

[REDACTED]

From: A [REDACTED] Roney [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 December 2018 15:47
To: Future Merton
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Council's Master plan for the Wimbledon town centre

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have been considering again the proposals concerning the Council's master plan for Wimbledon town centre, and I would suggest that the letter set out below covers most objections very clearly. It seems to be suggested that the town centre should become a second "Westfield". God forbid that that should happen. Retail units are swiftly disappearing with the increase in internet purchases, and even offices are diminishing in number as more people are encouraged to work from home on their computers. The Council would find themselves with a ghost town, with a huge reduction of rates paid to them, and tall, gloomy buildings encouraging crime as the environment becomes less pleasant, particularly as Wimbledon is a travel hub so villains can come and go easily and quickly...

We already have Centre Court Shopping which I believe has a significant shoplifting, card cloning and pick-pocketing problem at certain times of the year, if not all year round. I would ask that the Council explore the number of such crimes that go on already. I would be interested to know.

We do need a low-rise, landscaped arts/concert venue to complement the theatres, both the New Wimbledon and the Polka Children's Theatre in the centre; and already it can be seen that some use is made of the area in front of Morrisons for interesting events, such as the big screen for Wimbledon Tennis.

Please look again at these plans, and take a sensible view, with the interests of the residents at heart, rather than be guided by possible profit for developers.

I set out the letter I agree with in its entirety below:

Yours truly,

[REDACTED] A [REDACTED] Roney

Dear sir/madam:

I wish to object to both the recommendation and justification for building a new group of tall buildings (up to 16 storeys) around Worple and St George's Road, and also for the YMCA to be permitted to build up to 14 storeys here in Wimbledon.

At a community meeting with our MP on Saturday, 24 November 2018 it was suggested by a Council representative that 'these proposals are already part of existing plans.'

I am aware of no Council document that exists today identifying sites for tall buildings in Wimbledon town.

Indeed the latest Core Strategy, adopted December 2014 says:

"Recognising the growth potential of Merton, the policy designates Colliers Wood and Morden as appropriate locations for tall buildings. Wimbledon Broadway is also identified as being capable of accommodating a small increase in building height" (NB: no mention of Worple/St Georges).

Any expansion of Wimbledon Town and environs must be sensitively designed. The Council has a duty to provide good growth: organic, healthy, sustainable growth.

A group of shiny steel steroid-enriched towers for 8,000 new workers adjoining low buildings and homes is wrong. Any further commercial space must be accompanied by associated hard and soft/social infrastructure. Council insistence on intensification of such a tiny space will degrade residential amenities and damage the stability of the existing community.

Surely a document entitled a Masterplan must contain a Mission Statement and Positioning Statement for the Town, and include all aspects of town life - traffic, air quality, policing and security, peak tourism planning, public realm/pocket parks, and of course committing the P3 site to a new concert hall.

At the HEART of the new town, Wimbledon requires a performance venue to replace the hall stolen from our community by local government. Why is this new Hall not identified in the Masterplan? Cllr Alambritis certainly forced through his football stadium; why has he refused to back this excellent venture? Instead he shouts that Westfields in Wimbledon ("great stuff") is all it will take to make the future town a success.

If these issues outlined above are excluded from the Masterplan, the 136 page document is incomplete, a smokescreen for what is just a poorly justified 'supplementary planning document' for the Council to sneak in developer CIL money - without regard for the vast social and economic damage it will undoubtedly bring to Brand Wimbledon - Merton and the Southwest's golden goose.

By copy, I urge local residents to write in by 6 January 2019 and express their own views.

Yours sincerely,

L [REDACTED] Terrafranca

[REDACTED]