the 1993 pedestrianisation scheme was registered as “Town Green” which is a specific legal status under the Commons Registration Act 1965. As such legal advice has been taken relating to potential impact of a scheme on the Fair Green which may change the boundary or design of the green.
- 7.4. This advice clarifies that neither the former London Road nor the former Upper Green East and West were ‘stopped up’ as public highway in 1993 when the pedestrianisation was carried out and that neither was registered as Town Green although the core Fair Green area was.
- 7.5. However the former London Road and former Upper Green East and West were designated as part of ‘common land’ and as such should more than 250sq yards are needed to be reverted for highway or other purposes then it will need to be exchanged for other land under the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.
- 7.6. Fortunately the scheme assumes that the reduction in road space around the Fair Green will allow for an exchange to take place between highway land and common land.
- 7.7. It would be the intention to register all the final design of the Fair Green as ‘Town Green’ to ensure future protection as an open space.
- 7.8. The changes to crossing facilities can be introduced under powers conferred by Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). The Council is required by the Local Authorities Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to give notice to the public of its intention to introduce, alter or remove a formal crossing facility by Notice. This process only requires the Council to consult with the Police.
- 7.9. For the waiting/loading restriction, general parking places, disabled bays and loading bays the Traffic Management Orders would be made under Section 6 and Section 45 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). The Council is required by the Local Authorities Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to give notice of its intention to make a Traffic Order (by publishing a draft traffic order). These regulations also require the Council to consider any representations received as a result of publishing the draft order.

**8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. The scheme is intended to increase accessibility of the pedestrian environment around Mitcham town centre. The implementation of the changes to the current layout affects all sections of the community especially the young and the elderly and assists in improving safety for all road users and achieves the transport planning policies of the government, the mayor for London and the borough. The council carries

out careful consultation to ensure that all road users are given a fair opportunity to air their views and express their needs.

8.2. Specific measures include:

- Shortening pedestrian crossing distances
- Reducing impediments to pedestrian movement
- Increasing the space for pedestrian circulation
- Redesigning with crime reduction objectives taken into consideration
- Where possible reducing and gradients
- Introducing and standardising tactile paving services
- Improving and rationalising signage and local information
- Improving interchange

The outcomes of the scheme are of general benefit, but may be of particular benefit to people with mobility impairments, older people more reliant on public transport, other groups more likely to access the town centre area on foot or by cycle. As such this scheme is likely to have a positive impact on equality and community cohesion.

8.3. As part of the Stage 3 consultation a specific workshop was held with mobility impaired people and a report of this workshop is appended to this report in Appendix 3

8.4. There are no human rights implications apparent at this time

## **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. The scheme development process has included early consultations with a range of agencies involved in reducing crime and disorder including the Police, Safer Merton, Street Pastors, CCTV managers.

9.2. The objective of these consultations has been to ensure that the design of the scheme has a positive impact on crime and disorder reduction where possible and in no case creates potential for greater crime and disorder.

9.3. Within the consultation, personal security was mentioned as a concern for people visiting Mitcham and a preventative factor in people visiting more often. As such it will be of particularly importance to ensure that the design of the scheme focuses on the perception of safety

9.4. The scheme design will be audited under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which places a duty on the local authority to ensure that it takes into account crime and disorder impacts of its actions.

9.5. The scheme involves the relocation of and addition to existing CCTV coverage in the town centre.

**10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. A simple Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats summary is contained below

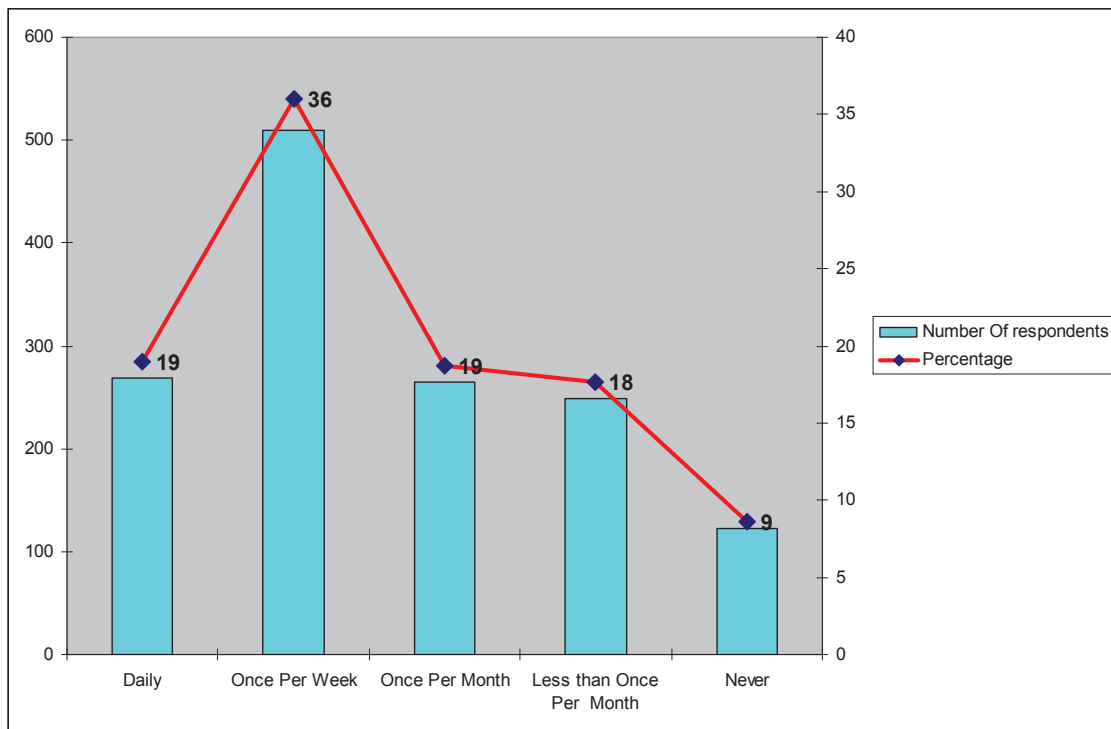
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong support for scheme amongst public</li> <li>• Scheme is relatively simple in terms of engineering</li> <li>• Key stakeholders part of project delivery structure</li> <li>• In house delivery promotes flexible approach</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical evaluation of traffic flow impacts could have high impact on final design</li> <li>• Balanced scheme seeking both accessibility, regeneration and urban design benefits will compromise the 'optimal' design should the scheme be only about regeneration or urban design or accessibility</li> <li>• Need to ensure that design of bus lane meets legitimate concerns regarding the status of the Fair Green</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong sense of need for change in town centre</li> <li>• Recent changes to Mitcham town centre such as new station, housing and superstore create momentum for change</li> <li>• Congruence of scheme objectives with wider regeneration policies both regionally and nationally.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major unforeseen budget cuts at national or local level could impact funding availability</li> <li>• Bus lane proposal remains controversial</li> <li>• Scepticism over councils ability to deliver major scheme in Mitcham</li> <li>• Ensuring deliver to timetable</li> <li>• Unforeseen utility diversions and underground conditions which increase costs and delay</li> </ul>

10.2. The borough has appointed an external independent Construction, Design & Management Co-ordinator (CDMC) as required by the CDM regulation 2007 This CDMC has responsibility for quality auditing the range of health and safety and design processes associated with the project and ensuring compliance with relevant legislation. The project management method for the scheme ensures that documentation management procedures support the CDM process. All work implementation will necessitate a full method statement from the contractor. Any work on private property will require technical approval from the landowner including a review of method statements. The Health & Safety Executive will be notified of the commencement of works via an F10 form submission and the works may be subject to inspection during H&S inspectors during implementation.

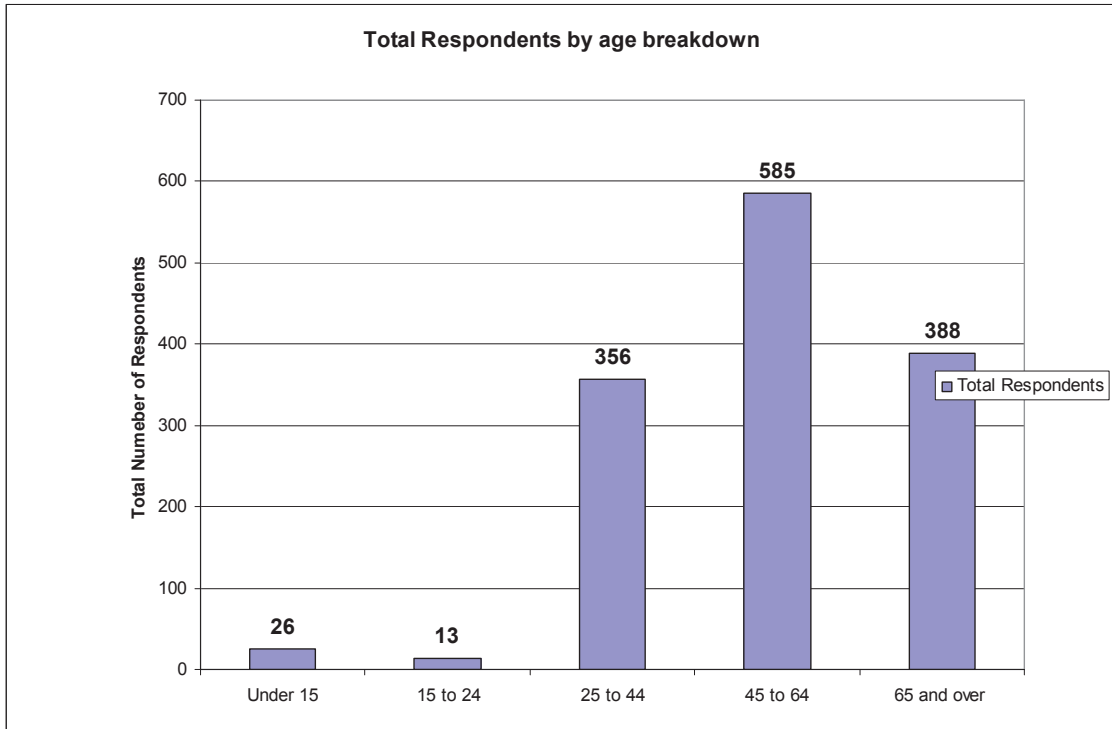
**11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

**11.1. Appendix 1 Stage 2 Detailed Analysis**

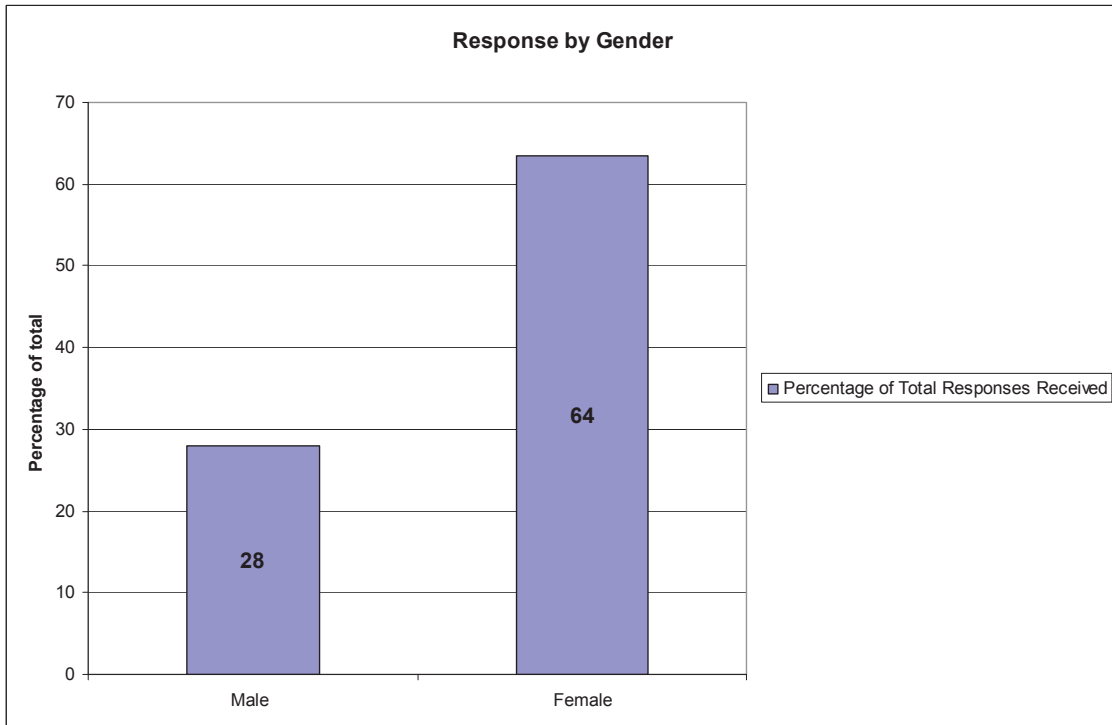
The total number of responses received was 1446 and the following charts set out the responses by demographic breakdown



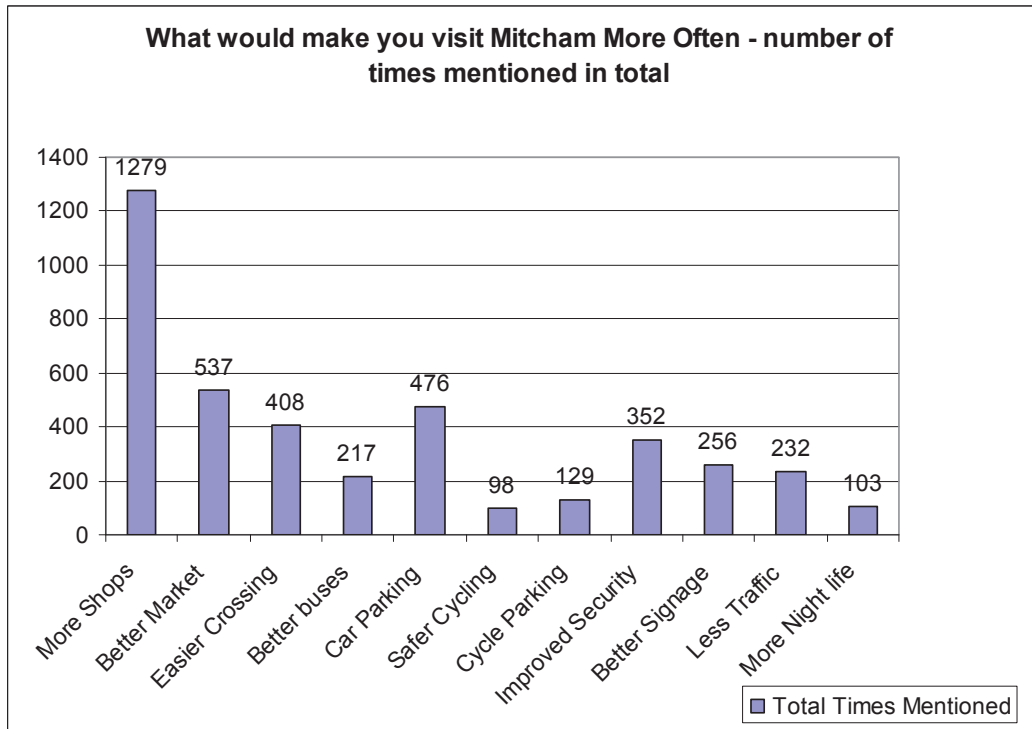
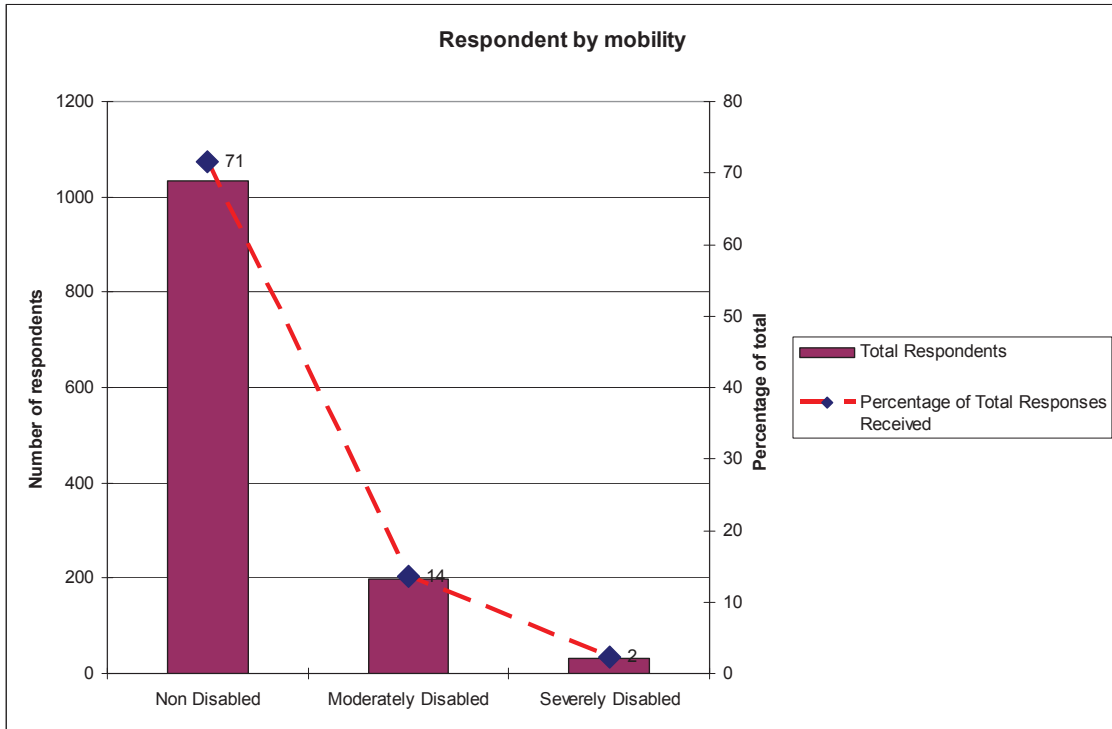
- Most respondents visited Mitcham frequently (at least once per week)

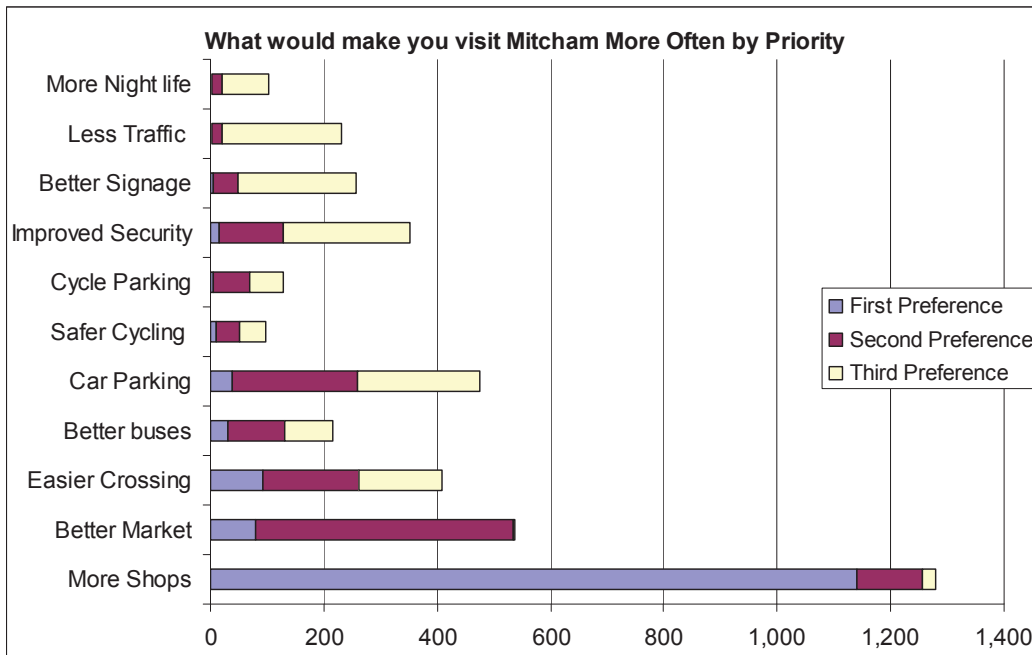


- The age range is heavily weighted toward older people. Further outreach needs to be carried out with younger people during the later stages of the consultation. Early contact has been made with the Children’s and Young Peoples Participation Team to improve levels of engagement.

