

Q7 What are thoughts on the Wimbledon policy and Site Allocations?

Answered: 35 Skipped: 130

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Please see our earlier comments, submitted 6 January 2019	1/27/2019 6:35 PM
2	I would like to see the council adopt the proposals from the Wimbledon Concert Hall which would result in a world class facility which would transform Wimbledon town centre. I am also strongly opposed to allowing high rise office blocks in the town centre.	1/21/2019 6:36 PM
3	I think that the concert hall is a priority. I am concerned about new developments being too high. I want more pedestrianised areas away from traffic noise, risk and associated pollution	1/15/2019 5:28 PM
4	Ambitious but ambiguous with some concerning conclusions on the character/aspirations for the town centre that seems to say one thing and illustrate another. The slow erosion of the urban fabric and character will not be helped by the proposed heights and public realm intentions. Wimbledon of all borough assets needs a stronger vision and masterplan built on urban design and retail but reinforced with better traffic management and public space.	1/7/2019 2:54 PM
5	I think the policies for Wimbledon Town Centre need to recognise more the unique character and assets of both the centre itself and the wider area (Village, common, tennis etc) and to promote a more clearly balanced approach to development and improvement - including support for more residential and mixed use development. At the moment, the plan seems to favour significant commercial growth - no doubt in part because of the potential (though by no means certain) opportunities that CrossRail 2 might bring. For example, having earlier proposed a strategic policy (6e) of "Maintaining Wimbledon as the borough's Major Centre ...", the aspiration in this chapter appears to shift here to "Promoting Wimbledon as south west London's premier town centre for cultural, social and commercial activities ..." N3.6 (a) and then in "f" towards being a Metropolitan centre. No further explanation is given as to what is meant by these - leaving ambiguity around the scale and nature of commercial and office growth which might result over time. Nor is there much evidence given to justify the proposals for (commercial) development - largely over the railway tracks - the scale of which would fundamentally alter the town centre, adding to congestion and pressure on infrastructure and the environment. In contrast, the aspiration to promote Wimbledon as a cultural centre is given little concrete form - for example, there is no mention of the Wimbledon International Music Festival (amongst many cultural activities) and the proposals for a multi purpose concert hall which would add considerably to the cultural reputation of the Borough. Instead, there is a passing (and somewhat lukewarm reference) in the site allocations section, Hartfield Road Car Park site, to an "Opportunity to provide a concert hall as part of this site where this is feasible and viable." Surely there should be much stronger support for proposals like this in the Plan, as well as providing much more residential accommodation within the town centre as part of a balanced mixed use approach? Otherwise, I strongly support the policies which support high quality design, protection of views and the specific town centre policies h,i, j and k	1/6/2019 11:24 PM
6	A very worthy set of objectives, ticking all the right boxes, but with no discussion of feasibility or of phasing of priorities.	1/6/2019 11:07 PM

