

Penhill
Ridge Close
Woking
Surrey
GU22 0PU

Tel: [REDACTED]

27th July 2015

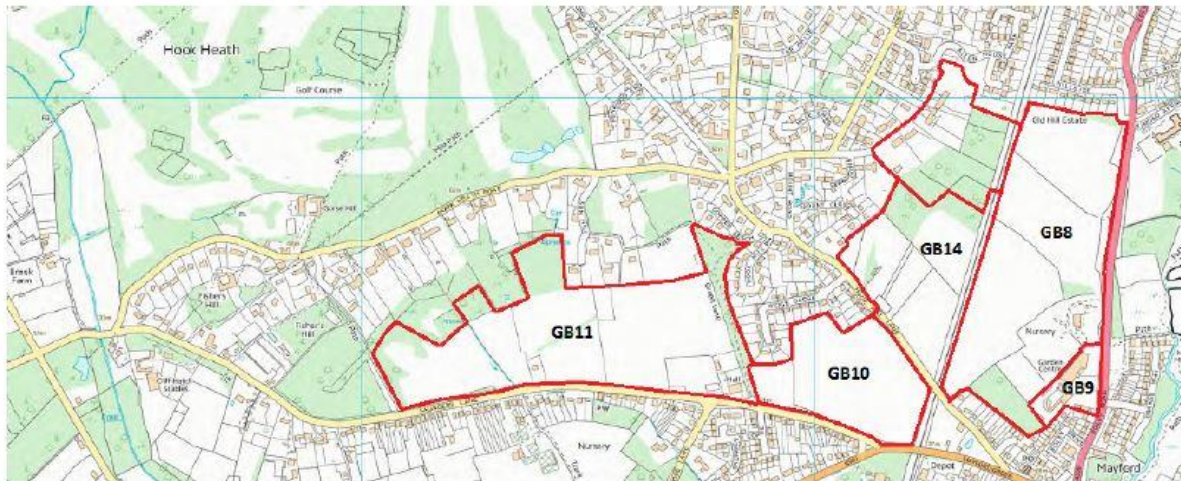
Dear Sirs,

Re: Woking 2027 DPD Consultation and in particular to site references:

GB10 (Land to the north east of Saunders Lane, between Saunders Lane and Hook Hill Lane, Mayford GU22 0NN)

GB11 (Land to the north west of Saunders Lane, Mayford, GU22 0NN)

GB14 (Land adjacent to Hook Hill Lane, Hook Heath, GU22 0PS)



As a resident of Hook Heath for 3 years I am writing to register my strong objection to the removal of areas GB10, GB11 and GB14 from the Green Belt and to proposals to build houses on parcels GB10 and GB11 post 2027.

We purchased our house, which is flanked on two sides by parcel GB10, specifically to enjoy the open space, countryside and views provided by the undeveloped land. The preservation and enjoyment of Green belt is important to us, and the main reason why we reside in Hook Heath.

Green Belt is there to prevent urban sprawl and to maintain the open spaces between individual towns and villages. The proposed 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

We want to preserve the rural nature of the area and believe that the development of this land would be detrimental to this.

There also appears to have been no consideration to the impact on Mayford's infrastructure that the increased population will result in Local transport infrastructure, 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 should not just be built in areas that have no supporting infrastructure – there will be gridlock and the extra traffic will change the character of the area, creating rat runs through Hook Heath. 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).

The proposed housing densities of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) on the Saunders Lane sites GB10 and GB11 are grossly excessive when compared to the average density of 5.5 dph in Hook Heath, and even less in the Fishers Hill Conservation Area
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.

Parcel GB10 is of particular concern to us as we moved to the area to enjoy the peace and quiet of a rural area. Development of this land would completely change the character of the area and our enjoyment of living in the area. This would no doubt be reflected in any future sale price of our house

It is our understanding that National planning policy allows the release of land from the Green Belt only in exceptional circumstances. The Woking Core Strategy requires WBC to find sites in the Green Belt for 550 homes in the period 2022-2027, but WBC has gone further than required by identifying sites for an additional 1200 homes in the period 2027-2040. While it may be sensible to look further ahead than the current core strategy, the exceptional circumstances rule still applies. WBC has not demonstrated any exceptional need for 1200 houses, nor indeed any other number, in the Green Belt around Woking post 2027. WBC should be arguing that the green belt is important and resisting future requirements to build on this land.

Woking Core Strategy policy CS24 requires that:

All development proposals will provide a positive benefit in terms of landscape and townscape character, and local distinctiveness and will have regard to landscape character areas.

To protect local landscape and townscape character, development will be expected to:

- conserve, and where possible enhance existing character, especially key landscapes such as heathlands, escarpments and the canal/river network and settlement characteristics; maintain locally valued features, and enhance or restore deteriorating features.

This proposal takes no notice of this requirement

The main justification for the decisions is the green belt review on which there was no consultation. Flaws include:

These sites were recommended on the basis of their proximity to a "Local Centre". However, other than a nearby Post Office and barbers, there is no supporting infrastructure in the form of shops, doctors, dentists, medical facilities, or schools. Residents living in these major developments will be isolated unless they have a vehicle.

It claimed these sites were 'sustainable' on the basis of Google travel times – taken outside the rush hour and hence hopelessly optimistic.

The removal of GB14 from the green belt to create 'green infrastructure' is not necessary since no change of use is planned. It is in any case 'not an exceptional circumstance' which is required for land to be removed from the green belt.

Please also refer to the responses given by the Mayford Village Society and Hook Heath residence association who I am happy also represent my views

Yours faithfully

Mr John Cockrill