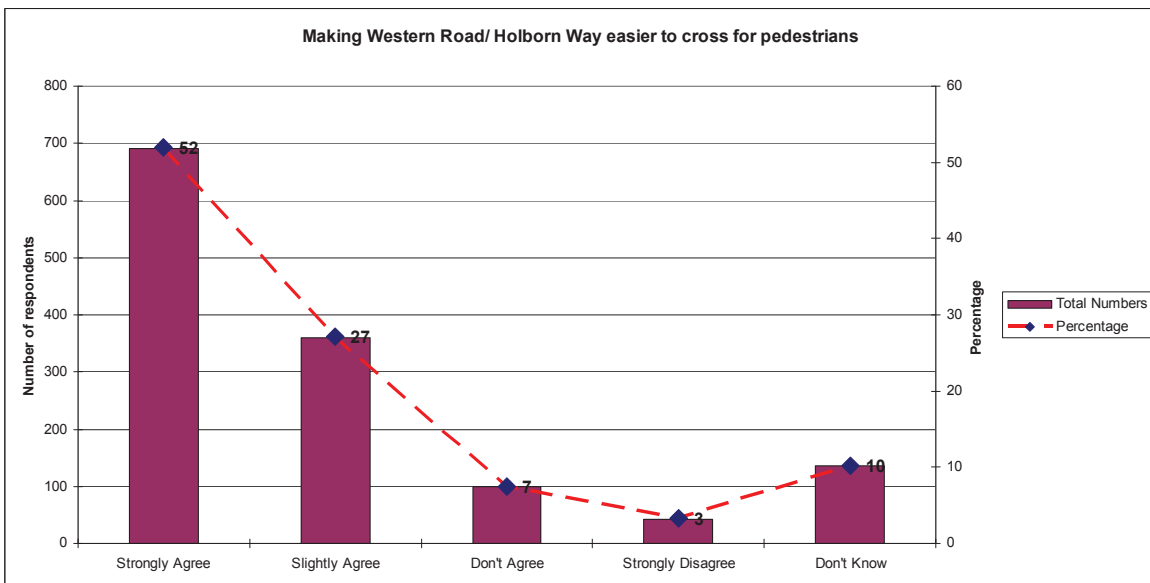


- Over twice as many women responded as men



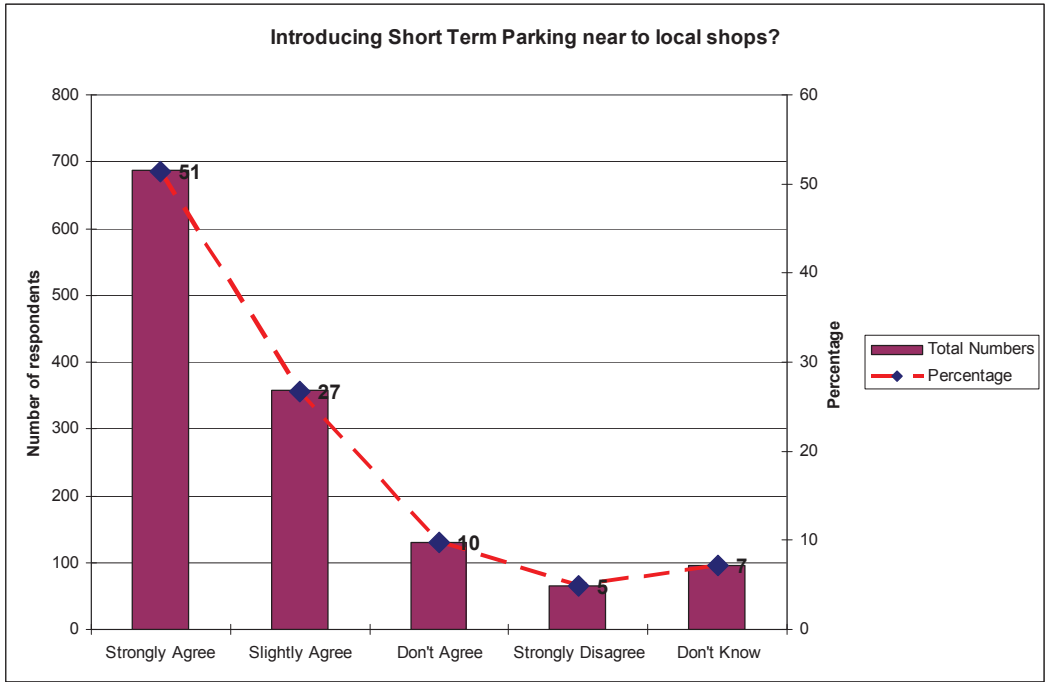


- Clearly the shops are the main focus of peoples concerns, but the market is also a key issue. Crossings, car parking and personal security are also relevant considerations.

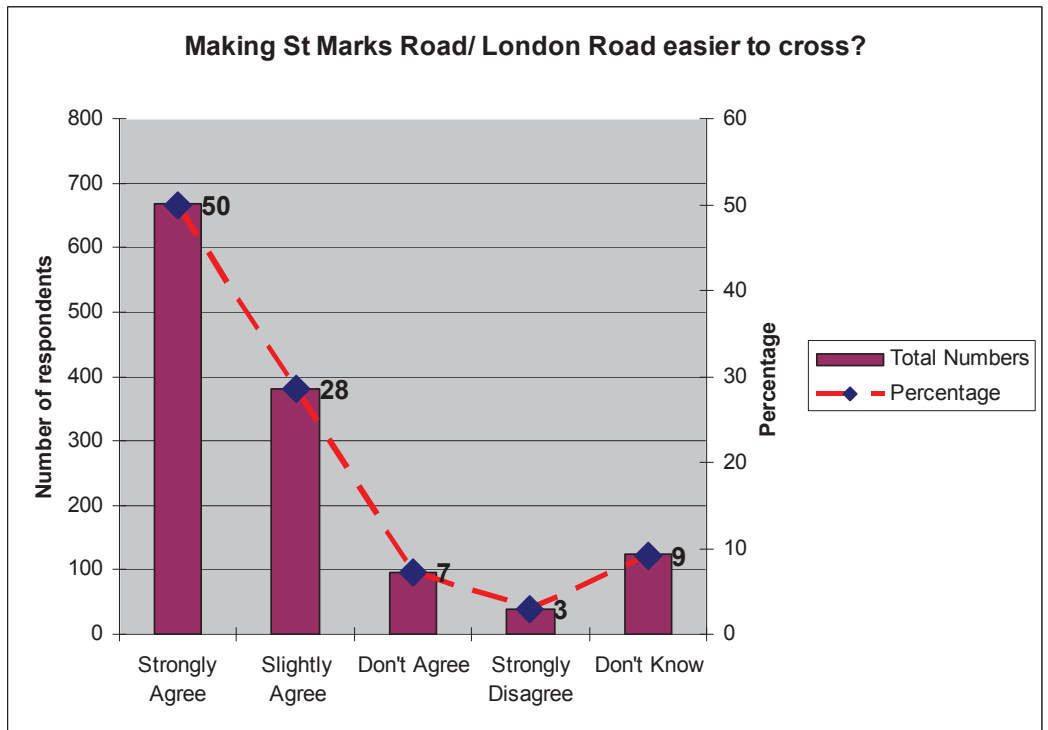


- There is strong support for improving the pedestrian links across Holborn Way. This is consistent with studies identifying this junction as a key disconnection point in the town centre

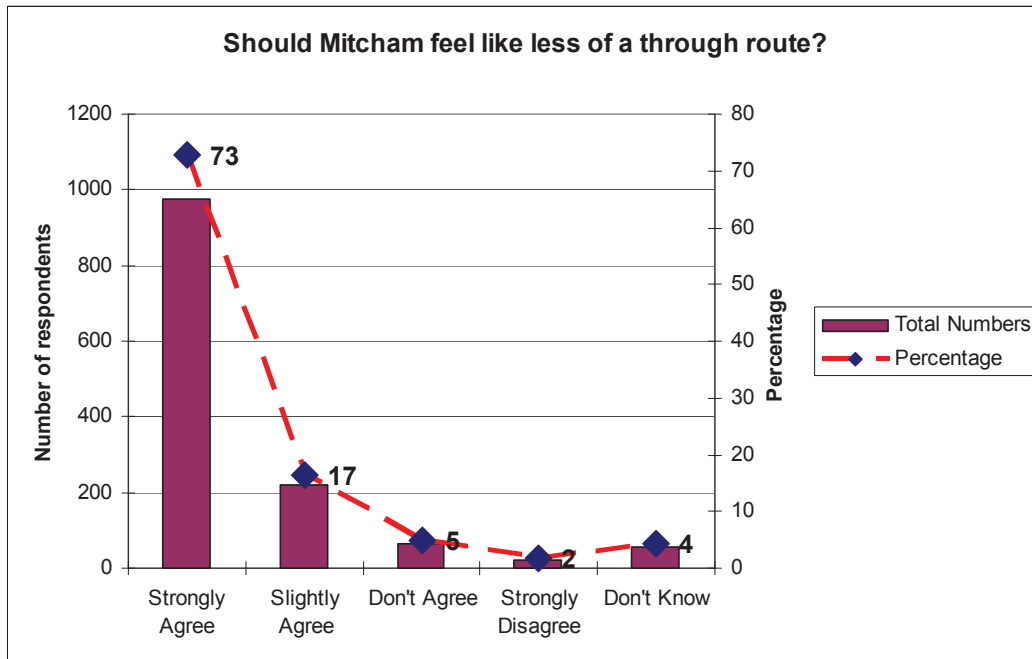




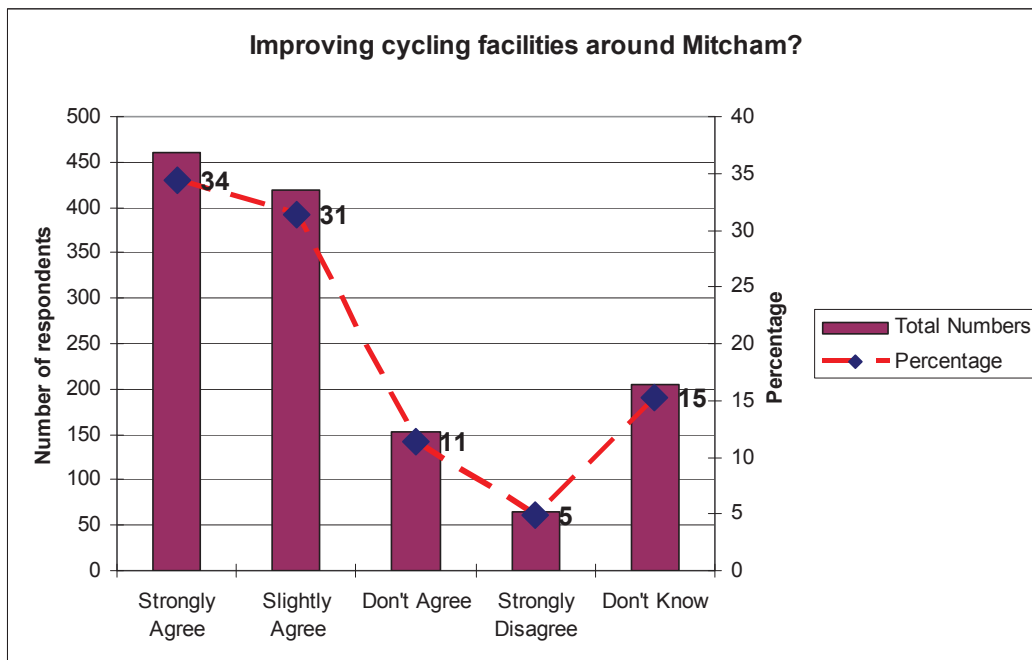
- Although there is a significant amount of parking it is somewhat removed from the Fair Green and is chargeable. Given the current quality and extent of local shops it may be of value to consider the provision of convenient short term parking at low or no cost (e.g. up to 20 minutes)



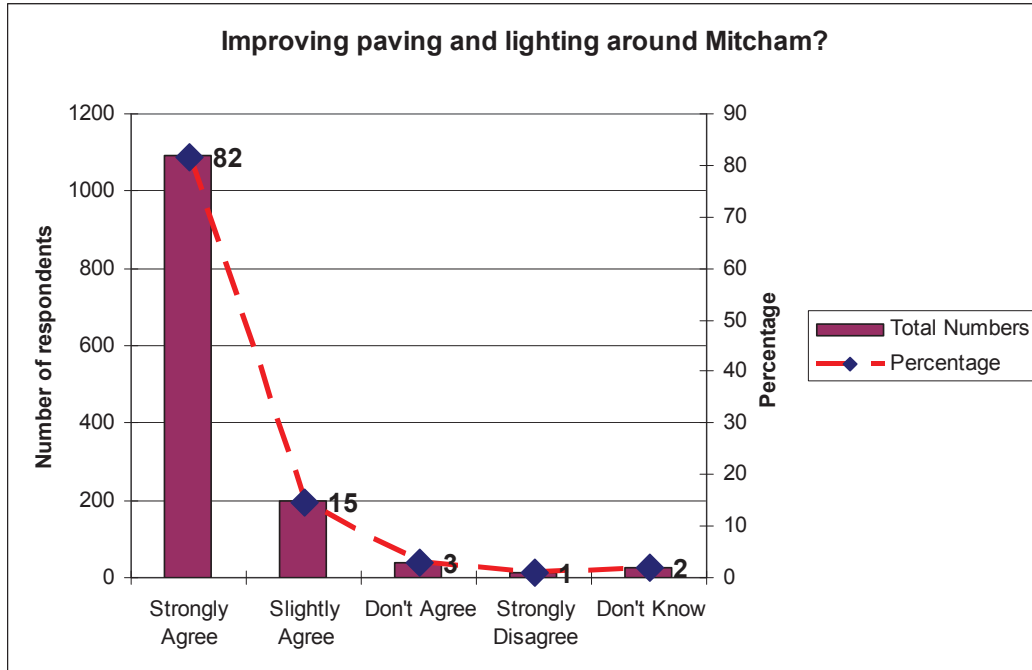
- This junction is relatively poorly used by pedestrians and vehicles. It is the northern gateway into the town centre but London Road pedestrian area is perhaps the least successful retail area in Mitcham.



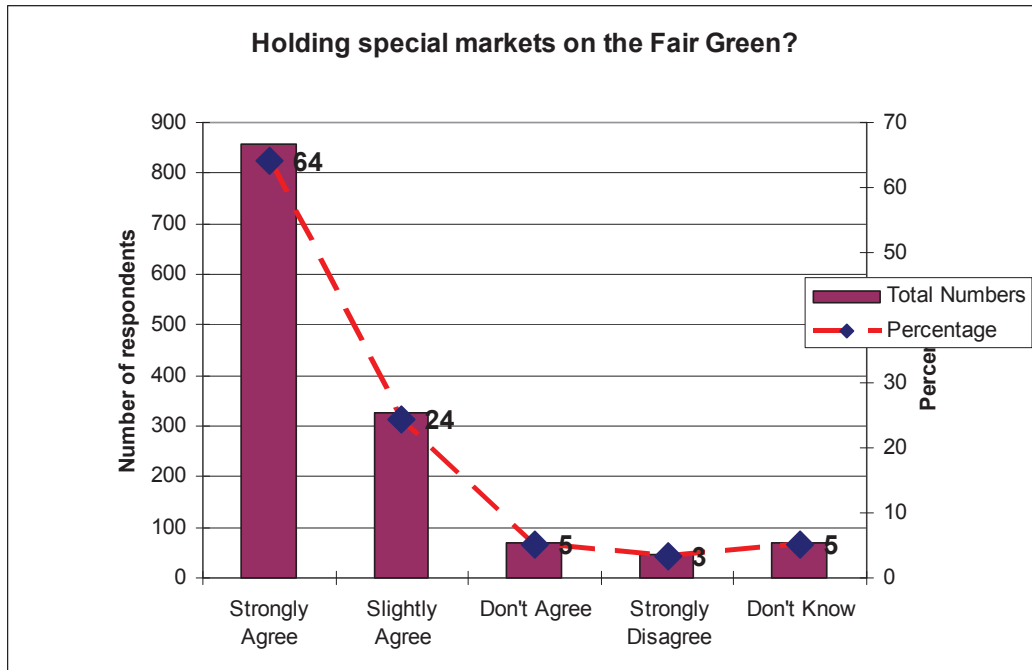
- Mitcham is and will likely remain a major through route due its locality adjacent to the Strategic road network . Through the design process it may be possible to reduce the sense of 'traffic dominance' but clearly the traffic management impacts will play a major part in what can be achieved.



