

I would like to make you aware of the serious concerns I have regarding this application and the impact it will have on the immediate local area, as well as WGC as a whole.

I understand the need for redevelopment and I'm not against it by any means. My own flat was only built a few years ago and it is nice to see the general area being redeveloped and improved. However, there are a number of issues with the application which I will try and address below.

Firstly, the issue of Social / Affordable Housing. I believe that the council's own policy / guidelines is for 30% of a development to be allocated as Social / Affordable Housing. It is very surprising, therefore, to see that just 10% is allocated at the new Biopark development. Is there an explanation for this? Has demand for affordable / social housing fallen so far that the policy/ guideline no longer needs to be in place?

The second issue is parking and the frankly laughable allocation of spaces in the new development. I believe the development has allocated 0.6 spaces per property? I would be very interested to know what kind of research has been undertaken to arrive at that figure? I live very close to the Biopark and, given the parking issues on this development, I am absolutely certain that we here have more than 0.6 vehicles per property.

When all those new property owners can't park their cars in an allocated space, where will they go? The answer is that they will start to spill outwards on to the neighbouring roads, causing further parking issues for the residents already living here. It is astonishing that anybody would think 0.6 spaces per property is acceptable in this day and age.

This links in to my third point, which relates to local services or lack thereof. If you wish people to use bikes / public transport rather than drive (which must be the reasoning behind the above?) then the services need to be in place. The station is too small and outdated. The bus service is inadequate (how long does it take to get to St Albans?). There aren't enough dentists, doctors, school, nurseries etc etc. All of these will be placed under further strain with this new development.

My last main point is regarding the "garden city" aspect of Welwyn. In what possible way does cramming in as many properties as possible match with the ethos of a "garden city"? The council itself has said that properties over five stories should only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. I would be keen to know what the exceptional circumstances are in this case? In my opinion "profit" should not count as exceptional circumstances, so I cannot see why such an ill thought out development is being allowed?

I was not written to about these plans, which I think I should have been as one of the direct neighbours. Had I been informed, I would have made my complaints at the earliest opportunity. I presume that the reason for not writing (in breach of regulations) is because of the clear issues the development poses to the local area and how clearly it contravenes the council's own policies/ guidelines.

As I have said, I am not entirely against redevelopment in the local area. But it must be done in such a way that it is sensitive to the needs of the local area, not only in terms of the number of properties provided, but in all the ways outlined above.

[REDACTED]

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