

The End of Kingston was decided by a mere 8 councillors on a sub-committee of the Council.

How can that be right?

At my call in of the council's growth plans as laid out in the draft Issues and Options document for the new Local Plan in December 2018, councillors ignored my evidenced claims that The Direction of Travel document, approved in 2016, was unsound and should not be used as a basis for setting large site housing targets for the Borough; nor should it be used by the Greater London Authority to create – with the council's approval - an "opportunity" area for mass development in Kingston

The Direction of Travel - which will destroy our Borough as we know it - was pushed through by **ONLY 8 PEOPLE** on 13 October 2016:

David Cunningham (Tudor, Chair)

Andrea Craig (Canbury, Vice Chair)

Ken Smith (St James')

Priyen Patel (St James')

Gaj Wallooppillai (Coombe Hill)

Cathy Roberts (Old Malden)

Raju Pandya (Beverley) and

Maria Netley (Tudor)

Current Council Leader, Liz Green, and Malcolm Self, current Deputy Leader and Chair of the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee (responsible for the Local Plan and Growth agenda) both voted **AGAINST** the Direction of Travel but now **support** both the large sites housing target and the opportunity area which both arise directly from the Direction of Travel.

The big question is Why? And Why will Liz Green not reply directly to any email from residents on this issue?

Councillors Christine Stuart (Chessington South) and Yoyan Yoganathan (St Mark's Ward) vehemently challenged me on my claims and asked why I did not challenge the Direction of Travel at the time.

I did. I was ignored.

I sent the e-mail below to all councillors two days before the Direction of Travel growth "strategy" was approved.

MY WARNING EMAIL, October 2016

Dear Councillors, Mr Berry and Mr Goldsmith

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames is at a crossroads and its future will be decided this Thursday evening. I am writing to you to ask you to **REJECT** the Direction of Travel growth strategy for Kingston. The fundamental lack of clear basis and mandate for such a massive growth strategy that will change the nature of the Borough forever, including the lack of definition and clarity about what is meant by the "Areas of Opportunity" that the strategy is seeking to approve mean that you

can not with integrity - as laid out in the Code of Conduct of Councillors - approve the strategy and you must REJECT it

The Direction of Travel growth strategy document is inadequate, it contains misleading representations and demonstrates a lack of response and payment of lip service to many of the requests for clarification and for changes

I draw your attention to the following extremely important and fundamental question from Historic England on Page B95 of the Direction of Travel document to which the council has not provided a response; they have merely said that they will relay the comment to the GLA because the "City in the West document was produced by them". This is basically a refusal to answer a fundamental question and address a core issue relating to the extent and nature of growth envisaged for Kingston. Without this issue being addressed, the Direction of Travel document is unsound and you must - with integrity - REJECT it

Historic England: "Kingston is not currently designated an Opportunity Area, despite the City in the West document suggesting otherwise. At the examination of the Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP) the Planning Inspector (paras 86 and 87) noted that the scale of change that Opportunity Area status usually envisages merited consultation and that this will provide communities an opportunity to influence how the area will be developed. How will consultation on Opportunity Area status be conducted, and will this question be addressed as a separate exercise?"

In the meantime, our council "leader" is continuing negotiations with the GLA for 11 parts of the Borough to become Opportunity Areas for mass development with no mandate to do so. I note that the City in the West document was produced by a "consultant" hired by the GLA and who was paid an extra £3000 in April 2016 to add an extra 10 Opportunity Areas to the document (see below). Kingston will become a City on the back of a document that cost £28,000 to produce

In addition, the conclusions that the council draws from their tick box "consultation" are flawed because they ignore all the detailed responses to the Strategy that people chose to spend much time writing in, rather than answering banal questions the answers to which the Council uses to support whatever strategy it has already decided upon. A consultation that is held over the summer months on a document that most people do not know about can also not be considered to represent the views of the people of Kingston

Lastly, in terms of protecting a "strong sense of local identity, which relates to existing communities and the environment", the council repeatedly pays only lip service to people's concerns, repeatedly adding a single generic response : 'We recognise that new growth must be balanced with the unique heritage and character of the Borough'. This statement is meaningless, especially in the context of the developments that the Council has approved to date and others that it is considering throughout the Borough.

This does nothing to respond to Historic England's and local people's concerns and leaves the door open for the many types of unsuitable development for The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames that will come with Opportunity Area status.

This basis of this growth strategy is unsound, the lack of changes made in response to detailed comments from a large number of people and from local and national bodies is inadequate and you must - with integrity - reject this strategy outright.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Scott
Park Road resident
Canbury Ward

*<https://www.london.gov.uk/decisions/add414-kingston-town-centre-oapfarea-action-plan-contract-extension>

ADD414: 12 April 2016: This decision requests approval for additional expenditure of £3,020.75 incurred by the consultant producing the draft Kingston Opportunity Area Plan. Part way through the project the scope of the document was expanded beyond the existing town centre boundary to include the 10 proposed Crossrail 2 stations in the borough.

ADD340 approved expenditure up to £25,000