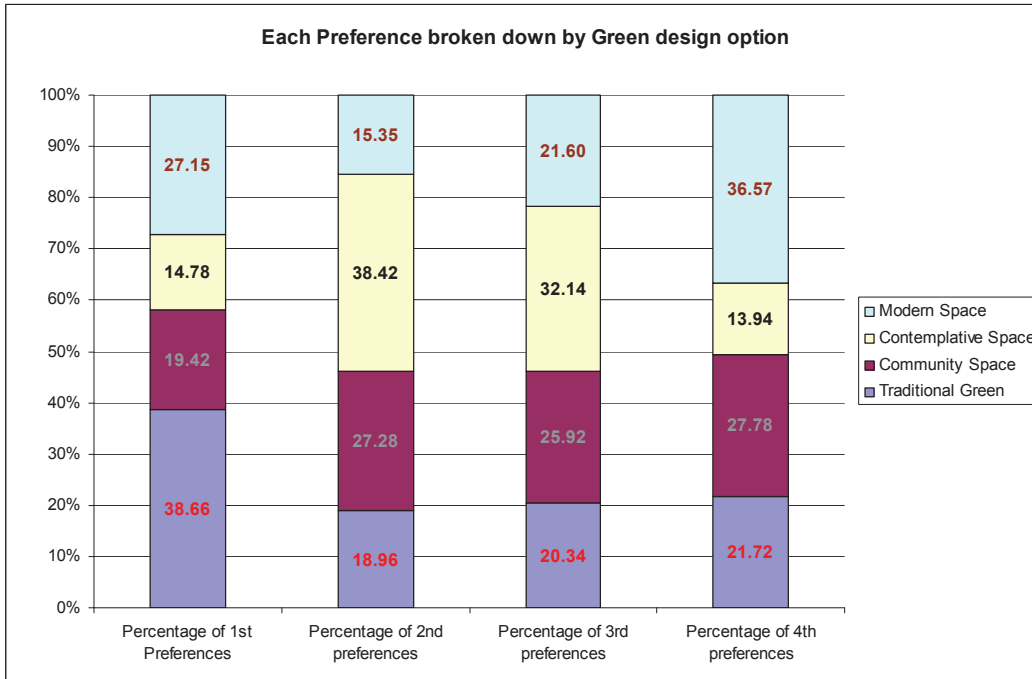
- Mitcham is an important location for cyclists for the same reason it is for motorists – i.e. its connections. However the traffic dominance can work against safe cycling. This may help explain the perception of unsafe cycling on the Fair Green and conflict with pedestrians. Better facilitating safe and legal cycling could help address this issue.



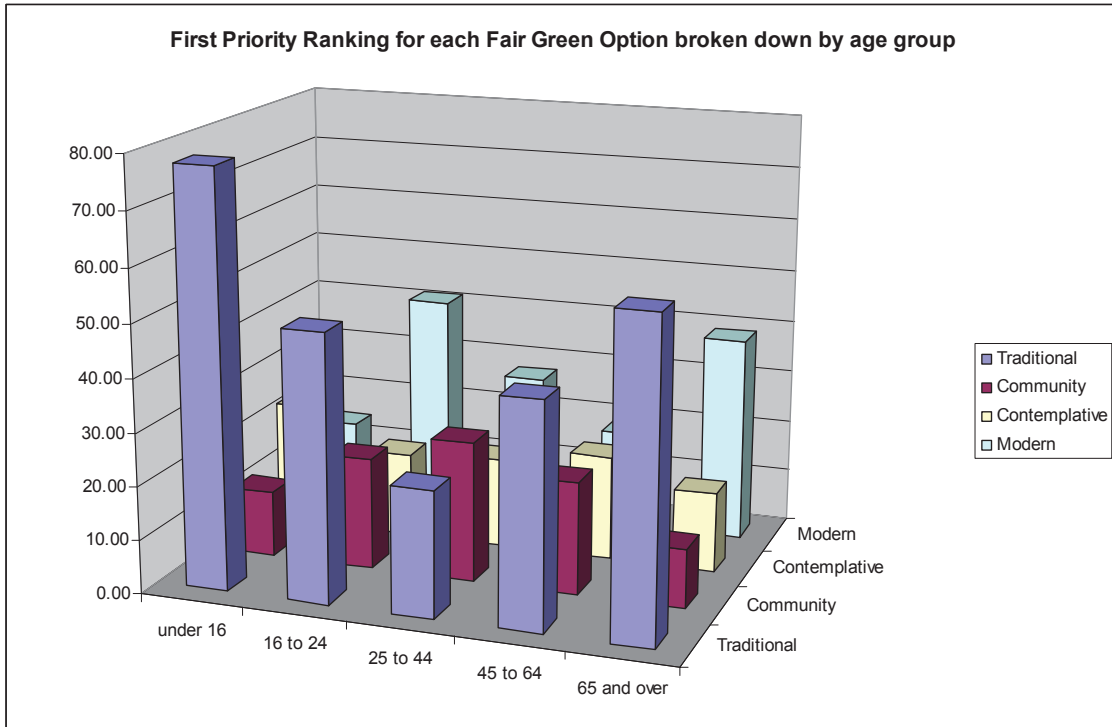
- Lighting is often mentioned as a concern in public meetings, particularly since the closure of McDonalds. Perception of safety can also be influenced by levels of lighting.



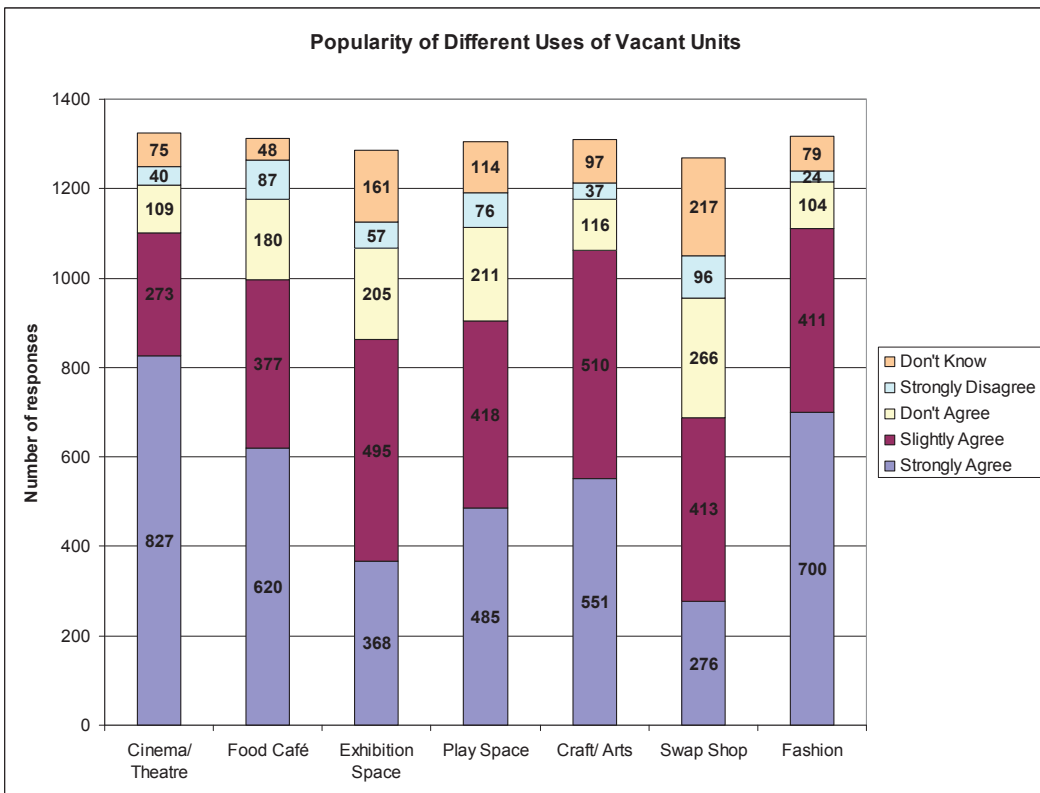
- The current market 'offer' is perceived to be of limited quality. However as set out in the 'visiting Mitcham more often' responses, a better market could be a key driver of improvement in the area



- A traditional Fair Green layout was the most popular first priority of the options offered followed by a modern space. However the modern space was also the most chosen 4<sup>th</sup> priority, which suggests it splits opinion. The contemplative space which in design terms is closest to the traditional green gained the greatest number of 2<sup>nd</sup> priorities which suggests that a broad 'vision' of a park like space could be the most popular aspiration for the Fair Green

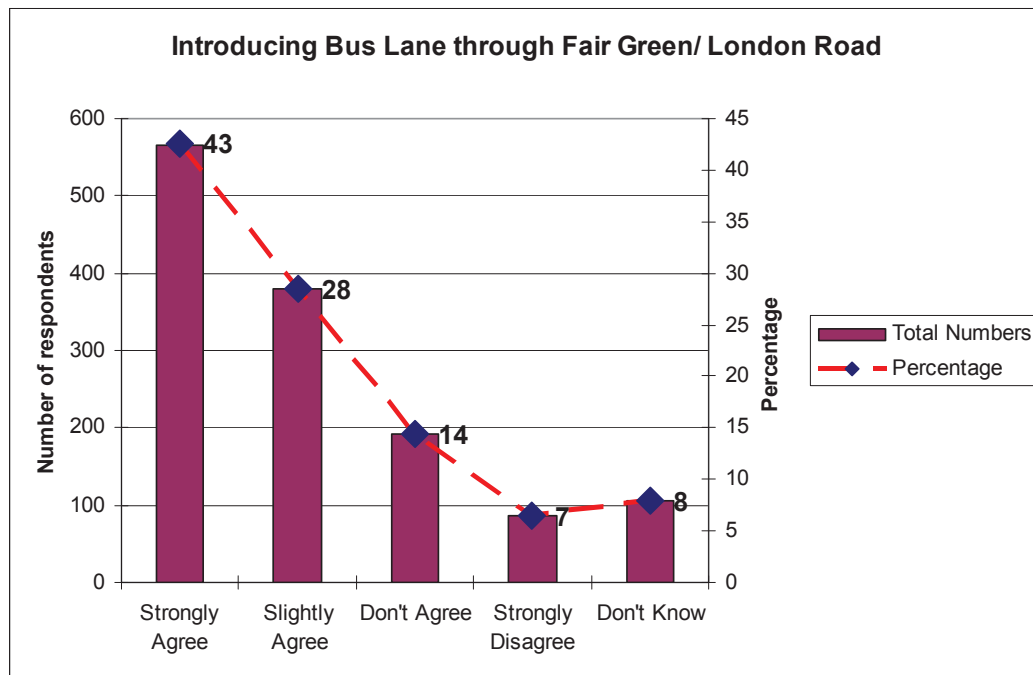


- Interestingly the traditional green was the most popular option for all age groups.

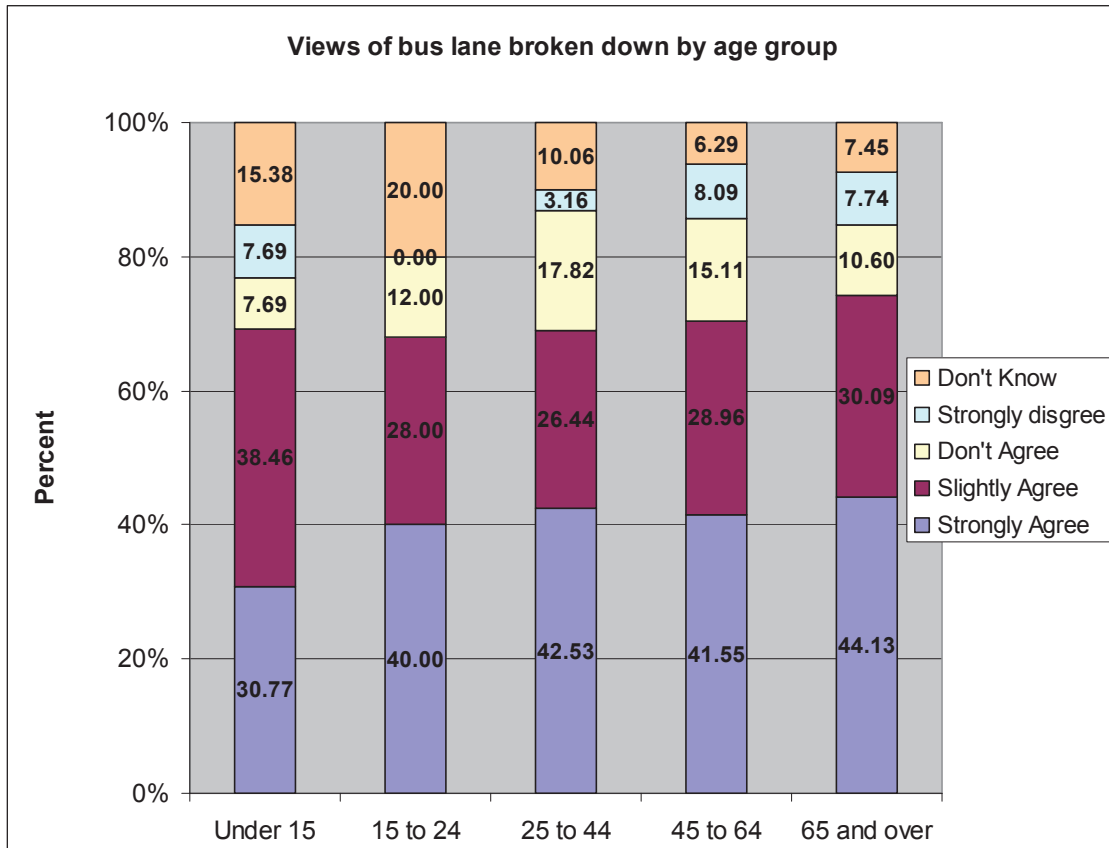


## 11.2. Bus Lane Proposal

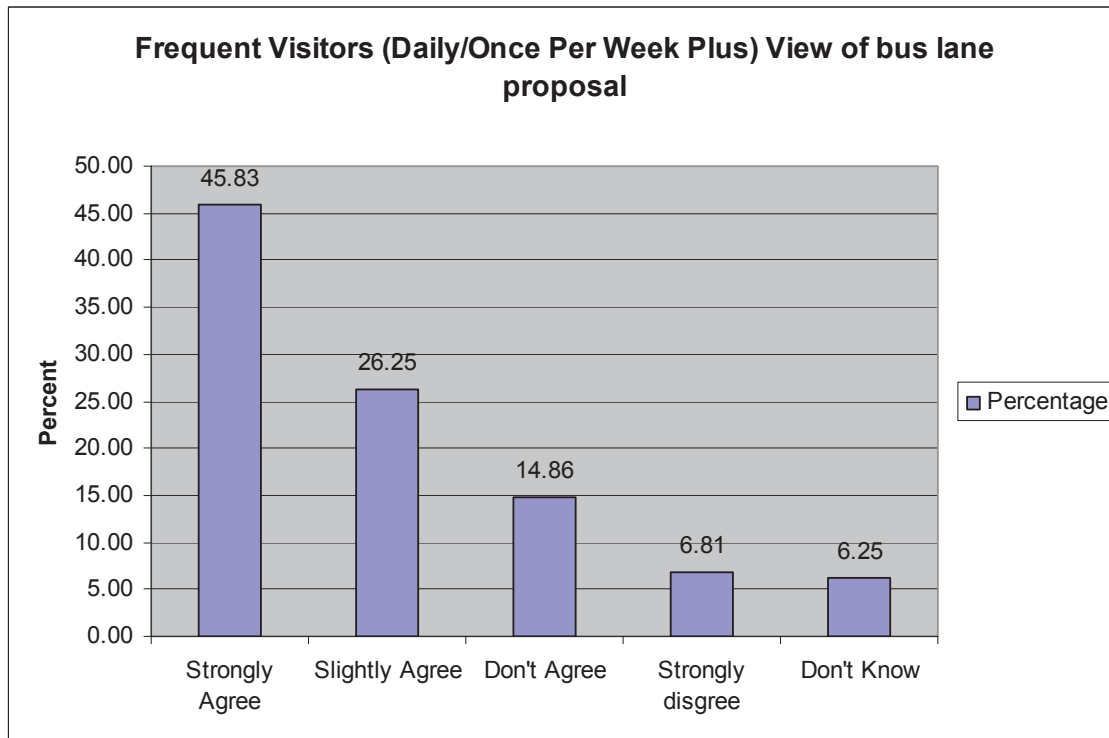
Although the bus lane is controversial it is well supported by the general public



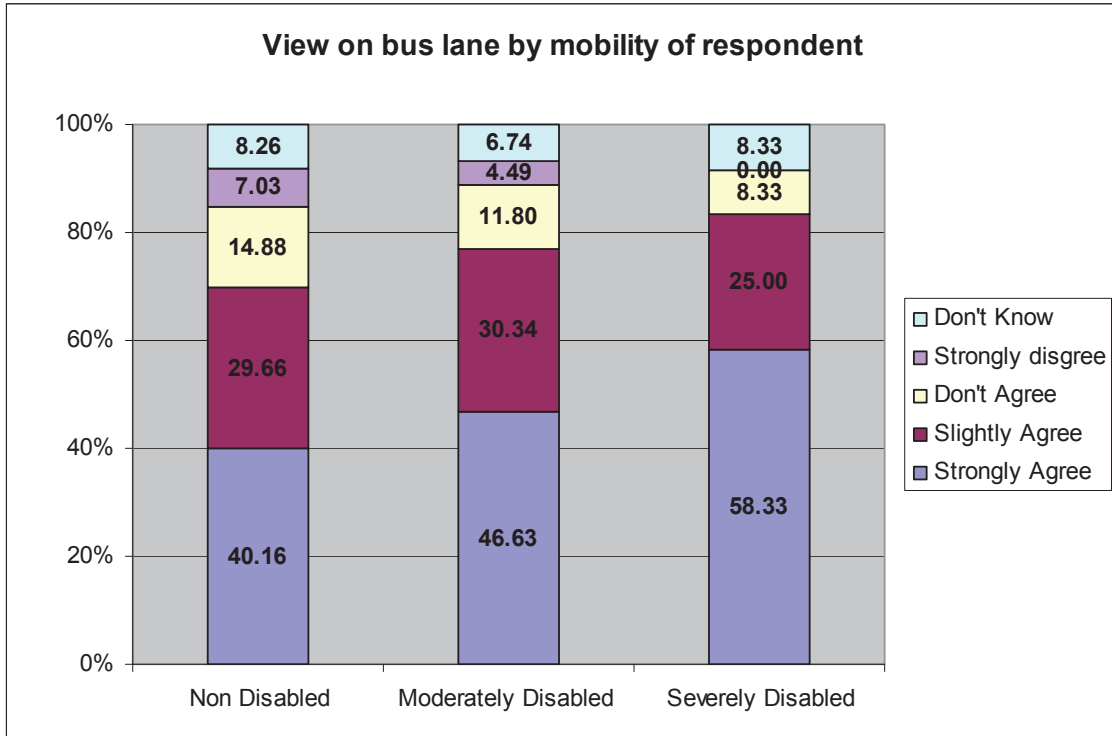
The 71% approval rate is very close to the support for the earlier “south bound” bus lane proposal in 2003 which had previously been agreed by the council.



