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Dear Councillors

Please join me and reject the three Broadwater Rd Planning Applications listed below and save our garden city from the plight of excessively high-density accommodation. **The elections in May will have a profound effect on Welwyn Hatfield Council and the future of our Garden City.** Residents of WGC are looking for Councillors who will safeguard the healthy environment of this town, which has always offered low housing density and sensible outside space and greenery per dwelling.

The three planning applications listed below will undermine the ethos and life of the garden city, by packing 2,438 flats into less than 10 hectares of land next to Broadwater Rd, with capacity to accommodate up to 6,800 new inhabitants.

Please help to limit the damage to our garden city to the level granted by councillors in 2019 which, in most peoples' opinions, was already too high. Enough is Enough. The council's present policy of protecting the Green Belt, and those who live there, regardless of the impact on everyone else, has played into the hands of inner-city property developers keen to exploit these brownfield sites. It is unacceptable to protect the green belt by building new 'Broadwater Farm' tenements in our town centre. A more balanced approach is required.

I strongly object to the 3 Applications listed below, and I urge the Council to refuse planning permission on three grounds:

1. The applications would result in an incongruous over-development of each site.
2. The applications are in breach of the Council's 'Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document 2008'.
3. The applications are in breach of Policy H6 of the District Plan

Wheat Quarter Ltd - Application 6/2021/0181/MAJ

This Application proposes to increase the number of dwellings by over 50% from 811 to 1,220, which will increase housing density from the 191 units per hectare granted in 2019 to 288 units per hectare and the population density from the 459 persons per hectare granted in 2019 to 745 persons per hectare. These housing and population density levels are totally inconsistent with the space and facilities of a garden

city.

MTVH -Application 6/2021/0671/MAJ

This Application seeks to increase the number of dwellings in "Phases 2 & 3" by over 65% from 435 units to 721 units, increasing the total number of dwellings on the South Site to 929 units. In 2019, councillors granted approval for 643 dwellings on this 3.6 hectare site. This new application will increase the housing density from the 178 units per hectare you granted in 2019 to 258 per hectare and the potential population density from 538 persons per hectare granted in 2019 to 793 persons per hectare requested now. Without doubt, these housing and population density levels are completely incompatible with the standards for our garden city. People are not sardines and we should not be deliberately aiming to house them as such.

Bio Park -Application 6/2020/3420/MAJ

This Application seeks to build 289 dwellings for up to 852 persons on a 1.24 hectare site. The housing density will be 233 per hectare, with a population density of 687 persons per hectare. This is well above what can be accepted in this garden city and is even above the 2019 housing and population density numbers on Application 6/2018/0171 . These density levels are not acceptable.

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 over-populated estates, with wholly insufficient external recreational space for the thousands of planned residents, insufficient facilities, and no services for schooling or proper medical facilities. History shows that such overcrowding 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 proposing to reduce it, and social distancing will be even more difficult on the new higher floors.

These applications seek to create much higher population densities than approved for the Shredded Wheat sites in 2019 and it could prove to be disastrous for the health of the people in the Borough. The number of blocks of flats has increased, the heights of the

blocks has increased, and the area of communal landscaping and greenery has been reduced to accommodate the number of homes.

ONS figures show that during the last 12 months, the areas with higher housing density have suffered more infection and death. We have seen that peoples' life chances are profoundly affected by where they live. Covid 19 death clusters in areas of higher density housing ought to prove the deadly risk of trying to squeeze in ever more blocks of flats and further densification of Broadwater Road.

Providing an environment that makes social distancing easy and provision of adequate and meaningful outside space has now become a **Planning issue** and cannot be ignored.

If, as scientists warn is entirely possible, there is another global pandemic in the next 5 years, people's lives could be put at risk through the Council's over-intensification of the Welwyn Garden City Housing.

The developments currently considered on Broadwater Road have most likely been planned prior to 2018 but the global pandemic has changed our lives and where people want to live. At the same time, the Council is 6 years behind in finalising its Local Plan and desperate to provide space for many homes in the Borough and considers land such as Shredded Wheat site an ideal candidate for squeezing in many flats.

This will be disastrous for people who need homes and will damage Welhat Council for decades to come. Permitting hundreds more flats to be built and packing thousands of people, boxed on top of each other, will lead to much higher rates of infection and death in the Borough. Allowing this to happen in WGC, which was planned for healthy living, will be criminal.

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. These three sites, taken together, seek to build dwellings for over 6,800 people on 9.34 hectares - which is over 730 persons per hectare.

The Council has made major mistakes in the past, but at least the 1990's Slough Estate fiasco was only a financial & political disaster and did not have health and death implications.

I urge you to reject 6/2020/3420, 6/2021/0181 and 6/2021/0671



