

Objection to the Springfield Garden Village Planning Application (2008/4452)

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Sample of:	
a) Survey respondents	
b) Online survey respondents	
Individual objections submitted by Tooting residents	

Introduction

This report outlines the multiple reasons Wandsworth Council's Planning Application Committee should **reject** planning application 2008/4452 - the outline planning application for the Springfield Garden Village - and the associated planning application 2008/5135 (permission to demolish listed buildings on the Springfield Hospital site).

The report has been compiled with reference to:

- **Wandsworth Council's Unitary Development Plan, adopted in 2003**
- **The London Plan**
- **The Wandsworth Core Strategy**

The objections are based upon my own assessment of the plans, as submitted to Wandsworth Council, and representations made by local residents.

In summary I believe the planned development:

- **is of an inappropriate size, density and layout to adequately reflect and match the character and grain of the surrounding area;**
- **will place a potentially catastrophic strain on the local highways and public transport infrastructure;**
- **will cause undue disruption and distress to the lives of thousands of residents living within the vicinity of the site throughout the construction process; and**
- **does not contribute positively enough to the local environment, and will not integrate seamlessly with the existing residential buildings, as it must do in order to protect and respect the character of the surrounding area.**

The report addresses problems in the consultation process, the impact on public transport, road traffic and the character of the surrounding area.

Where possible I have referenced the appropriate planning policies, obligations and statements from the relevant documents.

The Consultation Process

The consultation of local residents has been flawed throughout the planning stage of this development.

This is the largest development Tooting has seen for decades, and will affect the lives of thousands of people living over a widespread area.

With this in mind the developers (Springfield Hospital Trust and its partners) should have made special efforts to involve the local community in every stage of the planning process.

The feeling among residents, which is one I share, is that not enough has been done to consult residents about these plans.

In my survey of 11,000 residents:

- 87.5% of respondents felt Springfield Hospital had not done enough to inform them of the plans to re-develop the site.
- 77.4% of respondents felt Wandsworth Council had not done enough to inform them of the plans to re-develop the site.
- Only 15% of respondents thought Wandsworth Council would take their views into account when considering the planning application.

Furthermore, there have been serious problems with the accuracy of information provided by consultants to the development, making an accurate assessment of the current plans impossible to make and misleading residents as to the likely impact of the plans.

- the Springfield Hospital Trust and its partners (Arup, Montagu Evans, Urban Strategies Inc, Patel Taylor, WSP, Gleeds, GVA Grimley) have failed to produce accurate plans and assessments of the local infrastructure and public transport network;
- many of the inaccuracies grossly overestimate the capabilities of the local area to absorb a development of this size
- the Springfield Hospital Trust has failed to adequately and effectively communicate the current plans and their potential impact on the surrounding area;
- these inaccuracies and problems in the consultation process make it impossible for Wandsworth Council and local residents to assess the potential impact of the development;

Considering the above points, a decision granting permission cannot and should not be made about this development based on the current plans and public consultation.

Impact on Road Traffic

The impact of this development on Tooting's highways network, and the wider network that serves Wandsworth, will be dramatic to say the least. This will lead to an increase in noise and air pollution, serious road and traffic disruption from the associated works, and increased traffic throughout the construction phase and following the completion of the development.

One of the planning obligations Wandsworth Council sets out in its UDP is "*To ensure that all development meets, or contributes to meeting, the needs and pressure which it creates.*"

The existing plans show little improvement to the local highways infrastructure, and fail to convincingly prove that the influx of approximately 3000 new residents will not lead to a dramatic increase in traffic in the area.

- The construction process will dramatically increase traffic to the North and South of the site, putting pressure on the highway network throughout Tooting, and the wider area.
- **Trinity Road**, already a major traffic blackspot will carry much of this traffic, and residential roads will be forced to endure the passing of hundreds of lorries everyday, with the associated air and noise pollution this will generate.
- **Burntwood Lane** will bear the brunt of the construction traffic. There have already been serious problems with large vehicles causing excessive vibration and damage to homes. The increased construction traffic will exacerbate this, and make the road less safe.
- The increased traffic caused by the development will increase pollution, put further pressure on the local road system, pushing traffic into the network of residential roads that run between **Burntwood Lane** to the South and **Magdalen Road** to the North.
- Residents in **Waldron Road, Littleton Street, Quinton Street, Isis Street, Waynflete Street, Tramere Road, Swaby Road, Dawnay Road, Leckford Road, Headington Road, Lidiard Road, Openview, Fieldview, Godley Road, Gunners Road, Brightman Road, Tilehurst Road, Ellerton Road, Burntwood Grange Road, Herondale Avenue, Frewin Road, Loxley Road, Titchwell Road, Multon Road, Burcote Road, Collamore Avenue**, and many more, would become rat-runs and suffer from the increased traffic this development will cause.
- The impact of increased traffic on **Glenburnie Road** would also be huge. Glenburnie Road and the surrounding area is densely populated with many young children and schools - Glenburnie Road already suffers from increased traffic to the Hospital site, causing pollution, tailbacks and danger to children.

