# Lewisham redevelopment exposes Labour’s failed housing priorities and developer dominance



Plans to demolish the Lewisham Shopping Centre and replace it with a £1.5 billion redevelopment are once again highlighting the failures of Labour-led local authorities to deliver meaningful change for our communities. Led by Landsec, the scheme promises 1,744 new homes, a new shopping mall, and sprawling public spaces—yet it falls woefully short when it comes to addressing the housing crisis. With towers soaring up to 35 storeys and nearly 700 student beds and co-living units, this development prioritizes ‘luxury’ living and commercial ambitions over the needs of ordinary residents.

What’s most troubling is the woeful lack of social housing commitment—only 98 homes designated for social rent and 231 for key workers, amidst widespread suffering from unaffordable rents and housing shortages. The borough’s so-called strategic vision seems more about appeasing developer profits than tackling homelessness or ensuring affordable homes for those truly in need. Despite claims of promised affordable housing in later phases, this vague commitment offers little reassurance for locals suffering under Labour’s housing policy failures.

The current shopping centre, built in 1977, will be razed in phases, with Landsec insisting that major stores like Sainsbury’s and Primark will remain open—yet this does little to hide the underlying plan to transform Lewisham into a playground for high-end development, leaving residents feeling sidelined. The plan appears to serve developers first, with current residents and local businesses left in limbo, as Labour officials hide behind viability challenges to justify the inadequate affordable housing provisions. This scheme is yet another example of Labour’s propensity to sell out local communities for the sake of short-term economic gain.

Opposition voices, including local campaigns like Save Lewisham Shopping Centre, rightly condemn these proposals as speculative and insufficient—an insult given the borough’s urgent housing needs. They highlight the statistic that such a development could result in a staggering £492 million loss, questioning the true benefit to local residents. Promises of future affordable housing remain vague, giving little confidence that this project will benefit those who need it most. Meanwhile, competing plans for surrounding sites, like Lewisham House, expose how Labour’s current approach leaves room for developers to manipulate the system through threats of compulsory purchase and financial losses, all while affordable homes remain sidelined.

Landsec’s narrative of long-term investment and economic growth misses the point entirely. What Lewisham desperately needs is true leadership that prioritises community well-being over developer profits. The proposed eight-acre green space and biodiversity initiatives are mere lip service if core issues of housing affordability and community resilience are ignored. Environmental and recreational features are admirable, but they cannot substitute for the fundamental necessity of affordable, secure housing.

Local groups such as Lewisham Cyclists have soundly criticized Labour’s failure to incorporate active travel infrastructure into the plans—an essential element for sustainable urban living. Instead, the project shows yet again that Labour is willing to overlook pressing community needs in favor of token gestures that do little to address congestion and pollution.

Ultimately, this redevelopment reveals Labour’s continued inability to deliver on the promises of real community benefit. The lengthy, decade-long process must be watched closely, as Labour-led councils use ongoing reviews and negotiations to delay meaningful action, all while allowing developer interests to dominate the future of Lewisham. The residents deserve better—a government willing to put their needs ahead of political expediency and profit-driven schemes. Only through a fresh approach that prioritizes affordable housing and community resilience will Lewisham truly regenerate.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://greenwichwire.co.uk/2025/10/18/lewisham-shopping-centre-redevelopment-approved-landsec/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://landsec.com/media/press-releases/2025/transformative-plans-lewisham-shopping-centre-approved> - Landsec has secured planning permission to redevelop Lewisham Shopping Centre, aiming to transform the 1970s mall into a vibrant town centre. The masterplan includes over 1,700 new homes, 660 student beds, 445 co-living residences, and a reimagined shopping centre. A key feature is an eight-acre public green space with an urban meadow, enhancing biodiversity and community engagement. The development is expected to generate £160 million annually for the local economy and has received strong support from the community, reflecting a collaborative effort to revitalise Lewisham's town centre.
3. <https://landsec.com/media/press-releases/2024/urban-meadow-top-shopping-centre-heart-plans-town-centre-transformation> - Landsec's regeneration arm, LandsecU+I, has submitted a planning application to redevelop Lewisham Shopping Centre into a new town centre district. The 17-acre masterplan proposes 1,700 new homes, 445 co-living residences, and up to 660 student beds. Central to the plan is an eight-acre public green space featuring an urban meadow, aiming to boost biodiversity and provide accessible green space. The development is designed to retain key parts of the existing centre, minimising disruption and reducing carbon impact, with a phased approach to redevelopment.
4. <https://lewishamcyclists.org.uk/news-release-regarding-lewisham-shopping-centre-redevelopment/> - Lewisham Cyclists have called for Lewisham Council and Transport for London to collaborate with Landsec to improve active travel facilities in and around the Lewisham Shopping Centre redevelopment site. Despite the proposed development, the current plans lack dedicated cycling routes, which the group argues is essential for reducing congestion and pollution. They urge the council to work with Landsec and TfL to ensure these improvements are made before consent is granted, highlighting the importance of cycle-friendly infrastructure in the new development.
5. <https://ladywell-live.org/2025/04/16/landsec-submit-planning-application-for-redevelopment-of-lewisham-shopping-centre/> - Landsec has submitted a revised planning application for the redevelopment of Lewisham Shopping Centre, following a second round of consultations with Lewisham Council. The updated plans include increased retail and community space, adjustments to residential block layouts, and the addition of a new balcony design. The proposed development aims to create a new park, a revitalised shopping centre with dining and entertainment options, and over 1,000 new homes. The masterplan is expected to take around 10 years to complete and is the result of extensive community engagement.
6. <https://www.selondoner.co.uk/news/15102025-lewisham-campaign-group-urges-council-to-reject-regeneration-plan-over-serious-lack-of-social-housing> - A local campaign group, Save Lewisham Shopping Centre, has urged Lewisham Council to reject the proposed regeneration plan due to concerns over the lack of social housing. The development plans to demolish the existing shopping centre and replace it with towers up to 35 storeys high, including over 1,700 new homes. The campaigners argue that the proposal does not meet the housing needs of the local community and have launched a petition, which has garnered over 1,000 signatures, to halt the development.
7. <https://bdaily.co.uk/articles/2024/11/05/landsec-plans-new-green-district-in-lewisham> - LandsecU+I, the regeneration arm of Landsec, has submitted a planning application to redevelop Lewisham Shopping Centre into a new town centre district. The 17-acre masterplan includes 1,700 new homes, 445 co-living residences, and up to 660 student beds. Central to the plan is an eight-acre public green space featuring an urban meadow, aiming to enhance biodiversity and provide accessible green space. The development is designed to retain key parts of the existing centre, minimising disruption and reducing carbon impact, with a phased approach to redevelopment.