

I would like to strongly object to this planning application on the following grounds

- The limit for height of developments in WGC is 5 storeys and this exceeds that limit. There are no exceptional circumstances to allow these 9 storey buildings. The gradual increase in height over the site does not satisfy the council's own rules and should be refused.
- At a height of 9 storeys, these would be visible from all over WGC and indeed surrounding villages.
- Parking is grossly insufficient at 0.5 per unit and this will cause immense issues with both the site and other surrounding areas where parking is already an issue. Times Square is an example of lack of parking and the residents park in the sorting office carpark in desperation. Visitors are unable to park at all. WHDC comments about acceptable level of parking is flawed in that there are no such prospects of car free developments. This is unrealistic and totally unachievable anywhere. Car-free is not an option and should not be sought.
- The housing mix is not within the council's own criteria of 11% studio/1 bed, 26% 2 bed, 30% 2 or small 3 bed and 20% 4 bed.
- The amount of affordable home criteria is not met.
- There is no social housing and therefore WGC residents' needs are not being met.
- "Garden city" ethos of live, work and leisure in the same town are not being met proportionately, as most offices are being converted to flats.
- General mix of housing provided over the last 5 years is disproportionately flats. Current requirements are for houses and not flats following the pandemic.
- Flats of 3 and 4 bedroom are most likely to be inhabited by families with children as insufficient houses are being provided on this development. Mental health issues and the outcomes of those children are likely to be seriously affected.
- There are insufficient facilities for doctors, dentists and other health and well-being provision. Lister hospital is already over stretched and the part closure of the QE11 Urgent Care Centre, leaves us under provided for.
- The infrastructure will not be capable of supporting this expansion. Trains are already crowded, and roads are incapable of handling the additional car journeys.
- The government are encouraging garden towns such as that at Harlow/Gilston and Hemel Hempstead Garden Community. There will be a mix of houses and business' and there are no plans for high rise blocks. Why would we stray away from our own rules to provide tower block living when we are already a garden city.
- I cannot see how the impact of these tower blocks has been taken into account or even considered. The impact on the town is socially and economically detrimental. The balance between the amount of housing, work and leisure is very poor.

I implore you to refuse this planning application and review the height and density. While we realise that housing is required, this is not quality housing, this is simply a way of making up the numbers. The residents of WHDC are not well served as more houses are required, not flats.

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