The UDP's Environmental Impact statement aims:

- *to ensure that existing users and occupiers of land and buildings are safeguarded from uses generating unacceptable levels of noise.*

- *to ensure that users and occupiers of land and buildings are safeguarded from development which would cause pollution.*
- *to protect people from risks to their health and safety and damage to their amenity.*
- *to safeguard the natural environment.*

The increase in traffic this development will create will breach each of the above clauses in this statement, and planning policy **TBE3**¹.

It will also be in the breach of the London Development Plans policy **3C.2**², with regards to matching development to transport capacity.

¹ **Policy TBE3** Development will not be permitted if;

- (a) it would create an unsafe or insecure environment

² **Policy 3C.2** Matching development to transport capacity

The Mayor will, and boroughs should, consider proposals for development in terms of existing transport capacity, both at a corridor and local level.

- Where existing transport capacity is not sufficient to allow for travel generated by proposed developments, and no firm plans exist for a sufficient increase in capacity to cater for this, boroughs should ensure that development proposals are appropriately phased until it is known these requirements can be met.

Impact on Public Transport

I have serious reservations about the accuracy, and therefore utility, of the transport assessment carried out by Arup, who carried out the Transport Assessment for Springfield Hospital.

The current assessment grossly overestimates the proximity and provision of public transport and its ability to bear the additional pressure the development will place on it.

Tooting residents are understandably distressed at the prospect of thousands of residents moving into the area and aggravating a transport system will struggle to cope.

It is my view that the current plans fail to provide satisfactory information to demonstrate that the public transport infrastructure in Tooting can service a development of this size, and the thousands of new commuters that will be created, in accordance with the requirements of policy **GEN2**³ and **TBE6**⁴ of the Wandsworth Unitary Development and policy **3C.2**⁵ of the London Development Plan.

Rail

Earlsfield Station is already overcrowded, and **Wandsworth Common** is incredibly busy in peak periods. In order to meet the requirements of **GEN2**, **TBE6** and **Policy 3C.2** the Transport Assessment would need to demonstrate there is enough capacity to support the new development, or that further capacity can be generated.

The current Transport Assessment incorrectly states this capacity exists or can be easily created.

- It overestimates the number of train services passing through Wandsworth Common station (9-10/hour, not 15-17 as stated in Table 4.1);

³ **Policy GEN2** The Council will promote regeneration ensuring that the scale of development is related to environmental capacity and the capacity of public transport and other infrastructure.

⁴ **Policy TBE6** High buildings, that is those which significantly exceed the prevailing height of surrounding buildings, will only be permitted where the site:

has a high level of public transport accessibility;

⁵ **Policy 3C.2** Matching development to transport capacity

The Mayor will and boroughs should consider proposals for development in terms of existing transport capacity, both at a corridor and local level.

- Where existing transport capacity is not sufficient to allow for travel generated by proposed developments, and no firm plans exist for a sufficient increase in capacity to cater for this, boroughs should ensure that development proposals are appropriately phased until it is known these requirements can be met.

- It includes a service to London Bridge via Denmark Hill that does not stop at the station;
- It includes services from Earlsfield Station that do not exist;
- It overestimates the number of residents who are likely to use Earlsfield Station; therefore underestimating the impact the proposals will have on Wandsworth Common and Tooting Bec stations, which are both significantly closer to the main part of the development.

Underground

The **Northern Line** is already operating at peak capacity. In order to meet the requirements of **GEN2**, **TBE6** and **Policy 3C.2** the Transport Assessment would need to demonstrate there is enough capacity to support the new development, or that further capacity can be generated.

- The Transport Assessment fails to demonstrate that the Northern Line has the capacity to handle the additional pressure that will be placed upon it, actually overestimating the number of peak services on the Northern Line (There are currently 25 services/hour, not 30).
- The Transport Assessment suggests there will be an equal split between passengers travelling both into and away from London during peak hours. This does not reflect reality.
- The Transport Assessment fails to address the cumulative impact additional passengers at **Tooting Bec** will have on stations further along the Northern Line at **Balham** and **Tooting Broadway**.

Bus

Given the difficulties in generating extra capacity on the overground rail network and underground network, the proposals have placed a significant weight on the capability of the bus network to meet the additional public transport needs created by the development.

