

**Subject:**

FW: Wood Green Action Plan - response to public consultation

**From:** Dick Harris

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**To:** LDF

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Planning Policy,  
Haringey Council  
River Park House, 225 High Rd,  
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I am responding to Haringey Council's Area Action Plan for Wood Green dated February 2017 and I wish to object in the strongest terms to the assumption, which is clearly implicit in this plan, that large volumes of road traffic will continue to be routed to Wightman Road and the Harringay ladder. Indeed, the plan envisages a huge expansion of the commercial activities centred upon Wood Green and this can be expected to draw still more road traffic into an area completely unsuited for it.

Reading through the whole plan, I notice that the phrase Metropolitan Town Centre is used 17 times and seems to have inspired in the Council an ambition to totally transform and expand Wood Green. Many would agree that Wood Green needs improvement but I, for one, do not share this grandiose vision of what is required. By contrast, the term "air quality" occurs three times and "pollution" occurs only twice.

The notion that Wood Green is a "Metropolitan Town Centre" seems to have been taken uncritically from the London Plan and I would suggest that the proper response to this purely descriptive phrase would be to say to the GLA that Haringey does not recognise in this term any obligation to expand Wood Green beyond its present purpose of serving the local community. On the contrary, if the considered view of the GLA is that the Haringey/Enfield/Barnet sub-region should have a large Metropolitan Town Centre analogous to Croydon or Stratford then there should be a properly considered debate about it. A key point should be the ideal location of such a centre and especially whether it should lie within the North Circular Road which is already very crowded or outside it where there is plenty of room and where greater population growth is foreseen in the London Plan.

The population density of the borough is already well above the London average and continuing population growth in Haringey seems likely to be driven more by its proximity to and ease of public transport access to Central London rather than employment opportunities near at hand. I think our borough plans should reflect the realities of Haringey's position which is of an increasingly desirable dormitory area on the northern edge of central London. To people who live north of the borough and wish to travel by road, Haringey is something that has to be circumvented using congested red routes or traversed using residential streets increasingly made visible by satnav systems.

The plan alludes to the "threat" that *Other centres continue to grow and "out compete" Wood Green*. In my view, we are not interested in competing for the spending power of people in other boroughs. We are competing for quiet enjoyment of our houses, gardens, local shops and streets and for clean fresh air. I look to our councillors to secure these things and to protect them from being undermined by misplaced ideas of municipal competition.

Most parts of the borough were, like Wood Green, built before the age of the motor vehicle, and many parts are blighted by excessive road traffic much of which is just passing through. Any plans the Council makes should start by recognising this disagreeable fact rather than treating it as an afterthought along with air pollution. I don't want to see plans that prioritise the attraction of new customers from wide swathes of North London and I don't want even more traffic to and from an enlarged Wood Green treating our residential streets as nothing more than high roads. What I do want to see is a serious response to the new, invisible blight of NO<sub>2</sub> air pollution which is already widespread and above legal limits in many streets. This pollution is not something confined to a few "hot spots" and

it does not come only from buses and HGV's as suggested in the Action Plan, it comes also from many thousands of light vehicles that already pass through here every day – many of them diesels.

Richard Harris  
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