

Mrs Anita Allard
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30th July 2015

Dear Sirs,

Regarding: Woking 2027 DPD Consultation

I have been a resident of Mayford for 9 years and have been made aware of the Woking 2027 planning proposals that will impact Mayford. My comments are not specific to any of your documents. I will start with some general points and then address specific site references that I am concerned about.

Mayford and its surrounding areas have a perfect balance between town and country living. As you drive around Mayford you are surrounded by open space, wildlife and greenery. In our ever industrialised world these are priceless treasures. Stop and think about where you live today and ask yourself whether you would value such a treasure there and, if you have it, how would you feel if it was taken away? It is hard to express the benefit that this open space brings. For some it brings a relief from the concrete jungle they spend their working week in and for others the tranquillity brings a general sense of wellbeing. This is a truly priceless commodity – it was the compelling reason for moving my family to the area 9 years ago. Once this space is removed (or obliterated in the case of these plans) there is no going back and the area will be irrecoverably destroyed.

In one of the sustainability impact assessments it stated that there will be no specific impact in relation to “Personal safety and reduced fear of crime”. This is completely flawed. An uninhabited area has no crime. Crime exists because of people. If you increase the number of people then you increase the probability of crime – fact! We had the misfortune to be broken into a few years ago whilst I was sleeping with my 8 month old baby and 7 year old son and my son is still frightened by the experience and does not like to be upstairs by himself. The introduction of new dwellings on the scale being proposed will unquestionably increase the probability of crime. The fact that the official documents refuse to acknowledge this throws into question the accuracy of any of the other assessments made.

Site Reference: GB7 (Ten Acre Farm, Smarts Heath Road)

I strongly object to the proposal to increase the number of Traveller Pitches on this land.

Currently, Woking's Traveller sites are concentrated in one part of the Borough – Hatchington, Burdenshott Road (one mile from Ten Acre Farm), Ten Acre Farm, Mayford, and Brookwood Lye (three miles from Ten Acre Farm). Mayford already provides a major contribution towards the Traveller Community. There is no justification for further expansion in Mayford.

Additionally, Ten Acre farm is adjacent to Smarts Heath Common, an SSSI, used by residents of Mayford for leisure purposes. Any increase in the present Traveller site of five caravans at 10 Acre Farm would decrease the visual amenity and character of the area and also increase risk to wildlife due to increased number of domestic animals in close proximity.

Over the years successive Planning Inspectors have refused applications on this site because they reduce the openness of a Green Belt area.

A sequential approach must be taken in identifying suitable sites for allocation, with sites in the urban area being considered before those in the Green Belt. However no urban sites appear to have been considered - there must be doubt as to the validity of no other sites across the whole of the Borough being identified or suitable.

Where no sites are available in the urban area, priority will be given to sites on the edge of the urban area that benefit from good access to jobs, shops and other infrastructure and services. Mayford does not satisfy any of these criteria.

My husband and I have worked incredibly hard to earn the money required to buy the house my family lives in and find it insulting that the council would provide free land for travellers. Travelling is a lifestyle choice that is incompatible with 20th century life. If the council really needs to provide land to this group of society in order to meet government or European Union led diversity targets then they should allocate land far away from the rest of the community. Whilst it might be politically incorrect to say this, the truth is that majority of people do not want travellers living anywhere near them. The council is an elected body and should serve the wishes of the people that elected them.

Site References:

GB8 (Nursery land adjacent to Egley Road)

GB9 (Woking Garden Centre, Egley Road)

GB10 (Land to the north east of Saunders Lane, between Saunders Lane and Hook Hill Lane)

GB11 (Land to the north west of Saunders Lane)

GB14 (Land adjacent to Hook Hill Lane, Hook Heath)

I strongly object to the proposal for housing on all of the above sites.

The housing will fill in any green space between Mayford and Woking, thereby turning Mayford into a suburb of Woking and increasing greatly the risk of merging of Woking and Guildford – the whole purpose of the Green Belt. There appears to have been no consideration for preserving Mayford as a separate settlement to Woking, nor the impact on the character of the Village.

There also appears to have been no consideration to the impact on Mayford's infrastructure that the increased population will result in. More people mean more cars and more strain on the transport infrastructure. I note that there are no plans to upgrade the roads (some of which have no pavements) or railway bridges (which are all single lane) nor robust solutions to deal with the existing traffic problems on Egley Road. Houses cannot just be built in areas that have no supporting infrastructure – there will be gridlock. Two of the roads that service a significant part of the affected area have single lane bridges which slow traffic immensely. The additional traffic resulting from these plans will cause severe back logs at these key points. One of the roads (Hook Hill Lane) is a narrow country lane that already struggles to cope with multiple cars travelling in opposite directions. Today these cars reach a complete halt whilst they delicately try to manoeuvre around each other without hitting each other or damaging their cars on the hedgerows.

