

Consultation on Draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document

Jane [REDACTED]

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To: Planning Policy

To Whom It May Concern

Please find below my comments as part of Woking Borough Council's Consultation on the planned Green Belt release

Planned release of Green Belt in Byfleet (GB4 and GB5)

I am very concerned that there are plans to take away areas of Green Belt in Byfleet. There is very little green space left in and around Byfleet village and I feel strongly that this needs to be preserved for the residents of the village to continue to enjoy.

Inaccuracies

I am also concerned at the apparent lack of local knowledge shown by the authors of this report. The inaccurate descriptions which entitle both site maps (GB4 and GB5) indicate poor research and suggest a lack of interest in this part of Woking Borough. Site GB5 is described as 'south of Murrays Lane' which is very misleading as the majority of the site is bordered by Rectory Lane and Sanway Road and only a short stretch of Murrays Lane. The other site GB4 is headed 'land south of High Road' whereas the site is actually situated south of the Parvis Road.

This has caused difficulty for local residents identifying these sites and has created a lack of faith in the whole exercise. It would seem that these pockets of land have been viewed on a rough map only with little regard paid to the sites 'on the ground'. It would seem little, if any, time was spent in the village during the planning of this report. Visits to these areas would have shown the proximity to the road network and timed observations and studies in situ over a period of time would have indicated the volume and flow of traffic at different times.

This apparent lack of local knowledge creates a huge lack of confidence amongst residents in the management of this exercise and suggests a total disregard for the local communities who will have to live with and tolerate any additional development, which will be seen as totally inappropriate for this tight knit community. There is no more land to spare for any additional housing to that which has already been imposed on the village in the past.

Access roads

I am also concerned that the two designated areas are positioned next to roads which would not be able to cope with extra traffic generated by the housing developments proposed.

Site GB4 borders the extremely busy and congested Parvis Road – particularly approaching the 'blind' M25 bridge – and site GB5 borders a narrow local road with a very sharp bend on Rectory Lane on one side and another sharp blind bend on Sanway Road on the other, both of which locals know are dangerous with the existing current village traffic, in addition to busy school traffic at the junction of Rectory Lane and Sanway Road.

Where will the access roads be? In Site GB5 entry and exit to the proposed housing estate would need careful consideration as on three corners of the site there are either sharp bends or junctions. In Site GB4 it is noted in the proposal that access points onto the A245 would be constrained due to the already extremely busy Parvis Road and the proximity to the approach to the motorway bridge with a blind summit. The suggestion of potential access through the recreation ground car park to the rear of the site would need extremely careful planning, as the existing access road is a narrow one and access at the junction with Rectory Lane could be tricky given the proximity to the junction with High Road and the amount of traffic turning into Rectory Lane at a small roundabout.

The extra traffic which these two sites could generate will have to exit the village by joining existing traffic at the junctions with the Parvis Road and will inevitably cause bottlenecks and

potential gridlock on the main A245 thoroughfare. This in addition to the fact that the village is often used as a 'rat run' during the rush hour or when any congestion arises on the Parvis Road due to closures of local roads such as the A3 and the M25.

Infrastructure

I appreciate that more housing is required but surely land can be found in other areas – eg brown field sites, infill, - either in Byfleet or elsewhere in the borough, without taking away designated Green Belt from an area which is already at capacity. If this planned release of Green Belt for future development is to go ahead, then in the intervening years before any building starts, the road system and all other associated works need to be fully and seriously addressed and alleviated for the benefit of future generations who will have to live with the inevitable congestion which could develop if not managed properly and sensibly and considerately.

Proof of plans

We would need reassurance and evidence and concrete proof that there are plans in place for the infrastructure to be greatly improved and enhanced before agreeing to any release of Green Belt land which, if or when developed, has the potential to do great damage to the environment if the necessary preventative measures are not seriously addressed.

How can a Council impose such incredulous plans on its residents who are perfectly capable of seeing that such proposals appear to ignore their quality of life? Any details of how such developments can be sustained appear to be omitted from the plans.

Consultations

As part of the Consultation, the Council's leaflet "Have your say on future development sites in Woking Borough", invites residents to 'informal chats'. But these 'chats' were only available in certain locations around the borough - (ie Woking town, West Byfleet and Knaphill - as listed in the leaflet).

Why were these 'informal chats' not offered to residents in every area which would be affected by the proposals - eg Byfleet? When I asked your representatives this question, their response was that neighbourhoods were informed (via neighbourhood associations) that they could 'invite' officers to their locality if they wished for more information.

I think the Council should have automatically set up meetings in each location as part of the consultation exercise. To me it shows lack of respect for the residents affected and gives out the message that our views and opinions don't count and that residents' local knowledge and expertise are not valued or recognised.

Yours

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