

Subject: Welwyn Hatfield Council Online Planning - Comment

Application Number: S6/2015/1342/PP

Name: MICHAEL GREEN

Address: 6 Highfields, Cuffley, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 4EL Comment Type: Object

Comment: I am totally opposed to developments on green belt land generally. I understand that to be allowed there have to be very special circumstances;

The policy for the Borough should be that housing growth should be controlled so that the sites which are not in the green belt are developed before any are allowed within the green belt. Estimates are not necessarily borne out in practice. For all sorts of reasons the population growth in the Borough might turn out to be far more or far less than estimated now. If in fact the latter happens there would be less need to sacrifice green belt land since less homes would be required.

If the development is allowed the character of Cuffley would be changed for ever. The visual appearance on approaching Cuffley from either Crews Hill or Northaw would change from approaching a village to approaching a small town. The existing open green and agricultural nature would be replaced by a block of up to 121 homes, including flats alongside Northaw Road East. The plans appear vague about the numbers of different types of dwellings but at the public exhibition in Cuffley there were only two bungalows. Northaw Road East and other nearby roads have a much higher proportion of bungalows. It should be a condition that the site should more closely reflect the character of the nearby roads.

Probably the most significant other effects of the proposal would be on traffic flows and rail passengers.

I understand that there are proposals to deal with significant extra traffic due to the development which will simply shift the existing queues at peak times in both Cattlegate Lane and Northaw Road East to Northaw Road West and Plough Hill respectively. To avoid these queues, traffic will quickly find alternatives by using Well Road or Vineyards Road (the latter very unsuitable for lots more traffic), then Cuffley Ridgeway, Hanyards Lane (a very narrow private road), Hill Rise, Tolmers Avenue and Tolmers Road. Hanyards Lane and much of Vineyards Road have no footpaths.

I understand that with a view to further speed up the traffic there is also a proposal to remove the only pedestrian crossing from Station Road. Pedestrians should be given priority at all times. We have a significant number of local residents who are less able than some and have to cross Station Road. We actually need more pedestrian crossings, not none. The position of the existing crossing is not ideal as it is adjacent to the Tesco vehicular exit and many vehicles come out swiftly in an attempt to beat the changing lights. If changes are made to Station Road they should be made with a view to slowing the traffic rather than increasing speeds. Pedestrian crossings would be most useful at the entrance to Maynard Place so that users of the waiting area there and the main car park could more safely cross the road and another near Sopers Road so that users of that car park, the commercial premises along that road and the station could cross more safely.

Rail passengers already suffer from overcrowding at peak times. Passengers further down the line towards London would have greater difficulty in getting onto the trains.

There is no scope to lengthen the trains because the underground platforms at Moorgate (the major peak time destination) cannot be lengthened without huge expense, if at all. Also there is no spare capacity on the lines to allow more trains per hour.

I understand that the existing sewerage system is already overburdened and this will have to be addressed whatever additional housing is allowed.