

Mr Andrew Macpherson,
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Email: [REDACTED]
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27th July 2015

Dear Woking Borough Council,

Regarding: Woking 2027 DPD Consultation

I have been a resident of Mayford for 7 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, however I will refer to the specific site references that I am concerned about:

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 for the following reasons:

Destruction of the Green Belt

Currently Woking, Mayford and Guildford are separated by the Green Belt land which is fundamental in ensuring that there is a physical separation. Building on this land will make Mayford into a suburb of Woking and increase the risk of merging Woking and Guildford, and as such take away Mayford's status as a Village.

The Green Belt land is home to a number of wild animals including rabbits, all kinds of birds, moles, foxes and even deer which we have witnessed in our back garden (see attached picture below) and also on the land north west of Saunders Lane (GB11). To build on the Green Belt land would destroy the natural habitat for these animals and be a great loss to Mayford and the Woking Borough as a whole.

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.

Having a young family, one of the things that I love about Mayford is that as a family we are able to go for walks in the Green Belt and let our children explore nature and see the animals. There are a number of families in Mayford that we see out regularly on the Green Belt with their children and we also know there are a number of people from within Woking itself that come with their families to walk their dogs.

National Policy states that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in "exceptional circumstances", however nothing in the council's proposal shows this to be the case and the Policy clearly states that "housing need – including for Traveller sites – does not justify the harm done on the Green Belt by inappropriate development."

Landscape and Environmental Factors

Mayford is a key area for the absorption of rainwater to alleviate flooding. In recent years where there has been a lot of rain there has been flooding along Saunders Lane. Developing on the land proposed will increase surface water and increase flood risk to surrounding properties.

The Green Belt Review was worryingly inconsistent in its approach as it identified areas of land not to be considered (due to a number of constraints), however it then proceeded to recommend land that contained these constraints (Mayford included). The Brett & Associates Report rejected the 10 Acre Site as a Traveller site.

Infrastructure

Mayford Village does not have the road infrastructure to support the number of houses that are proposed. The roads around Mayford are narrow and in some parts do not have pedestrian footpaths. There are three single lane bridges in the village – two with traffic lights (Smarts Heath Road and Hook Hill Lane) which are situated by the land proposed for development. The bridge on Smarts Heath Road is extremely busy during peak hours and as it is the main bridge from the proposed development would not be able to support the increase in traffic.

There are only footpaths on one side of Saunders Lane and the road narrows near my house. The volume of traffic currently and also the speed that some of drivers travel at means it is dangerous for pedestrians and especially those walking children down to the Green Belt, park, or Mayford Village Hall. The proposed developments would increase the traffic and risks to pedestrians.

Mayford Village only has a Post Office and Barbers and no supporting infrastructure such as shops, doctors, dentists, medical facilities, or schools. Houses cannot just be built in areas that have no supporting infrastructure.

Worplesdon train station would also not be able to cope with an increase in commuters that would occur from the proposed development. I commute up to London from Worplesdon station on a daily basis and currently pay approximately £3,500 for an annual season ticket which allows me to stand on the train from Worplesdon to London Waterloo. Ten years ago when we moved to the Woking/Guildford area I use to get a seat on the same train I get today for less money!

The car park at Worplesdon station is also extremely busy and would also not be able to cope with the increased numbers and congestion. Currently between 07:30 and 07:50 there is frequently gridlock in the car park due to people parking on the double yellow lines to drop off their partners/children. In the last couple of years the station has also had to introduce a section for Car Park Season Ticket holders due to an increase in commuters who were fed up of paying the high rates at Woking and turning to use Worplesdon as the parking was cheaper. There is now a waiting list to get a Car Park Season Ticket.

Worplesdon station is likely to become even busier in the next few years due to the developments taking place in Moor Lane.

My wife and I drive to work together in the morning, but in the evenings as we come back on separate trains I walk home to Saunders Lane. The roads do not have footpaths and can be quite dangerous. An increase in traffic due to the proposed developments would make it even more dangerous.

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.

Please reconsider your plans - what is currently proposed will have a devastating impact to Mayford as a Village.

Please also refer to the response by the Mayford Village Society who I am happy also to represent my views. I would be grateful if you would please confirm receipt of this email.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Andrew Macpherson

