

FW: Objections re Pyrford (Upshot Lane) Helen O'Donovan

Jeni Jackson

Sent: 28 July 2015 11:59

To: Planning Policy

Jeni Jackson BSc (Hons) MRTPI | Head of Planning Services |

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From: M O'DONOVAN

Sent: 26 July 2015 23:38

To: Jeni Jackson

Subject: Objections re Pyrford (Upshot Lane) Helen O'Donovan

Dear Ms Jackson,

Re: Objections to each of the two proposals to develop fields either side of Upshot

Lane, Pyrford, Woking

Helen O'Donovan, Kingswood, Aviary Road, Pyrford, Woking Surrey GU22 8TH

Please accept this email as my objections to the proposals to build on two fields either side of Upshot Lane in Pyrford, Woking. My husband will write separately.

I have lived in Pyrford for over 15 years. I have 2 children under 12 and my parents have moved to Pyrford during the last year so that I can provide support to them as they grow older. I therefore have lived in the area a long time and fully anticipate continuing to live in Pyrford into my own retirement in 20+ years time. I therefore make these submissions in the knowledge that the 2027-2040 time frame will personally affect me and my children.

The aspects which attracted me to the area when I moved here in 1999 were the village feel, the semi-rural aspect and the trees. I have enjoyed taking walks from the houses in which I have lived in the area, particularly along Sandy Lane (which borders one of the fields under threat), the site of the old Orthopaedic Hospital and Aviary Road where I have lived for the last 3 years. Having lived in Pyrford for a long time I can vouch for the strong sense of community and in turn all the strong views I have personally heard from local residents who have been wholeheartedly against the proposals to develop the fields alongside Upshot Lane.

I would like Woking Council to give careful consideration to the views of their constituents, including my views, when they are exercising their duties. These elected duties carry heavy responsibility to balance the need for housing (which with young children I fully recognise and have taking into account when reaching my own views) with the importance of not taking steps which would irrevocably damage the landscape, use and enjoyment of this area on a daily basis for both those who live here and those who visit/travel through it.

In the past, I have read books on the history of the development of the Woking area. Some developments have clearly been out of keeping and architecturally damaging - the tall modern building in West Byfleet - Sheer House - being just one example. At the time of that development the Councillors undoubtedly thought they were acting appropriately, but time has demonstrated that the way we build and significantly the locations upon which we build upon have longstanding influences upon the way we live, enjoy the area and importantly respect the land which we are short term caretakers of.

My main objections/comments can be summarised as follows:

1. Topography/slope of the land/views from neighbouring sides of the proposed development.

The field to the south of Upshot Lane is on the crest of the hill and therefore certainly on the Pyrford Escarpment to the North Downs. Any development would be capable of being viewed both from Pyrford Common Road which leads down to Ripley but also from various locations a great distance to the South. However, I have equally strong views about the first field which was submitted for development "the 223 field" because as you walk or drive either direction along Pyrford Common Road you view the whole of the "223 field" as the land is sloped. This means that any development has a much greater impact than other alternative locations for development which are flatter and more shielded from view. Either of the fields cannot credibly be described as shielded by hedgerow and I request that the councillors view the site for themselves from all directions - by car and by foot as well as in all four seasons. Development on either of these fields would be irrevocably detrimental to a unique and beautiful part of the countryside. The slope of the "200 field" is lowest bordering the back gardens of Aviary Road (notably a road in a conservation area). Therefore, a development on that field would have a greater and more detrimental outlook from the houses on Aviary Road as well as in respect of all those who would walk along Sandy Lane or drive/walk along the B367 towards/from Ripley. As this is due to the slope of the land, landscaping would not be the answer, as rather than viewing the side of houses on one level, one would see the side of several rows of houses.

2. Green Belt Review recommendations.

The "200 field" was not recommended by the council's own planning consultants (PBA) as recently as 2014, as part of the Green Belt Review. Regrettably, it appears to me that the owners of the "223 field" have made a last minute submission to add the "200 field" to the overall development proposal perhaps in the misconceived hope that if they ask for more then they will get approval of "some" of the "223 field". However, for the reasons set out above, development of either of the fields would be detrimental and there are other locations which do not have either of those justifications against development which I have commented upon below. The approach of adding the second field has in fact increased my resolve to actively express my firmly held view to object to the development of either of these two fields.

3. Access to transport/facilities.

The close location of the Coop shops has been given as a reason why these two fields are suited for development of 423 houses. If you analyse who the developers would potentially market 223/200 or even 423 houses to it is certain that access to work and access to larger scale shops (West Byfleet /Brooklands) would in fact have greater significance rather than the ability to walk to the Coop group of shops. The greater proportion of residents of any new development would need to work and hence need to travel to work. If they worked in the Guildford or Kingston area for instance then they would probably want to drive through Ripley village due to the access to the A3. This route is single lane in several locations (the bridge, the Papercourt route and the entry to Ripley High Street) and would not be able to safely cope with the massive increase in car usage. The vast majority (say 95%) of those who would plan to travel by train would need to drive to the train station. 15 years ago about half of the West Byfleet station car park was utilised - now it is all, despite the trend for greater use of part-time home working patterns. There is no other land that could be used for car parking for West Byfleet station. Hence, houses would be built and sold to people under the misapprehension that there would be a viable means to commute in a

reasonable period of time to their workplaces. The service into London already is over prescribed with very few people embarking at Woking train station getting a seat. The long distance of the Woking train station car park to the platforms cancels out the slightly shorter train journey from Woking to Waterloo, so to those who are familiar with commuting, travelling from Woking is not necessarily an attractive option. This means that the better alternative sites for development are those that realistically offer the ability to walk to the station. Buses are not a viable option for most commuters because with most families having two working parents childcare prohibits the vagaries and extra time associated with bus travel.

4. Impact upon Coldharbour Road/Engliff Lane.

Even in 2015, at peak times, Coldharbour Road simply does not cope with the traffic to local amenities. A plan to put 423/223 or even 200 or less houses in this part of Pyrford village is illogical given the other more suitable locations in the area.

Alternatives

There is an over abundance of golf courses in the Pyrford area: Hoebridge, Pyrford, West Byfleet, New Zealand, Traditions and Wisley. Are so many golf courses really warranted and sustainable, particularly when considering long term housing needs? These golf courses service a relatively small proportion of the community; they are not always located on flood plain and sometimes have very good access to train stations, wider access roads, and are located on flatter land which would therefore have a lesser visual impact if partly built on. There are also locations on the Old Woking Road which are flatter, generally more shielded and have better access roads. Foremost, smaller/infill sites should be utilised for housing. Sites such as Sheer House should be replaced with more suited/attractive developments first.

To summarise, a green belt aspect that is enjoyed by all who travel through and live in or around Pyrford should have greater weight than the prospect of reducing the size of just one golf course and/or utilising a flat location which is closer to infrastructure and already more shielded thus having less visual impact and less impact upon the roads.

Looking at the bigger and more long term picture preserving the community/village feel with trees/views of fields is much more important to me and my children. To develop either of the two fields by Upshot Lane would be a planning and architectural mistake.

I have very much tried to be objective and balanced in both forming and presenting the reasons for my strongly held views. My objective in submitting these objections is to ensure that neither of these fields along side Upshot Lane are built upon. I trust that the council give this email and the community's views careful consideration when exercising their responsibilities.

King regards

Helen O'Donovan

Kingswood, Aviary Road, Pyrford, Woking, Surrey GU22 8TH

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