



City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA
Switchboard: 020 7983 4000
Minicom: 020 7983 4458
Our ref: jj -4230

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Sir Steve Bullock
Mayor of Lewisham
Town Hall
Catford
London SE6 4RU

Dear Steve

St. Modwen's Leegate Shopping Centre Regeneration proposal

A number of constituents have contacted me regarding the Leegate shopping regeneration proposal. They are very concerned about many of the aspects of this proposal, almost entirely caused by the size of the proposed superstore, such as the considerable reduction in the amount of public space and diversity of provision, the inherent increased congestion and pollution and St Modwen's apparent reluctance to consider suggestions that would 'improve the development'.

I would like to endorse their concerns, as set out below:

The proposed plans:

- **Effectively reduce public space** by three quarters and move it from a sheltered area to the edge of a busy road and contrary to London Plan policy 2.15C: 'Planning decisions should contribute towards an enhanced environment, urban greening, public realm and links to green infrastructure'.
- **Reduce the number of small traders.** The average of 25 small traders in the Leegate Centre over the past 6 years is replaced with less than half that number and contrary to London Plan policy 2.15C: Planning decisions in town centres should support and enhance the competitiveness, quality and diversity of town centre retail, leisure, arts and cultural, other consumer services and public services.
- **Provide inadequate permeability** through the site, splitting public space into two unrelated parts, one strip sandwiched between a busy road and 10 story high buildings, and another away from retail frontage to a residential street that bears no relation to the active areas of the town centre and contrary to London Plan policy 7.1D: The design of new buildings and the spaces they create should help reinforce or enhance the character, legibility, permeability and accessibility of the neighbourhood. They should frame the public realm at a human scale and enhance permeability.

- **Reduce public space coherence** with reduced permeability. This is contrary to London Plan policy 7.6B: 'The massing, scale and layout of new buildings should help make public spaces coherent and complement the existing streetscape.'
- **Not be in scale with the centre**, with the height referenced to the highest building nearby (which however unlike the proposed new tower in Leegate, is set back from the road and surrounded by green space) rather than the prevailing height in the vicinity and contrary to London Plan policy 2.15C: proposals in town centres.... should be in scale with the centre.
- **Lead to a decline in retail diversity**. The proposals will replace the current diverse range of retailers with a second superstore right opposite an existing superstore in a small town centre, leaving very little space for diversity or a wide range. This is contrary to London Plan policy 2.15D: Councils should manage declining centres proactively.... by seeking to focus a wider range of services and promoting diversification'.
- **Will not deliver adequate local services and the need to travel**. A retail studies assessment of local needs stated that Lee Green has a strong Convenience Offer and a weak Comparison Offer and suggested that Leegate be used for comparison retail beyond 2014, also Niche A3/4/5 offer. Locals will still need to travel a long distance for many goods and services whilst having their town centre dominated by convenience offer. This is contrary to the London Plan policy 6.38B: Promote local services to reduce the need to travel.
- **Failed to demonstrate active engagement with residents**. In addition to inadequate publicising of initial developer's public event, a skewed questionnaire; the results of the feedback not published, images not to scale, entrances and so on obscure or excluded from drawings, misleading publicity leaflets for the November 2014 exhibition, continually cancelled meetings and ignoring of suggestions of Leegate Working group, Lee Manor Society and A Better Lee Green. This is contrary to the London Plan policy 2.14: The Mayor will expect regeneration programmes to demonstrate active engagement with residents, businesses and other appropriate stakeholders. Regeneration proposals should take account of stakeholder aspirations for the neighbourhoods concerned, and for the wider area affected. Consultation and involvement activities should seek to empower communities and neighbourhoods
- **Do not set out plans for affordable housing**, which should meet the council's aim of 50% of the total housing built, with 70% of that for social rent. Given the way that these targets have been consistently missed in recent years following claims about viability, I would expect to see this information provided from an early stage.

I ask that you ensure that Leegate is developed in line with these planning policies. therefore, it is particularly important to encourage the developer to consider alternatives to the anchor store, in terms of either its size or concept. This could be achieved by genuine comprehensive and transparent grassroots involvement of the local community in Lee Green whose health, safety and amenity will be affected long-term by the development.

Best wishes


Jenny Jones
 Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb
 Green Party Member of the London Assembly