

[REDACTED]

From: A [REDACTED] Sinclair [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 January 2019 00:34
To: Future Merton
Subject: Future wimbledon masterplan

Dear Future Wimbledon Team,

I write to applaud the work you have done to create a holistic vision for Wimbledon as a place to live, work and shop. I agree that it is important to properly utilise office and retail space, create communal areas and your emphasis on strong architecture. I do also feel I need to raise my grave concerns.

I remain unconvinced by your transport and road strategy. I do not think you have tackled this robustly enough. Following recent interventions to widen the walkways, put in the multiway crossing at the junction of Wimbledon bridge, Alexander road and St George's road, and an additional pedestrian crossing in front of the station, I noticed a marked increase in traffic jams. I therefore object in the strongest possible terms to planning to increase the height of the cluster of office buildings in the St George's quarter above the current heights of 8-10 storeys. I think to do so before coming up with a robust change in the road and transport system risks bringing Wimbledon to a standstill.

Instead, I would favour the building of more low to mid-rise buildings (10 storeys or under) dotted along from Wimbledon Hill all the way to South Wimbledon, to spread out the pressure on the pavement and roads. But only AFTER agreeing a coherent traffic and transport strategy, which I think should incorporate alternative and modern means of transport (eg electric automated/self drive vehicles that people can hop on and off, dedicated cycle routes not shared with cars and buses) and properly studying the impact that extending or increasing the tram system would have on traffic. All new buildings should also incorporate adequate amounts of parking.

A gridlocked and polluted Wimbledon would not be good for anybody. Wimbledon is a beautiful and characterful suburb. I think it is possible to regenerate and expand retail and office capacity and retain the positive, suburban characteristic of Wimbledon but such expansion needs to be more gradual and less clustered around the station. This also cannot be done on the cheap and the right expertise must be sought (from towns and cities who have succeeded in their expansions). It would be a shame to repeat the failure of the recent changes of the pavement widening and multiway junction, where it would appear that the traffic management planning and implementation was rather subpar.

I also wonder where all the funding for this regeneration would come from. It is clear the council barely have sufficient funds to keep up with funding schools, social care, road and pavement maintenance and rubbish collection, without investing in the road infrastructure which is vital to make any expansion of Wimbledon possible.

Yours faithfully,

A [REDACTED] Sinclair