

Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)

Regulation 18 consultation questionnaire

18 June 2015 – 31 July 2015



How to respond to this Consultation

The Site Allocations DPD public consultation documents are available on the Woking2027 website (see www.woking2027.info), local libraries and the Council's Civic Offices.

You can use this form to let us have your comments on the draft Site Allocations DPD. Additional copies of this questionnaire can also be downloaded from the website.

Alternatively, the Woking2027 website features an online version of this questionnaire and an interactive map of the proposed development sites, through which you can let us know your views.

The public consultation is open to **5pm on Friday 31 July 2015**. Unfortunately we cannot accept responses received after 5pm on the closing date.

Data Protection: Please be aware that representations received by the Council will be made publicly available. If you have any questions about completing this form please contact the Planning Policy team by email planning.policy@woking.gov.uk or on **01483 743871**.

Your details

Please provide your contact details below. We are unable to accept anonymous or confidential responses.

Title: Miss

First name - Jill

Surname - Willis

Position (if applicable) (also on behalf of Mr. Leslie Willis, joint owner)

Organisation (if applicable) _____

House name and/or number - 14

Street -Wakehurst Path

Locality -Sheerwater

Town - Woking

County- Surrey

Post code – GU21 5NT

Email address [REDACTED]

Telephone [REDACTED] mobile [REDACTED]

Please select your status or that of any party you are representing:

- Resident of Woking Borough **Yes**
 - Someone who works in Woking Borough
 - Someone who visits Woking Borough
 - Someone representing a group or organisation

 - Owner of land in Woking Borough
 - Planning / land agent
 - Developer
 - Other (please specify)
-

If you are an agent representing another party, please state who:
Also representing Mr. Leslie Willis, joint owner and resident of 14 Wakehurst Path

Please note that everyone responding to this consultation will be notified of future Woking Borough planning policy consultations. If you would prefer not to be contacted in the future, please tick

Woking Citizens' Panel

Woking Citizens' Panel is comprised of a group of residents from across Woking from all backgrounds, ages and ethnicities. They are contacted a number of a times each year, via email or post, and asked to provide their views on all kinds of issues that affect local people.

Would you like to join the Woking Citizens' Panel?

Yes

Please provide your comments using the questions on the following two pages and return the whole questionnaire – including any additional comments pages – by 5pm, Friday 31 July 2015:

- By email to: planning.policy@woking.gov.uk
- By post to: **Planning Policy, Woking Borough Council, Civic Offices, Gloucester Square, Woking, Surrey, GU21 6YL**

Please note that responses will not be individually acknowledged.

Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Your views

Please complete a separate copy of pages 3 and 4 of this questionnaire for each individual site or section that you wish to comment on.

Which consultation document does your comment concern? Please tick one option only:

Site Allocations DPD Sustainability Appraisal Report Habitat Regulations Assessment
or General comment (not specific to any one of the consultation documents) Suggest a new site

Which site or section of the document does your comment concern? (if applicable)

Please state all that apply:

Site reference: (please select and note number) UA32

Section title **Land within Sheerwater Priority Place, Albert Drive, Woking, GU21 5RE**

Page number 158 - 164

Paragraph number _____

Are you? Supporting Objecting A combination of these Neutral

Your comment

I agree with the broad proposals to regenerate Sheerwater, but I do not agree with increasing the size of the proposed development site beyond that identified in Woking's 2027 Core Strategy, that is, the flats around Devonshire Avenue and Dartmouth Avenue. The 2027 area has been identified as an area with housing stock that does not meet current needs and is ranked as a deprived area. However, increasing this development site to that proposed in the DPD is contrary to Woking Council's stated aims and objectives and I do not agree with the DPD proposals.

Including Sheerwater Recreation Ground, the football pitch used by Sheerwater Football Club and the Athletics Track in the DPD development site fails to meet Woking Council's stated planning objectives in 2027 core strategy and in the DPD text (in quotes) on the following points:

- 1) "Development proposals should promote a sense of place" – Sheerwater estate was built in the 1950s by London County Council and won an award for its design with open space, grass verges, trees and recreation space for all ages. It was unique in that it was planned with recreation space, allotments, schools, local shops and industry. There are restrictive covenants in the 1961 sale of the Recreation Ground to Woking Council which aim to keep Recreation Ground as public open space. To develop on the Recreation Ground would go against this and destroy the sense of place, not promote it.
- 2) DPD text states "any loss of open space should be justified, athletics track to be retained, improve club facilities for Sheerwater football Club" I agree with the text but if these are the aims, the Recreation Ground should remain designed as public open space and not be included in land allocated for development for housing.
- 3) "Surface water flooding should be mitigated" – the Recreation Ground, Football pitch and the land along the Basingstoke Canal are in a zone 2 flood zone according to the Environment Agency. In the winter the land is waterlogged. There were land drains installed when the estate was built (I have two in my garden). The Rive Ditch which is culverted and I understand the water pumped to the water treatment works at Weybridge, as the water from the Rive Ditch is too contaminated with iron ore to pump directly into a water source. If this land is built on, it will need to be drained and the clay lined Basingstoke canal protected from the drainage or it will leak. Developing the Recreation

Ground will mean a significant rise in the amount of water that needs to be pumped away and will significantly increase the risk of flooding. In heavy rain the roads around already flood. Developing on the Recreation Ground will increase the risk of flooding, not mitigate it. Developing the area outlined in the 2027 Core Strategy will already require increased infrastructure and drainage as the development will be to a greater density with less open land. It is possible to achieve the stated objectives without developing on the Recreation Ground and compounding the problem and further increasing the risk of flooding.

