

Dear Mr Kasmani,

Your council states on its website that the campus east site is suitable for "up to 280 new homes", yet this is an application for 313. Your council also states "We will ensure that any development is appropriate for its position within the Garden City". Looking at the guidelines for new developments in conservation zones, they state these must be sympathetic to an area's special architectural and historic qualities, including scale, design, materials and space between buildings. I believe this proposed development falls short on the following grounds;

- a. Scale - council policy is to restrict residential dwellings to a maximum of 5 stories. As becomes clear in the block A drawing, this proposal includes 6 story blocks. (I note this is not referred to elsewhere in the proposal, presumably to avoid drawing attention).
- b. design - Lack of Mansard roofs common throughout dwellings within the town centre, combined with windows not complying with the estate management design guide.
- c. space between buildings - 4/5 storey blocks just metres away from adjacent existing dwellings which both overlook and obstruct, creating issues around privacy and encroachment.

Bellway homes states in its leaflet "The Bellway aim is to build beautiful, expertly crafted houses which meet the needs of today and consider the demands of the future." This proposal does not live up to the current needs of the town in the following areas;

- d. Dwelling sizes - The Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update (2017) and the Welwyn Hatfield Technical OAN Paper (2019) provide evidence that the greatest need is for three bed properties. The proposed development shows a mere 4.5% as 3 bed. Indeed, one of the conclusions following the appeal for the Biopark development stated that there would remain "a need for further housing, including a large proportion of three and four bed units."
- e. Social housing - 0% social housing offered.
- f. Parking - 'affordable' homes will have 0.37 parking spaces per home. Completely unacceptable, particularly when viewing 2021 census for Handside and Sherrards showing 77% of homes have at least one vehicle despite living within easy reach of the railway station.

This proposal does not live up to the future needs of the town in particular in the following areas;

g. Education - where will the families of future residents send their children to school, and how will they get there? School numbers are hugely restricted by current demand and the ability or otherwise for existing schools to expand. I suggest an impact assessment is required prior to approval of this or any other proposal for this site.

h. EV charging points - Building regulations Part S stating the requirement for dwellings with a parking space, means this application is not in compliance with current building regulations and therefore cannot be approved as it is.

Historic England writes that negative change can have a real effect upon the way the community feels about their area, affecting confidence, reducing investment, and leading to a cycle of decline. When conservation areas become at risk, this can signify or contribute to an area's social or economic decline. I suggest this development would have a negative change on our area. For all the above points I object to the application in its current form.