

Highlands
Cedar Road
Woking
GU22 0JJ

28 July 2015

Dear Sirs,

Re: Woking 2027 DPD Consultation

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 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 after 2027. My reasons for objecting are as follows.

The separation of Hook Heath from Mayford, and of Mayford from Woking, by open spaces and undeveloped land, is a key part of their character. Allowing the open space to be encroached on and the separation to be eroded would seriously adversely impact the character of Hook Heath and Mayford. To allow these areas to be developed would simply create additional urban sprawl, to the detriment of the areas concerned. Moreover, the proposed densities, particularly in the Saunders Lane area, are excessive and out of keeping with the localities.

Far from proposing encroachment into the Green Belt, the Council should be resisting additional housing on Green Belt land beyond that identified by the present Woking Core Strategy. The Council should be pro-actively seeking to preserve the Green Belt, not gratuitously looking to find reasons for an incursion into it years before any need can be demonstrated, at a time when the Council cannot have the information to know whether or not the exceptional circumstances required for the release of Green Belt land will exist: they certainly do not exist at present.

Woking Core Strategy policy CS24 requires that all development proposals must provide a positive benefit in terms of landscape and townscape character and local distinctiveness and must have regard to landscape character areas. The proposals for an additional 1200 houses, when the Woking Core Strategy identifies a need for only 550 units by 2027, clearly does not satisfy that test.

Whatever crystal ball anyone thinks they may have, the Council cannot realistically look forward beyond 2027 and make policy decisions now, based on views of the situation twelve years and more hence, which will be of immediate detriment to the locality. A decision to change Green Belt policy based on a guess (and beyond 2027, it can only be guesswork) now as to the situation beyond 2027 seems to be little more than an ill-founded attempt to sidestep the national planning policy

requirement to identify exceptional circumstances which justify an incursion into the Green Belt and the Council's own strategy in policy CS24 requiring development proposals to conserve and secure a positive benefit in terms of landscape and townscape character. Far from securing benefits, development in the Green Belt areas will not be supported by local facilities (which do not exist in the area) and a strain would be placed on existing transport systems caused by the increase in traffic which would arise as a result of residents needing to access facilities elsewhere.

My particular interest is that I am a resident of Hook Heath, but in any event I consider that the removal of these areas from the Green Belt would be misconceived and detrimental to the character of Woking as a whole.

Yours faithfully

G N Prentice

To: Planning Policy Team
Woking Borough Council
Civic Offices
Gloucester Square,
Woking
GU21 6YL