However, the Transport Assessment:

- seriously underestimates the number of bus trips generated by the proposals by failing to take into account residents who will use buses to access local railway and underground stations.
- grossly overestimates the number of bus services operating on **Garratt Lane** - the assessment states there are twice as many buses operating as are actually in service.

- identifies **Trinity Road** as the most likely corridor for increased bus traffic - placing additional pressure on a road that is already gridlocked throughout the day.

Impact on the character of adjacent streets

Having reviewed the proposals, specifically with reference to the layout and density of the new buildings, it is my view that this is in fact a massive overdevelopment, whose form, size, building heights and design will be grossly out of character with the built form of the surrounding houses.

Specifically the proposals to place three storey, and graduated four to eight storey buildings closest to the houses on **Glenburnie Road** and **Lingwell Road** are not in keeping with the current character of the area, as their height dramatically exceeds that of the current building already within sight of these houses.

This is in clear breach of policies outlined in Wandsworth's Unitary Development Plan, specifically **GEN6⁶**, **GEN7⁷**, **GEN12⁸**, **TBE1⁹**, **TBE5(a)¹⁰** and **TBE10¹¹**.

- The proposals will create a mini-metropolis, with thousands of new residents, in a quiet, residential, family friendly and beautiful part of Tooting.
- The majority of buildings are to be placed in the South-East corner of the site, directly bordering an already densely populated residential area.
- The new buildings in this area will be significantly higher (**up to 8 storeys**) than the existing residential buildings, encroaching on the visual amenity the site currently provides to residents and leading to a loss of privacy and light to homes and gardens.

⁶ **Policy GEN6** The Council will protect, conserve and enhance the existing varied character and heritage of the Borough.

⁷ **Policy GEN7** The layout, form and design of new buildings and the spaces around them should contribute positively to the local environment.

⁸ **Policy GEN12** In determining proposals for development the Council will seek to protect and enhance the character and amenity of residential areas.

⁹ **Policy TBE1** New development will only be permitted when:

(a) it is physically integrated with its surroundings; and

¹⁰ **Policy TBE5** Development will only be permitted if:

(a) its density, layout, scale, mass, design and materials are compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces;

¹¹ **Policy TBE10** Development will not be permitted if it would:

(b) fail to respect the grain of the area.

- Years of construction work and increased traffic will disrupt the peaceful environment that attracted residents to this area in the first place, damaging their quality of life and failing to respect the character of the area.
- The attempts to limit parking on-site will only serve to force drivers to park in the road adjacent to it. This will be particularly prevalent in the South-Eastern corner of the site where the main Hospital buildings and the majority of residential units are placed.
- **Fishponds Road, Hebdon Road, Glenburnie Road, Beeches Road, Ansell Road, Morven Road, Gateside, Beechcroft Road, Mandrake Road, Fircroft Road, Brenda Road, Langroyd Road and Noyna Road** will doubtless see an increase in parking outside of the operating hours of their Controlled Parking Zones, as will **Dalebury Road, Hendham Road, Wandle Road, Brodrick Road and College Gardens.**

Glenburnie Road

Glenburnie Road is a quiet and attractive road which offers a peaceful haven for residents in the middle of a densely populated and busy part of London; this has no doubt been a cause of the rising house prices in the area in recent years. Residents will have invested heavily in their homes here for this reason.

The re-development of the hospital will have a more serious impact on Glenburnie Road than perhaps any other road neighbouring the site. The development will dramatically increase vehicular traffic on Glenburnie Road, throughout the construction process as well as after project completion. This will increase pollution, decrease pedestrian safety and dramatically detract from the character of the road, in breach of the Environment Statement in the Wandsworth Unitary Development Plan, and planning policies **GEN6**¹², **GEN12**¹³ and **TBE3**¹⁴.

- Traffic accessing Springfield Hospital already causes some disruption to residents, and detracts from the character of the road and surrounding streets. This problem has increased since it became possible to use the Hospital as a cut-through to **Burntwood Lane**. The traffic often travels at a speed that is not appropriate for a residential road.

¹² **Policy GEN6** The Council will protect, conserve and enhance the existing varied character and heritage of the Borough.

¹³ **Policy GEN12** In determining proposals for development the Council will seek to protect and enhance the character and amenity of residential areas.