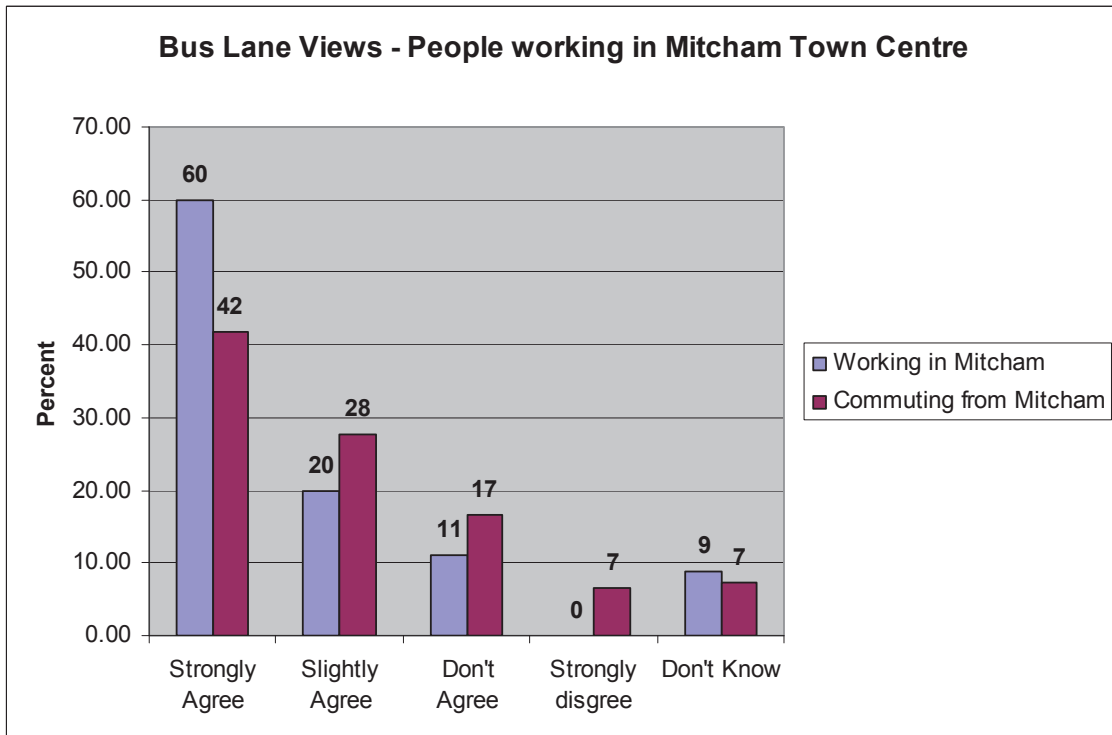
Support for the bus lane is highest amongst older people



Frequent visitors to the town centre are slightly more in favour of the proposal than all respondents on average,

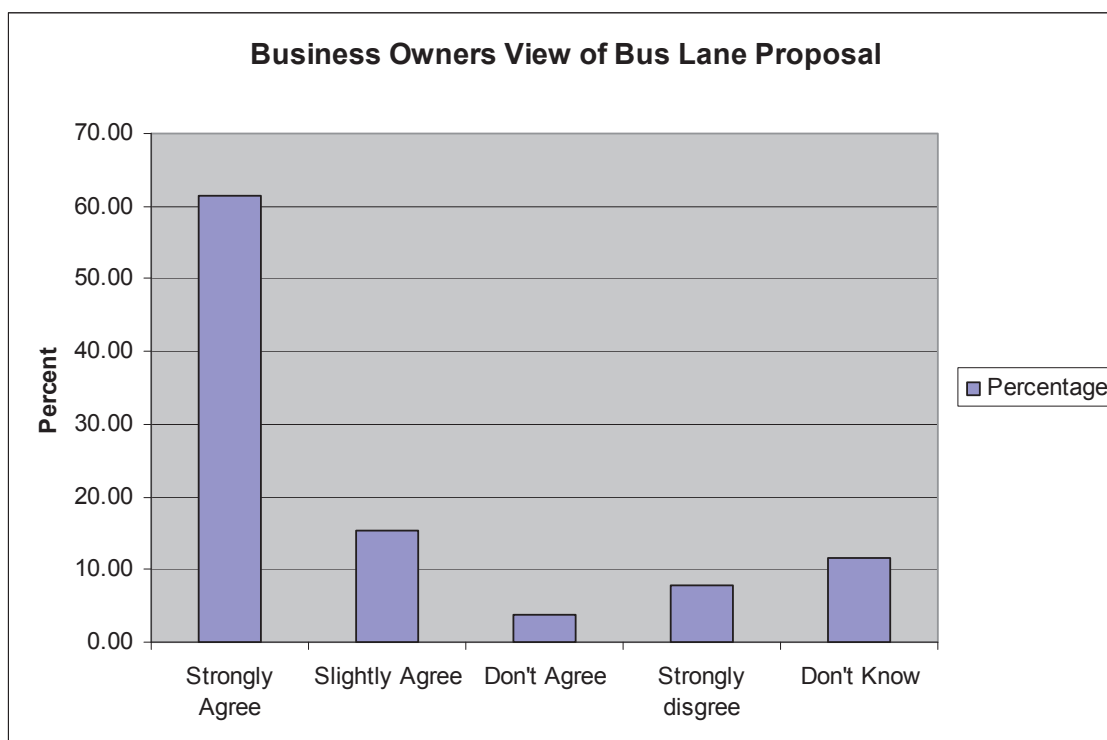


The more disabled people are more strongly in favour of the bus lane which suggests social inclusion impacts.





People working in the town centre very strongly agree with the proposal as do business owners.



11.3. "Other" issues mentioned in the consultation included

- The absence of toilet provision in the town centre
- The preponderance of certain types of shops (such as betting shops and hairdressers)
- A sense of personal insecurity due to gangs/ street drinkers/ anti social behaviour
- Emphasis on the impacts on traffic dominance
- Concern about the lack/effectiveness of lighting in the town centre
- A general feeling that the Fair Green did not act as a community hub in its current layout

- 11.4. **Appendix 2 – Key Outcomes of Design Workshops/ 8<sup>th</sup>/ 11<sup>th</sup>/ 15<sup>th</sup>  
January 2013 Fair Green and Mitcham Town Centre. Report  
prepared by Studio Weave**

# Studio Weave - Fair Green Workshop Report

Mitcham OLF Project  
21 January 2013



*Mitcham Area Action Plan - Proposals Map, Feb 1980 (brought to workshop by a participant)*

Studio [Weave](#)

[hello@studioweave.com](mailto:hello@studioweave.com)  
[www.studioweave.com](http://www.studioweave.com)

020 8510 3665  
07903 031 976 / 07940 325 080

33 Saint John's Church Road  
London, E9 6EJ

Studio Weave is a limited company.  
Our company number is 6352249.  
Our VAT Registration number: 973 4536 91.

# INTRODUCTION

## *About This Document*

This report outlines the findings from a series of three workshops carried out in early January.

## 1 SCOPE OF WORK

### *1.1 The Brief*

Studio Weave (the design team) have been appointed by LB Merton Council and the Greater London Authority to deliver market regeneration, shop front and open space improvements for Mitcham Town Centre with funding from the Outer London Fund.

As part of this work, design team were asked to facilitate three workshops to help to inform the concept for the design of the Fair Green. This workshop series was designed to build upon the findings of the 'Rediscover Mitcham' questionnaire, issued in late 2012, and to achieve the following outcomes:

- A clear set of objectives from which public realm improvements can be derived
- An understanding of what people want the space to look and feel like, and how it should be organised
- An understanding of how people perceive the needs of others in the community
- An understanding of people's feelings towards the proposed Highway changes (bus route, junctions etc)

The following elements were discussed in the workshops:

- Links and movement (derived from the concept of 21st Century Fair Green)
- Green Spaces (derived from the concept of Contemplative Fair Green)
- Activity & Community (derived from the concept of Traditional & Community Fair Green)
- Highways proposals

## 2 THE WORKSHOPS

### 2.1 Location, Dates, Times and attendance

All workshops were held at: St Mark's Family Centre Hall

Workshop 1 - Tuesday 8th January (15.00 - 18.00) - approx 14 attendees

Workshop 2 - Wednesday 9th January (15.00 - 18.00)\*

Workshop 3 - Friday 11th January (10.00 - 13.00) - approx 14 attendees

Workshop 4 - Tuesday 15th January (18.00 - 21.00) - approx 10 attendees (with two repeat visitors)

\*Note: Workshop 2 was facilitated by Merton Council and the Centre for Accessible Environments to deal with wider issues concerning mobility impaired people and is not incorporated into this report.

### 2.2 Workshop structure

The workshops were lead by Studio Weave and Merton Council Future Merton team. A brief presentation discussing the principles behind a design approach to each theme was given, and then round table discussions around each theme followed. At the end of each session, a spokesperson from each group gave feed back with their top five messages to the design team with regard to the topic discussed.

Groups of around 4 people per table (5 tables), were gathered, with one facilitator from the project team on each table.

### 2.3 Workshop agenda

Please see below and overleaf for the agenda followed at each workshop.

5mins	Brief Introduction (Ross Mitchell or other Council representative, Merton Council)
5mins	<b>Topic 1: Links and Movement</b> Links and Movement - instructions for first topic (Maria Smith, Studio Weave)
5 mins	Your Map of Mitcham Each participant creates their own map of Mitcham - this does not have to be wholly accurate: the purpose of the exercise is to understand how people remember the area.  What we learn: a list of what places are most memorable to people, and to see how they connect from memory rather than in reality.
20mins	Round table discussion: what is important to you about links & movement in Mitcham?  Make notes on your map, draw routes of where you usually go, write names of favourite shops, mark out a special place to you.  Note your 5 key points for the design team to take away, and discuss these with your table.  Come up with 5 key points for your table, with regard to this topic and note these on the worksheet
10 mins	Table feedback - Topic 1 Each spokesperson feeds back on what they discussed, and tells the group their top five points.  What we learn: how people move around Mitcham and why, favourite locations in Mitcham and list of key areas to focus upon (improvement)

2.3\_Workshop agenda (continued)

5 mins	<p><b>Topic 2: Green Spaces</b>  Green Spaces - instructions for second topic  (Maria Smith, Studio Weave)  OS Maps placed onto tables</p>
20 mins	<p>Round table discussion  Group to highlight green spaces on the map, and to grade them according to their quality.</p> <p>Brown = poor quality  Yellow = medium  Green = good quality  Purple = ideas for new green spaces</p> <p>Sum-up with 5 key messages (or questions) to the Design Team</p>
10 mins	<p>Table feedback - Topic 2  (as above, spokesperson to summarise)</p> <p>What we learn: priority areas for intervention, alongside new ideas as to how to treat them</p>
15 mins	<p>--- Break &amp; Refreshments ---</p>
5 mins	<p><b>Topic 3: Activity &amp; Community</b>  Activity &amp; community - instructions (Caf Fean, Studio Weave)</p>
10 mins	<p>Events on Fair Green</p> <p>Imagine you had unlimited Council funding...</p> <p>If you could put on an event on the Fair Green, what would you do</p> <p>Who would you work with?</p> <p>What would make it different and special to Mitcham?</p> <p>What would make people want to come again?</p> <p>How would it attract different ages and backgrounds, people from Mitcham and elsewhere?</p> <p>Participants agree a table list of answers to these five questions.</p>
10 mins	<p>Table feedback - Topic 3  (as above, spokesperson to summarise)</p> <p>What we learn: what sorts of events and activities would be welcomed in Mitcham, who can help make these happen, what people think will encourage re-visits.</p>
10 mins	<p>Open discussion about proposed Highways changes</p>
20 mins	<p>Sum up / Next Steps</p>



### 3 WORKSHOP FINDINGS

*Workshop in full flow - 8th January*

#### 3.1 Summary

36 local people participated in the Fair Green workshops.

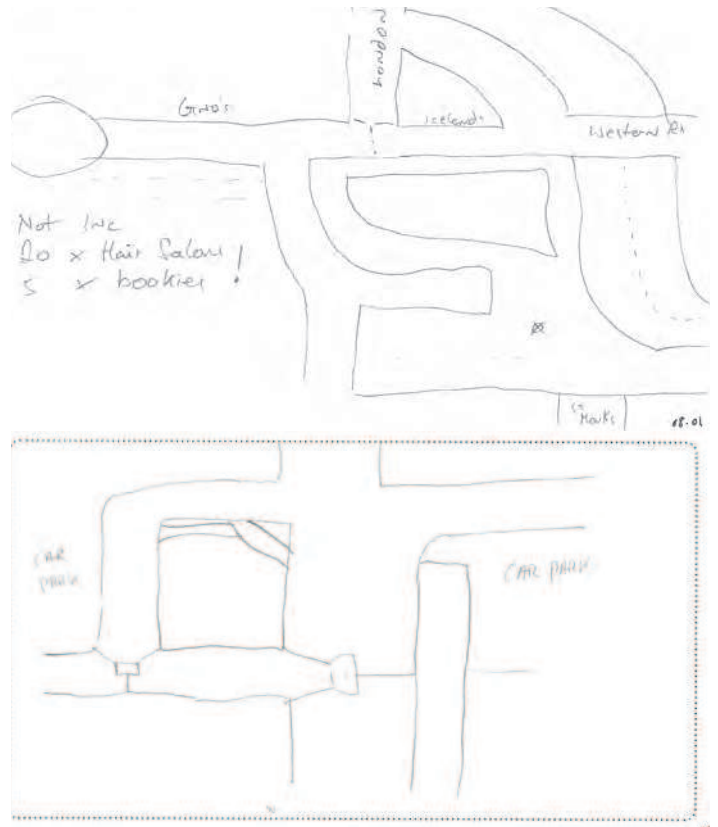
Participants mapped Mitcham from memory, discussed links and movement, open space opportunities and co-created an event to put Mitcham on the map for the world to see: we would like to thank all those involved in taking part - the insights listed in this report are invaluable for our work on Public Realm improvements, and also for the Future Merton team, who are managing the wider Public Realm initiatives.

The following headlines were drawn from the consultation:

Mitcham...

- is in need of improvement, and a focal point
- has a market that needs to be made more of (with varied goods and a wider offer)
- needs more planting and better use of redundant spaces (e.g. car parks)
- needs better lighting, and easier traffic flow through the centre
- has potential, and many people who are willing to help

We will draw from these headline findings, and those explained further in this document, to inform the concept design for the Fair Green.



An example of the memory maps of some participants

### 3.2\_Topic 1: Links and Movement

#### 3.2.1\_Memory Maps

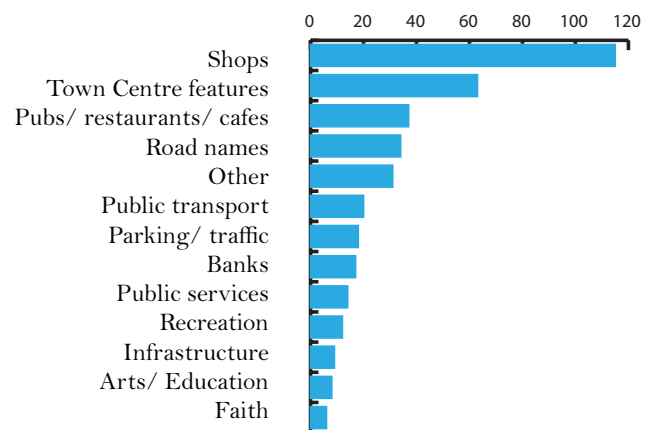
Participants were asked to draw their map of Mitcham from memory, highlighting any important places, names of favourite shops and regular routes taken through the Town Centre.

Interestingly, many of the 30 maps collected show a great number of roads, with the Clock Tower normally marking out the centre or the 'heart' of the area. In some discussions, the notion of linking up Fair Green and the other 'hubs' of the town centre were mentioned.

The shops in Mitcham were most frequently referenced, with 115 instances of shops being noted. The shops referred to most frequently were the chain stores, namely Morrisons (16), Lidl (11), ASDA (6), Boots (5), Peacocks (5), Superdrug (3) Iceland (2) and Tesco (1). Independent shops, and shopping parades were also mentioned, as were betting shops, coffee shops, charity shops and pound shops.

The Clock Tower was a key locating point for many, and roads dominated many of the drawings. 'Pedestrianised area' was mentioned by many, and typical routes through varied: some walk through the town centre and find the pedestrianised area safe for children to run around, whilst others know Mitcham far better by car or by bus. The local eateries and pubs were note by many, with the White Lion and Gino's restaurant featuring frequently.

