

To: ["c.howe@welhat.gov.uk"](mailto:c.howe@welhat.gov.uk)
Subject: Objection to Planning Application 6/2020/3420/MAJ - BioPark Broadwater Road Welwyn Garden City AL7 3AX
Date: 17 March 2021 17:41:41

Dear Miss Howe,

I object to application 6/2020/3420/MAJ for the development of the BioPark site, Broadwater Road and I urge the Council to refuse planning permission on the following grounds:

1. The application would result in an incongruous overdevelopment of the site.
2. The application is breach of the Council's 'Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document 2008'
3. The application is in breach of Policy H6 of the District Plan

This application would result in an incongruous overdevelopment of the site, have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring areas, fail to meet quality standards for space and amenities and have a detrimental impact on traffic and parking. According to the information supplied by the developer, there would be 289 dwellings for 852 people in an area of only 1.24 ha. It is shocking to realise that housing 852 people in only 1.24 ha results in a population density of 687 persons/ha. To put this into perspective: the most densely populated area of central London is Islington, with a population density of 160 persons/ha; Manhattan has 275 persons/ha; and Mumbai (one of the most densely populated cities on earth) has 530 persons/ha.

The application is in breach of the Council's 'Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document 2008', in terms of building heights and housing density. The developer's proposals do not satisfy the required criteria as mentioned in section 6.17 for building higher than 5 storeys, specifically, the effect on the local environment and amenity of those in the vicinity of the building; the relationship to the context of the site and the wider area; and the effect on the historic context of the site and the wider area. The amenity and privacy of people living in the houses nearby will be seriously disadvantaged by the residential units proposed to be higher than 5 floors at the location.

The application is in breach of Policy H6 of the District Plan which only allows for densities in excess of 50 dwellings per hectare in central areas and in areas with good accessibility provided that the development does not have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area and complies with other design policies of the Plan. The developer proposes building 289 dwellings on this 1.24ha site, which equates to 233 dwellings per ha. It is clear that cramming 233 dwellings per ha into this site, with little or no investment in the necessary schooling, medical, welfare and outdoor recreational facilities will have a major deleterious effect on the surrounding area. It is unreasonable for the developer to seek to bring in 852 new inhabitants into a town like Welwyn Garden City and make no provision for their wider, long-term needs & welfare. Lastly, this area has very poor accessibility for a housing estate: the only access is via BioPark Drive and once this cul-de-sac has been equipped with pavements wide enough for safe access for all inhabitants of the estate, the remaining road-width of BioPark Drive will only be suitable for one-way traffic – which is clearly unacceptable & impossible – or be dangerously congested with two-way traffic.

In the UK, we have experience of congested housing estates and we know that this level of population density will be detrimental to the health & safety of the future inhabitants. I urge you to study the terrible failures of similarly over-developed estates in the past, such as the Broadwater Farm, Chalkhill & Aylesbury Estates in London and Billyfields in Wales. There are many more such examples and the policy of building such estates has generally been abandoned in the U.K. In fact such estates are being torn down and replaced with lower density housing.

This proposal will result in a over-populated estate, with wholly insufficient external recreational space for the hundreds of planned residents, very restricted road access, insufficient facilities and no services for schooling or proper medical facilities. History shows that such over crowding leads to anti-social behaviour and other environmental & societal problems. The Covid-19 pandemic has placed a bigger importance on the outside space but the developer is providing little usable outdoor public space.

I urge the Council to refuse this application.

