

West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum
Sharnberry, Maitland Close, West Byfleet, Surrey, KT14 6RF.
Penny@wbnf.org and Pauline@wbnf.org

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

30th July 2015

Dear Sirs,
On behalf of the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum [WBNF]
Re: Site Allocation Plan Document with regard to West Byfleet.

Removal of Green Belt land is a serious matter for all our residents. Once removed it cannot be replaced. A very large area of our green belt is to be removed under the proposals. Whilst we understand that we must meet future needs for housing it is of the upmost importance that any new development is built in an appropriate area and that the supporting infrastructure is in place before any development proceeds so as not to adversely affect the lives of residents.

1. Specific Site Commentary:

1.1. Broadoaks proposed release 2015

We would not object in principle to the removal of this land from green belt as the land has already been released for offices. We would support the release of this land to help meet our housing needs.

In principle we also support the Octagon proposals for 150 homes, some affordable. From our questionnaires feedback, 94% of our residents would be happy with some form of development on this site, which has been left unused for over fifteen years. However the possible inclusion of a private secondary school for up to 900 pupils and perhaps 150 staff introduces a new dimension with major infrastructure and safety issues as regards the Parvis Road /A245.

It is believed that no planning application has so far been presented to WBC for this site and our understanding of what is proposed has come from a public consultation afternoon arranged by Octagon and a meeting between Octagon and the joint chairs of the WBNF and others.

1.2. West Hall proposed release 2022

We object to this land been removed from the green belt.

Although at present residents do not have access to this land, the trees and space act as important buffers against the noise of the M25 and the land gives a general countryside feel to our community. From the Dodds Lane track the open fields of West Hall run alongside the ancient waterway of the River Wey Navigation, which is an important and much used asset to our community. The Dodds Lane track area and the towpath is the only green open space with public access in this part of the West Byfleet/Pyrford neighbourhood.

The proposal to build 592 homes on the West Hall land will put a massive strain on the infrastructure and will greatly change the character of our community.

Using WBC statistics of 1 household being 2.38 people and taking into account the proposed total homes in Broadoaks and West Hall (742) this is a possible increase of 1765 people which is just under one third of our present community of circa 6000 residents.

2. Major Concerns

2.1. Parvis Road /A245 and the proposed developments at Broadoaks and West Hall should be considered together.

For both these developments the major concern is the Parvis Road /A245. This is a busy much used road.

One of our residents was involved in research and the issues of an authoritative report into the traffic problems along this road in 1999 which was referred to Government offices. The report should be in the records held by the WBC. It is of considerable relevance to the traffic impact of the current proposals and should be made available.

This resident reported at the Forum's public meeting that at that time the report showed that the Parvis Road/ A245 was deemed to be overloaded. [Woking Borough Council's local plan for 1999 states that it is *'difficult to absorb further development without aggravation of this problem'*.]

In a 2002 Traffic Study the Head of Traffic management for Surrey County Council reported the A245 was *'over trafficked'* and *'burdensome to the local community'*. Both the proposed sites of West Hall and Broadoaks will have entrance and exits only onto the A245/ Parvis Road. The Transport Assessment, published June 2015 by Woking Borough Council, confirms that the flow of traffic along the Parvis Road/ A245 regularly exceeds the measure used for determining 'congestion'.

Our car ownership in Surrey is an average of 1.50 cars per household, so the two proposals could add well over an additional 1,100 cars using this road as well as the possibility of over 1000 pupils and staff entering and exiting the school each day. Therefore total extra movements could be, on a modest estimate, with each car exiting and entering once per day, 2,200 movements. Over a 12 hour day, this is 1 every 20 seconds.

Our concern is that the increase in traffic will cause safety issues with the proposed school, major hold ups along the Parvis Road, and that the increase in traffic movements will result in knock on effects on all adjoining roads and beyond, both in the WBC Borough and the adjoining Boroughs of Runnymede and Elmbridge.

2.2. Health Care.

The present Health Centre houses three Doctors Practices who look after 30,000 patients from West Byfleet and the surrounding areas. We have been informed that the doctors are working to maximum capacity.

We already have access and parking problems for appointments and there is a lack of sufficient parking for patients who live in the wider Pyrford, Byfleet, New Haw, Wisley and Woodham communities and need to travel to the Health Centre. Our concern is that a large influx of new patients will overwhelm the existing facilities.

2.3. Schools

Our local infant and junior schools have been increased in size to meet a critical demand for school places for children living in the West Byfleet area. This expansion will allow sufficient places until, we understand, about 2021. The statistics are available from Surrey County Council. They do not allow for children who may be living at 'West Hall' or 'Broadoaks' in the period.

We do not have a state secondary school within the West Byfleet area and as far as we know none is currently planned. Page 45 of the Site Allocation report states that West Byfleet has a Secondary School and Community Centre. **Both these statements are incorrect.**

Our concern is where will the influx of children be expected to attend school?

2.4. Utilities.

To increase housing in any area to the extent proposed puts pressure on all our existing utilities. Of particular concern is water and sewage.

Will the present sewage plant at Wisley be adequate to meet the increased needs following the development of the Broadoaks and West Hall sites and other proposed schemes in the Borough such as Sheerwater?

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 West Byfleet has very little natural green space. It seems very unjust that the major part of the proposed new homes should be within our neighbourhood area and in so doing deprive us of a great deal of our green belt land.
- 3.2 No development in this area, including Byfleet and Pyrford, should be considered until the traffic congestion issues along the A245 have been addressed.
- 3.3 Could better use of the land at Broadoaks be made to provide more housing and address the shortage of affordable housing and small houses (not flats) for retired residents? This would lead to the release of existing larger homes for new families.
- 3.4 WBC to look again at the brown field land at the back of the West Byfleet Industrial Estate, part owned by WBC and part by The Byfleet United Charity. This land was tested about 4/5 years ago and was found to be contaminated. But ten/twelve years would have passed since then if WBC is looking for development in 2022.
- 3.5 West Byfleet is used by the wider community. Therefore before any developments are considered the extra strain on our health care, schools, transport, utilities etc. must be addressed.
- 3.6 The availability of a site should not be the prime reason for allocation but the ability of the infrastructure to sustain development should be determined before any suggestion of allocation is made.
- 3.7 **We are not objecting to the release of Broadoaks but we are objecting to the release of land at West Hall.**

4. Publicity and Public Consultation

Because of the importance of this consultation and the effect of the likely outcome on our community the local Forums and the Residents Association has had to deliver to each home leaflets to explain what is being proposed and arrange public meetings etc. at considerable cost.

We feel that many of our residents still do not even know or fully understand the implications of what is being proposed.

For the next round of consultations can WBC please post a letter to each of the households explaining what the conclusions are from this first round of consultation and representation?

Yours faithfully,

***Penny Hoskyn and Pauline Hedges on behalf of the WBNF committee
Joint chair WBNF***

Copies to:

Cllr Richard Wilson, Cllr Gary Elson, Cllr Graham Christie, Cllr Ashley Bowes, Cllr John Bond, Cllr Anne Roberts
Cllr Harry Briggs Jonathan Lord MP, Godfrey Chapples (chairman of the Residents Association and the Byfleet NF),
Martin Doyle chairman of the Pyrford NF. Surrey County Council Transport.