

Batson .R

I would like to comment on the draft Local Plan and in particular Policy N3.6 relating to Wimbledon Town Centre.

I support the emphasis on "exemplary design and landscaping", taking opportunities to green Wimbledon and requiring developers to have regard to quality and design excellence in new buildings.

But I have the following concerns about other points in the draft plan:

1. I do **not** support the Council's desire to "strengthen the position of Wimbledon towards being a Metropolitan Centre in south London" (N3.6.f.). In my view this is neither necessary nor desirable. Wimbledon has grown organically and the town centre is bounded by residential streets on all sides. The scale of development associated with being a Metropolitan Centre is inappropriate for Wimbledon.
2. The draft Local Plan refers to "encouraging office development to support businesses and jobs". As with the Masterplan, it is hard to see where such demand will come from. In fact the economic and social trends point in the opposite direction - new technologies and more flexible ways of working are likely to reduce the demand for traditional office and retail space over the next 20 years.
3. I do not support the suggested need for a "moderate increase in building heights". **Certainly** the building heights proposed in the Masterplan, particularly around St George's Road, Worple Road, the station and the area around the current YMCA, are significantly higher than existing buildings and would represent over-development of the town centre. Such buildings would tower over neighbouring residential streets and would exacerbate traffic congestion and air pollution problems in the town centre. I suggest the height of all new buildings should be capped at 8 storeys.

Thank you