

Jonathan Lord MP,
Constituency Office,
Woking Conservatives,
Churchill House,
Chobham Road,
Woking
GU21 4AA

2nd August 2017

Dear Jonathan,

We met at our stand at the Pyrford Flower Show last month. At the time our Plan was with Woking Borough Council for approval, which it duly received. We have a referendum in the autumn.

Last weekend it was publicly announced that a developer has put forward a proposal to build a pub in West Byfleet Recreation Ground. This is in direct contravention of one of our Plan policies.

I have written to the developer, Marston's, about it and a copy of my letter to its Chief Executive Officer, is attached.

The residents of West Byfleet are very strong supporters of the recreation ground. It is well used by all ages. That is why we protected it as "Local Green Space" in our Plan.

Earlier in the year there was a public meeting in St. John's Church to discuss another development scheme in West Byfleet, the rebuilding of the Sheer House Complex. During the potential rebuilding there will be the loss of all the public car park spaces on the site. I moderated the questions at the meeting. When a suggestion was made to provide temporary car parking on the recreation ground there was uproar. Most residents were against even that, believing that "temporary" would become "permanent".

I am very disappointed that our local County Councillor Richard Wilson is in favour of the scheme. He has not discussed the matter with me or to my knowledge any of my other committee members or those of the Residents Association. If he had he would have learnt that a large majority of our residents and local organisations want to keep the recreation ground as it is.

West Byfleet is about to have a substantial population increase with new homes in the village centre, at Broadoaks Park and, with the potential release of Green Belt land, at West Hall. Many of these homes do not have gardens. Our recreation ground has never increased in size since it was gifted to us. It will be used even more when these homes are built.

What I find very odd is how a pub company based in the Midlands would even think of building in a recreation ground in an area it has no experience in. How did they find out about it? Why would Woking Borough Council employees encourage this development. The land is not on the market nor open to tender. Marston's must have been promised that they could have this land. Is this in accordance with Local Government rules?

The recreation ground is held in trust by Woking Borough Council for the recreational use of the people of West Byfleet. It was passed on to them to manage on this basis.

We do not want to have to escalate this further with other bodies such as the Charities Commission, Fields in Trust (previously the National Playing Fields Association), the relevant Minister etc...

Please can you look into this matter and give us your support to keep our recreation ground as it is for this and future generations.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wade Pollard'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Wade Pollard,
Chairman, West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum

Cc Councillor Graham Chrystie,