#### Memory maps: most frequently referenced



*"The centre itself has a nice feel and plenty of potential"*

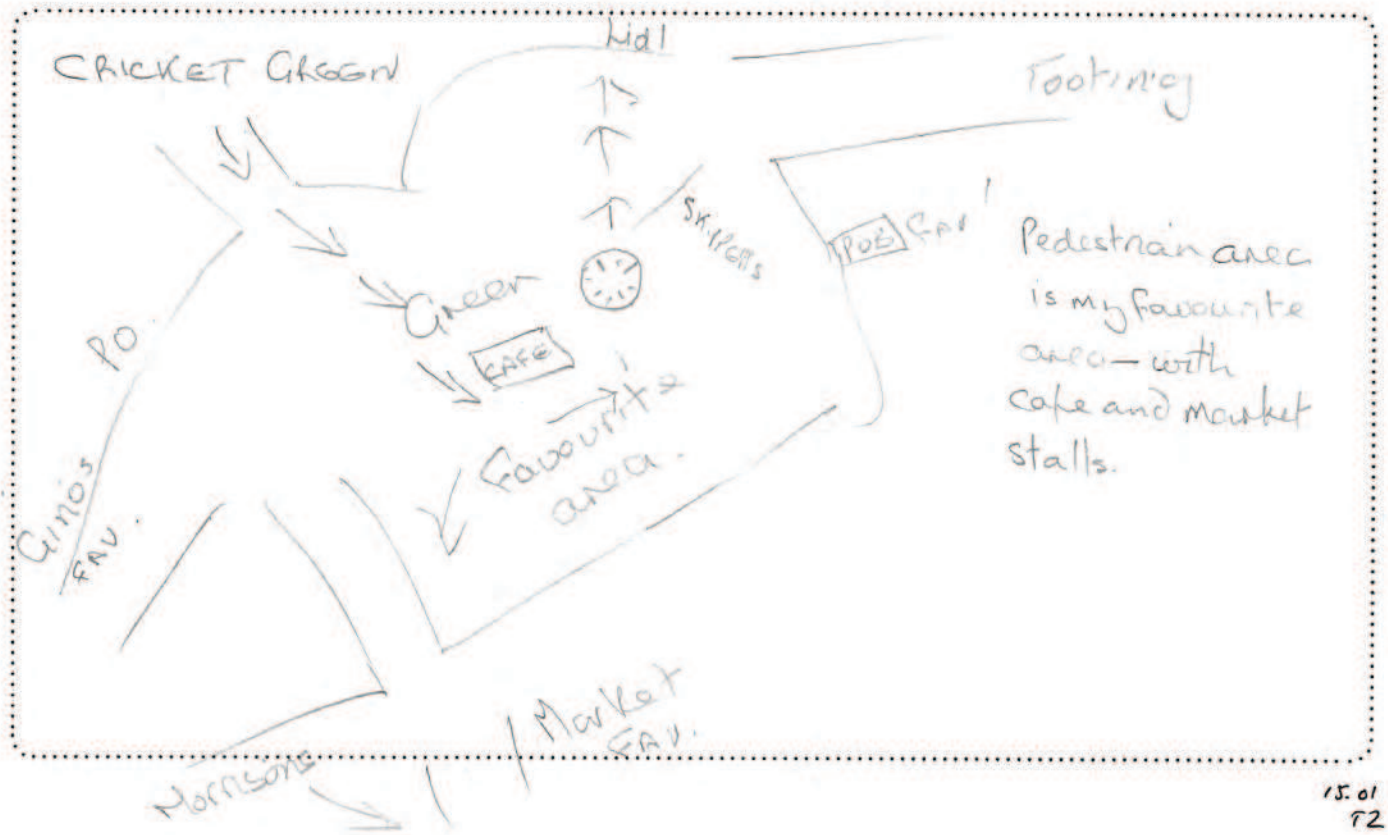
*"I normally drive through Mitcham - there are limited shops for me to go to, or to make me stay in the area. I would like to see more of the market in the area!"*

*"McDonald's as was: excellent place for an anchor store"*

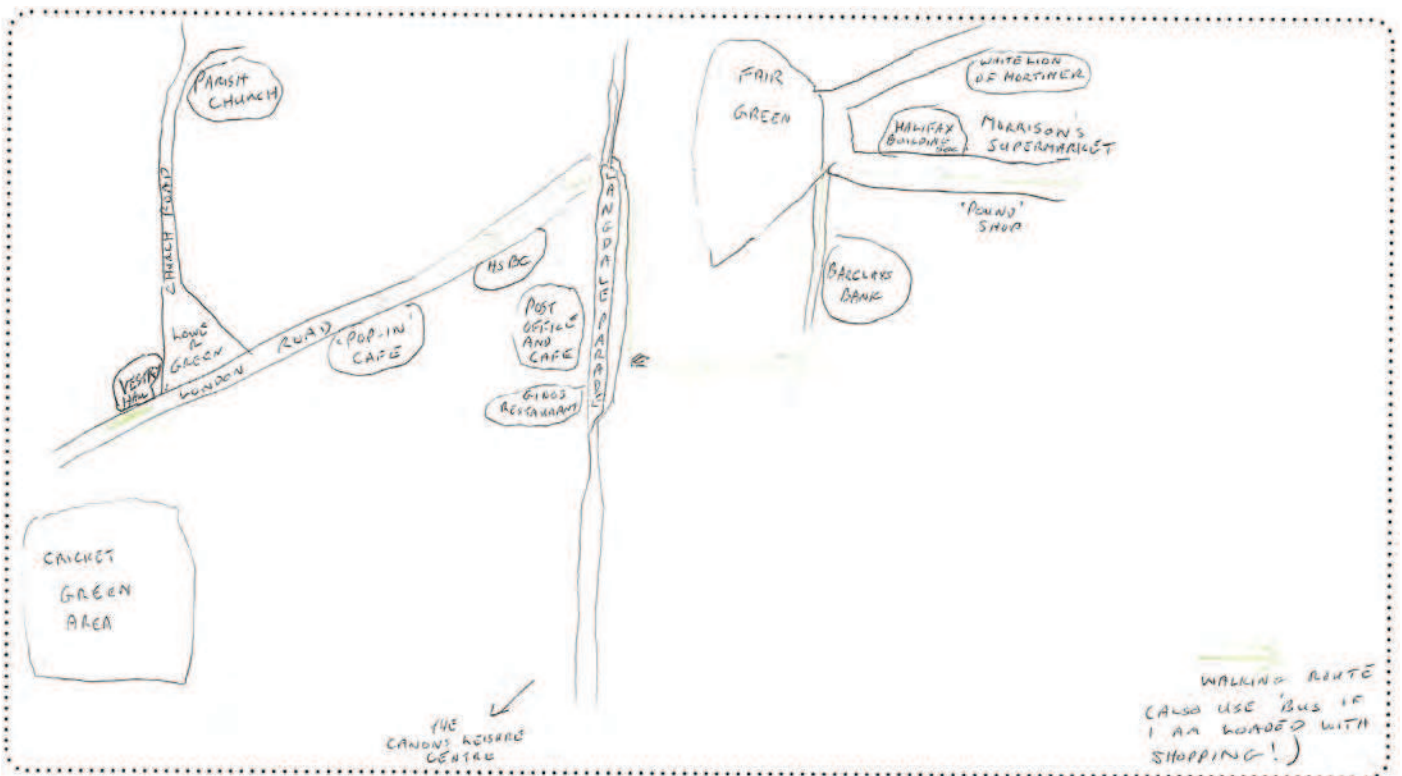
*"Too many roads"*

*"Traffic!"*



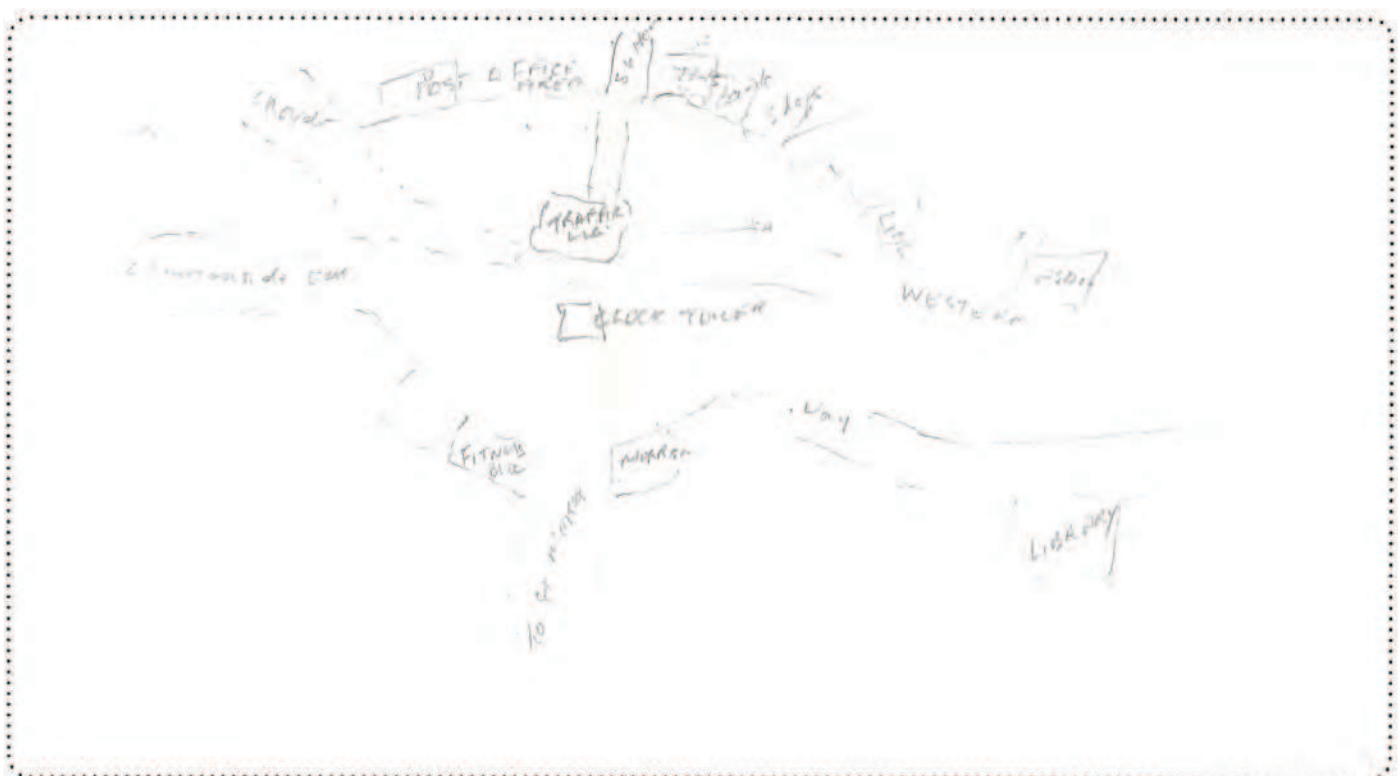
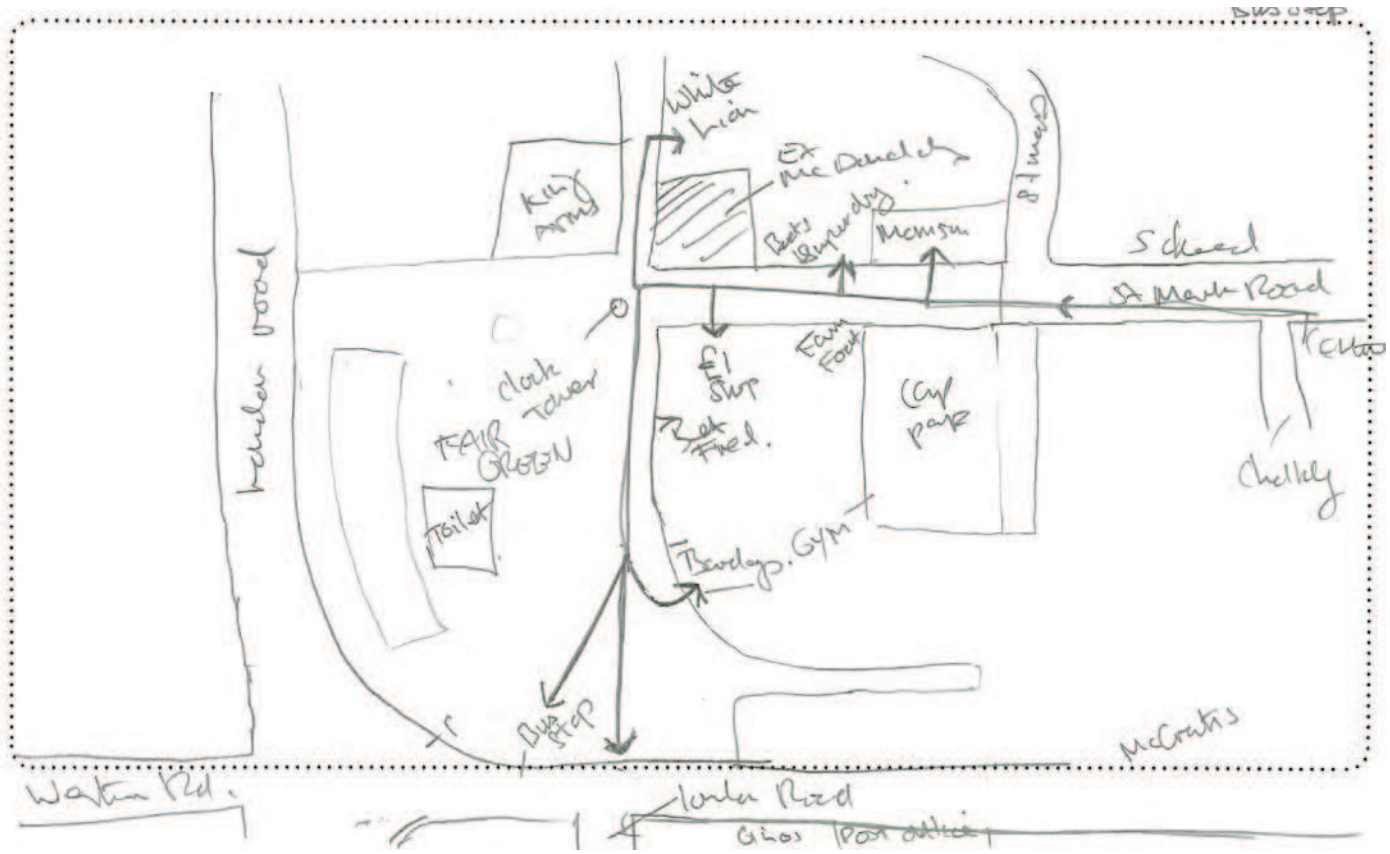


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72



The styles of memory map vary: some participants focused on thematic representation of the Town Centre, as in the map at the top of this page. For this participant, the centre of Mitcham is the green, and the locator is the Clock Tower. The participant is very keen on Gino's (which has had several mentions throughout this consultation), and the market square.

By comparison, the lower map shows a wider perception of Mitcham Town Centre, reaching from Fair Green, to Cricket Green and on to the Canons. Langdale Parade is significant for this participant, and local favourite spots are marked out along the road routes. A typical walking route is also mapped here.



The two maps shown here again express a gravitation towards the centre and the Fair Green with the Clock Tower. The routes shown in green on the lower map indicate typical journeys, and destinations such as Croydon are marked. Roads tend to dominate all of the drawings.

The map above shows a typical shopping trip, with a stop-off at the pub. The Ex-McDonald's is marked here: this empty unit was mentioned at each workshop as a missed opportunity.

### 3.2\_Topic 1: Links and Movement

#### 3.2.2\_Links and Movement - discussion

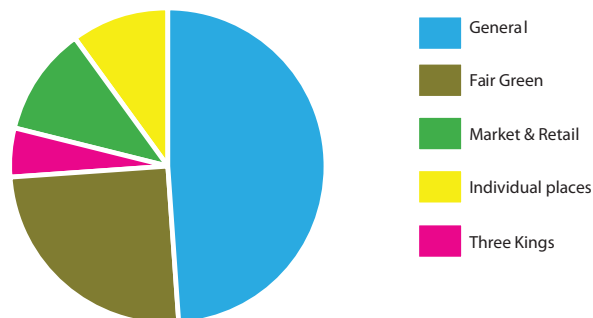
*“Turn Mitcham from a ‘go through’ to a ‘go to’ place”*

*“Mitcham needs its Unique Selling Point”*

*“Love Cricket Green - make the most of it”*

*“Use green space or street trees to tame traffic and roads”*

*“Link between pond and green”*



#### Individual responses

The pie chart above right shows the proportion of responses, under different themes. 117 comments were logged in total, in relation to Open Spaces. We have split these into themed categories for analysis. The most commonly referenced topics were:

General **49%**

Fair Green **25%**

Market & Retail **11%**

Individual places **10%**

Three Kings Piece/ Pond **5%**

General comments were made about how the design work is approached, ensuring that different ages and backgrounds are involved in the process. There was a call for more seating and more lighting to be introduced, across Mitcham, with 27 of the 57 total general comments made pertaining to some aspect of the design of the Town Centre.

Landscaping and planting within the Fair Green was welcomed, with some mentioning the possibility of a play area, water feature or a Band Stand. Community groups would be encouraged to make better use of Fair Green, and maintenance should be kept in mind.

People are asking for a more cohesive, attractive Market, with more independent shops and more restaurants to attract people to stay and spend time and money in Mitcham.

Upper Green, Holborn Way, Cricket Green, Figges Marsh, Iceland (as a potential development site), Langdale Parade, Mitcham Common, and Morrisons Carpark (for the view) were all identified as places with potential by individual respondents.

The area of Three Kings Piece and the Pond is treasured by many. People suggested it should be improved with lighting and seating.

## **Group discussions**

The following headlines were drawn from group discussions around links and movement:

### **Calmer traffic**

Too many crossings, difficult junctions and congestion were mentioned by all workshop groups. The need for a coordinated approach with regard to traffic flow and buses was also noted.

### **Fair Green: pedestrianised and better lit**

A preference was expressed for Fair Green to remain pedestrianised. Some would like lighting to be improved, especially where McDonald's used to be. This is also a general point about the Town Centre.

### **Easier connections wished for**

People would like to see easier connections for pedestrians across the Town Centre, with direct pathways to specific areas, including Three Kings Piece.

### **Improved 'look and feel' for Mitcham, with distinct focal points**

"Flowers and beauty - not concrete!" this sentiment was expressed by all groups. A general improvement to shopfronts and parades was requested, and a focal point of some sort was wished for. The 'no drinking zone' is appreciated, and should be maintained.

### **Signage, planting and gateways encouraged**

- People would like to see:
- Better signage throughout the town, but no clutter
- Planting to 'lift' the place
- 'Welcome to Mitcham' announcing your arrival at each gateway

### **Attractive and varied market**

People like the market as an idea, and would like to see it tidied up with a unified look. Some mentioned the possibility of a structure to shelter the stalls from the rain and to provide other opportunities for use when the market is closed. A variety of markets were suggested, including antiques and Farmer's Markets.