Merton new Local Plan

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| 7 | <p>Policy N3.6.6 - greening Wimbledon is a priority and I agree with this. This has to be a meaningful statement and developers (both private and the council) must be held to account on this, not simply pay lip service with a few token bay trees and pots. Policy 3.6.7 - it is disingenuous to suggest proposals are for a “moderate” increase in height. The master plan has numerous buildings over 9 floors, plus a number in the 18-20 storey category. These heights are unacceptable and risk destroying the family and community feel of the local area. Site Wi4 Hartfield Road - I agree that it is important to protect Graham Rd and Herbert Road (I live on Herbert Road). A hotel has also been approved on the site of the old Slug and Lettuce and the likely impact of two hotels, plus a potential concert hall and further development of Victoria Crescent is hugely significant for local residents. Whilst I support development of the town centre, this needs to be carefully balanced to avoid putting families off of the area entirely. The current plans for this development are woefully inadequate when it comes to greening Wimbledon and more must be done to ensure that this is not a hollow objective for the town centre. Site Wi5 Hartfield Road car park. Again, whilst I support development, height restrictions must be imposed (Max 4-5 storeys) and careful consideration must be given to the impact on local residents in terms of rubbish collections, impact on on-street parking etc. The interaction with other developments in this area is key as Hartfield Road is already heavily congested with traffic and a line of tall buildings in either side will exacerbate the poor air quality in this heavily utilised pedestrian route into the town centre. Does the bus interchange have to remain here? Surely it would make more sense to integrate with the train station and utilise the area for access to/egress from any proposed new development? Site W11 Victoria Crescent Again, heights talked about in the draft master plan are unacceptable in terms of the impact on air quality, the local environment and the general ambience of this part of Wimbledon.</p> | 1/6/2019 11:05 PM |
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| 8 | <p>Policy N3.6. The 'historic core' of Wimbledon is not defined and therefore vague - but allowing 'taller development' ie. high rise development of up to 18 storeys in the station area, St George's Road and Broadway East would destroy the appearance of core of the town centre. In addition, views across Wimbledon from any direction will be dominated by towers of offices: this runs directly counter to the result of the public consultation and would be a disaster for Wimbledon, scarring it for ever. Wimbledon would simply become a less pleasant place to live. I disagree with F) making Wimbledon a Metropolitan Centre. This would change the nature of Wimbledon and make it a less attractive place to live. People move to Wimbledon for the open spaces and family atmosphere. Making is a metropolitan centre would make it into another Croydon which is exactly what the public consultation meetings objected to in the strongest terms. This objective runs counter to the results of the public consultation.</p> | 1/6/2019 10:32 PM |
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N3.6 Wimbledon In order to ensure the Plan meets its objective to ensure that Wimbledon continues to be a thriving destination for businesses, local residents and visitors, a number of omissions of the role that cycling can play in achieving this should be addressed. The promotion of “pedestrian and cycling routes” should be added at “c. Supporting midrise contextual architecture with traditional urban blocks of high-quality design, active streets and a tight grain to promote pedestrian routes;” The integration of the Healthy Streets approach to placemaking strategies would assist in achieving the objective and should be integrated at point (h): “h. Promoting good placemaking by providing places for people to meet, relax, enjoy events and participate in the town centre, including a town square, pedestrian laneways, high-quality cycle routes and parklets;” TfL’s publication ‘Walking and Cycling the economic benefits’ (November 2018) finds that facilitating walking and cycling is important for attracting staff and then retaining staff, additionally employers experience a 27% reduction in sick leave where staff commute by foot or pedal, so prioritising cycling will support the achievement of e. Encouraging office development to support businesses and jobs. k. Securing investment in Wimbledon station to improve the passenger experience, help manage the increase in patronage and provide space for new shops, services and town centre activities, working with Crossrail2 and Network Rail. The desire to improve the passenger experience for those using Wimbledon station would be strengthened by an explicit policy direction to promote electric bike hire at Wimbledon (the location adjacent to an escarpment hill offers a major opportunity for electric bike hire). In which respect Wimbledon proposals should not only be requiring the usual bike parking for all developments but this should also include charging points for electric bicycles/mobility scooters within developments and on the streets. The initiatives for encouraging active transport are more clearly spelt out in the other urban centres included in the ‘Local Plan 2020’ and we would ask that they are more explicitly spelt out in this section as well. To ensure that the objective to connect the surrounding neighbourhoods to Wimbledon is achieved, there should be an explicit policy for making the centre easier to get to for pedestrians and cyclists (as set out for Mitcham) and generally better connectivity and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists; with pedestrians and cyclists as a priority (as set out for Morden). MCC notes that Justification Item 3.6.17 Refers to commitments ‘As set out in the draft transport policies’ but no such policies appear in Merton’s ‘Local Plan 2020’. However, it has been impossible to assess these policies while reviewing the Wimbledon chapter as the Transport Chapter was not published until the 4th of January after MCC drew its absence to the attention of the Council. Whilst MCC supports the principle of the Sutton Link we do not support the route option currently under consultation which starts in Wimbledon; the route does not provide any additional benefit that could not be achieved by simply increasing the frequency of the current rail service, has a construction timetable that would be beholden to Crossrail 2, and would in fact decrease the provision for cyclists as it is possible to take bicycles on the current rail service, but under current policies it would not be possible to take them on a tram service. For such a thriving destination Merton is also missing a trick by not promoting bike hire at Wimbledon. The location adjacent to an escarpment hill offers a major opportunity for electric bike hire. In which respect Wimbledon proposals should not only be requiring the usual bike parking for all developments but this should also include charging points for electric bicycles/mobility scooters within developments and on the streets.

