

Mr Serguei Mouratov

Care of:
Hillside
Hook Heath Road
Woking
Surrey GU22 0QD

31st July 2015

Dear Sirs

Woking 2027 Draft Planning Proposal Consultation

I would like to strongly object to several of your 2027 planning proposals set to impact on the Green Belt areas of Mayford and Hook Heath.

Site Reference: GB8, GB9, GB10, GB11 and G14

I strongly object to the proposal for housing and other developments on all of the above sites.

As outlined by your consultants, Peter Brett Associates (PBA), the land around periphery of Woking town contributes significantly to the fulfilment of the Green Belt purposes. Their report stated that currently the Green Belt boundary around the Borough is well defined and performs a significant role in maintaining the separation between Woking and Guildford.

PBA's report highlights the importance of the above sites (area 20 in the PBA report) in preserving the green gap between Woking and Mayford and the risk of compromising the integrity of the gap between the town/village. Your planning proposal seeks to manoeuvre around this factor by ensuring screening by trees etc. between sites, but this is a poor compromise.

Removing areas from the Green Belt in all of the proposed parcels of land above is not in keeping with the safeguarding of the countryside. National Planning Policy only allows the release of land from Green Belt in exceptional circumstances, however Woking Borough Council has demonstrated no exceptional need for any additional houses. Despite this, although the Core Strategy (CS) has a requirement for 550 homes in the Green Belt, a further 1200 sites for homes have been earmarked for future development. GB8 is even highlighted in your own report as a site at which there are little, if any, local amenities and hence GB9 is to be earmarked for future development in this respect. This will certainly not prevent the sprawl of built up areas, particularly as it will encourage further growth in the area.

Furthermore Mayford is a historical village that is mentioned in the Domesday Book and it is noted in your planning proposal for site GB8 that the area is one of High Archaeological Potential. As such an area, the character of the village should be considered in line with the potential areas for development and hence in this instance it is considered that developments of 35-40 dph (GB8-9) and 30dph elsewhere are significant. Whilst your report argues that GB11 relates more to the slightly higher density of the south ribbon development of Saunders Lane, it will in fact back onto properties in Hook Heath that are much lower in density at around 3 dph.

The dismissal of urban areas where flats could be built and the acceptance of Green Belt land for development not appear to account for the fact vulnerable and older persons, as well as those acquiring social or affordable housing, are let down by a significant lack of any amenities or good

transport links. Although PBA's report stated that there are good train and bus routes around GB10/GB11, in reality, buses are only once every hour in Mayford and whilst trains from Worplesdon are infrequent, and are only accessible down a country road. Furthermore the PBA report used estimates from Google as to the travel times between Mayford and Woking and did not consider the already high volumes of traffic, particularly in morning and evening rush hour, meaning that travel time can be over 4 times as long (30 mins rather than the 7 estimated).

In addition, please consider the impact on the infrastructure of the area. Access towards Mayford/Woking is restricted to 2 single file bridges over the railway line, with both Saunders Lane and Hook Hill Land being small quiet country lanes. An addition of 171 dwellings on GB10 alone will result at least in over double the current traffic that uses these roads and will lead to long queues at the traffic lights that go over the railway bridges. Hook Heath and Mayford as residential areas will become shortcuts through to St John's and North Woking. Egley Road is particularly congested in the morning and evening rush hours and is unlikely to cope with the additional traffic not only associated with the housing, but also the school and retail park etc.

Site Reference: GB7

I strongly object to the proposal to increase the number of Travellers' pitches on this land.

Ten Acre Farm is adjacent to Smarts Heath Common, which is an SSSI. An increase in the present Traveller site would threaten wildlife because of increased residency, an increase in domestic animal proximity, development, noise, pollution and traffic.

Furthermore your Core Strategy is misleading – it outlines the need for 19 pitches for 'gypsies, travellers *and travelling show-people*' for 2012-2027, however your draft also identifies 3 additional pitches, bringing the total to 22. Your document then goes on to note that these pitches *do not* include those needed for travelling show-people.

The final report issued by PBA specifically states that only if the Council is unable to deliver urban sites within the next 5 years or to 2027 should Green Belt be considered for such uses. Thus your report does not appear to take specialist advice from both external consultants and the National Planning Policy.

Lastly I note that in previous years, successive Planning Inspectors have refused applications on this site because they reduce the openness of a Green Belt area, which indicates the importance of the land as defined under law as Green Belt.

Please reconsider your plans. What is currently proposed will have a devastating impact on Mayford and Hook Heath as uniquely characterised areas of the Woking Borough.

I note that I wish to be notified at the above 'care of' address of the subsequent relevant stages of the Site Allocations DPD process.

Yours sincerely,

Serguei Mouratov