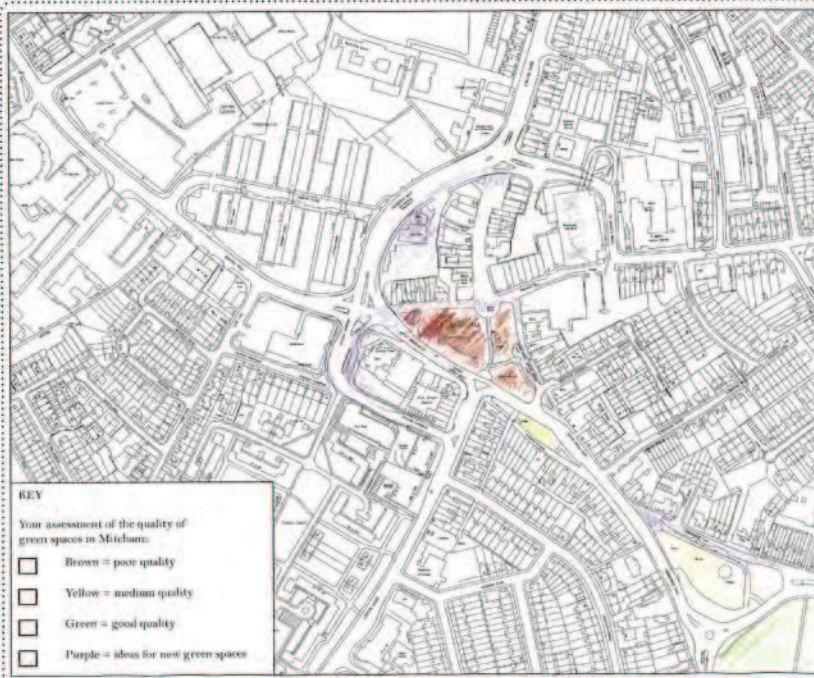
### 3.3 Topic 2: Green/ Open Spaces

Participants were asked to colour in an ordnance survey map of the Mitcham area, highlighting green or open spaces on the map, in terms of their quality at present. They were then asked to leave 5 key messages (or questions) to the Design Team, both as individuals, and as a group.

An example of these mappings can be seen below.



2) Please sum-up with 5 key messages / questions to the design team regarding Green Spaces in Mitcham both as an individual, and in your group



- 1) REDISCOVER FRAMINGS OF COMMON LAWN
  - 2) USE GREEN SPACE / STREET TREES TO TAME TRAFFIC - ROADS
  - 3) CELEBRATE PHYSIC GARDEN HERITAGE - MORE THAN LAMENOS
  - 4) DISTINCTIVE MITCHAM VARIATION ON INCREASINGLY EDIBLE BASED ON HERBS FRAGRANCE
  - 5) GREEN OVER UPPER GREEN WEST - NEW TOWN WIDE ROADS
- Your group's top five points for the design team:
- 1) TACKLE SPACE WASTED DUE TO POOR CAR PARKS + USE
  - 2) MORE ACTIVE MANAGEMENT OF TOWN CENTRE AS PLACE FOR EVENTS + ACTIVITIES
  - 3) IMPROVE WITH STRONGER JOINTLY + BETTER OFFER
  - 4) LEAST HOSTILE ROADS - INDUSTRIAL ZONE - STREET TREES
  - 5)

The two maps above show a wider view of Mitcham, taking in the Common, and a more zoomed in version, from two different participants. We will analyse these responses and formulate a concept for the Fair Green for the end of January.



### 3.3.1\_Topic 2: Green/ Open Spaces - Headline findings

*Fair Green - parade of shops*

The role of Fair Green as a park (place) a through route and a focus for the town centre was raised by many in the workshops as a three-part function of what many perceived to be the 'heart' of Mitcham town centre.

There is a need to obtain balance between these three functions: people want a place that has better shops, a better market, better linkages and places to sit. This leads to some clear principles for the design team to take forward:

1. The Fair Green cannot be conceived purely as a village green
2. The Fair Green must connect the town centre
3. There must be a community function/facility in the green
4. The green must retain its 'green and pleasant' feel
5. Mitcham Town Centre is a wider area: do not consider Fair Green in isolation

It should be noted that many perceive the town centre as wider than simply the Fair Green, and that this notion of a more unified approach to linking up the various parts of Mitcham (including the Canons, Cricket Green and Figges Marsh) needs to be reflected in design analysis and delivery with regard to public realm improvements in Mitcham.

### 3.4\_Topic 3: Activity and Community

If you had unlimited funding... what would you do to put on an event, in Mitcham, to show the world and those who live and work locally, that Mitcham is on the map? We asked eight teams of participants to develop an idea for bringing something truly exciting to Mitcham - the results of this exercise follow below.

<i>"We've discovered Mitcham - it's been here all the time"</i>	<i>"Celebrating Mitcham's Rich Heritage"</i>	<i>"Mitcham Funtime"</i>
<i>"The Mitcham Story"</i>	<i>"Mitcham Extravaganza"</i>	<i>"The Mitcham Experience"</i>
	<i>"Mitcham Festival"</i>	<i>"The Big Mitcham Village Weekend"</i>

#### Event ideas

Ideas ranged from local history celebrations, to food festivals, to all-singing-all-dancing acts involving Danny Boyle (famed director and author of the 2012 Olympic Games opening ceremony) as chief coordinator. Event ideas included:

- Food festival, celebrating the diverse cultures present in Mitcham
- Celebration of Mitcham's heritage through walks, screenings, talks and re-enactments
- Large-scale events connected across the Town Centre and beyond
- Open air theatre, cinema screen on the Green, performance artists and dance bands

#### Who to work with

The following groups and individuals were identified as good catalysts for these events to happen (in alphabetical order):

ASDA; Abbey Fest; Artists; Businesses; Churches; Danny Boyle; Future Merton; Greenwich Leisure; Library services; Local cultural / history groups; Maxine Morgan (Local Groups/ People and business); Merton History Group; Merton in Bloom; Merton Leisure Department; Multicultural organisations; Older people; Polka Theatre; Restaurants in the town; Schools; Sport individuals / clubs; Voluntary groups; Wandle Industrial Museum; Wimbledon Theatre

#### What would make it different and special to Mitcham?

Many different answers were given from the different teams in answer to this question:

- An audience with a famous person from Mitcham
- Celebration of all things 'Mitcham'
- It would draw in locals to see more about the area and attract expats of Mitcham via advertising
- Making use of the Fair Green
- Maybe film screening in the evening - deck chairs for seating. Involve local schools
- Put Mitcham on the map, draw more people to town, puts all communities together
- Special offer or an offer that appeals to everyone
- Specific events for children
- The Mitcham Story, multicultural aspect



Jubilee Celebrations, 2012 - Thornville Grove, Mitcham



New Year's Eve Fireworks, 2012 - Central London



*View from the top of Morrison's Car Park - a view that could be capitalised upon,*

### *3.4\_ Topic 3: Activity and Community (continued)*

#### **What would make people want to come again?**

- Because they had a good time
- Ferris wheel where Morrisons Car Park is
- Make it great! Free transport to Mitcham on the day!
- Performance arts, music, try and showcase Mitcham - link local areas in positive way (improve the Duck Pond)
- Repeat events, establishing new businesses, publicity
- The Mitcham Experience' - historical features of Mitcham
- The interest

#### **How would it attract different ages and backgrounds, people from Mitcham and elsewhere?**

- Because it would appeal to older people who want to remember and younger who want to know more
- Excellent location, good timing and events; signposted from a-far, gateways
- Inclusive ideas; local focus
- Publicity - across London and beyond
- Stuff for all - fireworks, music, multicultural elements - inclusive events and activities





*View from the top of Morrison's Car Park - a view that could be capitalised upon,*

### **Activity and Community: Conclusions**

There is a keen appetite for local, home-grown events, with good publicity and a meaningful, 'Mitcham' based message. Common themes across all of the ideas for events in the Fair Green and beyond included linking up the Town Centre, showing Mitcham's interesting history and cultural diversity, bringing back some of the heritage of the area, and offering something for all segments of the community.

The groups expressed their pride in their home town, jokingly setting Mitcham's 'brand' against that of Wimbledon. The many community groups and organisations are ready to work together, and representatives of those mentioned were known by many participants present.

The material we collected here and in the previous exercises will be extremely helpful to us in forming a concept for the design of the Fair Green, and in implementing a series of events and public realm improvements.

We would like to thank all those who took part in the workshops, and look forward to working together again very soon.

11.5. **Appendix 3 – Workshop Report Accessibility Issues around Mitcham**

**Rediscover Mitcham: Town Centre Redevelopment**

**Workshop report**

**Accessibility and mobility issues: Fair Green**

**At St Mark's Family Centre**

**9 January 2013 1500 - 1800**

The workshop was facilitated by Brenda Puech, Centre for Accessible Environments

**Attendees**

- 1 Mrs Pam Hoosang
- 2 Mr Martin Armstrong
- 3 Mr Richard Bellamy
- 4 Lyla Adwan-Kamara (Manager, Merton Centre for Independent Living)
- 5 Tom Walsh (Sustainable Merton)
- 6 Barbara Holdgate
- 7 Fred Day
- 8 Joy Rogers
- 9 Roy Dawson (Merton Community Transport)
- 10 Charles Barrabal (Living Streets, Merton Seniors, London Cycling Campaign)
- 11 Cllr Andrew Judge (Cabinet Member for Environment & Regeneration)
- 12 Ashley Heller (Merton Council)
- 13 Paul Garrett (Merton Council)
- 14 Chris Chowns (Merton Council)

Others who contributed views by telephone included

- Miss Jacqueline Mitchell
- Mr and Mrs Webster:
- Mr H Brown
- Errol Moore:
- Janet Jeffery

## 1 Introduction

It was explained to attendees that the redevelopment of Mitcham town centre was a long-time ambition of the Council. Finally the Council have secured funds to improve the town centre. Funding of £3 million had been made available by Merton Council and a further £3 million was made available by TfL for the redevelopment of Mitcham Town Centre.

There were four proposed phases of development over the next three years (2013 to 2015):

**Phase 1** Improvement to Fair Green and Majestic Way

**Phase 2** Improvements to Western Road and Upper Green West

**Phase 3** Improvements to London Road

**Phase 4** Improvements to Holborn Way

This workshop would focus on issues to do with Fair Green, but would also look at wider access issues.

Attendees were asked what they liked about the town centre and what aspects they found problematic.

Issues identified were as follows:

## 2 Issues with Fair Green

- **Issues with surrounding traffic gyratory:** There was a feeling that the gyratory system has killed off the local town centre by cutting off Fair Green from the surrounding areas. There is little or no access for pedestrians or bus users. There is nothing to encourage people to have a look within Fair Green. There was divided opinion as to whether limited traffic should be reinstated within Fair Green to revive its economy and to make it easier for shoppers to cross to and from neighbouring shopping areas. The traffic should include making it easier for cyclists and scooter users.

It was noted that major route generators and trip destinations include the Post Office and Skippers fish and chip shop.

- **Walking to the centre and pedestrian crossings:** Older people preferred to walk to the town centre. There are also many mobility scooter users. However, crossings to Fair Green are currently very difficult:
  - crossings are too complex and disorienting due to the number of staggers and changes in direction. It makes it especially difficult for visually impaired people.
  - there are too many phases involved,

- waiting time is too long and crossing time allowed is too short for each phase stranding pedestrians in the middle of the road;
  - traffic islands are very small and not large enough to accommodate the number of pedestrians; also pedestrians feel intimidated and under threat from fast moving vehicles, especially large lorries going past when on traffic islands;
  - traffic islands are also too small for scooter users
  - pedestrians also feel under threat from pollution due to the lengthy crossing time.
  - In particular Vestry Road crossing time is too short and waiting time too long (from Greggs bakery),
  - there are too many roads and phases to negotiate to cross to Tesco's
- Another barrier is the railway line which is difficult to cross.
- **Issues for bus users:** Coming in by bus was a popular way to access the centre. The 200 and 152 bus routes were particularly popular. Issues identified were:
    - Bus stops were too far from facilities and crossing points requiring long walks to find a suitable crossing point - e.g. the 200 bus stop. The pedestrian crossing location near the post office needs to be moved closer to the desire line for crossing. The 152 bus stop at LIDL is too far away from the crossing.
    - Grouping of bus stops at an out of the way bus terminal is not preferred by some. It is preferred to have bus stops on the roads and close to facilities and shops.
    - Bus stop locations for individual stops should be close to and opposite each other and passengers should not have to walk for a long time to find the corresponding stop on the way back.
    - Bus stop area allocation is too small and people queuing for buses create congestion on the footpath not allowing others to pass. Footpaths need to be made wider and even wider at bus stops.
- **Surfaces** of routes are an important consideration.
    - Pedestrians prefer smooth, level and firm surfaces. Uneven pavements and road surfaces are a hazard particularly for scooter users and visually impaired people.
    - Poor drainage causing flooding and ponding of water is a hazard for pedestrians.
    - The problem of road surfaces was also a problem stated by users of the 200 bus. The stop in front of Iceland has an uneven road surface to cross and is a trip hazard.

- The grassy area of Fair Green was used as a crossing point, but this has an uneven surface and is difficult to walk on particularly if you have a mobility impairment. There was a preference for a smooth, level and firm path to walk on.
- **Speed and volume of motor traffic:**
  - Many expressed concern about high vehicle speeds. There was preference expressed for a 20mph zone for the area surrounding Fair Green.
  - It was felt that as the population grows older, it is important to make routes and areas safer for walkers and scooter users.
  - It was explained that TfL motor traffic flow requirements meant that Merton Council were constrained in their ability to provide for pedestrian and cycling facilities. Attendees pointed out that pedestrians and cyclists needed to be included in traffic counts as their needs were important too and they made a significant contribution to the town centre economy. It was noted that most shoppers were local people who had come in to the centre via buses or walking.
  - People were concerned about pollution levels.
- **Safety:** is another issue of concern. Issues at Fair Green include:
  - anti-social behaviour from gangs of youth known to frequent the Green,
  - poor lighting in the car park opposite Morrisons.
  - Fieldgate Lane near ASDA is an access road that has poor lighting and no overlooking.
  - Safety from motor traffic is also an issue

**3 Desirable features:** With regard to features that people wanted to see on Fair Green, these included

- more and better crossing points into Fair Green are essential.
- better surfaces of roads and pavements with more dropped kerbs matched up on opposite sides of the road to allow crossing.
- There was also a preference expressed for small focused interventions with greater impact.
- **Street Market stalls:** People expressed a preference for encouraging a street market in the Green.
- **Quality and range of shops** should be improved. There was a preference for more arts and crafts shops, and more shops for families - e.g. for clothing and shoes. The only clothing shop was Peacocks.
- **More eating places/ cafes:** people were disappointed that McDonald's in Fair Green had closed

- **Public toilets**, including accessible toilets were essential. A pod type self managed toilet would be acceptable.
- **Bandstand:** This idea was very popular and was felt it would be extensively used and could be a community focus for events and temporary exhibitions along with music performances.
- **Seating:** This was essential to attract people to the area.
- Bins were also important to keep the place tidy and attractive
- Cyclists should be given suitable routes.
- Better lighting and use of low energy lighting and solar power to conserve energy
- More Blue Badge parking, as shoppers use local bays to access the town centre.
- **Concern about use of level surfaces for streets:** It was felt the use of level surfaces for streets in the context of heavy traffic would lead to dangers for pedestrians. It was noted that the design of streets was likely to be traditional with raised kerbs for footpaths.

#### 4 Case studies

Mr A, an older resident, who has lived in the area for 40 years, prefers walking to the centre from his home in Cricket Green. He is able to easily visit his bank (HSBC) and the post office on the same side of the road as the bus stop, but in order to do any shopping in Fair Green he would need to cross the road which is intimidating due to lack of crossing points and heavy traffic particularly large lorries.

- Mr B, another local resident in his 80s, finds poor surfaces very difficult; also finds crossing the roads to Fair Green very difficult due to large number of crossing phases, not enough room on traffic islands; people get stuck on the islands due to insufficient time given to cross the road. This is a particular problem near Gregg's bakery.
- Mr C, manager of the local community transport, is concerned about being able to pick up clients and drop them off in the area. Access is difficult as bus stops are spread out because of the gyratory system and it is difficult to identify stops that people might be waiting at. Traffic islands are not large enough for mobility scooters. He would like access for community transport buses to extend into Fair Green.
- Mr D, who is over 80, feels the facilities he wants may not match the wishes of younger people. He feels it would be good to have:
  - a cinema combined with a dance hall (community hall).
  - a large shop or stall, or small mall offering more choice for families, e.g. for clothing
  - public toilets: I am an invalid and so I need accessible toilets (the only public toilet is the one in the car park in Mitcham and this is always

closed and only open for bus drivers). Morrisons have an accessible toilet in their staff storeroom area which they let me use after I asked a supervisor but then challenged me after I had used it. More accessible toilets are needed in Mitcham.

- Bandstand in the park for concerts for older people, who enjoy a variety of music including classical and brass bands to enhance the quality of the space and to go and relax.
- Mrs E is retired and has a disabled husband who uses crutches, and they both like making a visit into the town most days. They take the 152 bus (often not getting a seat) into town and walk 10 minutes to a café on the same side of the road and then get the bus back. They do not go into Fair Green as there is nothing to visit there.

She grew up in Mitcham and preferred it with a simple cross road traffic system before the gyratory was introduced. She said it used to have a lovely village like feeling. She feels the gyratory and roundabout has increased traffic, congestion and danger. She walked to school and everywhere as a child and feels it is not possible to walk easily now because there are too many cars. She cannot cross the roads in the centre, as cars do not allow her the time to cross and she gets into arguments with them. There are too many car lanes.

She feels there is a major security issue in Mitcham with gangs of unemployed youth and lack of employment opportunities. The town needs to invest in local, good quality shops to bring back customers and to employ local people. Currently investment seems to be only in housing, not in shops and local businesses.

She feels there is currently a poor range of shops in Mitcham centre and people have to travel to Sutton or Tooting for their shopping. She is forced to go to Sutton sometimes to shop and it costs her £12 for a cab back. She feels there needs to be a bigger range of shops in the centre including better clothing and shoe shops and music shops. This would bring employment into the centre and would reduce gang crime.

- Mr F is disabled and uses a walking stick. He sometimes drives into town and parks at Morrisons. Other times he uses the 118 bus and gets off outside the post office. He finds local shops okay, but if he is driving he will go out of town to the Sainsbury's at Colliers Wood.

He finds it difficult to cross the town centre roads as traffic comes round too quickly not allowing him to make the crossing. He finds the roads dangerous.

He would like to have a public toilet in Mitcham and a cinema and would like to see a café such as McDonalds back in Fair Green to be able to sit and have a snack.

