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**From:** W [REDACTED] McTernan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 January 2019 17:04  
**To:** Future Merton  
**Subject:** Feedback on the Future Wimbledon Masterplan

Dear Planners,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Masterplan. I appreciate the huge amount of research, careful thinking and work that has gone into this. There are some very good ideas there, which will greatly improve and enhance our town. However, I do have some reservations, as follows.

1. My overarching point is that Wimbledon should retain and develop a distinctive character, and not try to become another Metropolitan Centre like Kingston, Sutton or Croydon, nor 'southwest London's premier location for business, leisure, living and culture.' I appreciate these can be attractive aims for planners but Wimbledon town centre is simply too small to accommodate all this. An example of an attractive town that has managed to keep its distinctiveness and personality is Richmond.
2. The proposed creation of 8,000 office spaces - nearly double what we currently have - can only be achieved by building so-called mid-rise blocks. Four blocks of 15 storeys and another couple even higher? No thank you. We haven't the transport network nor the roads to support this, and they would completely change the character of Wimbledon, dwarfing existing buildings. In my view, development of significant office space and the mooted tech hub should be as per the Local Plan which I understand utilises land elsewhere in the borough, taking the heat away from the already crowded town centre. I would have thought the very high commercial rates and rents would make Wimbledon town centre less attractive than the cheaper parts of the borough?
3. I don't want a huge shopping centre in Wimbledon, full of high street brand names. Rather I would prefer to see Wimbledon go down a more imaginative route with less emphasis on consumerism, encouraging independent shops with affordable rates and rents, workshops, recycling, etc. I support the idea of Wimbledon developing culturally with a concert hall, for example, a better art space, and I agree, it could do with a nice hotel - doesn't have to be enormous.
4. Wimbledon used to be a balanced place socio-economically, where everybody could have a home. Over the last forty years it has become very rich, with the result that there is virtually no housing provision for low-paid workers in shops, pubs, cafes and restaurants, cleaners, people who work at the station, etc. It would be great if some of the new buildings in Wimbledon town centre could provide for these employees to 'live over the shop' as it were. Wimbledon (like the whole of central London) is set to become increasingly elitist unless this is addressed in meaningful ways. This is Wimbledon's opportunity to buck the trend and continue its heritage as a distinctive and attractive place to live.

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W [REDACTED] McTernan  
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