

Cohere .E

In general, a lot of the draft local plan give the impression of being fluff with very general words which don't have a lot of meaning but sound nice. Apologies if that sounds harsh. I appreciate it is a mammoth task.

For example:

“Supporting developments and occupiers that help improve or strengthen local character, reflecting the area’s rich architectural history or providing a modern interpretation”

This is just one of many statements in the local plan which sounds nice but is far too open to interpretation and thus appears almost meaningless.

Supporting is very vague and indecisive.

Improve or strengthen local character – far too open to interpretation to have any meaning.

Reflecting the area's rich architectural history – ditto

Providing a modern interpretation – this could mean anything. A developer or architect only needs to make a statement showing the most tenuous link between existing architecture and their design for it to be taken as providing a modern interpretation. Ultimately, giving a broad brush for any developer or architect to design anything without any respect for the architectural character or history of the area.

A couple of other examples of vague statements with nice words:

“Enhancing the experience for people coming to Wimbledon commensurate to its international reputation by requiring exemplary design and landscaping, streetscene and public realm investment, taking opportunities to green Wimbledon;”

“Supporting high quality architecture and design”

WIMBLEDON:

Document Stage2a_9_Wimbledon_FINAL.pdf

Has the header South Wimbledon. This is clearly wrong! The header on each page should be Wimbledon.

N3.6 e. “Respecting views from Wimbledon Hill through the town centre and beyond, with taller developments set away from the historic core, located around the station, St George’s Road, Hartfield Road and Broadway East;”

This passage is not clear. Are the taller developments to be located around the station, St George's Rod, Hartfield Road and Broadway East.

OR

Is the historic core located around the station, St George's Road, Hartfield Road and Broadway East.

PLEASE CLARIFY/REWORD THIS PASSAGE to make it complete clear.

Wimbledon Objectives

Are the three main objectives in order?

If so, the order should be

Conserving character

Greening Wimbledon

A vibrant town centre.

If the first two objectives are achieved, Wimbledon will be a nice place to visit, work, live and so the town centre will become vibrant.

YMCA:

The YMCA site already has an approved planning application. There is no mention of this in the draft local plan.

SOUTH WIMBLEDON

Character Photos: It is misleading to include a photo of the proposed High Path Estate, which does not as yet exist, as an example of the character of the area.

N3.5 f - *“Encouraging measures that help to minimise and mitigate pollutants associated with the busy road network, including planting and green cover, measures to encourage walking and cycling and, electric vehicle charging points”*

Encourage is way too vague. It seems even less powerful a word than promote. Surely, encourage is not strong enough for this statement/policy.

N3.5 g & j – there is no mention of Haydons Road Recreation Ground which is a well used and important green space and will become more so as the High Path Estate is

regenerated. It will be in a direct line up Nelson Road from the proposed public park at High Path. It should therefore be included in:

N3.5 g “Protecting and enhancing the public open space at Nelson Gardens and Haydons Road Recreation Ground and improving links to Abbey Rec, Wandle Park and other nearby open spaces”

TALL BUILDINGS

Tall buildings should be minimised for a number of reasons:

Microclimate effects (not just wind effects) including:

- Wind.
- Shading the streets preventing ice from melting in winter making pavements dangerous for pedestrians and roads dangerous for cyclists.
- Storing heat thus raising the temperature of the town centres/tall building groupings.

Plus:

- Harder to demolish when the time comes.
- Shade adjoining buildings – including solar panels which removes any benefit of solar energy generation from those adjoining or near by buildings.
- The impact on adjoining historic or architecturally significant buildings.
- Require more open space for high rise dwellers.

The covid outbreak has demonstrated how important it is to provide sufficient outdoor space and green space. High rise rabbit hutch living makes the situation worse. As does close working conditions without fresh air circulation (ie from open windows) such as high rise offices.

Wimbledon:

The tallest building heights in Wimbledon Town Centre are excessive. The maximum should be 6 or 7 storeys.

Colliers Wood:

Britannia Point, as I understand it, could not be demolished. Building more high rise blocks on the same island will exacerbate this problem. Given that buildings seem to have a short planned life time, it is incredulous that thought is even being given to the development of more high rise buildings adjoining Britannia Point.

The microclimate effects are already problematic there – the wind effect makes the plaza and surrounding roads/pavements unpleasant and dangerous for cyclists.

South Wimbledon

As with many other areas, is an area of low rise shops, housing and commerce. The only tall buildings, other than the three towers on High Path Estate, have been built

in very recent years – for example those on Morden Road. All have been totally out of keeping and character with the surrounding buildings, and have the appearance of very poor quality.

Efforts must be made to ensure further developments of this sort are not possible.

DESIGN

The nice words throughout the draft local plan such as maintaining the character of an area, respecting heritage etc, are meaningless when developments are going to be allowed that do the opposite. There needs to be great detail and more precise and specific guidance as to what this means.

ECONOMY, CLIMATE CHANGE:

Using development as a means of providing jobs is short term and not sustainable in the long term unless we keep repeating the cycle of build, demolish, rebuild.

The aim should surely be to refurbish existing buildings to make them suitable for purpose. Surely this does less damage to the environment, less use of valuable resources, less waste of materials from demolition that may end up in landfill.

Are the priorities right?

The idea of 20 minute neighbourhoods – for work, shopping, health and fitness etc – would seem a far better idea than trying to bring 1000s of office workers in to Wimbledon Town Centre on a daily basis. This would reduce the need for the use of private motor vehicles, put less pressure on public transport, in particular the underground network, during peak hours. The ptal rating for housing simply increases the pressure on already overwhelmed transport during peak hours.

FLOOD ZONES/FLOOD RISK:

Construction should absolutely not take place where there is any risk of flooding. Given the amount of rain that has fallen recently, and this is likely to get worse over the coming years due to climate change, it is inconceivable that properties will be built where there is risk of flooding, especially housing. Insurance companies will stop providing cover for flooding or the policies will be prohibitive, leading to huge financial problems for those property owners when they get flooded. Water levels will rise.

UNDERGROUND STATION DEVELOPMENT:

The plans to develop and build over South Wimbledon and Colliers Wood Underground Stations will:

Likely cause more wind effect at these stations which already suffer from wind.

Destroy the architecture of the stations.

At South Wimbledon will make the busy but small road junction more closed in and with more microclimate effects, detrimental to pedestrians and cyclists.

CHARACTER PHOTOS:

Some of the character photos selected for the different areas are misleading. Those buildings that are more recent and out of character with an area should not be being used as examples of the character of an area. This is a self fulfilling or intentionally using a new, and possibly unpopular, development for setting a precedent. Using such examples of the local character of the area is misleading – in fact, it appears intentionally misleading.