## **5 Time scale**

- Proposals to be finalised in April/ May 2013
- Phase 1 is to start in August 2013 to be completed by the end of year
- Other phases are due to end in 2015

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **Rediscover Mitcham Consultation Broadsheet**



Questionnaire  
attached

MERTON COUNCIL

# Rediscover Mitcham

Your space, your place, your future

## Have your say and help shape Mitcham's future

Merton Council has at least £3 million to invest in Mitcham town centre. We need your help to spend it.

**Rediscover Mitcham** is a fantastic, multi-million pound project over the next 3 years .

Now is the opportunity for residents, businesses, school children and all those who use Mitcham to let us know what the town centre should look like and how we can make it a better place where people can live, work and shop.

**Rediscover Mitcham** is all about the council involving local residents and businesses in a dialogue of ambition to create an attractive town centre to be proud of.



Come and see us on Fair Green from 9am  
till 5.30pm on 22, 23 and 24 November.

[www.merton.gov.uk/rediscovermitcham](http://www.merton.gov.uk/rediscovermitcham)

### Inside

**We want to make Mitcham a better place to be** and ask you to help us do that. Take a look inside for a taste of the opportunities ahead and tell us what you think.



**Get involved in the dialogue** by completing the attached questionnaire, and have the opportunity to win up to **£150 in local shopping vouchers**. Last date to return your questionnaire to the council is 14 December 2012.



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# A history to treasure and a place to breathe fresh life into

Mitcham is an historic place. Once a beautiful Surrey village, it is a town that has been swallowed up by industrial and suburban development over the years. Where it was once an area of thriving commerce and pleasant open space, we now find Mitcham dominated by busy roads, declining quality of shops and a deteriorating public realm. But beneath the postwar development, that unique town still exists. Surely, this is a place worth revitalising.

## Mitcham – the place for royalty and industry

Mitcham was home to lavender fields – the ward name is no accident. The Mitcham lavender was known for its therapeutic qualities and offered welcome respite to those living in the city. Perhaps Queen Elizabeth I sought such remedies on her frequent visits.

During the Industrial Revolution, areas like Mitcham and the banks of the River Wandle were major manufacturing centres for textiles, snuff, copper, flour, iron and dye.

## Mitcham – a place rich in heritage

Its impressive heritage has left Mitcham a number of architectural and landscape gems such as Eagle House, the famous clock tower, Cricket Green and the Three Kings Piece in Upper Green East.

## Mitcham’s changing face

In more recent years, Mitcham, and in particular, Fair Green, has seen economic decline. Some of this decline has been due to the changing ways we do business. Increasing numbers of people buy and sell goods and services online. The town has also been affected by poor quality, unattractive buildings and road planning. We cannot rebuild the town centre or change the location of busy roads that run through Mitcham. However, we can

reduce the negative impact of some mistakes made in the past by identifying small scale local improvements and putting them together in a package of measures that will make a real difference. By making such changes we hope we can help make Mitcham a place where people want to live and do business.

**A vision for Mitcham:** A bustling town centre with a good variety of shops and local services. A town centre people can move around easily and safely. A town that’s accessible. A town that people can enjoy.

## Mitcham: the vision

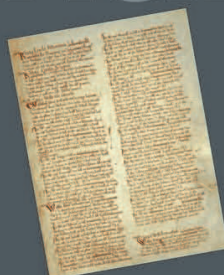
To make the vision for Mitcham a reality, we are bringing together funding from a range of sources. We have already been successful in securing £3 million to help towards improvements. We are also working with Transport for London to secure more funding to help us deliver our **Rediscover Mitcham** project.

For a town to really work and be successful, we need to understand the issues that affect those who use the area. This document explains some of the main local concerns identified in meetings we have started to hold with local people around the area and how an improvement scheme in Mitcham town centre could go some way to addressing those concerns.



# Mitcham history

The Domesday Book records Mitcham as Michelham. It was governed partly by the Canons of Bayeux; partly by William, son of Ansculf and partly by Osbert.



During her reign Queen Elizabeth I made at least five visits to the area. Sir Walter Raleigh also had residences here. With an abundance of lavender fields Mitcham became renowned for its soothing air.  
Page 374



Mitcham was industrialised first along the banks of the River Wandle, where snuff, copper, flour, iron and dye were all worked. Mitcham became a calico cloth printing centre of England by 1750.

# Reinvigorating the local economy

## Business vitality and the town's retail offer

The shopping facilities in and around Fair Green are often inferior to surrounding retail parades in London Road and Upper Green East. There are now a number of closed shops and the area towards St Marks Road has been particularly badly affected by loss of business. The lack of successful businesses, in addition to the traffic issues affecting Fair Green, create a negative perception of the area, deterring businesses from investing in Mitcham.



## Mitcham town centre layout

Mitcham is both a town centre and a busy thoroughfare. This makes it difficult for pedestrians and road users to move with ease around the Fair Green area of the town.

Buses are important to the town centre, as there is no railway or tramline in the immediate vicinity.

## Think about how you get around Mitcham town centre

Imagine approaching Mitcham on foot from various directions. You will face a number of difficult junctions to cross:

## Western Road – junction with Holborn Way and Upper Green East

This is a large junction. At its widest, it is six lanes across. Its design means that it is not possible for pedestrians to cross easily, so it can take several minutes to cross. It is also not possible to go directly from the 200 bus stop to Fair Green. It could be that if you got off the bus by Lidl, you may not want to cross this junction and visit the shops on the other side.

## St Marks Road – junction with London Road

This junction is very wide to allow for a large volume of traffic. Unfortunately, this means that pedestrians have to walk a significant way to cross this junction. Additionally, its layout encourages drivers to drive fast into Holborn Way. You may notice that compared to other roads, St Marks Road is not as busy.

## London Road South

The bus stop outside Tesco Metro is separated from Fair Green by two busy junctions. This deters people from visiting the town centre. If you are walking to Mitcham from the Cricket Green area, you may well just stop at the Tesco Metro and go no further.

## Upper Green West

This area is dominated by through traffic and is frequently busy and severely congested. There is nowhere to stop for people wishing to park for a short time. The bus stop close to the junction with Holborn Way can create congestion problems. The dominance of traffic in this area has contributed towards Fair Green not being as enjoyable a place as it could be.

## Fair Green

Fair Green should be the vibrant heart of Mitcham. In reality, the uninspired layout combined with the poor quality of paving, seating and lighting means Fair Green is tired and not the lively community hub it could be. So far, the attempts to improve the area have been piecemeal without any great impact for the better. A reasonable number of pedestrians use Fair Green, but the overall layout makes it appear underused and less attractive for that.

## Front cover

Mitcham clock tower and Mitcham Lavender.

1. Picnic time time at Cricket Green.
2. The Fair Green is a public space which can set Mitcham apart from other suburban town centres.
3. Mitcham was once a picture postcard town.



The activity along the River Wandle led to the building of the Surrey Iron Railway, the World's first public railway, in 1803



The 1840s also heralded a change in industry, as horticulture gradually gave way to manufacturing, with paint, varnish, linoleum and firework manufacturers moving into the area.



Mitcham became a borough on 19 September 1934 with the charter of incorporation being presented to the 84 year old mayor, Mr. R.M. Chart, by the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, Lord Ashcombe.

1. London Road close to the junction of St Marks Road in the 1950's.
2. Looking north, from the current day clock tower, we see trams pass through the heart of Mitcham in the early 20th century.
3. This picture from the 1950's shows the Fair Green as it once was.

## Breaking the cycle of decline

**Rediscover Mitcham** is about breaking the cycle of decline in a realistic and achievable way.

The ideas for Mitcham on the following pages are based on the principles below:

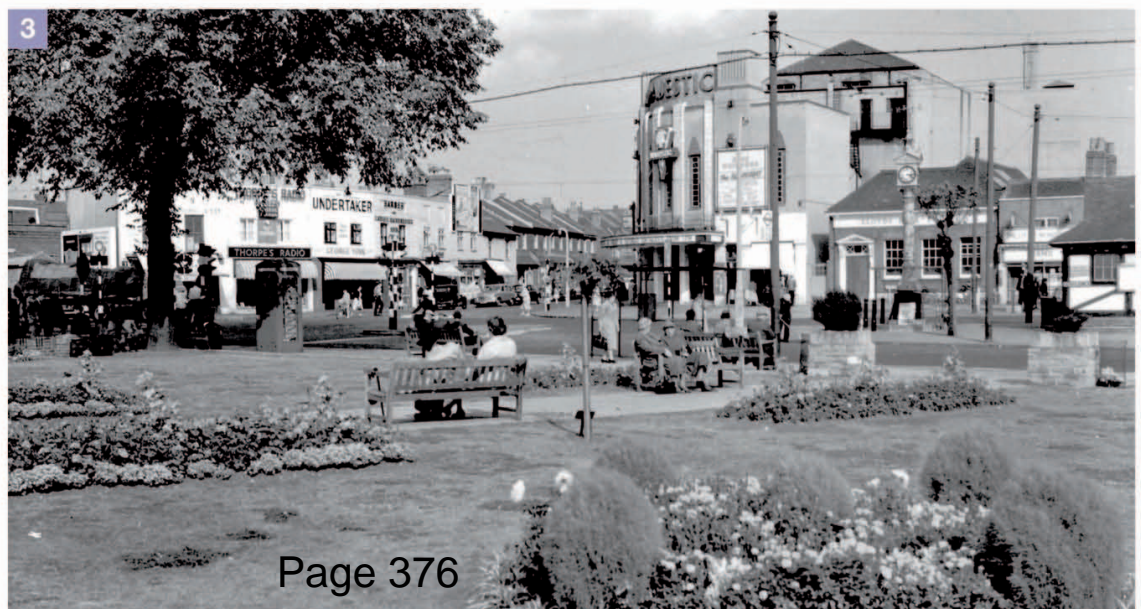
- The scale of funding available to the council, while significant, does not allow us to remove or divert traffic from the town centre gyratory. Therefore, any potential project will need to work within the existing road layout and building frontages.
- Pedestrian movement around the area is very important. However it is not possible or desirable to ignore the need for traffic to flow freely. Proposals will need to reflect this.
- Buses play a vital role in Mitcham, providing a public transport system in the absence of a town centre train or tram station. They bring pedestrians and potential shoppers to the area. A more effective bus service could increase shopper numbers and benefit local shops.
- An effective design and layout of Fair Green is essential to the success of the town centre. Fair Green is the heart of the town with a range of uses including a retail space, a market place, a pedestrian through route and a public space.
- It is important to recognise, retain and develop the existing strengths of Mitcham. Fair Green is historically an area which has always been busy and functional, but also attractive and a centre for community activity.



## A thriving town centre

**Rediscover Mitcham** recognises Mitcham as a once thriving town centre, and its potential to be one again.

**Rediscover Mitcham** is not simply about physical changes to the roads and bus stops, but is also about working with the local community and businesses to identify what other measures and events will help them achieve a Mitcham to be proud of.



# Your chance to get involved in shaping your town centre

## How areas around Fair Green could look

The following drawings, plans and images represent our ideas for the area around Fair Green. Please study each plan and respond to the questions in the attached survey.



## Western Road Junction

The Western Road junction is difficult for pedestrians to cross. Our suggestion for Western Road junction is to reduce the dominance of vehicles and improve the crossing facilities for pedestrians. This would better link Fair Green with the residential areas in Raleigh Gardens and Western Road as well as improve access from Lidl and Asda.

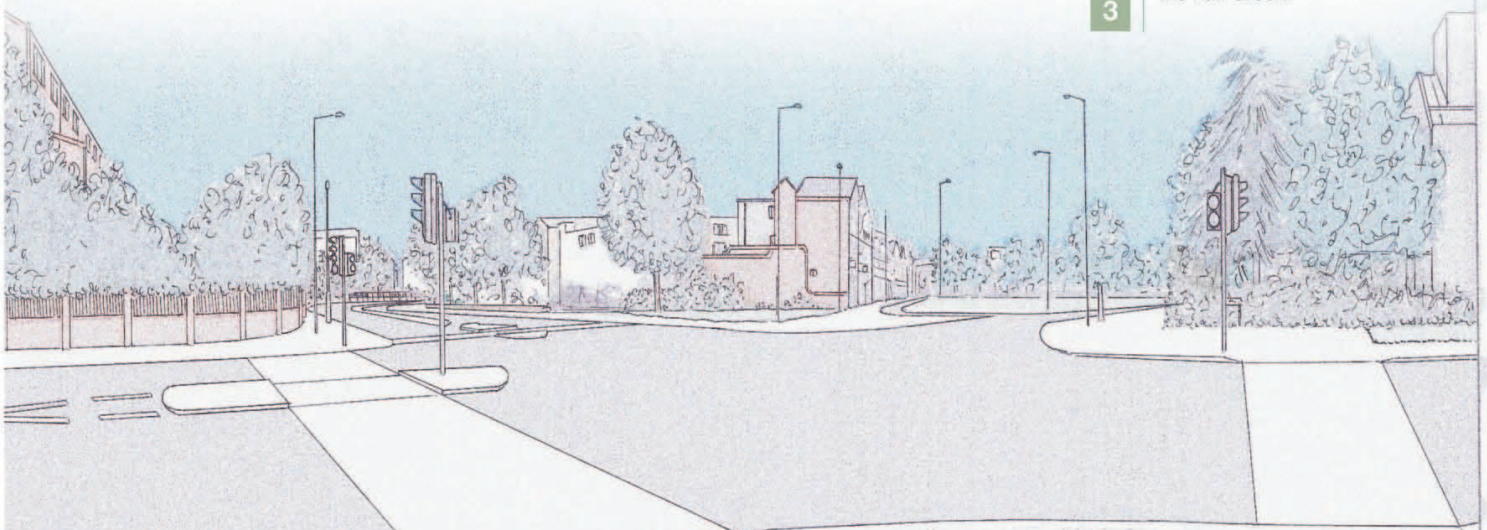
This proposal will also involve moving the 200 bus stop at this junction to another town centre location.



**1.** A number of locations are mentioned in this brochure. Please refer to this map if you are unsure of the places being referred to.

**2.** The Western Road junction is a major interchange in the centre of Mitcham. Its design was aimed to ensure that traffic could move through the area as quickly as possible.

**3.** This artists impressions shows a more pedestrian friendly junction in which the road layout is more akin to what you might expect approaching a town centre on foot. The crossings are shorter and less complicated and it feels easier to cross into the Fair Green.



**1.** Looking from London Road toward St Mark's Road, we currently see a large junction which can be intimidating for pedestrians with guard rails, and long crossing movements. The area has few shops and illegal parking has overtaken what should be a busy pedestrian street.

**2.** This artists impression shows how the junction could look if it were made pedestrian friendly. In this case buses are shown coming through the junction, but even if this did not happen we could improve its layout.

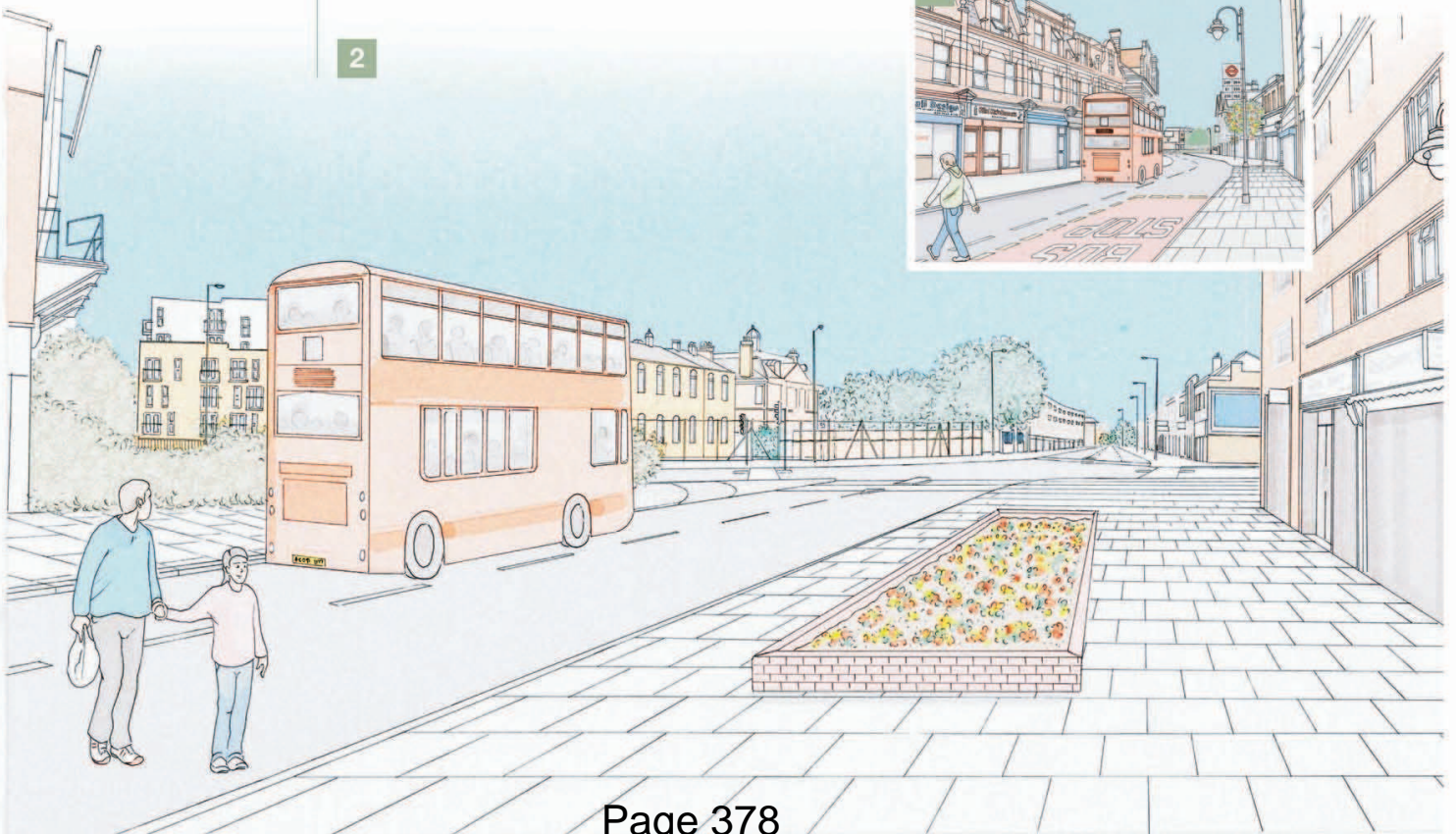
**3.** Introducing buses into the London Road pedestrian area through the St Marks Road junction could benefit the town centre shops.