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10	<p>Although I accept that some increase in building heights in certain areas may be acceptable, the current proposal Both the Masterplan and the Local Plan refer to a need for denser development and more “mid-rise” buildings in Wimbledon town centre, to enable commercial Definitions of “high-rise” and “mid-rise” may vary, but the fact is that any new buildings exceeding 7-8 storeys will tower over the existing townscape and radically alter the skyline for residents – not just those living in neighbouring streets but also those further afield. The proposed scale and intensity of development are wholly inappropriate for Wimbledon. If so-called "mid-rise" buildings are allowed as proposed, the Town Centre's character will change fundamentally from a relatively welcoming, people-centric environment into something more like Croydon, which is justifiably a byword for soulless, tall building development. It would be better to cap the height of buildings in this area at somewhere in the range of eight storeys, and discourage a uniform, blocky skyline by also restricting the increase in height of new developments to a certain percentage of the existing height. Also, greater weight should be given to the effect on surrounding low-rise residential neighbourhoods of tall buildings in designated areas, or Town Centre development risks creating a wall of buildings running from St. George's Road down to Merton High Street that sharply divides existing residential areas from each other. The policy does not give enough thought to Wimbledon Station. Regardless of whether Crossrail 2 is actually built (which seems increasingly unlikely), the Station is in need of a major re-design to accommodate the already-heavy flows of people into and out of the station. This re-design could be done in tandem with development over the station and developers should be required to contribute to the cost of the infrastructure improvements that would bring further traffic to the new development. Although other sections of the plan consider the value of Conservation Areas, the Wimbledon policy should address these further and make clearer that building heights in and immediately bordering such areas should not exceed prevailing norms.</p>	1/6/2019 9:50 PM
11	N/A	1/6/2019 9:36 PM
12	<p>The draft Future Wimbledon Masterplan contains proposals which would radically alter the nature, design, size and daytime population of Wimbledon town centre. Commercial usage is envisaged to increase by up to 50%, with a doubling in building heights in some areas, from 7 up to 18 storeys. We consider this scale and intensity of development to be wholly inappropriate for Wimbledon town centre. It would adversely impact neighbouring residential areas and would change the essential character of Wimbledon, whilst exacerbating current traffic congestion and pollution issues in the town centre. We welcome and support the Masterplan's emphasis on improved quality and design of buildings and the aspiration for a greener, more attractive town centre. But in our view these laudable aims are compromised and made harder to realise by the nature and scale of development proposed elsewhere in the Masterplan.</p>	1/6/2019 8:31 PM
13	<p>I feel it important that new buildings are not of a scale that dominate adjacent buildings. Also that traffic calming and pollution is considered an important factor.</p>	1/6/2019 7:56 PM
14	-	1/6/2019 4:36 PM

My main points on Policy N3.6 are as follows: *Business versus Community: Page 3 of Policy N3.6 states that Wimbledon is well positioned to be south west London's premier business location. What is the impact, though, of future commercial development on local residents? Wimbledon is home to many people who value its size, low-rise buildings, and sense of community. It is not solely a commercial centre for businesses, and should not be treated as such to the detriment of the local community. *Future business demand: The Local Plan, as with the Wimbledon Masterplan, is based on the premise that there is surplus demand for commercial space in Wimbledon, justifying its huge expansion and the development of tall buildings in the town centre. It does not provide any data supporting this additional demand, however. Nor does it consider how demand may change in the next 10-20 years. What will the impact of technology have on working and shopping patterns in the future? I fear that, without a forward-looking view that considers potential changes to future demand, that there is a risk that Wimbledon could become a ghost town full of empty buildings leading to a general feeling of dereliction and decay. *Tall buildings: The Local Plan refers to "mid-rise" buildings. In the Wimbledon Masterplan, "mid-rise" buildings include building heights of 16-18 storeys in some parts of the town centre. I do not consider buildings of this height to be "mid-rise". I believe that Merton Council in both its Masterplan and Local Plan should state unequivocally that new buildings in Wimbledon in excess of 7-8 storeys are unlikely to receive planning approval because of their visual impact on the surrounding area, their incongruity with existing historic buildings and the increase in traffic congestion and pollution that would inevitably result from more intense development. *"Metropolitan Centre": Page 3 of Policy N3.6 refers to strengthening the position of Wimbledon towards being a Metropolitan Centre which would allow for much larger scale development. I view this vision of Wimbledon as wholly undesirable. The town centre is surrounded by residential streets on all sides. This makes large scale redevelopment problematic, while creating an unpleasant environment for local residents in streets abutting the commercial town centre. Many of us chose to live in Wimbledon precisely because it is a town, with a feeling of community and a moderate-sized town centre. Treating Wimbledon as a Metropolitan Centre would give it a very different feel. I do not want Wimbledon town centre to become a "mini-Croydon". *Design and Greening Wimbledon: I welcome the inclusion on page 3 of the Local Plan of high quality design and landscaping, as well as greening Wimbledon, however I question the Council's ability to influence design, fabric and cladding of new buildings. *New Concert Hall: The Local Plan for Wimbledon includes site Wi5 – the current council car park on Hartfield Road – but does not make specific mention of the potential of using this site for a new concert hall in Wimbledon. I would welcome the development of such a concert hall which I feel would be a huge asset to the cultural life of Wimbledon and help attract visitors and businesses to the town, thereby boosting overall economic activity. I would therefore like the concert hall proposal to be given more prominence in the Local Plan. I also think that the proposals for Wi5 should include underground parking to replace those spaces lost by the redevelopment of the existing car park.

