

Mr C.G. Milbourn,
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Woking, Surrey, GU22 0SL

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

30th July 2015

Dear Sirs,

Regarding: Woking 2027 DPD Consultation

I have been a resident of Mayford for 20 years and have also worked locally for the last 13, and am very concerned about the Woking 2027 planning proposals that will have an impact on 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 Reference: GB7 (Ten Acre Farm, Smarts Heath Road)

I object to the proposal to increase the number of Traveller Pitches on this land.

Whilst in principal I do not object to a small increase in their number, the proposal seems to be for twelve to fifteen. Since Traveller sites should be so situated as to provide access to schools, local facilities, business related activities, jobs, shops, and other amenities, Mayford is not a suitable site as it provides few of these. Furthermore, a significant increase in number of pitches would reduce the visual value and amenity of, and represent a risk to, the adjoining SSSI.

Also I am given to understand that over the years successive Planning Inspectors have refused applications on this site because they reduce the openness of a Green Belt area.

Site References:

GB8 (Nursery land adjacent to Egley Road)

I object to removal of Green Belt status from this parcel of land. As a parent I recognise the urgent need for another secondary school (provided I believe under 'exceptional circumstances') in the area, but I do not feel that the site is suitable for further development, namely the extensive proposed sports and leisure facilities, and housing. The site cannot support the extra infrastructure required for the suggested development and most specifically with regard to provision for the increase in traffic along the A320 and the surrounding roads. I also feel dubious about assurances given with regard to flood risk; despite local works in the last few years I have still seen significant flooding in the time I have lived in Mayford, including sewage breakout in the low-lying area alongside the A320 south of the Mayford roundabout.

GB9 (Woking Garden Centre, Egley Road)

I very strongly object to removal of Green Belt status from this parcel of land. Besides other arguments with respect to future development as applied to parcels GB10, GB11, and GB14 below, this site represents one of only a handful of amenities for the residents of Mayford. It provides not only a garden shop and for other businesses, but a local café which is very popular and locally unique, and offers an attractive environment within easy reach for people with young families or those who prefer not to have to travel into Woking.

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 very strongly object to the removal of Green Belt status from the above parcels of land (GB10, GB11, GB14) and offer the following points for consideration:

The purposes of the Green Belt are;

1. To check urban sprawl and prevent merging of neighbouring towns;

The housing will fill in any green space between Mayford and Woking, thereby turning Mayford into a suburb of Woking. The proposals above will also result in a merging of the localities of Mayford and Hook Heath. Proposals within the Borough of Guildford are bringing the northern Guildford boundary closer to Woking and even WBC's own consultation plan states that the boundaries will be far less than in guidelines for maintenance of Green Belt. Green Belt land in Mayford is fundamental to the physical separation of Woking, Mayford and Guildford – this is incorrectly classified only as "important" in the Green Belt Review

2. To preserve the setting and character of historic towns;

There appears to have been no consideration for preserving Mayford as a separate settlement to Woking, nor the impact on the character of the Village.

Moreover I can find no justification for the assertion that Mayford has no historic value or character: There is a community here of which many residents have lived their whole lives in, and can tell stories of, Mayford past. There are many very old and beautiful dwellings, and of course Mayford was mentioned in The Domesday Book,

3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside;

We have in Mayford two SSSIs, currently under consideration for inclusion in the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas and the 400m 'buffer zone' around these would preclude development. The area itself is rich in wildlife, providing homes and habitat for buzzards, red kites and sparrowhawks, alongside many smaller birds including woodpeckers, nuthatches, yellow wagtails, snipe, kingfishers (and also reportedly, the rare nightjar). Small deer can be seen quite often, and badgers – as well as the not-so-welcome foxes. These animals will move around the area in search of food and shelter and they absolutely need the 'animal corridors' to reach other suitable areas where they can spread out or find new families. Removing Green Belt designation and developing these significant open spaces will have a very detrimental effect on our local wildlife, as well as the more obvious visual impact and increased noise and air pollution.