- ¹⁴ **Policy TBE3** Development will not be permitted if;

(a) it would create an unsafe or insecure environment

- The **Glenburnie Road** gate is not designed for the increased traffic that now uses it. This traffic is becoming increasingly dangerous as it is almost impossible to see the cars coming out from the hospital, especially when the cars line the road.
- This problem is exacerbated by parents collecting their children from **Ernest Bevin College** in the afternoons.
- **Wandsworth Council should be looking at ways to limit the amount of traffic accessing Springfield Hospital. This development will actively increase it, increasing the danger to pedestrians and residents, in breach of policy TBE3.**
- Much of the construction traffic will use the vehicular access point at Glenburnie Road. The potential for damage to homes, trees and vehicles from this construction traffic cannot be ruled out.
- Transport plans for the site include the possibility of directing a bus route along Glenburnie Road and into the site, this would necessitate significant alterations to the road layout to accommodate the new traffic.
- **This is wholly inappropriate and would completely alter the character of the road, increase pollution and increase the risk of damage to houses, vehicles, and increase the dangers to pedestrians and cyclists.**

Hebdon Road

Hebdon Road is a quiet residential cul-de-sac that leads to the Southern edge of Springfield Hospital. Residents benefit from the lack of through-traffic, which creates a safer and more secure feeling environment.

- The proposals include the possibility of vehicular and pedestrian traffic to and from the site through Hebdon Road, where there is currently no access of either type.
- Access through Hebdon Road during the construction process, or whilst other roads are closed for improvement works will seriously disrupt the lives of residents. The potential for damage to homes, trees and vehicles from construction traffic cannot be ruled out.

Lingwell Road

Lingwell Road is a quiet residential road linking **Glenburnie Road** and **Hebdon Road** which directly backs on to Springfield Hospital site.

The new development will impact hugely on the houses which back on to the Hospital site, leading to a loss of privacy and visual amenity for residents, as well as years of disruption caused by the development.

This is in clear breach of policies outlined in Wandsworth's Unitary Development Plan, specifically **GEN6¹⁵**, **GEN7¹⁶**, **GEN12¹⁷**, **TBE1¹⁸**, **TBE5(a)¹⁹** and **TBE10²⁰**.

College Gardens

College Gardens is a quiet residential cul-de-sac that backs directly on to Springfield Hospital. Residents benefit from the lack of through-traffic, which creates a safer and more secure feeling environment. The visual amenity provided by the Metropolitan Open Land on the Springfield site cannot be underestimated - it gives the area a peaceful village-like character, and is much loved by its residents.

The current proposals would have a devastating affect on the character of College Gardens, and the lives of its residents, in clear breach of policies **GEN6²¹**, **GEN7²²**, **GEN12²³**, **TBE1²⁴**, **TBE5(a)²⁵** and **TBE10²⁶**.

¹⁵ **Policy GEN6** The Council will protect, conserve and enhance the existing varied character and heritage of the Borough.

¹⁶ **Policy GEN7** The layout, form and design of new buildings and the spaces around them should contribute positively to the local environment.

¹⁷ **Policy GEN12** In determining proposals for development the Council will seek to protect and enhance the character and amenity of residential areas.

¹⁸ **Policy TBE1** New development will only be permitted when:

(a) it is physically integrated with its surroundings; and

¹⁹ **Policy TBE5** Development will only be permitted if:

(b) its density, layout, scale, mass, design and materials are compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces;

²⁰ **Policy TBE10** Development will not be permitted if it would:

(b) fail to respect the grain of the area.

²¹ **Policy GEN6** The Council will protect, conserve and enhance the existing varied character and heritage of the Borough.

²² **Policy GEN7** The layout, form and design of new buildings and the spaces around them should contribute positively to the local environment.

²³ **Policy GEN12** In determining proposals for development the Council will seek to protect and enhance the character and amenity of residential areas.

²⁴ **Policy TBE1** New development will only be permitted when:

(a) it is physically integrated with its surroundings; and

- Currently the boundary adjacent to College Gardens would have buildings of 2-storeys plus roof within 5 -metres of the boundary and 4 - 5 storeys plus roof within 24 metres of the boundary.
- If built, the proposed buildings would cut out light from the West to the existing houses and gardens. This problem would be at its greatest in the autumn, winter and spring, as the existing properties are orientated North/South and the proposed buildings are located to the West of them, thus blocking the sun.
- The proposals would mean that the existing residences would be overlooked and the current "open and green" ambience of the area destroyed. This will result in a loss of the existing visual amenity of the existing properties.
- There are also issues relating to the loss of radiant heat from the sun, and the impact of the proposals on neighbouring properties' future use of solar energy.
- The current proposals do not fit with the existing urban grains and patterns of the area. Nor do they unlock the full potential of the existing buildings and land. There would also be the loss of existing visual links /views across the site from neighbouring streets that currently contribute to the existing character of the area.
- Proposals to provide pedestrian access to the site through College Gardens pose a risk to the security of College Gardens residents and residents of the new development. College Gardens is currently a cul-de-sac, which creates a natural 'safe-haven' environment for residents. By allowing access through College Gardens this will be lost, which I believe is in contravention of policy **TBE3**²⁷.

