

# HERTFORDSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

*Researching and preserving historic gardens. Working with schools to improve and sustain their environment.*



Conservation & Planning, c/o Gardens, Ashridge, Berkhamsted, HP4 1NS

26 March 2021

**Re: Former Shredded Wheat factory, Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1RR**  
**Hybrid planning application comprising: Detailed Planning Application for 399 Private Rented Sector (PRS) dwellings and 153 dwellings (Class C3), 250 units of residential car accommodation for the elderly (Use Class C2) with associated communal facilities, 15,247m<sup>2</sup> of community and commercial hub (Use Classes E and F1) with associated cycling hub, car parking, access, landscaping, public art and other supporting infrastructure; and Outline Planning Application for up to 418 dwellings (Class C3) with all matters reserved except access.**

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust, of which HGT is a member.

In 2008 WHBC produced a Supplementary Planning Document for Broadwater Road to inform planning decisions coming forward, to ensure that key heritage assets and the character of the historic town were respected.

We are therefore disappointed that this application does not accord with some of the provisions in the SPD.

1. The SPD recognises the spirit of the garden city and requires that any development enhance the local environment, including at an appropriate scale. We consider that the proposed height of the blocks at 9/10 storeys is not an appropriate scale and is double the SPD's limit. This will harm the setting of the WGC town centre and the Conservation Area
2. The SPD also notes that the former Shredded Wheat silos (Listed by Historic England), are a main landmark on the skyline which should not be adversely affected by any new development. The nearby former Roche buildings are also Listed. The excessive height of the proposed blocks will severely harm the significance of these Listed structures., contrary to the SPD and the NPPF Chapter 16 which requires the conservation and **enhancement** of heritage assets, including their setting.
3. Unwin's Garden City Principles, reflected in de Soissons Welwyn Garden City, specified 12 dwellings per acre with adequate green space for healthy living. The proposed density here of 121 per acre is contrary to garden city principles and is above many urban housing developments elsewhere.
4. Garden City Principles require a mix of housing types and sizes, from detached houses, through cottages to modest 3-storey blocks as found at Knightsfield. The proposal of so many flats and so little green space per dwelling is contrary, and harmful, to the character of Welwyn Garden City.
5. Many of the traditional houses in the town will be adversely affected, not only by the looming bulk of these blocks, as demonstrated in the application at Appendix 10.3, but also by increased traffic densities.

Welwyn Garden City is the most visually coherent of our Garden Cities and an expression of the importance of providing a healthy, integrated way of living as realised by de Soissons. This application not only negates these ideas but will have a harmful effect of designated and undesignated heritage assets and the character of the town. The Gardens Trust and Hertfordshire Gardens Trust, therefore object to it.

Kate Harwood, Conservation & Planning, Hertfordshire Gardens Trust

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Registered Charity No. 1010093: Pie corner House, Bedmond, WD5 0SG: Email- [info@hertsgardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:info@hertsgardenstrust.org.uk)

[www.hertsgardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.hertsgardenstrust.org.uk)