

# How Do I Object to the Woking Community Stadium development?



A guide to preventing overdevelopment in our community

Kingfield reference: PLAN/2019/1176

Egley Road reference: PLAN/2019/1177

Version 1.2 (2019)



[www.southwokingactiongroup.org.uk](http://www.southwokingactiongroup.org.uk)

# Why should I object?

Take action to protect our community. Your objection can be an essay, or a sentence. The more objections the better.

Your objection counts. The same developer, Wayne Gold of GolDev, lost a planning application for Braintree stadium based on similar planning issues, and the objections of residents.

Share this information with your neighbours, colleagues, friends, and family. A thrilling conversation starter for the festive season!

We recognize that the stadium desperately needs improvement. We believe in a more holistic approach that supports the club without compromising the community that supports it.

- This proposal is a permanent and drastic change to the character of our established and thriving village community
- 1,048 flats is an overdeveloped housing proposal for an out-of-town, low-rise residential area
- If it were to proceed, it would set a precedent for high density tall buildings in other low-rise suburban villages
- Should the Council be providing a private developer with £250m in finance, putting our money at risk?
- A lack of affordable housing on-site (only 18% compared to the 40% required), segregating of affordable housing tenants
- Residents' lack of confidence in WFC's business plan being used to justify the residential scale
- The Egley Road site contains only 36 houses, with no affordable housing and the expensive relocation of David Lloyd.

We are working through the plans and intend to submit an extensive response to it. **Our response alone is not enough.**

# How can I object?

Everyone is entitled to object as many times as they like (providing the content of each objection is different). **It must contain your name and address.** Non-Woking residents can object too!

There are three methods of objecting:

1. Comment on the online application, PLAN/2019/1176 (<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=Q1ZWI8RUGIW00>), you will need to register an account and confirm your email address before being able to submit your comments online.
2. Email the planning authority at [developmentmanagement@woking.gov.uk](mailto:developmentmanagement@woking.gov.uk) with your objections. Be sure to reference the planning number in your email: PLAN/2019/1176
3. Post your objections to the planning authority:

Benjamin Bailey  
Woking Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Gloucester Square  
Woking  
GU21 6YL

You should try to submit before the **10<sup>th</sup> January 2020**. However, evidence *must* be considered right up to the date of the hearing.

The Egley Road application (Ref: PLAN/2019/1177) is separate. Be sure to include both planning references in your objections!

# How to use this guide

Planning policy is boring, full of jargon, and incredibly complex. We've digested as much as we can, and tried to distill it down into a few key points. It's been a mammoth task, but, we think that our community is worth it.

Below is an extract from our list to explain how to read our guide.

*This is the subsection title. Documents below refer to this aspect of planning.*

## Tall Buildings

*This is the planning document title. The below statements refer to this document.*

### Woking Design SPD (2015)

- Tall Buildings (those two-storeys above their surroundings) are not allowed outside of the town centre in low-rise areas, as stated in **Part B**.

*Each bullet point refers to a single extract of the planning document.*

*Green text tells you which extract of the planning document supports the statement.*

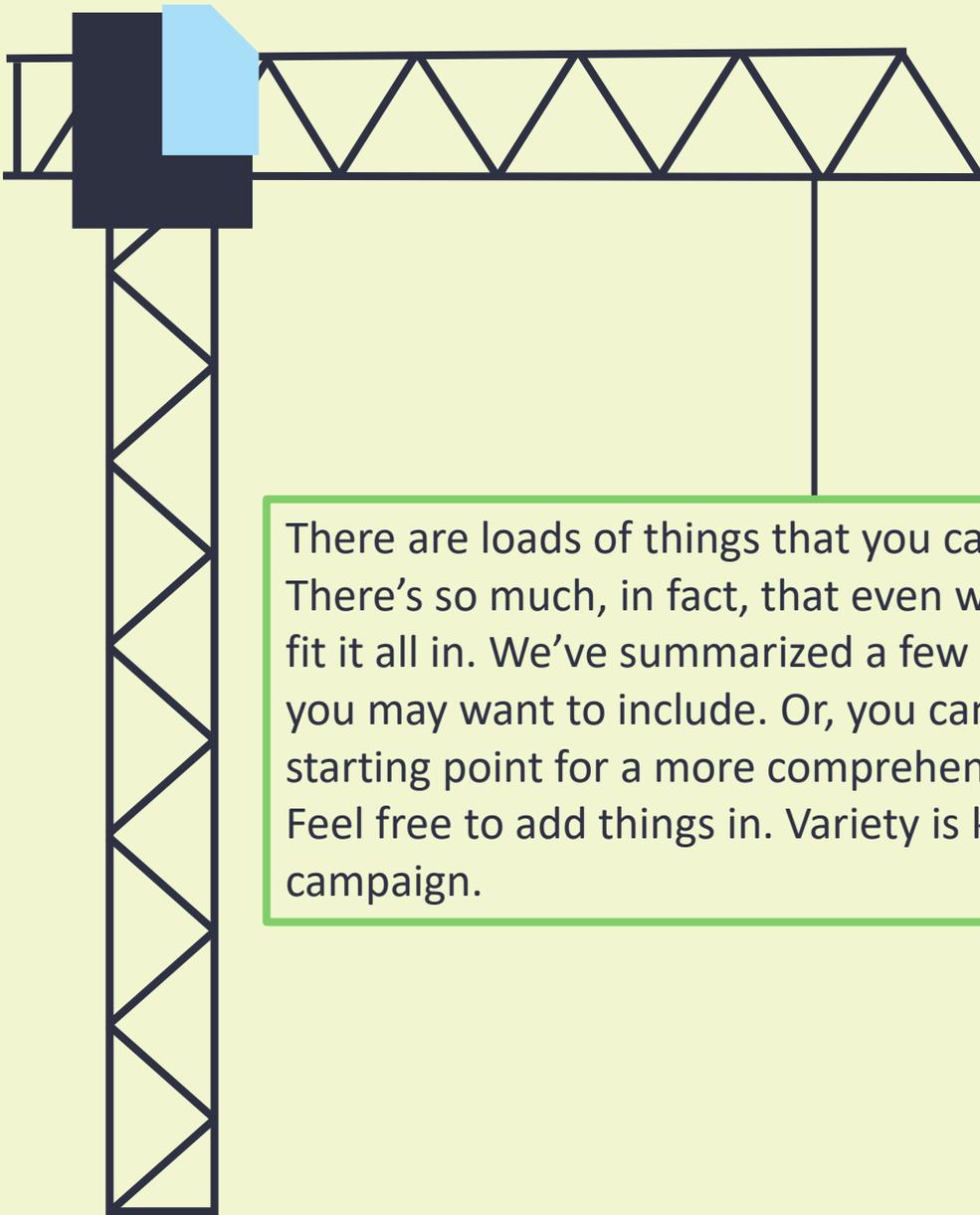
When writing your objection, try to be as specific as possible to make life easy for the Councilors. Reference the policy and document.

