

Development Control
Merton Council
Civic Centre,
London Road
MORDEN
SM4 5DX



10 May 2021

For the attention of Stuart Adams, Case Officer

Dear Sir

21/P1136 - WIMBLEDON STADIUM: PROPOSED ADDITIONAL USE FOR RUGBY

This application concerns the proposed introduction of Rugby into the Football Stadium.

In the 18/P3354 (7/2019) planning permission, Condition 37 limited activities to general sporting uses and football matches and no other commercial or public events. This was to allow the Council to control the level of sporting use, and safeguard the amenities of those in adjoining properties, and deal with local transport conditions.

When the application was referred to the GLA/Mayor, being of strategic importance, transport was raised by the GLA/Mayor as one of the elements of concern.

The football season generally operates between late August and May. The Rugby season is proposed to operate between March and October, ie it is to be a principally summer game.

Because of the disruption to sporting events caused by Covid, spectators have not yet been able to attend matches at Plough Lane. As a result, it has not been possible to verify the assumptions and predictions set out in the transport studies and assessments that formed part of the original planning application. This is important as the site is in a defined area of poor public transport accessibility.

The Minutes of the Council meeting in 12/2015 state that there is a need to update the transport assessments once the Stadium becomes operational. This has not yet been done. So the effects on the local area, and on local residents and businesses etc, are not as yet able to be verified. The extent to which the residents in the new development itself could be affected needs to be verified also: will they be happy with "disturbance" throughout the year? One notes that the application (Stantec 2.4) refers to spectators parking in St George's Road car park, but this has been closed for more than a year.

The Society considers that this application should not be supported at this time. If, however, the Council is minded to approve, then it is suggested that permission should be limited to say 3 years, to allow a proper evaluation of the transport and other impacts to be verified.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Goodair
Chairman, Wimbledon Society Planning and Environment Committee

cc: Stephen Hammond MP