

From: Wimbledon E Hillside Residents' Assn (WEHRA).

Section F: Wimbledon potential sites and draft policies maps (January 2013)

Site Proposal 16: Wimbledon Library/Marlborough Hall, 35 Wimbledon Hill Road

DRAFT Council's preferred use: "Remainder of site considered for an appropriate mix of any of the following: community (D1), retail (A1), Prof'l & Fin (A2) rest/café (A3) office (B1) and resi (C3)."

Our recommendation:

We believe the council's preferred use must exclude any overtly commercial operation. We feel the only remaining use for the 'non-library' part of this site should be for community use (D1).

Rationale:

This building and land was given to Wimbledon over 100 years ago as a free library. It was given to the people for this purpose and this purpose alone. Given the massive commercial influx of retail, prof'l & financial, restaurant/cafes into our neighbourhood, it is unacceptable to think that you could have the right to sell off the only remaining patch of our area that actually belongs to us as a community.

We have a great and growing problem with 'spill' from the Town Centre. Most of our homes do not have off street parking, and we need to park our vehicles in roads here (or within 100 metres of our front door – which today is seldom possible). By opening up the possibility of even more commercialism in our community, you will further reduce our right to quiet enjoyment, our parking amenity and increase the likelihood of more litter, anti-social behaviour and crime. Don't do it.

Thank you for amending the council's 'preferred use' to read only COMMUNITY USE. There is ample available commercial space in the area to accommodate any new business venture we might need, without having to sell the library.

Site Proposal 31 -Wimbledon Community Centre, 28 St George's Road

DRAFT Council's preferred use: "...or an alternative option for the site could be a hotel (C1)."

Our recommendation:

We believe the Council's preferred use must exclude the final phrase of this 'preferred use' – as it is totally inappropriate to remotely consider the possibility of a hotel on this small footprint.

Rationale:

This site is a community-serving building that is clearly in need of rebuilding/reformatting/relocating. Other suggestions proposed may be considered, as this site is in a highly desirable location for commerce. However a hotel needs quiet for people to sleep at night, and it needs a lot of off-street parking to house the many vehicles that this business would attract. It is in our view absurd to consider locating a small hotel in this extremely densely packed commercial environment. The traffic flow in the area around Ely's has been likened to a snake pit; it would be far worse if a hotel were shoe-horned into the centre of that.

A valid argument is made for a hotel on the long-debated P4 site, and we urge you to delete any thought of a HOTEL for 28 St Georges Road, and instead focus on locating a decent-sized hotel on the P4 site.