

Woking 2027 DPD Consultation - site references GB10, GB11 and GB14

Jon Yendell [REDACTED]

Sent: 28 July 2015 10:07

To: Planning Policy

Dear Sirs,

As a resident of Hook Heath I write to object to the Council's proposal to remove the following sites from the Green Belt, with a view to releasing for housebuilding post-2027.

- **GB 10** – Land north of Saunders Lane, between Saunders Lane and Hook Hill Lane, Mayford GU22 0NN
- **GB 11** – Land to the north of Saunders Lane, Mayford, GU22 0NN
- **GB 14** – Land adjacent to Hook Hill Lane, Hook Heath, GU22 0PS

Whilst I am sympathetic to the council's need to look beyond established developed land in order to deliver the housing, employment and infrastructure needs for the future, I consider that the release of green belt land should be the absolute last resort and as a local resident to the three proposed sites above, I specifically object to the release of these particular sites for the following reasons;

Having read the Council's DPD, I consider that the Council has not followed the National Planning Policy core principle of releasing Green belt only in "exceptional circumstances".

Specifically;;

- Key to Green belt designation in the first place was the intent to prevent urban sprawl and coalescence of settlements. Release of these sites and building on the open land between Hook Heath and Mayford will directly coalesce the 2 settlements, so how can this be considered appropriate??
- The Council's core strategy requires the Council to identify sites in the Green Belt for 550 homes in the period 2022-2027. The Council has however taken it upon itself to identify sites for a further additional 1200 homes for the period from 2027-2040 against which GB10 and GB11 are proposed. Whilst it may have considered it prudent to look further ahead, the Council has in no way demonstrated an "exceptional need" for these 1200 additional houses to be sited in the Green Belt post 2027 and hence the exceptional circumstances rule clearly has not been satisfied. I believe the council should be looking to protect the important Green Belt rather than eroding it without evidence of need.
- The Council's un-consulted Green Belt Review, recommends these sites on the basis of their proximity to a local centre, yet Mayford Village only has a Post Office, Village Barbers and a Public House - this is hardly constitutes a sustainable local centre!!
- The Council's Core Strategy – policy CS24 requires all development to "provide a benefit in terms of landscape and townscape character" and looks to conserve and where possible enhance existing character, particularly key landscape features such as "escarpments", amongst others. These 3 sites together comprise "Escarpments and Rising Ground of landscape importance" in your Councils' previous Local Plan designations and so should surely be looked to be protected by the Council??
- Local road infrastructure is already stretched at peak times, in particular Egley Road and its junction with the Mayford Roundabout. The Council's Green Belt Review claims that these sites are sustainable in terms of road infrastructure determined purely on Google travel times, which are wholly unreflective of real time rush hour traffic. Furthermore Hook Hill Lane and Holly Bank Road are already a "rat-run" in rush hour, which will only intensify should these proposals be forthcoming.
- The proposed 30 dwellings per hectare density proposed for GB10 and GB11 is wholly inappropriate compared to an average density of 5.5 in Hook Heath and even lower density in the nearby Fishers Hill Conservation Zone.

- The proposal to remove GB 14 green belt designation to create green infrastructure is simply absurd as there will be no change of use. How can the Council justify any “exceptional circumstance” for this land to be removed from the green belt??

In conclusion, I see no justification for the Council’s proposed release of these sites from the Green Belt and are disappointed that the Council believes that it can in any way satisfy National Policy that “Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances”.

I trust that due consideration will be given to these proposals taking account of this public consultation process and that upon reflection the Council will revert to its previous position of looking to protect the Hook Heath Escarpment to ensure that the local landscape character is protected for generations to come.

Yours Sincerely

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