

Please accept my objection to **Planning Application 6/2022/2801/MAJ** from Bellway Homes for the redevelopment of Campus East in Welwyn Garden City.

This site is owned by the Council, and Bellway Homes' offer to pay £18m for a 250-year lease of the site is, subject to Planning Approval. We hope the Council takes our objections seriously and does not grant its approval in order to receive this £18m.

This site is in the heart of Welwyn Garden City conservation area, and special care should be given to its redevelopment.

This planning application fails the town in many areas, as detailed below:

### **NPPF - Sustainability Social Factor**

The NPPF policy aims to provide for the needs of the future community. As the Bellway Homes proposal aims to provide an insufficient number of larger accommodation units, the planning application fails this factor. It is natural to expect that a couple moving into a 2-bed flat will need a family-size dwelling to move to in the near future and providing only 14 units with 3 bedrooms will be insufficient. The application indicates that children will be living on the site and again it is prudent to expect their families to be outgrowing these small flats. Alas, developers are not building enough 3- & 4-bedroom homes and each developer expects the other developers to do so and so, as a group, they are failing to provide for the needs of the future community. This approach destroys our communities by forcing families out of the area. The council must ensure sufficient family homes are planned and this planning application fails the Sustainability Social Factor test.

### **Council Policy on dwelling sizes**

The Council's approved policies require provision of around 60% of 3- & 4-bedroom dwellings on developments such as this but this development offers under 5% with three bedrooms! This is a shortfall of 182 properties. The developer not only fails the Council requirement but also, by not providing enough family size dwellings, will drive families away from this area and create a transient and therefore unsustainable community. Such a development would be unforgivable in a Garden City which has been planned with social engineering policies in mind.

### **Car Parking spaces**

Car parking space provision falls far short of what nearby developments have shown to be needed. The 2021 census shows that car ownership in Handside and Sherrards is much higher than this Application proposes. It is naïve to assume that those renting Affordable Housing or have shared ownership dwellings have less need for a car than privately owned dwellings but developer is offering 0.69 of space for privately owned and only 0.37 of space for the Affordable Housing flats. Even those who use the public transport for work, will still have a car to visit friends and will need space for their family & friends to visit them. The parking experience in the Times Square development nearby has shown that even providing one space per unit has created issues of overspill in surrounding areas and problems with deliveries. Failing to provide 130 of the flats with parking spaces will create anti-social behaviour in the roads nearby, caused by people trying to park their cars outside this development

site and this will undermine the viability of the town centre. I live in Handside and I already frequently experience parking overspill in my road.

### **High blocks**

The application disguises the true height of the 6-storey blocks by calling the first floor 'zero'. This is disingenuous. Blocks of 6 floors are not what we expect to see in this part of the town. The council policy of maximum 5 storey is still valid and must be observed.

In addition, taller 4-5 storey blocks should not be positioned near existing 2-storey houses as they will create overlooking & overshadowing effects and will have a negative impact on these local houses. Local residents/ homeowners should not pay the price for developer's higher profits.

This development fails to safeguard the privacy of to the north of this development. The 4-5 blocks on that side should be lower where they meet the neighbouring properties.

### **Housing Density**

Building 313 housing units on this 2.1 hectare site is far too high for this town centre site and twice of what the council states as acceptable in their Broadwater Supplementary Planning Document . The Local Plan allocation for this site is 290 homes and this application exceeds that.

### **Social Housing**

It beggars belief to think that the council would consider a development on its own land, which will not provide even one unit of Social Housing when there are 3,000 people registered on the Council Housing list!

### **Play Space**

The proposed play area is insufficient for 313 dwellings, even though the application expects children will be living on site, especially for living in a garden city. If this application is permitted in its present form, the town will have to deal with problems caused by lack of children play area and damage to Campus West which is a cherished community asset and not a playground.

### **Infrastructure**

The only school within walking distance is already full. Where would children of this development go to school, particularly that 130 units will not have parking space and are assumed not to have cars?

### **Design of the blocks**

The development fails to observe the street scene and the style of windows of nearby properties. We live in a garden city and its architectural heritage should be respected, or else we lose the reasons to

call our town a garden city. The 'anything-goes' approach is not acceptable and we expect our Council to protect the environment of our conservation area.

This is not the way we expect a residential development, to look like, in our garden city.