Merton new Local Plan

16	<p>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.</p>	1/6/2019 2:24 PM
17	<p>I am a bit concerned with suggestions to introduce new taller buildings, but do hope that it will not change current Wimbledon community too much.</p>	1/5/2019 10:27 PM
18	<p>I am concerned that Merton council seeks to upgrade the status of Wimbledon to the next level in the Mayor's London Plan of being a Metropolitan Borough. The shape of the town is constrained by residential streets on all sides and the development of the town in its current evolving state should be carefully balanced. Merton Council is suggesting that the daytime population could increase by 50% to around 24,000 people but that would only be on the basis of their proposals to increase the size and availability of office and shop space. Whilst I agree that the town does need shaping and upgrading, I would like to see a compromise in the scale of their plans to meet the evident dissatisfaction of local residents with the size and scale of their plan. I would not want to see the size of proposed office space over 9 storeys in any area of the town. I am keen to see the street level reshaping suggested around George's Road and the idea for a new grid of streets to bring in more lanes for pedestrians. However, I would want to be satisfied that they weren't creating wind tunnels as with the buildings along the Thames around Tower Bridge. The lack of curves and harsh ground surface there is off-putting in the colder, wetter months. I would like to see the greening of the town and better treatment and care of any subsequent greening in the proposed areas. I find the plans to build up office space along the rail tracks appealing however, do not want to see high rise within the town as I do not agree that Wimbledon should try to emulate Croydon, Earls Court or Hammersmith. I am concerned that current greenery is neglected - why are trees not more carefully checked for damage and the need for pruning to keep them healthy - and trees that fail replaced immediately? I would like to be assured that the council has considered how the new plans for the development at the AELTC will not suck potential revenue from the town and in any way reroute visitor spending - likewise the plans for AFC redevelopment. I would like to see more engagement with the local community - Tara Butler mentioned getting the involvement of younger people - I would like to see how that is shaping up - the plans that we were invited to comment on in group debate in 2017 only reached 220 people which was mentioned as being a big enough sample size to give results, however, I am concerned that the average age was 51. It seems critical that even if the comments gathered are not from property owning residents, it's possible to garner interest, engagement and comments from the generations who will inherit these spaces.</p>	1/5/2019 8:20 PM
19	<p>Wimbledon is currently a desirable place to live, with its people-friendly buildings. High-rise buildings will destroy this.</p>	1/5/2019 6:31 PM