These roads cannot accommodate additional traffic let alone emergency services on the scale that would result from these plans. We have very old and very young residents living in Ridge Close, on Hook Hill Lane and roads leading off Hook Hill Lane. I know this due to being an NCT representative for the Hook Heath area. It is already difficult for emergency services to get down Hook Hill Lane to our residents due to the single lane bridge and narrow country lane than struggles with the multiple cars travelling in opposite directions.

Prey Heath Road will become very dangerous as increased traffic to Worplesdon station will be weaving around people walking on the road (as there are no pavements).

Earlier in this letter I used the term "as you drive around Mayford". The fact that I used the word "drive" rather than "walk" is intentional. Nearly every journey completed in this area involves motorised transport. This is because there are almost no amenities outside of a post office, barbers and pub within walking distance and also because some roads are not suitable for pedestrians through a lack of footpaths. In 9 years my family has probably left the house on foot on less than 20 occasions because of the dangerous nature of Hook Hill Lane to pedestrians. The times we have left on foot have been early on a Sunday morning when traffic is at its lightest or when it is incredibly dangerous to drive on Hook Hill Lane due to ice and snow, as these roads on and off Hook Hill Lane are not gritted. Even then it is an anxious walk. Some drivers still attempt to drive along Hook Hill Lane with many of them skidding and slipping all the way. While I attempt to walk our children up Hook Hill Lane to waiting friends, who have offered to take our son to school from the top. I find it extremely frightening walking with the children while having to

watch out for skidding and sliding cars within a few feet of us. Where footpaths do exist they are barely used, I would go as far as to say that they are the most unused footpaths of any place I have resided.

The fact that 99% of journeys require motorised transport means that the traffic levels in this area are going to increase significantly if these plans are approved. This will increase pollution; the cost of maintaining already poor quality roads; and the number of traffic accidents and road deaths.

As someone who moved to Surrey from a different county I was, and still am, appalled by the state of the roads. The road surfaces are terrible and they cannot cope with the volume of traffic they are currently exposed to. My husband has recently had to replace an alloy wheel on his car because the repeated impact of pot holes had left the wheel buckled. The traffic is horrendous. A journey that would take between 5 and 10 minutes on a clear run often takes 25-35 minutes because of traffic. Put simply, the roads cannot cope with the current peak volume of traffic let alone adding new traffic.

I have seen plans on the Woking council website for a sports centre to be built on site GB8. This will amplify all of the concerns raised in this document because of the additional volume of people and traffic it will generate. In addition to this, the noise and light pollution that this will generate during weekend and evenings will be significant to those in the neighbouring area. My husband plays football on a Friday night at Goldsworth Park under floodlights where I have gone along to watch on occasion. As they are the last people to play there they turn the lights off when they leave. That allows me to appreciate exactly how far the light pollution travels into the surrounding areas. Having such a facility on this site will change the evening experience for people in a large area. As much as the open spaces of Mayford during the day are a positive, quality of life enhancing feature, they are equally valuable in the evening by providing areas of quiet and darkness devoid of light pollution. My husband works hard to support our family and has been to many consultants and had several tests run, including a MRI scan, due to finding it incredibly difficult to sleep with his increased work load. He is on medication to help him to drift off into a peaceful night's sleep. This additional noise and light pollution will affect him further and could cause him to become more severely ill and for him to have to increase his medication further. Not only will the wildlife in the developed areas be wiped out, but also there will be increased risk to wildlife in our protected Heaths (Smarts Heath and Prey Heath) due to the proximity of the development.

My family and I enjoy seeing the deer come into the garden and sit below the apples trees which they graze on throughout the day. We especially enjoy it when they bring their young back too and sit together peacefully. I personally feel that many of us take this wonderful species for granted. We also see many rabbits happily hopping along and eating the grass and have great pleasure in watching their young grow. On many occasions we see a beautiful large heron engulf the sky and sit on top of the fir trees while gazing down at many of our neighbour's fish ponds. The children and I have also seen many hedgehogs in our back garden. It gives everyone of us a lift every time we see one of these animals in our garden. Please save our precious British wildlife.

Please reconsider your plans - what is currently planned will have a devastating impact to Mayford as a Village. Mayford is unique in the U.K. and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Please also refer to the response by the Mayford Village Society who I am happy also to represent my views. These plans will also have detrimental impact on the wider Woking community by negatively impacting quality of life on a daily basis through increased traffic, increased noise and light pollution and increased strain on already stretched public and private amenities. Whilst I understand the need to cater for a growing population, the council has a responsibility to maintain quality of life for existing residents. These plans are excessive and will destroy a perfectly balanced area. I will move out of Woking if these plans are approved as they will wipe out the quality of life that we moved here for.

Yours sincerely,

Anita Allard