

23 June 2015

Dear Ernest

I have read the statement of community involvement and the Local Plan you kindly forwarded and provide feedback as requested:

### **COMMUNICATION**

Many of the developments will make the town more attractive but (from negative experience of the development in the area in which I live) I ask that communication be with a wider area of local residents so that they are aware of, and may comment on, developments in their communities. Currently this does not necessarily happen. A recent planning decision was picked up in an internet search for another purpose. Although relatively local to Little Riding the application was not known to us. The outcome was approval for two four bedroomed homes, each with one parking space at a former retail site in Maybury Hill. Dangerous parking issues had previously existed. Authorities were advised and virtually all of the homes removed gardens to provide space for cars. This made the area safe as it removed car parking on double yellow lines and in front of traffic lights/crossings.

### **LACK OF NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM**

Many areas in Woking will be like the one in which I live where the profile of residents is very varied. Those areas setting up Neighbourhood Forums seem to be those where similar types of families reside. My home is in GU22 7EP and development in recent years has very much changed the face of the area. Many families have moved away as multiple occupancy properties for those with health issues arrived. Placed here too has been more social housing. There are commuters who have no time to consider the Plan and probably have no interest in it. There are many newcomers to the Country. There has been development of religious venues and schools.

### **TRAFFIC CONSIDERATIONS**

In this area there has been surprisingly little consideration of traffic and highway safety. In a busy traffic area has been placed a busy doctor's surgery. An expanding taxi firm sits at the junction of East Hill and Maybury Hill. Formerly these properties were residential. Flats too have been placed opposite the Friends of the Elderly building. There seems to have been little consideration of the increase in traffic caused although these are spots known to locals as traffic bottlenecks.

### **RETAIL PARK**

The retail park is a double edged sword. As a convenience it is an asset. Detrimental aspects are the fact that it is not kept clean, planting near Little Riding is not watered and maintained. The original policy of keeping the site separate from residential areas was a good one. Cooking smells are unpleasant

for neighbours. (In fact the increase in eateries in Woking had made the town overall a bit smelly.) A coffee shop built near to our homes had no conditions for screening to protect amenity, absorb smells and conceal the view of a messy yard from the street. This has resulted in more litter in and around the park. Asda's planning applications have all (aside from that requiring 24 hour opening) been achieved despite WBC and our councillor being aware of concerns/objections from neighbours.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH EVERYONE**

I note from the documentation that groups will be asked for input regarding development. Ours is an area in which sit the Mosque, Churches (and community rooms for groups) and a number of religious and other schools. All of these organisations will provide views that protect the interests of their congregations, users and pupils. Many people being represented will be outsiders rather than those from the immediate locality. This may act to the detriment of those who are not involved in religion, education or other groups.

## **SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

We already find St Pauls being used as the car park of choice for those attending the Mosque at times during the day or night, irrespective of its close proximity to homes and the fact it is not a public car park. It is used too by parents for collection and delivery of pupils for local schools.

Despite the close location to homes and the Councils policies on sustainability and environment there is no measurement of emissions. It was disappointing that a request for measurement was dismissed without consideration. These issues are important for the health of neighbourhoods, particularly those where the council increases the number of homes and adds additional business units.

## **LIGHTING AND LIGHT NUISANCE**

The roundabout at the entrance to Lion Retail Park is brightly lit and despite contact with Surrey and Woking Councils there has been no explanation as to why the lighting was increased. Contact with your own department to ascertain why a grinning face can now be seen on the window of Lion House from bedrooms in Little Riding has been ignored. Photographs were made available but there has been no reply. My input is to request that correspondence receive replies and lighting in connection with developments be non-intrusive and in line with council policies. In Woking there are very different lighting levels in different areas.

## **HOME WORKERS AND NON RELIGIOUS RESIDENTS**

My request to you is that you might influence WBC and Surrey CC to achieve a situation where planning for the area takes account of the needs of everyone. There are many non-religious families in the town and their views should be heard. Self-employed people are disadvantaged by concessions made to

groups. Dense housing and expanding businesses cause traffic congestion where the road system is not well developed. The noise and pollution is detrimental to everyone and particularly those who work from home. For instance, development and greater numbers attending the Mosque has added to the bottlenecks on the approaches to Oriental Road, East Hill and Maybury Hill junctions.

Finally, I ask that the lack of a cohesive group here should not be allowed to work to our disadvantage and hope my input will be of some help to you.

M Meinke