

From:
Sent: 06 January 2019 14:24
To: Future Merton
Cc:
Subject: Local Plan

Dear Sir, Madam,

I'm writing to you with respect to the Local Plan for Wimbledon as outlined on your website. I have reviewed it, and would like to share with you my thoughts and concerns. These closely overlap with my concerns over the Masterplan.

Building Height:

- As stated in my response to the Masterplan, I am very concerned about allowing development up to a proposed maximum height of up to 18 storeys. I think that this is wholly inappropriate for Wimbledon and would irrevocably change the character of Wimbledon, as well as exacerbating current traffic congestion and pollution issues in the town centre. To pass this level of increase off as "moderate" is disingenuous. A maximum of 10 storeys around the St. Georges / Worple Road area should provide capacity to grow without impacting the town in the way I outline above. The YMCA building on the Broadway, which is the tallest building by some distance in the area, is an eyesore. Permitting further similar development cannot be allowed as part of this Masterplan

Classification of Wimbledon:

- I disagree with Merton Council's stated desire for Wimbledon to be a "Metropolitan Centre", rather than a "Major Centre". If you set out with that ambition, I fear you will be setting us up for a development path that is not in sympathy with Wimbledon's character. Indeed, this also stokes fears of a mini-Croydon. I understand that you are not keen on this comparison, but your Masterplan and the language it employs only promotes this fear.

Historic Buildings:

- Rather than simply acknowledging the town's rich history, I would like to see specific commitments to preserve specific historic buildings and facades.

Consultation process:

- The consultation process for both the Masterplan and the Local Plan has been inadequate. Given their importance to everyone who lives and works in Wimbledon, it is not enough simply to publish the documents on the Council's website and place hard copies in libraries. With such 'passive' methods of communication, most residents are likely to remain in ignorance. The Council should be more proactive and consider writing to all residents at their home addresses, as well as for example mounting pop-up information stands in the Piazza and Centre Court/.

Overall, I am very supportive of the idea behind a Masterplan and a Local Plan for Wimbledon. A blueprint that will guide future growth and development in a sympathetic way is an excellent idea. It is therefore critical that it is done right, and doesn't aim to fundamentally change the character of the town through overdevelopment, or indeed permit high-rise development that would drastically alter the feel of the town. I'm in agreement with the idea of developing the St. Georges Road / Worple Road area, but fear that the current plans are too drastic.

I trust that you will take my feedback into consideration,

Kind Regards