Chancery Mews

Chancery Mews is a quiet residential cul-de-sac that leads directly to the fence bordering Springfield Hospital. Residents benefit from the lack of through-traffic, which creates a safer and more secure feeling environment.

This has particularly attracted young families to the street, who can be confident that their homes, the road and playground are safe for their children to play in.

²⁵ **Policy TBE5** Development will only be permitted if:

- (c) its density, layout, scale, mass, design and materials are compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces;

²⁶ **Policy TBE10** Development will not be permitted if it would:

- (b) fail to respect the grain of the area.

- ²⁷ **Policy TBE3** Development will not be permitted if;

- (a) it would create an unsafe or insecure environment

- Currently the boundary adjacent to College Gardens/Chancery Mews would have buildings of 2-storeys plus roof within 5 -metres of the boundary and 4 - 5 storeys plus roof within 24 metres of the boundary.
- The proposals would mean that the existing residences would be overlooked and the current "open and green" ambience of the area destroyed. This will result in a loss of the existing visual amenity of the existing properties.
- Proposals to provide pedestrian access to the site through Chancery Mews pose a risk to the security of Chancery Mews residents and residents of the new development. Chancery Mews is currently a cul-de-sac, which creates a natural 'safe-haven' environment for residents. By allowing access through Chancery Mews this will be lost, which I believe is in contravention of policy **TBE3**²⁸.

Burntwood Lane

- Due to its good links to trunk routes into the area, **Burntwood Lane** will bear the brunt of the construction traffic.
- There have already been serious problems with large vehicles causing excessive vibration and damage to homes. The increased construction traffic will exacerbate this, and make the road less safe.
- This is a residential road, with a lot of pedestrian and cycle traffic, a large proportion of which is made up of school children.
- The current traffic calming measures are ineffective in slowing down large vehicles, which often travel at speed along the road, causing increased danger to pedestrians.
- The existing traffic calming measures also cause a significant level of vibration to the houses on the road, and have led to damage to these houses, and increased noise and air pollution.
- The increased traffic caused by the development will increase pollution and put further pressure on the local road system, pushing traffic into the network of residential roads that run between Burntwood Lane to the South and **Magdalen Road** to the North.
- Residents in **Waldron Road, Littleton Street, Quinton Street, Isis Street, Waynflete Street, Tranmere Road, Swaby Road, Dawnay Road, Leckford Road, Headington Road, Lidiard Road, Openview, Fieldview, Godley Road, Gunners Road, Brightman Road, Tilehurst Road, Ellerton Road, Burntwood Grange Road, Herondale Avenue, Frewin Road, Loxley Road, Titchwell Road, Multon Road, Burcote Road, Collamore Avenue**, and many more, would become rat-runs and suffer from the increased traffic this development will cause.

• ²⁸ **Policy TBE3** Development will not be permitted if;

(a) it would create an unsafe or insecure environment

- **This will have a seriously detrimental affect on the character of the area and the quality of life of local residents.**

Conclusion

In summary I believe the planned development lacks ambition, does not have the support of the local community and would squander an opportunity to create an alternative innovative and exciting project in the heart of Tooting.

The planned development:

- is of an inappropriate size, density and layout to adequately reflect and match the character and grain of the surrounding area;
- will place a potentially catastrophic strain on the local highways and public transport infrastructure;
- will cause undue disruption and distress to the lives of thousands of residents living within the vicinity of the site throughout the construction process;
- does not contribute positively enough to the local environment, and will not integrate seamlessly with the existing residential buildings, as it must do in order to protect and respect the character of the surrounding area.

With specific reference to the planning and consultation process I believe that:

- the Springfield Hospital Trust and its partners (Arup, Montagu Evans, Urban Strategies Inc, Patel Taylor, WSP, Gleeds, GVA Grimley) have failed to produce accurate plans and assessments of the local infrastructure and public transport network;
- the inaccuracies in the reports submitted by the Springfield Hospital Trust's partners grossly overestimate the capabilities of the local area to absorb a development of this size;
- the Springfield Hospital Trust has failed to adequately and effectively communicate the current plans and their potential impact on the surrounding area;
- these inaccuracies and problems in the consultation process make it impossible for Wandsworth Council and local residents to assess the potential impact of the development.

The planning application 2008/4452 (Springfield Garden Village) and 2008/5135 (permission to demolish listed buildings on the Springfield Hospital site) should be refused.