

Campus Park East (Bellway Homes)
Application Reference: /6/2022/2801/MAJ

I am deeply concerned that development plans for a council-owned piece of land in the heart of WGC - high-profile and visible, within a conservation area - leased to Bellway Homes, does not live up to and fails to meet the criteria set by policy and the needs of the town.

The idea that the council would allow an application to go through with 0% Social Housing is shocking. Policy states that social housing allocation on this site should be 47 units, yet this application has none. On a site that the council owns and has leased to the developer, to not help a single person from the 3,000 on the waiting list is both disgraceful and against policy.

Any development should be inclusive and place social and affordable homes around the development so as not to create a divide or stigma not predominantly siting in one block.

Council policy states 62% of new development housing should be 3 and 4 bedrooms. This application has 4.6% 3 bed and 0% 4 bed, giving a shortfall of 182 family homes. In addition the site will have a density of 150 dwellings per hectare - far greater than any other site in the town centre. The local plan allocates a maximum of 290 homes, this application increases this by 8%.

Bellway is ignoring the council's policy town-wide policy of a maximum of 5 storeys. Proposing 6-storey blocks within this conservation area is wrong - the 5 storey height limit must remain. Blocks at the north end of the site rise to 4/5 storeys at the point where they meet neighbouring properties giving rise to privacy and encroachment issues. Where the site borders lower properties the height must be reduced to avoid this.

The totally unfeasible allocation of parking on the application is 0.58 per dwelling overall. Many homes have more than one car and, whilst I fully support reduction in car use, there is no provision for those whose work requires them to have a van. Once more inequity is shown to 'affordable' home owners as they will only have 0.37 parking space per home. Why assume those living in affordable homes have less requirement for a vehicle? Reducing car park spaces alone does not achieve sustainable transport use - cars will be left illegally parked elsewhere and cause congestion in neighbouring areas. There should be a cycle path to encourage sustainable vehicle use.

Where will new residents' children go to school? Schools cannot magically expand both physically and in terms of class numbers. Adequate schools provision must be made locally and which can be reached by sustainable transport, cycling and walking, before any development is approved.