- 4) “Reduce vulnerability to flooding and harm to public well being, economy and environment, improve accessibility to all services and facilities, improve health and well being”: – developing on the Recreation Ground is contrary to these aims. Taking away the open space, football pitch and athletics track which are used by local residents, clubs and clubs for disabled, will reduce accessibility to facilities for the residents of Sheerwater and will reduce the opportunities for activities which contribute to the health and well being of the residents. The Recreation Ground and land along the Basingstoke Canal have a positive effect on the environment and the land adjacent to the Canal supports a wide range of wildlife including bats, newts, stag beetles and birds. Developing this land will harm the environment and is in direct opposition to the stated planning policy.
- 5) “Site must be viable for development”: – Development of the Recreation Ground includes burying or removing the high voltage power cables and pylons. This is extremely expensive and is only done in places like a National Park to protect a sensitive environment, or in high value areas such as London where the cost of buying land for pylons makes burying cables an economical alternative if considered over a period of around 60 years. To bury existing cables requires a number of trenches as only three cables can be buried per trench, with wayleaves for access, and large pylons with special equipment at either end where the cables go back to overground. Estimates of the cost of burying the cables plus removal of the pylons and addition of the two new pylons with specialist equipment, appear to be uneconomic for development for housing. If the proposal is to run the underground cables to the sub station in West Byfleet it is even more expensive and disruptive. Burying the cables next to the Canal in waterlogged ground has huge problems. If buried elsewhere such as under a road, access will be required at some point for maintenance with road closures and disruption. There is no evidence that this is practical or economic. With the addition of the flooding problems, the Recreation Ground is not a site viable for development.
- 6) “All reasonable alternatives have been considered”. There is no evidence that any reasonable alternatives have been considered to development of the Recreation Ground. Development of the land outlined in the 2027 Core Strategy and occupied mainly by the flats can deliver the objectives of better quality family housing at a higher density with an increase in homes without developing on the Recreation Ground.

Total site area

With regard to the total site area identified in the DPD, this will cause problems with traffic congestion and infrastructure.

There are only two road access points into Sheerwater via Maybury road and Sheerwater Road. These are already congested and at peak times the traffic is at a standstill on these roads with long queues. Increasing the density of development and the amount of traffic that will go with it, will add to the congestion. This will harm the environment, reduce the demand for the offices and business units in Albert Drive and harm the economy, in direct opposition to the stated planning objectives. Any development will add to the problem but keeping the development to the area that has been identified in 2027 as needing improvement will at least limit the problem to some degree.

The roads already flood in heavy rain, especially Blackmore Crescent around the Recreation Ground. A

larger development will increase the vulnerability to flooding. The existing infrastructure can not cope with a large development and a larger development is not necessary in order to meet the stated objectives.

The DPD objectives state that “a significant proportion of the site area contains poor quality and out dated housing stock that fails to meet the needs of the local community, which requires more family accommodation (two or more bedrooms)”. If applied to the smaller site identified in the 2027 Core Strategy, which consists mainly of flats, including over 200 one bed flats, this may be true. However it does not apply to the larger site identified in the DPD proposal.

The area around the flats consists mainly of two, three and four bed family homes, most of which are privately owned (around 85%) and are not in a poor state. Despite living in my home since 1964 and being a chartered Surveyor, I had a structural survey carried out by a RICS Building Surveyor in 2009 before I bought the house. This confirmed the house needed updating but was structurally sound. All 1950s built houses will require some modernisation, in most cases this has already been done. The houses are traditionally built brick and tile, structurally sound with good sized rooms and front and back gardens. They already meet the criteria identified by Woking Council and do not need to be included in the DPD development site.

Developing the area around Devonshire Avenue and Dartmouth Avenue as identified previously by Woking Council in their 2027 Core Strategy will meet the stated objectives. Restricting the site to the smaller 2027 area can deliver the density and type of housing required without loss of public open space and facilities and with a limited and manageable effect on the environment and infrastructure.

Proposed modifications – please explain what changes you consider should be made, if any (for example, changes to the text, a site boundary, etc.)

The site boundary should be the smaller area identified in the 2027 Core strategy as needing improvement, consisting mainly of the flats and the area around Devonshire Avenue and Dartmouth Avenue. The larger area currently proposed in the DPD, consisting mainly of family homes, should be removed from the site.

The Recreation Ground, football pitch, athletics track and land along the Basingstoke Canal should be removed from the site and designed public open space/amenity land.

The text should be amended to include a statement that any proposed development of Sheerwater should be in keeping with the original design and planning of the estate, reflecting its architectural and historical heritage as a ‘garden estate’ planned with open spaces, gardens, recreation space and low density housing.

These comments are page ___5_ of ___6_ pages.

More comments?

If you would like to make additional comments about other proposed sites or sections of any of the consultation documents, please complete further copies of pages 3 and 4 of this questionnaire. Please ensure that these are firmly attached with the main questionnaire - including pages 1 and 2 providing your details - and return this by email or post to the Council (contact details on page 2).