## St Mark's Road Junction

St Mark's Road junction is wide and unwelcoming for pedestrians. It creates a barrier between the shops in London Road and the pedestrian area. St Mark's Road junction could be gateway to the town centre as well as a new access point to London Road for buses travelling southbound towards Morden and Croydon and an exit point for buses going north bound towards Tooting and Streatham. This would require the junction to be redesigned. The entrance to St Mark's Road would be narrowed significantly to make it easier for pedestrians to cross. A new pedestrian crossing could be put in place across Holborn Way. This could provide more options for improving this part of the town centre for pedestrians .



2



## Upper Green West

Upper Green West divides the shopping area and is difficult to cross. While only limited changes can be made to Upper Green West, we could see a new short term parking and loading layby opposite the Fair Green. If buses were able to enter the Fair Green, the bus stop on the corner of Upper Green West could be removed, enlarging Fair Green on this busy corner. A new cycle lane and footpath could run along the edge of Fair Green. Depending on the impact on traffic, the road could be reduced to two lanes giving more space back to Fair Green.

**1.** Upper Green West is major through route for traffic. It also has the effect of dividing the Fair Green from the shops on London Road.

**2.** Although Upper Green West will remain an important through route this image shows that its impact on the town centre could be 'softened' perhaps introducing more opportunity for short term parking.



**1.** Upper Green East, similar to Upper Green West, is a busy through road. There are limited crossing opportunities as the existing pedestrian crossing is quite a distance from the Fair Green. The post office on Upper Green East is an important local facility.

**2.** The artists impression shows a cycle lane which could run parallel to Upper Green East and West. This would be of benefit to cyclists going toward Colliers Wood and Tooting and reduce people cycling on pavements.

## Upper Green East

Upper Green East is another road which really isolates the Fair Green from surrounding shops and services. The main idea here is to simplify the entrance to Montrose Gardens to allow vehicles to enter a one-way street around the Green. This could allow for short-term parking and loading and Blue Badge parking. The new paving and street furniture upgrades could be extended to this area. The road alignment will also be altered to widen the pavement so a cycle lane could be accommodated. Bus stops and laybys would be improved and simplified. We could also move the existing pedestrian crossing a little further along Upper Green East so that cyclists approaching from the Three Kings Piece direction could cross safely on the Fair Green. The crossing would then also be close to the heart of the Fair Green, reducing the barrier caused by the busy road.





# London Road South

Buses crossing Fair Green could emerge onto London Road (south) using a new junction with Upper Green East and West.

Buses from the south could access the Fair Green via a new 'contraflow' bus lane running from London Road or use the existing gyratory system on Raleigh Gardens, depending on the impacts on traffic congestion. Buses approaching from the west could turn right onto Fair Green directly from Upper Green East or could also use the gyratory system.

**1.** This is quite a well used shopping area but does have a lot of busy junctions. It is not the easiest place to cross the road, but it is also a key traffic interchange.

**2.** Although the amount of traffic makes it difficult to make large changes, perhaps this area could be made to feel more part of the town centre, for example through better paving and lighting. The artists impression shows a bus lane going north bound toward Fair Green. This is one possible option, but only if it did not have an adverse effect on traffic in the area.



Fill out the enclosed survey, Help us create a great future for Mitcham  
and you could **Win £150 in shopping vouchers**

## How do you travel?

We have outlined the ideas we have for improving pedestrians facilities and convenience around Mitcham. However, people using other modes of travel will also benefit from these proposals.

### Bus services

If buses entered the Fair Green it would change the way buses operate in Mitcham. In general buses that go north and southbound could stop on the Fair Green.

The services that would stop in the Fair Green area are:

**152, 200, 201, 127, 280, 270, 355, 361, S1**

If these services were to stop at Fair Green, this could allow the closure of the bus stop on Upper Green West at the corner of the Fair Green, and possibly the bus stop on Raleigh Gardens (near Lidl).

### Cycling

Promoting cycling is a key priority of the **Rediscover Mitcham** project. A number of important cycling routes pass close to the area. Making it easier for cyclists to come to and from Mitcham will have positive benefits on road congestion and will encourage local people to visit more regularly. In addition we are keen to promote commuter cycling from Mitcham towards Eastfields Station.

### Summary of key cycling suggestions:

- New two-way cycle route running along Fair Green from east to west linking Upper Green East and Western Road.
- Cycle access north and south through the bus lane and from St Mark's Road towards London Road North in the south, avoiding the need to use Holborn Way.
- Cycling along Majestic Way towards St Mark's Road – but only if it can be done safely.

### Driving

The improvements include new short term parking bays in Fair Green and Upper Green West. This would benefit local shops and be used for delivery vehicles, disabled parking and shopping for up to 20 minutes.

Although the wide range of ideas includes changes to junctions and road space, they will be carefully assessed to ensure that people driving through the area are not unduly disadvantaged.



### People with mobility impairments

It is essential that any changes to the town centre take into account the mobility needs of all people who use the area. In particular we want to ensure that those people with mobility impairments do not feel that their accessibility needs are overlooked. As a starting point we will always ensure that any proposals are safe and compliant with the latest accessibility standards. However we will also be organising a workshop for people who feel they have specific mobility concerns and if you wish to participate please let us know by ticking the box on the attached survey form.

## Four possible schemes for Fair Green

Fair Green would see the most significant changes if, as suggested, buses could be reintroduced using the old road alignment closed when the area was pedestrianised in the 1990's. New bus stops would be located for both north and south bound buses next to the Green and London Road.

A parking and loading access road could run along the edge of Fair Green occupying a similar space as the existing footpath and original road. This will be a pedestrian friendly space. The layout would be designed with safety in mind, with either pedestrians and vehicles sharing the same space or a more conventional kerbed road.

Landscaping and materials will be completely replaced and upgraded in consultation with local people. Below you will see some ideas for how Fair Green could be improved.

### Redesigning Fair Green

A central part of the regeneration of Mitcham is improving the green space itself. Working with local groups we have come up with four possible approaches for improvements to Fair Green.

## Fair Green 1

### Traditional Fair Green Concept

A civic space, similar to the original layout prior to pedestrianisation.



### Content

The green would be defined by railings around a grassed area, paths to wander along and flower beds. It would be a relatively formal, urban space, traditionally suited to an urban village green using traditional materials and street furniture. The repositioned clock would have pride of place as the focal point. Trees would be important but would also allow views across the green to the surrounding buildings.

### Pros

This concept could:

- Restore the heart of Mitcham.
- Reflect the history and character of the place.
- Restore a sense of civic pride.

### Cons

This concept could:

- Limit uses and activities possible on Fair Green.
- Require funds to maintain grass and planting to good standards.
- Look back to the past rather than forward to the future.

**1.** Parsons Green in West London is an example of a more conventional village green in a suburban setting.

**2.** There are some similarities with Mitcham Fair Green in the 1950's.

**3.** Currently the green space is quite bare with little seating or focus. There are also no paths for people to cross the green area.



**1.** Jubilee Gardens close to London City Hall on the South Bank is an example of a contemplative space which is relatively informal but also offers an opportunity to sit slightly back from the surrounding bustle.

**2.** A community green could include a local facility such as a play area. The size and design of the play area would need to be relative to the overall size of the Fair Green.

**3.** Some people have suggested that a bandstand or stage of some kind could be useful local focal point. Again, do you agree?

## Fair Green 2

### Community Fair Green

#### Concept

A community space designed to allow for activities for local people.

#### Content

The space would provide facilities such as a play space for children, which could be used by parents whilst shopping in the town. The space could also be designed to allow for a programme of local public events based around a variety of themes, put together by local people to develop community spirit. In some areas the space may need to be enclosed by railings of some kind to ensure safety from buses and service vehicles.

#### Pros

This concept could:

- Give the space to the community.
- Allow the community to define the space.
- Deter anti-social behaviour.
- Give the town centre a 'new' heart.

#### Cons

This concept could:

- Provide a flexible space for events but could appear a little barren in appearance when no events are happening.
- Require sufficient demand for the space to be used in such a way.
- Require the space to be actively managed by someone.

## Fair Green 3

### Contemplative Fair Green

#### Concept

A park-like space, in which people can relax.

#### Content

A friendly, characterful space, allowing escape from the traffic and bustle of the town centre. An informal layout with undulating landscape, not dissimilar to parts of the current green, but upgraded with better materials and maintenance. Enclosure of the space would be less important and the planting less structured. The space would be more important than the buildings around it defining the Green. The new Jubilee Gardens by the London Eye is a good example of such a space.

#### Pros

This concept could:

- Be easy to maintain.
- Provide escape from the hustle and bustle.
- Make use of much of the existing planting and landscaping.

#### Cons

This concept could:

- Be quite suburban.
- Mean a lack of focus on the town centre.
- Result in an inefficient use of space and not be very dynamic.
- Not necessarily be the place where people choose to relax.



# Fair Green 4

## 21st Century Fair Green

### Concept

A modern interpretation of a Town Green.

### Content

This option would take inspiration from successful new and re-invigorated London spaces, such as Leicester Square, City Hall, Olympic Park and others. It would reinterpret this for the Mitcham context, with references to relevant historical and contemporary features such as the lavender fields. It could be loosely based on the traditional green character, but with a modern interpretation in terms of detailed design of seating, furniture, materials, lighting etc.

### Pros

This concept could:

- Give a strong message of revitalisation and investment.
- Recreate the heart – a new jewel in a re-emerging crown.
- Bring a sense of confidence in a brighter future.
- Put Mitcham on the map.
- Rediscover and re-establish the town's identity.

### Cons

This concept could:

- Involve the high cost of top quality materials and maintenance.

With all the above concepts, we all need to think about whether they fit into Mitcham's urban surroundings.

**1.** Wimbledon Station square is a recent example of a new public space created in Merton. While much smaller than the Fair Green, it does demonstrate how a contemporary space could look.

**2.** Leicester Square is a different example, with modern seating in a green setting.

**3.** Also from Leicester Square we see modern railings which may or may not be suitable for Mitcham. What do you think?

**4.** Try to consider how a redesigned Fair Green could look if it were bordered by lightly trafficked roads.



# Before and after images of Fair Green



**1.** This image shows that even a very significant change to road layouts in and around Fair Green does not mean that the space will be reduced in size or that community activities are going to be affected. The council are very aware of the importance of the Fair Green space to the character of Mitcham and our objective is to ensure a successful space bordered by a successful town centre. The image shows the clock tower close to the market square, but it could easily be located elsewhere on the Fair Green.

**2.** Fair Green as it is today.

We recognise that a lot of information has been presented in this leaflet. We have decided to share our developing ideas with the residents and businesses in Mitcham so that at an early stage your views can genuinely be reflected in the final scheme proposals. The other side of this is that there is still a significant amount of technical work to be completed before we can come back to people with our final proposals. There are still a number of unknowns which may change what we can and cannot achieve including a large funding bid for £3million to Transport for London.

However, we also realise that many people will be concerned with the impact of changes to the town centre on the Fair Green space. It is certain that we have no intention of reducing the size of the Fair Green, even if its shape may alter slightly. If we have to take a small piece of the existing space (for example to accommodate buses) then another piece of land will be given back to the space.

The success of **Rediscover Mitcham** will depend on working together as a partnership. Mitcham can be both a pleasant and successful place which will benefit everyone who lives works and visits the area.

## The thinking behind 'Rediscover Mitcham'

### Why are we doing this now and how does this relate to what the council is doing in the rest of the borough?

In 2011 the council adopted its Core Planning Strategy. This says how the council will approach the development and planning of the borough over the next 15 years. The borough is divided into five sub-areas, each with a specific approach based on local needs. Raynes Park and Wimbledon have recently seen improvements. The council's attention is now focussed on Mitcham.

The policies in the Core Strategy have a certain amount of funding allocated to them by the council. The council must also secure funding and expertise from other sources if it is to secure real and effective change. One of the key needs of the Mitcham area is regeneration aimed at stopping and turning around economic decline.

The council had therefore successfully bid for funding for a package of regeneration measures for Mitcham under the London Mayor's Outer London Fund (OLF). This amounts to a total of £715k. Enhancements to the public realm, streets and open spaces in the town centre forms one part of this approach to regeneration. It is this part of the regeneration that is detailed in this leaflet, and which the council is now seeking your view on.

Other initiatives in the OLF bid will be running parallel to the development and implementation of the public realm enhancements. Because the public realm enhancements are a large project, they are being run and managed as a separate (but integrated) project. The OLF has a very great emphasis on working with local people and the following section explains the main elements of the project.

### Working with local communities

We understand that it takes more than just physical improvement to a place to make it operate to its fullest. That's why a significant part of the work we'll be doing is being developed for and with the local community to ensure that the changes lead to better business opportunities and a more vibrant town.

### Support for businesses and the community

We're working towards a Mitcham town centre which has good shopping with new, better quality shops, restaurants, cafes, bars, office space and a vibrant local market. This major investment in the town will lead to more money being spent locally in local businesses and more jobs being created for local people.

Specifically, we now have extra funding to:

- Identify ways to make existing community links stronger and more supportive of local growth.
- Consider how the night time economy can be revived for example through special events such as temporary cinemas
- Identify ways to bring back some of the empty shops into use to support the needs of the community, possibly with provision for entertainment or activities.
- Improve the quality of the market space and promote it better. This could include ideas such as specialist markets and night markets taking place.
- Tidy up shopfronts to make them look more attractive.
- Support local shops and businesses through Business Support – e.g. improve internet sales and marketing.
- Introduce community skills which could include training for local people for employment.
- Provide marketing and promotion activity alongside a series of events to highlight Mitcham's qualities.



# Rediscover Mitcham

Your space, your place, your future

## Mitcham town centre needs you

For Mitcham to have the best design and be a 21st century town we can all be proud of, your input is needed. We want to know your views about the proposals in this document so we can get going on creating a Mitcham that is lively and economically resilient.

At the heart of this town centre is the Fair Green so why not take part in a working group and help us design the best space for Mitcham. Please include your details on the attached questionnaire.

### How do I make sure the council receives my views on the proposals?

We want to hear your views on the ideas in this brochure. Once the results of the consultation are in, we will then reflect these in the plans we are developing. We will then need to obtain the formal permissions that will be required to implement the changes. These include agreement from council members, the Emergency Services and Transport for London.

Some ideas will also need to be tested to ensure that they do not create problems with the road network in the area. This may result in some changes to the proposals but we will keep you informed.

Once we have got a good idea of local peoples priorities we can then come back to you in the first part of 2013 with some specific proposals. If these are acceptable then we can start the works on the ground.

### Keeping you up to date with what's going on

Once we have an agreed plan, we will ensure that this is publicised around Mitcham and also on the internet page [www.merton.gov.uk/rediscovermitcham](http://www.merton.gov.uk/rediscovermitcham)

The construction will involve some changes and disruption, so we will discuss these with local residents and businesses.

We will ensure that the construction is phased to minimise disruption in the town.

#### Rediscover Mitcham: What happens next?



### Getting involved

This is a genuine opportunity for local people to have their views heard and reflected in a major set of changes to the town centre. Please take the time to fill out the survey as, without your views, we cannot ensure that the new town centre design meets your needs.

### Don't forget

to send us your views on the enclosed questionnaire by 14 December 2012

If you have any questions about the information contained in this brochure please contact Future Merton either writing to: Rediscover Mitcham, 12th Floor, Civic Centre, Morden SM4 5DX or email: [rediscovermitcham@merton.gov.uk](mailto:rediscovermitcham@merton.gov.uk)

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SUPPORTED BY

**MAYOR OF LONDON**

#### Request for document translation

If you need any part of this document explained in your language, please tick box and contact us either by writing or by phone using our contact details below.

- Albanian Nëse ju nevojitet ndonjë pjesë e këtij dokumenti e shpjeguar në gjuhën amtare ju lutemi shenojeni kutinë dhe na kontaktoni duke na shkruar ose telefononi duke përdorur detajet e mëposhtime.
- Bangali এই ডকুমেন্টের কোনো অংশ আমাদের নিজস্ব ভাষায় বুঝতে চাইলে, দয়া করে বাংলায় (বাংলা) ঠিক ঠিক দিন এবং যিটি লিখে বা ফোন করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন। যিহা (যোগাযোগের বিবরণ) নিচে দেয়া হয়েছে।
- French Si vous avez besoin que l'on vous explique une partie de ce document dans votre langue, cochez la case et contactez-nous par courrier ou par téléphone à nos coordonnées figurant ci-dessous.
- Korean 민원 본 서류의 어떤 부분이라도 귀하의 모국어로 설명받으려면, 상지속에 표시된하고 우리에게 전화나 직간접로 연락하십시오.
- Polish Aby otrzymać część tego dokumentu w polskiej wersji językowej proszę zaznaczyć kwadrat i skontaktować się z nami drogą pisemną lub telefoniczną pod poniżej podanym adresem lub numerem telefonu.
- Portuguese Caso você necessite qualquer parte deste documento explicada em seu idioma, favor assinalar a quadricula respectiva e contatar-nos por escrito ou por telefone usando as informações para contato aqui fornecidas.
- Somali Haddii aad u baxsan tahay in qayb dumeentigan ka mid ah laguugu sharxo luqaddaada, fadlan sax ku cagaamadee sanduuga oo nagula soo xiriir warqad ama telefoon adigoo isticmaalaya macluumaadka halkaan hoose ku yaalla.
- Spanish Si desea que alguna parte de este documento se traduzca en su idioma, le rogamos marque la casilla correspondiente y que nos contacte bien por escrito o telefónicamente utilizando nuestra información de contacto que encontrará más abajo.
- Tamil இதைப் படிக்கிறீர்கள் எனில் எந்தெந்த பகுதிகளை உங்கள் மொழியில், தெரிவிக்க வேண்டும். நாம், உங்கள் மொழியில், எங்கே உதவலாம் என்பதைக் குறிப்பிட்டு, கீழே உள்ளவற்றில் எங்கே எங்கே தொடர்பு கொள்ள வேண்டும். காண்க: இங்கே உள்ளவற்றில்.
- Urdu اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کے کسی حصے کی وضاحت چاہیے تو براہ کرم اس حصے کے ساتھ ساتھ اس دستاویز کے نیچے دیئے گئے معلوماتوں کو بھی پُر کریں۔

- Large print
- Braille
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#### Your contact:

Name.....  
 Address.....  
 Telephone.....