

DPD consultation - letter of objection

Sent: 29 July 2015 18:01

To: Planning Policy

Pointers Lodge
Hook Heath Road
Woking
Surrey
GU22 0DT

29 July 2015

Dear Sirs,

Re: Woking 2027 DPD Consultation and in particular to site references:

GB10 (Land to the north east of Saunders Lane, between Saunders Lane and Hook Hill Lane, Mayford GU22 0NN)

GB11 (Land to the north west of Saunders Lane, Mayford, GU22 0NN)

GB14 (Land adjacent to Hook Hill Lane, Hook Heath, GU22 0PS)

I am writing as a resident of Hook Heath to register my objection to the removal of areas GB10, GB11 and GB14 from the Green Belt and to proposals to build houses on parcels GB10 and GB11 post 2027.

My reasons for objecting are:

Lack of demonstration of exceptional circumstances for 1200 houses

According to national planning policy, land should only be released from the green belt in exceptional circumstances. While the Woking Core Strategy required WBC to deliver 550 new homes per annum between 2022 and 2027, there was absolutely no suggestion at that time that additional land should be released for the period beyond 2027. However, the Site Allocations DPD has proposed the release of green belt land to provide for, among other uses, the development of an additional 1200 homes, significantly beyond what is needed to meet the Core Strategy requirement for 550 homes. WBC has failed to demonstrate any exceptional need for 1200 houses, or indeed any other number, in the green belt around Woking beyond 2027.

Lack of appropriate infrastructure

The Green Belt Review deems development on GB10 and GB11 to be appropriate given the ease of access to Woking town centre. However, the report states that estimated travel times were based on Google maps travel times; surely this is a wholly inappropriate source to justify the release of land from the green belt. Mayford residents know to their cost that at peak hours travel over the short distance from their homes to the centre of Woking can take in excess of 30 minutes, a situation that will only be exacerbated by the development of the proposed school, retail park and additional housing estates on Egley Road. In addition the road network around Mayford itself is insufficient to support an increase in traffic. The single lane bridges on Smarts Heath Road and Hook Hill Lane will become bottlenecks. A professional transport infrastructure assessment is essential to demonstrate consideration of the impact of proposed developments in Woking; Google maps travel times are completely unreliable for this purpose. The report also makes reference to the suitability of GB10 and GB11 for development on the basis of their proximity to a 'Local Centre'. However, with the exception of a small post office and barbers, there is a clear lack of supporting infrastructure such as shops or medical facilities. Residents who choose to live on any major developments in the area will have to own a vehicle, thus adding to local traffic congestion, or accept isolation.

Increase in urban sprawl

A major purpose of the green belt is to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another by maintaining the open spaces between them. However, the current proposals for development of the land to be released from the green belt could only result in the erosion of the gap between Mayford and Hook Heath.

Yours faithfully

