

Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)

Regulation 18 consultation questionnaire

18 June 2015 – 31 July 2015



How to respond to this Consultation

The Site Allocations DPD public consultation documents are available on the Woking2027 website (see www.woking2027.info), local libraries and the Council's Civic Offices.

You can use this form to let us have your comments on the draft Site Allocations DPD. Additional copies of this questionnaire can also be downloaded from the website.

Alternatively, the Woking2027 website features an online version of this questionnaire and an interactive map of the proposed development sites, through which you can let us know your views.

The public consultation is open to **5pm on Friday 31 July 2015**. Unfortunately we cannot accept responses received after 5pm on the closing date.

Data Protection: Please be aware that representations received by the Council will be made publicly available. If you have any questions about completing this form please contact the Planning Policy team by email planning.policy@woking.gov.uk or on **01483 743871**.

Your details

Please provide your contact details below. We are unable to accept anonymous or confidential responses.

Title: Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Other (please specify) Mr & Mrs

First name Mick & Tracey

Surname Hayward

Position (if applicable) _____

Organisation (if applicable) _____

House name and/or number 89

Street St Michael's Road

Locality Sheerwater

Town Woking

County Surrey

Post code GU21 5QA

Email address _____

Telephone _____

Please select your status or that of any party you are representing:

- Residents of Woking Borough
 - Someone who works in Woking Borough
 - Someone who visits Woking Borough
 - Someone representing a group or organisation

 - Owner of land in Woking Borough
 - Planning / land agent
 - Developer
 - Other (please specify)
-

If you are an agent representing another party, please state who:

Please note that everyone responding to this consultation will be notified of future Woking Borough planning policy consultations. If you would prefer not to be contacted in the future, please tick ✓

Woking Citizens' Panel

Woking Citizens' Panel is comprised of a group of residents from across Woking from all backgrounds, ages and ethnicities. They are contacted a number of a times each year, via email or post, and asked to provide their views on all kinds of issues that affect local people.

Would you like to join the Woking Citizens' Panel?

✓ Yes No I am already a member

Please provide your comments using the questions on the following two pages and return the whole questionnaire – including any additional comments pages – by 5pm, Friday 31 July 2015:

- By email to: planning.policy@woking.gov.uk
- By post to: **Planning Policy, Woking Borough Council, Civic Offices, Gloucester Square, Woking, Surrey, GU21 6YL**

Please note that responses will not be individually acknowledged.

Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Your views

Please complete a separate copy of pages 3 and 4 of this questionnaire for each individual site or section that you wish to comment on.

Which consultation document does your comment concern? Please tick one option only:

- Site Allocations DPD Sustainability Appraisal Report Habitat Regulations Assessment
or General comment (not specific to any one of the consultation documents) Suggest a new site

Which site or section of the document does your comment concern? (if applicable)

Please state all that apply:

Site reference: (please select and note number) UA / GB UA32 (Sheerwater)

Section title SITE/0099/MYSH, SHLAAMS092 (Sheerwater)

Page numbers _____

Paragraph number _____

Are you? Supporting Objecting A combination of these Neutral

Your comment

1. Housing Tenure

A large amount of the housing in the regeneration area is already 2+ bedrooms. There is no logical reason to destroy these homes just to rebuild similar size homes. Likewise, the regeneration area already contains sheltered accommodation; again, why destroy these homes just to rebuild similar?

2. Health and wellbeing

A large proportion of the housing within the regeneration area is of decent, good quality housing stock and any 'positive impact on health' by being rehoused in a new dwelling will be completely negated – and worsened – for residents by having their homes taken from them through compulsory purchase. Regarding improving access to the Basingstoke Canal to improve walking/cycling opportunities, the towpath and entries onto it from Sheerwater have all been recently improved and opened up, to ensure safe and easy access onto the towpath...no further improvement is necessary.

3. Flooding

Part of the regeneration area, including the Recreation ground is in Flood Zone 2 but the Masterplan shows this as a high density housing area. How can this go ahead against the advice of the Environment Agency? Flooding will further be exacerbated by the regeneration, both by splitting the green space into 'pockets' – i.e. moving the green space out of the flood plain area – and also by the fact that, with another 250+ dwellings, the number of cars will increase. The quantity of parking spaces to be allocated per household are not realistic and won't be sufficient (e.g. 2 spaces for a 5-bedroom house with potentially 5 adults and therefore potentially 5 cars!). Residents will continue to be forced to pave over their front gardens (supposing they will have front gardens), thus adding to the flood risk situation, and having the added effect of further reducing green space, i.e. gardens, also to the detriment of the wellbeing of the community.

4. **Deprivation**

Statistics that show Sheerwater as deprived – if accurately represented – are undoubtedly driven by a certain section of the Sheerwater community – in fact the DPD mentions that ‘pockets’ of the area are classified as deprived. Historically, Sheerwater has been a main choice for the Council to house people who have social and economic needs and who may not be able to work for one reason or another so this obviously affects overall figures of income and employment and, if you calculated the statistics on the majority of Sheerwater, leaving aside the areas of social housing, they would surely read differently. The majority of Sheerwater residents, if asked, would not consider themselves deprived and we object to being told we are. Statistics can be made to read different things, depending on where you set the criteria.