4. To assist in urban regeneration;

The Mayford Village society reports that “No evidence (independently verified) has been produced to demonstrate that Woking Council has exhausted Brownfield sites for development in its Plan”.

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 very strongly object to the proposal for housing on all of the above (GB8, GB9, GB10, GB11, GB14) sites, and in addition to the above comments on removal of Green Belt status would add that the infrastructure in Mayford cannot provide the support that such developments would require.

I reiterate especially my concerns about flood risk, and the capacity of the local water and sewage systems to cope with the needs of an extra 500-600 homes, on top of those of the school. The recent sewage works in Vicarage road were I believe required to increase capacity for the homes currently being built; by inference the current provision in Mayford is insufficient to deal with any more demand as a result of further development. Public health will be endangered should floods and sewage breakouts as mentioned above, recur – the likelihood of which would increase with any rise in population.

Access to Mayford is restricted. There is one main road between the two major towns of Woking and Guildford, which routinely becomes congested northbound on the Egley Road for a couple of hours each morning. On the two occasions I have been called upon to provide an alternative to a cancelled train from Worplesdon to Woking before 8am, it took around forty minutes – in sharp contrast to the ten or so mentioned in the PBA plan. It would have been quicker to wait for the next train.

When any of the local major trunk roads (M3, M25, A3) suffers delay, accident, or congestion, the effect is a noticeably large increase in volume on the A320 whatever the time of day. Even outside the busiest times, it often takes some minutes to be able to turn right into the A320 in a southerly direction whether in Egley Road or on the main road. The concentration of traffic from the proposed Hoe Valley school must surely render gridlock every day. To add the traffic from a further 550 homes cannot be imagined.

When any local road has been closed in the past twelve months, the remainder suffered intolerably as a result. Even the closure (for bridge repairs) of the relatively quiet Hook Hill Lane caused significant congestion on Smarts Heath Road; and when the situation was reversed, Hook Hill Lane felt like a dangerous rat-run. Closure of Vicarage road caused traffic queues and delays of more than half an hour on every day I had to drive in the area. Local roads just cannot provide the extra capacity required for traffic to service large residential and commercial increases in density.

In addition to a general increase in local traffic, there is the matter of specific access to any development on the parcels of land. In particular, that labelled GB14 adjacent to Hook Hill Lane. This lane is weight and width restricted at the lower end, where there are also traffic lights controlling alternate traffic flow. Along its length there are high field banks and garden boundaries, and in parts it is too narrow for two vehicles to pass. At the top of the lane there is a five-way junction on a brow of a hill, with restricted view of oncoming priority traffic. The Plan seemed to

suggest that access to and egress from any development on this site would include a way onto Hook Hill Lane. Congestion and accidents must surely result.

The present bus service is meagre, but presumably would increase in capacity and frequency were demand to grow. However, access to the train service is limited. Worplesdon station is simply not placed to cope with much greater local demand, as well as being too far from the suggested developments for easy access by any other means than car. The car park already very often overflows, to walk along Prey Heath Road itself feels and looks dangerous as it is too narrow for a pavement, and the only other route is across Prey Heath along a muddy footpath.

Amenities in Mayford are insufficient as they stand. The Green Belt Review recommended Mayford on the basis of proximity to a "Local Centre". Given that this only comprises the Post Office, barbers, garden centre (which would be relocated anyway under the proposals), and two pubs, it is a rather puzzling reason for recommendation. The school would only be fulfilling an existing demand so cannot be included. There is no doctor or pharmacy, no dentist, no other medical provision, and apart from the Post Office, no other shops at all.

Should there be any attempt to provide such facilities, they would then add further to the enormous pre-existing problem of traffic congestion in the area noted above, as the servicing requirements for these would entail yet more traffic.

Please reconsider your plans - what is currently planned will have a devastating impact on Mayford as a Village, a community, and an area of such environmental importance.

Please also refer to the response by the Mayford Village Society who I am happy also to represent my views

Yours sincerely,

Mrs C.G.Milbourn