

[REDACTED]

From: M [REDACTED] Creagh [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 January 2019 22:33
To: Future Merton
Cc: Councillor Daniel Holden; Councillor David Simpson; Councillor David Williams
Subject: Masterplan

To whom it may concern

I am writing to express my serious concerns about the proposed Wimbledon Masterplan. Firstly, it is only through a chance conversation with another local resident that I became aware of these proposals and the opportunity to express my views before the imminent deadline. As a resident who lives [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (and thus will be significantly impacted by the proposed changes to Worple Road and St George's Road) I believe that I should have been actively informed by the council of these proposals and invited to respond. I know many other Wimbledon residents who would also wish to express their views but are almost certainly unaware of the proposals.

I purchased my property eight years ago and chose Wimbledon as a place to settle due to its residential and village-like character. I believe that it is the sense of living outside London but with wonderful transport links to the city centre that makes Wimbledon such an attractive and sought-after place to live. I am particularly concerned about the proposed 'mid-rise' buildings which, given that the highest building is currently only eight floors high, will substantially alter the skyline not only in the immediate vicinity of the station but also into the densely residential areas of Worple Road and St George's Road. I am horrified by the proposal to have an 18-story building towering like an eye-sore over the town centre, and also by the idea that buildings of twelve to fifteen stories could become the new norm. It is disingenuous to suggest that this would only represent a moderate height increase. Rather, this would completely change the character of the town centre which is comprised of relatively low-rise buildings, will block out the sky and the light around the town centre, and will make Wimbledon feel more like a central London commercial and business hub. Its residential, peaceful and historical charm for which it is so renowned risks being destroyed.

Furthermore, if many thousand more workers were encouraged to commute to and work in Wimbledon, the additional traffic, congestion, over-crowded amenities and increased pollution would place an unacceptable pressure on a town which is already becoming increasingly hectic, congested and polluted. Parking is already problematic, cafes, bars and restaurants crowded, traffic heavy, rush-hour trains packed and schools full. Is there scope to absorb so many more workers and residents as proposed?

I am also concerned at the likely change in the demography of Wimbledon if the proposed redevelopment goes ahead. Many families seeking a peaceful and residential place to settle will be deterred by the commercial atmosphere of the town, the traffic, the hustle and bustle and increase in nighttime noise (and crime?) which will inevitably accompany the 'Metropolitan' character of the redeveloped town. People such as myself (a childless teacher) who had hoped to make Wimbledon my home for the long term may opt to sell up and move further out. It is likely that the proposed redevelopment will lead to an increase in short-term renters and a transient population. Typically, such populations are less invested in their local community and take less pride in their local area.

To conclude, I ask that there be a more proactive, extensive and deep consultation with local residents who surely have the right to be made aware of and respond to the proposed changes, which will inevitably

have a very considerable impact on their lives, both during the disruptive (and lengthy) building phase and in the long term for those who wish to stay.

Yours sincerely

M [REDACTED] Creagh