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To: Planning
Subject: Welwyn Hatfield Council Online Planning - Comment

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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Application Number: N6/2010/2055/MA
Name: [Redacted]
Address: 31 valley road welwyn grden city herts AL8 7DH Comment Type: Object
Comment: Disturbance and activity
See traffic and parking below

Character and appearance of area
· None of the proposals appears to echo the ‘ethos of the Garden City’ as suggested in the plans. Welwyn garden City is a model for development in countries throughout the world; it is something studied in degree courses and we have a duty to protect our heritage. While future viability of the Town is important, any permitted development must be with the best interests of residents and current local business at heart. The ambitions of any multinational business should not dictate how our town centre will develop in the coming decades. The claims for a parkland setting in the application is not borne out by the plans. The ethos of the Garden City includes gardens for dwellings, open spaces, garden frontage for houses and a specified minimum space between buildings. This is not conformed to by the proposals which would be detrimental to the conservation area of the Garden City. No gardens have been identified in the outline plan.
· If a care home is to be included, it is particularly important that elderly frail people should have continuity of the open environment they have lived with in Welwyn Garden City. The proposed Tesco Store design is – unlike that of Waitrose and Sainsbury’s – unsympathetic to the environment of the Garden City centre.

· We do not need an second large Tesco; the nearest one is about 2 miles away. The impact of a second large Tesco so close to the Town centre would be devastating for local small businesses. Furthermore, small retailers on the new site would be competing with existent ones in local areas and of course John Lewis and Debenhams in the Howard centre and around. This could threaten all of them, new and old. The result could be a neglected ghost town, not a garden city.

· There is no congruence with the District Plan agreed and adopted by the Council for Broadwater Road

Traffic and parking
· The provision of over 400 parking places plus all the cars of new residents of the area will add immensely to the traffic flows through and in the town. This in turn will be detrimental to the air quality of the area and exacerbate pollution.
· No provision has been made for new access roads; indeed it is difficult to see how these could be provided.
· The provision of 3 hours free parking will have a detrimental result on the revenue of Council car parking in the Town centre.
· Pedestrian access to site: The proposed bridge does not appear to be a significant improvement on the old one. Furthermore, the width is inadequate and will result in congestion of people wishing to cross and descend on the only escalator in the Howard centre.
· The proposal for a doctor’s surgery is ludicrous as access would be very difficult and there are already doctor’s surgeries within easy walking distance of the Town centre on both sides of the railway.
· The proposed bridge will be shorter, pedestrians will be required to cross an existing right of way.

Appearance size and form of buildings proposed
· All buildings appear to be modern in style.
· There is NO neo-Georgian building of residential apartments which would form part of the current town centre ethos. If the plan is to unify the town centre with a new bridge then this is a contradiction.

· Section 106 requirements do not appear to have been provided; these must be explicit and binding.