

FW: Woking 2027 DPD Consultation - letter of Objection from William Gorman

Bill Gorman [REDACTED]

Sent: 31 July 2015 15:45

To: Planning Policy

Whitelands
Fairway Close, Golf Club Road
Hook Heath
Woking
GU22 0LT

30 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 I am writing to register my 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.

My reasons for objecting are as follow:

1. Urban sprawl will be increased.

As we understand it the purpose of the Green Belt and the protection of it is, historically, to ensure the prevention of urban sprawl and to retain the open land that separates areas such as, in this consultation, Hook Heath from Mayford and Mayford from Woking. The residents of these areas fought and won an earlier attempted assault on this principal this open land back in the 1980's. The current proposals to build on this open land will actually achieve the opposite and will clearly be to the everlasting detriment of these areas.

2. There are no exceptional circumstances demonstrated for WBC to be offering an additional 1200 homes in the period 2027 – 2040.

The Woking Core Strategy required WBC to find areas in the Green Belt for 550 homes between 2022 – 2027 but WBC has gone far further than required by offering sites for an additional 1200 homes. It can be argued that WBC has a duty to find sites for 550 homes but there appears to be a lack of need for 1200 houses and WBC also has a duty to protect the Green Belt for the current & future benefit of Woking residents whom they have a responsibility to serve and protect by resisting future requirement to build on this land.

3. A disregard of Woking Borough Council's own Strategy.

As we understand, WBC has a duty to also ensure that all development provides a benefit in terms of landscape and townscape character areas and that such development should conserve and enhance existing character such as heathlands, escarpments, canals and rivers. Woking is not noted for an over abundance of character in relation to many of its previous and approved planning applications and relies heavily on the surrounding residential areas to retain locally valued features. This suggested Woking Core Strategy policy CS24 seems to deny this requirement.

4. There are clear flaws in the Green Belt Review

This relates to the sites listed above (GB10, GB11 & GB14) being recommended for development on the basis of their nearness to a "Local Centre". Are we to understand that the apparent "Local Centre" quoted is referring to Mayford Post Office and the barbers shop? Therefore where is the supporting infrastructure in regard to shops, doctors and other medical facilities or schools? I do wonder if those responsible for these proposal actually live within and travel within the Woking area as Egley Road and Saunders Lane plus other local roads have the same traffic capacity as they had in the 1980's and are barely ready to cope with current levels of traffic with Egley Road, in particular, being utterly congested during both morning and evening rush hours.

It is therefore quite ridiculous to assume or suggest that the Egley Road could possibly manage to absorb the ensuing additional traffic that several new housing estates, a retail park (!) and school would place on it.

5. The density of housing is not compatible with the surroundings.

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

6. The Removal of GB14 from the Green Belt.

The removal of GB14 from the Green Belt to create "green infrastructure" is not necessary since no change of use is planned. There are no "exceptional circumstances" for land to be removed from the Green Belt. We must, as current residents, protect our town and surrounding residential areas for future generations of Woking residents and provide an attractive and enjoyable environment. Once we lose Green Belt areas they are "gone" for ever and WBC will ultimately be, quite correctly, held responsible for failing to protect its residents from these ill-conceived proposals.

Yours faithfully

William Gorman