

Subject:

FW: Comments following the meetings regarding Wood Green Shopping Centre and proposals which affect housing in Mayes Road /Caxton Road

From: Margaret macrory

Sent: 31 March 2017 02:33

To: LDF

Subject: Comments following the meetings regarding Wood Green Shopping Centre and proposals which affect housing in Mayes Road /Caxton Road

Thank you for hosting the meetings on Wednesday.

1. The plan appears to be based on the Piccadilly line upgrade which is more likely and CrossRail which may not happen at all. It does not appear to have factored in Brexit which could result in job losses and less demand for both shopping and housing in Greater London. The economic forecasts are difficult. Cautious rather than bold might be sensible having regard to the uncertainties.

2..Shopping the minimum disruption should be considered whilst seeking to improve the infra structure already there.

3. Shopping has possibly declined in Wood Green. The data may be unclear. The meetings only referred to a limited survey of shoppers and not whether existing businesses had been surveyed to see whether rents for premises, profits and footfall are increasing or declining or whether new businesses had been canvassed.

4. Consideration will need to be given as to why Muswell Hill, Crouch End, Haringey Green Lanes and Palmers Green Haringey Green Lanes appear to be thriving and attracting a mix of chains and small businesses and Wood Green appears to be losing the same with empty shops, betting shops and "easy money venues". Wood Green would be better forging a more local identity of its own meeting local residents needs as in Muswell Hill and Crouch End.

5. Consideration will need to be given as to whether Wood Green can compete with Brent Cross which has free parking and a more secure shopping environment.

What are the lessons of Enfield Town, Edmonton Green or Romford which might be comparable?

Is there any academic or rigorous research?

6. Evening economy. Wood Green has good transport links. An active cinema should be preserved. A small theatre/gallery could be considered to provide a comedy venue, a platform for theatre and dance groups and a venue for the diverse ethnic groups to perform and preserve cultural heritages. Restaurants usually provide jobs and enjoyment but clubbing and late night pubs usually involve drunkenness, drugs noise and nuisance. There are many town centres blighted by such to the point where residents are deterred and upset.

7. Leisure is usually enhanced by a good swimming pool, bowling and gym centre.

8. Employment.

Jobs in retail are usually low paid and so over reliance or expansion of retail may create costly social deprivation.

More should be done to attract the expanding jobs from the Old Street/Cambridge axis of high tech and science. The train line from Old Street and the A10 to Cambridge already exist.

A theatre/gallery might attract creative industries.

There should be a good industrial area with workshops, studios and industrial units. The Lea valley corridor and adjacent areas were once the envy of the world.

9. Housing

a. The figures were unclear at the meetings with different speakers referring to different figures. The borough appears to have been told to provide 15000 new homes of which 7000 have been allocated to Wood Green. This is a very large number for a single area of the borough to provide and it was unclear as to what proportion other or more affluent areas of the borough were providing.

Given Brexit, cuts and an uncertain economy is the Mayor being realistic in his strategic plans?

How many people would be taken off the Borough's housing waiting list and how many people will be displaced and need rehousing?

b. Any complaints were considered as being anti social and "not in my back yard"! Surely existing residents with long term commitments and contributions to the area, who pay council tax and who will have to cope with decisions made

on a day to day basis should be carefully considered e.g. a gentleman at the meeting was having to consider housing elderly parents if their house was compulsory purchased.

c. High rise low cost housing often results in hidden costs such as mental health issues. What research has been done as to the type of housing being provided or is this a matter for developers only and individual planning applications? Should an academic body have been asked to research the existing residents of Sky City and those being displaced as to their future needs?

d. How are hospital, police, fire and other services to be provided in a time of cuts for such a substantial number of new residents? A more holistic approach should perhaps be considered.

e. Compulsory purchase of homes. How can this be justified?

Philosophically the planners seemed to say the unknown needs of others override the existing home owners and residents in Caxton, Coberg and Mayes Road as the unknowns are greater in number. We heard of the devastating affect this would have on known individual families and the future blight on all house owners.

f. The effect of high rise housing immediately adjacent to existing lower rise housing is not immediately apparent as this will be subject to later planning applications

10. Other housing resource solutions.

Conservation even a conservation area for the houses in Caxton Road, Coberg Road, Mayes Road, Jack Barnett Way and Parkland Road. The houses are diverse but they represent the different architectural developments of Wood Green itself in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Jack Barnett Way being named after an important post war mayor.

Lower rise development in the parking area in Caxton Road which might in the longer term present fewer problems and strain on local resources.

11. New council offices. If resources allow these would be better placed in a more convenient place but in times of cuts is this plan still feasible?

Margaret Macrory