

As a local resident to Campus East I would formally like to object to the planning application of 6/2022/2801/MAJ based on its failure to meet key planning policies and the needs of the town. The key pertinent points are listed below.

Height of the development: The council town wide policy that restricts heights of developments to 5 storeys is being ignored due to buildings of 6-storey being proposed and that is before you even consider that they fall within the conservation area.

Density of dwelling: By my calculations there is a density of 150 dwellings per hectare and is significantly more than any other site in the town and twice as much as the density planned for Broadwater Road at 75.

Mixture dwelling type: This application fails to meet the council policy states that 62% of new homes should be of 3 to 4 bedrooms. Looking at the plans it's a shortfall of 182 properties. Why can't this application be like the Bessemer Road development (ref 6/2018/3110/MAJ) with a mixture of flats and houses with the latter put next the houses on Maple Grove to stop overlooking (see below)?

Overlooking – Impact on Gresley Close houses. The buildings neighbouring Gresley close at the north of the site are 4/5 storeys and are too high and will cause privacy and encroachment issues to those neighbours. On other applications, such as Birchall Garden suburb, the heights step up from neighbouring house, so 3 storeys (or even houses) should be considered at the north end. This is a point that needs to be addressed and potentially sent to the design review panel prior to being heard at DMC.

The initial local plan: This was set at 290. There has been no reasoning or justification to why it now stands at 313.

Education: It is the county's responsibility to ensure that there is an adequate school's provision in place in local schools and that they can be reached by sustainable transport prior to a development being approved. Given the local school of Templewood is a 1 class per year entry and an S106 contribution will do nothing to create space anywhere, especially at a grade 2 listed building, the question of where the children will go to school needs to be addressed?

Parking rate: 2021 Census data reveals at least a 77% 1 car ownership per home based on neighbouring areas of Handside and Sherrards. This application falls significantly short at 0.58 per dwelling and thus is inadequate. Any resident(s) with children will find it difficult to walk to schools beyond the local school of Templewood (1 class per year entry and a Grade 2 listed building) if their child fails to secure a place at this over-subscribed school.

Parking allocation: The application shows that owned homes will get a parking space but any affordable home will only get 0.37 per home. This assumes that those living in affordable home have less requirement to own a vehicle, which is wrong. It is clearly insufficient with no rationale and there is no justification of supporting evidence for it.

Social Housing: Policy states the plan should have 47 dwellings of social housing. It doesn't have any and thus will not take anyone off the housing waiting list which is abhorrent and against policy.

Location of affordable housing. Plan states it will be mainly in one block. Based off other local developments we have seen evidence that this does not work. Promoting a wider spread of affordable housing will not create a divide or stigma.

Design: The design does not have the accepted window style in the town centre design guide, there is a lack of continuity in the design between blocks in and out of the conservation area, and the design does not feature mansard roofs, which is the style of town centre dwellings.

Play space: There is a lack of it for older children. Local areas of play are needed unless the plan is for children to cross a busy road and play near a busy road at the Campus?

EV Charging: The allocation of spaces equipped with EV is at 50%, this is in contravention of building regulations Part S introduced in 2021. Whilst officers may state that this is a building regulation rather than planning regulation, it would be wholly negligent and remiss of any officer to recommend an application for approval, whilst being aware that it contravenes building regulations.

Consultation: As a general note, it should be recorded that the consultation on this development appears to have been nothing more than a PR exercise. Having initially consulted and made changes to the plans, the application that has been submitted does not reflect the changes that were expected. Whilst it is not the council holding the consultation, WHBC should have guidelines so that as a minimum requirement consultations are a) Meaningful b) Given Adequate Notice c) Held at convenient times for the public d) Provide Adequate information to enable an informed opinion to be reached.

Please do not turn Welwyn Garden City into Welwyn Concrete City as a better solution can be found for this site.