

Strategic Policy Research,
Future Merkon,
London Borough of Merkon.

Dear Sir,

2017

WEST BARNES LIBRARY
SITE PROPOSAL NO. 15

I hereby submit my response to proposals for West Barnes Library as contained in the Draft Sites and Policies Development Plan Document.

West Barnes Library remains under threat of closure as a result of cuts in central government grant to Merkon Council. The Council must not be tempted to "sell the family silver" to a developer for housing or other purposes; otherwise this valuable resource would be lost and never replaced. It is therefore important that there is a water-tight legal agreement between the London Borough of Merkon and any developer to ensure that an improved library facility is provided. Any proposal to fund this project through the Private Finance Initiative should be resisted as this will be a financial millstone for council taxpayers for many years to come.

In order to strengthen the case for the retention of a library on this site I would suggest that the document be amended under the following headings to read:-

use suggested/organisation

"Library to be retained and improved, Residential part of the site to support library function - LBM."

Council's preferred use


"Library (D1 use class) to be retained and improved with residential (C3 use class) on upper floors."

The site with close proximity to the railway line may not be suitable/adequate for housing with residential car parking spaces. The acquisition of neighbouring office buildings would give scope for provision of a larger library with a community/health centre (which this area lacks).

I am opposed to an open plan library. I agree with the specification to increase the customer floor area and would wish to see a library, separate study area, community hall with kitchen and toilets incorporated in the building.

Car parking spaces are currently available for library users and it is vital that there should be no loss of spaces in any future development.

Yours faithfully,

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