

B.A Rowlands (Resident & Owner)

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Woking Surrey

GU22 0NF

Email: [REDACTED]

30th July 2015

For the attention of Jeni Jackson,
Head of Planning & Planning Policy Team
Woking Borough Council
Woking, Surrey
GU21 6YL

Subject: Woking 2027 DPD Consultation

I am writing to lodge my OBJECTION to removing land adjacent to Egley Road GB8 (WGB020a of parcel 20) from Green Belt. My understanding is that Woking Borough Council has a planning application 'PLAN/2015/0703' to build a school and leisure facilities under special circumstances and a need but keep the land in Green Belt. The proposed leisure facilities do not appear to be special circumstances or a need but more of a commercial enterprise hung on the back of the school. In addition there is an existing Leisure Centre about one and a half miles away so there is hardly a need for another leisure centre so close. The proposed running track, as I understand, is to replace the current track at Sheerwater where it is proposed to build housing. There is already a high density of housing in this area and I would have thought the residents would benefit from keeping this green open area which also includes a children's play park. Also have Woking Council considered the open area close to Goldsworth Park Lake? There are already sports pitches here and plenty of parking in situ.

I do not believe that there are sufficient pupils to support the school proposed in this particular area south of Woking and would need to be supported by pupils from further afield. This can be supported by a survey carried out by Surrey County Council in 2014 where it stated that the need for an extra school in Woking was not urgent at this time. Therefore, with respect to National Policy which states that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in "exceptional circumstances" has not been established by Woking Council.

This proposed development goes against government policy in as much as the government directive to local councils is that the green belt should be conserved. The purpose of the Green Belt is defined by National Planning Policy which is in place to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas, prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another and to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. This proposal, along with others, such as GB9 (Woking Garden Centre, Egley Road), GB10 (Land to the north east of Saunders Lane, between Saunders Lane and Hook Hill Lane) and GB11 (Land to the north west of Saunders Lane), to which I also object, goes against the National Green Belt Planning Policy and current government policy per say.

The increase in Traffic, Pollution, Flooding, Noise, Crime, Loss of Green fields and Escarpment Feature, are more reasons why it should remain in Green Belt and development should not go ahead. The road network in the vicinity is poor, together with lack of pedestrian footpaths and the impact from these proposals would make it even worse and rendering the recommendations of removing the area from Green Belt unsustainable.

Furthermore the area currently supports an abundance of wild life including bats, which are protected species, and buzzards. The removal the area from Green Belt and the development of the area with the inclusion of floodlights and evening recreational facilities will have a detrimental impact on the wild life especially to the bats. There will also be increased risk to wildlife in our protected heaths (Smarts Heath and Prey Heath) due to proximity of the proposed developments.

I would also draw your attention to a quote by Mr Ray Morgan, Woking Council Chief Executive, in an article in the Surrey Advertiser, 20th March 2015, 'Do people really want every field we've got built on or would they rather the intensification of the town centre' (sic). His sentiment with respect to removal and development of Green Belt I am sure is supported by a considerable number of people in Woking especially as Woking is one of the smallest boroughs in Surrey with proportionally the least amount of Green Belt.

No evidence has been produced to demonstrate Woking Council has exhausted Brownfield sites for development in its plan.

I object strongly for the removal of Green Belt not just for Egley Road GB8 which is not an extreme case or even a special case, and to GB7 (Ten Acre Farm, Smarts Heath Road), GB9 (Woking Garden Centre, Egley Road), GB10 (Land to the north east of Saunders Lane, between Saunders Lane and Hook Hill Lane) and GB11 (Land to the north west of Saunders Lane).

Please reconsider your plans as otherwise if it goes ahead it will have a devastating impact on Mayford Village itself and surrounding areas.

B A Rowlands