Merton new Local Plan

20	Not had time to read this but is important to me because i work in Wimbledon Village (transport links + parking key issues) and use the town centre daily. Concerned that internet shopping will erode sustainability of businesses, even though the public like to go shopping! I do not use retail parks as I do not drive, so viability of shops in wimbledon + cinemas of key importance to me.	1/5/2019 2:34 PM
21	Wimbledon and Morden Town Centre Master Plans In both Master Plans, much more high rise development is proposed than was expected at the time of original consultations. Wimbledon Town Centre workshops definitely expressed a desire to limit heights. Similar concerns have been stated concerning Morden at MPWRA meetings. The idea that finding development partners depends on achieving a certain size of project, requiring high rise, is therefore unfortunate. It may be necessary to approach rather smaller developers who could be less choosy. Their viability in undertaking developments would need careful scrutiny. In the case of Wimbledon, there appears to be much office space already vacant. Before approving the suggested heights above the Station and St Georges sites, in the Masterplan, professional indication of likely intent to fully occupy should be sought. With continuing development in the City of London and proposed new development down-river from Canary Wharf there will be competition to attract tenants. Putting specified heights into the Masterplans are necessary but they could encourage speculative development that might never be economically or usefully occupied, saddling the Town Centres with over-tall building unnecessarily. We suggest putting in the Masterplans height limitation more in line with public opinion, but with proviso that application will be considered up to a stated higher figure where full occupation can be robustly demonstrated at the time of application or before building commences. Policy EC7.3.3 mentions speculative development but, in view of the above, this should not be encouraged. Car Parking in the Masterplans We understand that Central Government is reminding local authorities about the need to retain car parks. This reflects the reduction of retail shopping footfall due to the alternative of online shopping. The Government is worried that lack of parking could deter even more shoppers and visitors to town centres. Our experience is that the Hartfield Road Car Park, Wimbledon Theatre Car Park and Peel House (Sainsburys) Car Park in Morden are fully used and, if to be developed, underground parking should be required to constructed before the surface car parks are closed – as a planning condition.	1/5/2019 11:36 AM
22	Don't want to see such high buildings in Wimbledon because don't feel there is an economic need for them and they will blight the surrounding residential areas.	1/5/2019 10:26 AM
23	a. Wimbledon shouldn't aim to be SW London's principal centre for commercial activities - we don't want to be Kingston or Croydon. Patterns of retail shopping are changing, as the council acknowledges,so it si pointless building more of the shops etc - they are already closing in Centre Court. b. agree c. if midrise is 8 stories this is too high for the centre of the town. d.see objections above. e.is this feasible? Are there any compelling reasons at present for tourists to visit Wimbledon apart from during the tennis fortnight? f. definitely do not see Wimbledon's future as a metropolitan centre. g. agree. h.and i. need realistic plans to deal with traffic congestion, which is already bad a peak hours and horrendous during the tennis j. agree. k. the current uncertainty about Crossrail 2 is a huge constraint on future planning, whatever the council argues. The delays to Crossrail 1 do not bode well.	1/3/2019 5:40 PM
24	Main concern is the proposal for more 'mid rise' buildings. These are being classified of being 8 stories high but could well be much higher than this. Even at 8 stories high, this would be inappropriate if in dense clusters in the town centre and should be reconsidered.	1/3/2019 3:07 PM
25	No specific mention of promoting town centre for retail activities. Although high streets face challenging times, positive incentives from the council could slow, perhaps even arrest, the decline.	1/2/2019 7:54 PM
26	Think again about your plans for tall buildings - the majority of buildings along the Broadway are no more than four or five storeys.	12/30/2018 10:57 PM
27	I'm against an eight storey hotel (in fact described as an "apart-hotel") so clearing parking will be required. Six storeys should be the limit for this site. The parking site next to the bus stops and Corrosions - why can this not have ground floor parking?	12/30/2018 6:22 PM
28	Danger of too much office and too many buildings that are too tall. It is a residential area, serving RESIDENTS as well as commercial.	12/28/2018 6:08 PM

Merton new Local Plan

29	Seems to be changing the core of Wimbledon. Too much to take in. The intent seems in line with the master plan but the devil is in the detail and it seems to me that 1) cross rail could have Wimbledon as a building site for a decade and 2) who knows what society will be like in 10 years. Overall, I have reservations about the height of buildings and I find the use of the words "traditional urban" a contradiction.	12/27/2018 4:32 PM
30	Ok	12/25/2018 11:54 PM
31	see section 20	12/20/2018 12:17 PM
32	N/A	12/13/2018 12:21 PM
33	Wi1 has been vacant now for over a year and the Council is wasting money each money to secure the premises-this needs to be addressed asap when schools, social care and housing are in dire need of funds. This site should have some sort of local community use as the community lost a community use building when All Saints School moved into the South Wimbledon community centre. Wi2-this would be a short sighted Council approach to take away much needed parking in the area. On theatre nights/afternoon the carpark is packed and there is very little parking close by. People will also be less reluctant to come into Wimbledon and the theatre if they cannot park cars-long term this will impact on the sustainability of the theatre which in turn will damage local businesses. Wi5- Development of the carpark-negative impact on existing businesses. Visitors will not come into Wimbledon if they cannot park. Wi12- impact of visitors into this area for sporting event-traffic and local infrastructure/transport link not able to sustain volume of people. Impact on local residents. more consultation neede to local residents around this and policing.	12/12/2018 4:45 PM
34	there should be a max of 8 storey buildings in Wimbledon	12/12/2018 6:26 AM
35	Main Wimbledon Centre plan looks ambitious - great if realised close to the plan but not if it's compromised in realisation and ends up looking more like the current lower broadway area.	12/10/2018 3:04 PM