

111 Westfield Road  
Mayford  
GU22 9QR

23 July 2015

Woking Borough Council  
Planning Policy Dept

Dear Sirs,

### **Comments on Woking 2027 DPD Consultation**

I have been a resident of Mayford for 33 years and have these comments on the Woking 2027 planning proposals.

#### **General Comments On The Mayford Area (Site References GB7, GB8, GB9, GB10, GB11).**

I strongly object to any infrastructure on Green Belt Land being planned in Mayford.

**ACTUAL HOUSING NEED.** National Planning Policy has already declared that planning should be local, therefore there should be no government imposed additions to the local housing requirement. This is especially so when all main government parties have declared their intention to revitalise the North of England and thus reduce or diminish pressure on expansion in the South East. Thus Woking can decide on its own needs for housing and in view of pressure on local land resources this must only be for a few start up and local service industry employees. The amount of housing suggested for Mayford goes against these policies, and it can only be achieved by violating Green Belt land.

**GREEN BELT IS JUST THAT.** National Policy also states that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in "exceptional circumstances" – this has not been proved by Woking Council, especially as Policy clearly states that "housing need – including for Traveller sites – does not justify the harm done to the Green Belt by inappropriate development."

Woking Council openly states that it considers land available for development (for example owned by the Council or a Developer) as more "viable" for removal from the Green Belt – the ownership status of land has no bearing on whether it should be Green Belt or not.

#### **Site References GB8, GB9, GB10, GB11**

**VILLAGE STATUS.** Mayford is in a rural area and the whole area around the village would need extensive changes to accommodate the number of houses proposed. This negates it being a village and it may as well be re-designated South Woking suburb, despoiling its village status for the last 900 years at least. The concept of a village community where many people know each other, help each other and generally interact together on many levels, will be destroyed. It will be like a town.

**COSTS OF REQUIRED INFRASTRUCTURE CHANGES.** The local road network is rural with single or 1.5 track roads in many places eg Saunders Lane, Hook Hill lane. All would need widening (and straightening in the case of Hook Hill lane) to accommodate increased traffic and safe pedestrian and cycling access.

All railway crossings in the area are singled and would need bridge reconstruction and widening, despite several bridges already being rebuilt and hardened by Network Rail and the County Council in recent years, (Prey Heath, Smarts Heath Road and Hook Hill Lane).

Other bottlenecks would also need to be cleared, including the railway tunnel at Blackhorse Road and Kemishford Bridge. Egley road would need dualling between the Bird in Hand and Turnoak roundabouts at least.

None of this would otherwise be required. The cost to Borough and County Councils and the arguments with (and costs to) Network Rail over bridge improvements would outweigh any possible overall benefit. As a local tax payer I do not wish to contribute to these unnecessary costs, especially with the currently dire state of the councils' finances.

**TRAFFIC OVERLOAD.** There are already existing new developments (eg Moor Lane) that once completed will exacerbate an already overloaded road system. At peak times traffic already backs up from Woking to the Bird in Hand roundabout making journey times into Woking in excess of 30 minutes, Thus makes a nonsense of the stated 7 minute access time and throws into doubt the validity of the arguments in the documents.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT.** Local public transport barely serves the existing community and is not located near enough to these sites to be of any value. Extensive changes would be needed. Worplesdon station is already full for car parking and would need expansion and services improved to meet the demand of extra housing. Already, small timetable changes between Brookwood and Worplesdon have resulted in considerable changes to traffic patterns at the stations. Commuters from the area trying to beat the overcrowding at Woking station will flock to Worplesdon.

**LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS.** Mayford, typical of a rural village, has only a post office as a general amenity as well as a hairdresser only. Extensive local shops would be needed to accommodate extra housing including medical and all other local services. These would need to be mandated if any development occurs in Mayford on the scale implied.

**LOCAL HEATHLAND.** Planning policy requires a 400m buffer zone between declared heathland and housing developments. This has not been achieved in the above areas. The simple tracks across Prey Heath forming a short cut to the station will be overloaded by pedestrians and cyclists from the proposed housing and Hoe Valley local school. This is delicate wetland also used for controlled cattle grazing and wholly unacceptable as a high use route.

#### **Site Reference GB7**

The needs of travellers would simply not be met by expanding this site which has already been rejected by professional advisors. The site should be rejected for travellers or any other infrastructure purpose.

In summary there is doubt over the actual need for housing on the scale implied for 2027 and beyond and in any case it is wholly inappropriate to even consider violating Green Belt land for the purpose.

**MAYFORD VILLAGE SOCIETY VIEWS.** I also support the views of Mayford Village Society and those of the Hook Hill Society in rejecting these plans.

Yours sincerely,



Mr JVW Myall