

[REDACTED]

From: K [REDACTED] Arundell [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 January 2019 16:10
To: Future Merton
Subject: MASTERPLAN

Dear Merton Council and Officers

Below are my comments to the Council's proposed MasterPlan.

You will have received comments from Friends of Wimbledon Town Centre which has a membership of c.1000. Therefore it reflects a significant view of your proposed Plan.

1. There should be a protection of the TC (town centre) but your proposals radically alter the nature, design, size and daytime population all in the likely interests of alleged financial benefit. This is confirmed by the envisaged density increase in commercial use of 50% and bldg height from 7 up to 18 stories within a smallish area. That is not a Town - that is bordering on a City development. The Town's character would disappear. I support improved quality and building design however but note that the proposed increase would impact hugely on the flow of traffic - already a nightmare - and nearby residential areas. Can this increase in commercial space be justified or will there just be highrise buildings sitting empty? Page 69 of your Plan says 'The townscape and topography is not suitable for high rise towers....' and the proposed bldg heights around St George's Rd/Station/YMCA would be significantly higher than existing bldgs and are more than a moderate increase in height.

2. Where is the data that suggests there is a need for an extra 8000 jobs and a proposed 50 % increase in commercial space. Did you just merely acquiesce to the Mayor of London's draft London Plan. Wimbledon is a Town and its centre is as such but not a Metropolitan Centre like Croydon or Kingston.

3. Whether Crossrail 2 goes ahead imminently or down the road it is wrong for the Plan to say it would not be reliant on the CR Project. It might be more prudent to wait any MasterPlan decision until the Govt decides on Crossrail 2 funding etc.

4. The Council should decide once and for all regarding the idea of a world class Concert Hall which has been a dream proposal for almost as long as I have lived in Wimbledon ie 1993. It would add to Wimbledon's cultural life and would join up with the annual Bookfest/International MusicFest etc.

5. Protect Wimbledon's TC and its heritage and sense of community. Your Plan recognises the TC's rich history but it doesn't recognise the significance of residents' expressed wish to preserve historic bldgs and facades.

It is laudable that the Council has developed a 136 page MasterPlan but merely putting it on its website/sticking a copy in libraries etc is not sufficient communication for such a proposed major change and impact on its TC. I support the proposal from FoWTC for more significant communication with Wimbledon residents and in doing so you will also receive significantly more objections to your MasterPlan than you have already. Will you do that please?

Thank you.
K [REDACTED] Arundell
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