5. **Traffic**

Increasing housing quantities within Sheerwater by 250+ houses will undoubtedly increase the number of cars on the estate and the volume of traffic and car journeys. Improving access to cycle paths and public transport facilities is mentioned; Sheerwater already has a cycle path system travelling right through the estate – in fact, it is only outside of Sheerwater that this cycle path disappears. There is also a regular bus service and the towpath has been upgraded/refurbished, creating an easy walking/cycling route to Woking, West Byfleet and beyond. How exactly do these facilities need to be more easily accessed or improved?

The development of recreation, health, community and retail facilities is also mentioned; all these are already present in Sheerwater and appropriate to the estate’s size and style. Any more development or increase of these will substantially increase traffic through the estate. The new Asda superstore has already increased traffic and congestion to what was previously a manageable and appropriate traffic level.

Even supposing more journeys will be made by public transport/on foot/by cycling, existing and new residents will still require cars for work and other journeys, so car numbers and traffic through the estate will increase substantially. The increase of car numbers x 250 houses – and the associated noise and emissions - will far outweigh any extra journeys made in a more sustainable manner.

The addition of a new Leisure Centre within the scheme will also increase traffic into the estate, as will the enlarged school facilities, which will be needed to accommodate the additional families potentially living on the estate but that will also undoubtedly accommodate children (and their associated car journeys) from *outside* of Sheerwater.

Added to the above, more cars means more congestion and exacerbated parking problems, as well as potential flood risk problems associated with residents paving over their front gardens (as Point 3 above).

6. **Green space/ facilities**

We believe that the re-distribution of green space does not necessarily involve re-allocating the green space within the original area, i.e. Sheerwater could lose green space to a ward elsewhere in the Borough. The DPD mentions ‘**high quality of open space**’ – Sheerwater currently has a high quality open space in the form of the Recreation Ground, used currently by a diverse range of residents, from children playing games to dog-walkers to people en-route to the towpath or just taking a stroll. To replace this with ‘pockets’ of green space spread throughout Sheerwater would render the open spaces as small, useless areas of land, harder to maintain and impossible to use for recreation such as those mentioned above. Using the school playing fields is not a comparable alternative as it will be out of bounds for much of time (school time).

Regarding community facilities, Sheerwater has all the facilities within the estate, that are available in any other Woking ward – and in some cases, more facilities – so any increase in facilities needed would only be needed because of an increase in residents (i.e. due to the regeneration), not for the current community.

These comments are pages 4 of 5 pages.

7. **Commercial Development**

Once again, it is historical that the shops in Sheerwater have never had the sort of investment or interest put into them, in comparison to other wards in the borough. Whilst businesses need to *want* to come to Sheerwater, no obvious encouragement has been made to make Dartmouth Avenue an attractive, vibrant and desirable place to open a business.

As such, development of Dartmouth Avenue would be a good idea, however, the scale of retail/industrial development throughout the estate needs to be considered as there are numerous empty shops, empty office blocks and empty industrial units throughout these areas of Sheerwater. The reasons behind these empty units need to be investigated and assessed before adding any more.

It is also questionable as to why the (partly empty) industrial areas have not been thought of as potential housing, instead of compulsory purchasing peoples' homes?

8. **Community**

We appreciate and understand that there is a small area of Sheerwater that needs improvement and possible redevelopment as we have specified in the 'Proposed Modifications' section below. We also believe that Sheerwater should have continuing improvements made with regards to roads (surfacing and upgrading), such as the recent improvements to Albert Drive/Eve/Arnold Roads, the roundabout by Bishop David Brown and traffic calming measures.

The reasons given for the regeneration are insufficient to warrant such large-scale destruction; destruction of peoples' homes and of their lives. Sheerwater already has all of the features the regeneration says it will provide, in terms of community/retail/accessibility etc. What Sheerwater also currently has, which it will lose if the regeneration goes ahead, is a Community that has built up over the last 60 years. Never has it been so apparent that Sheerwater has a community spirit than since this threat has come upon us – mass regeneration will obliterate this community and destroy peoples' lives.

Proposed modifications – please explain what changes you consider should be made, if any (for example, changes to the text, a site boundary, etc.)

We believe any regeneration should be limited to Dartmouth Avenue shops, flats above and garages behind; this we understand was the original area proposed by Woking Borough Council for regeneration, and this should be adhered to.

The wider regeneration plan should be scrapped completely.

These comments are pages 5 of 5 pages.

More comments?

If you would like to make additional comments about other proposed sites or sections of any of the consultation documents, please complete further copies of pages 3 and 4 of this questionnaire. Please ensure that these are firmly attached with the main questionnaire - including pages 1 and 2 providing your details - and return this by email or post to the Council (contact details on page 2).