For example: **"The Woking Design SPD (2015) states in Part B that tall buildings are not appropriate for out-of-town developments."** Remember to include your personal touch.

# What should I include?

It's important to make your objection personal to you. Comment on the things that mean the most to you. Show the Council that you disagree with this development.

If you don't have much time to commit to writing your objection, a simple sentence stating that you object is enough to make a difference. If you have a bit more time to tailor it, then that's even better.



There are loads of things that you can object to. There's so much, in fact, that even we're struggling to fit it all in. We've summarized a few key points that you may want to include. Or, you can use them as a starting point for a more comprehensive objection. Feel free to add things in. Variety is key to a successful campaign.

# What should I include?

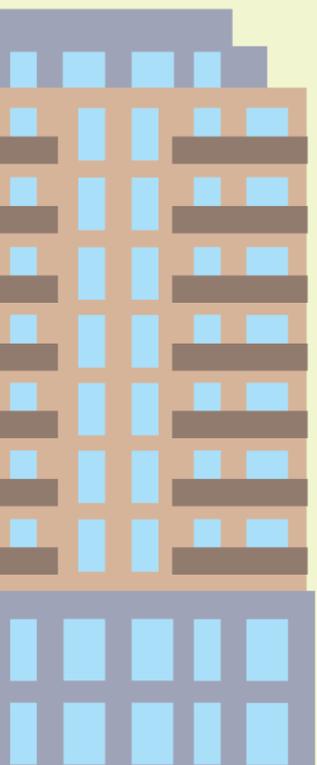
## Tall Buildings

### Woking Design SPD (2015)

- Tall Buildings (those two-storeys above their surroundings) are not allowed outside of the town centre in low-rise areas, as stated in **Part B**.

### Core Strategy (2012)

- Sets the Council's planning rules, and policy **CS1** is supported by the statement above.
- **Appendix 3** shows that Kingfield is not in the Town Centre.



# What should I include?

## Character

### Woking Character Study (2010)

- Kingfield is a low-rise area, with many of the two-storey homes being of a chalet-style.
- Our area is generous in its green space, with grass verges on the road, and attractive front gardens being a defining characteristic of the area.

### Core Strategy (2012)

- The focal point of the community already exists at the Kingfield Local Centre, as described in **Table 2**.
- The stadium retail element undermines the vitality of our Kingfield Local Centre. **CS4** (which defines the intended retail growth in the Borough) makes no provision for new retail development outside of local centres for this reason.
- The development fails to make a positive contribution to the area's character required by **CS21**. It does not respect the scale, height, proportions, layout, materials, and other characteristics of adjoining buildings.



## Character

“the appearance of any rural or urban location in terms of its landscape or the layout of streets and open spaces, often giving places their own distinct identity.” (Planning Portal)

# What should I include?

## Density

### **Core Strategy (2012)**

- The Council promotes high density development only in the main centres of the Borough, stated in **5.203**.
- Town and district centres are suitable for high density development, low density (such as Kingfield) for lower proportions of small dwellings (**5.73**).

### **Proposals Map (2016)**

- The site is outside of the area allocated for high density buildings.

### **Woking Design SPD (2015)**

- Density increase must be managed sensitively according to **9A**. This development is not sensitive or respectful. Buildings shouldn't exceed 5 storeys, nor densities of 70 dwellings per hectare. The density will be 982dph, and 10 storeys.
- Proposed increases in density must carefully respect the surrounding context (**p66**). Our current density is around 30-45dph.

### **Housing Density SPG (2000)**

- The volume and extent of development is the main concern in density (**2.1**).
- Spacing between buildings, layout and design, or the loss of soft amenity is important in density (**6.85**).

### **Site Allocations DPD (2018) (DRAFT)**

- **UA44** requires efficient density on the site without compromising character.
- The Kingfield site is currently subject to a review by the Planning Inspectorate, which will determine the appropriate density. His findings will be returned in the Spring.

# What should I include?

An (optional) note on density calculations:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Dwellings}}{\text{Total area (hectares)}} = \text{Density (dwellings per hectare)}$$

The equation above describes the calculation for density. The total area of the Kingfield site is 4.64ha. Therefore, the density of the development may be described as 226dph.

**However**, only 23% of the site is residential (noted in GolDev’s presentation). PLAN/2006/1237 (Willow Reach) Environmental Statement splits the site between the public realm and residential aspects. Therefore, it is reasonable to split the Kingfield site between residential and stadium aspects in this case.

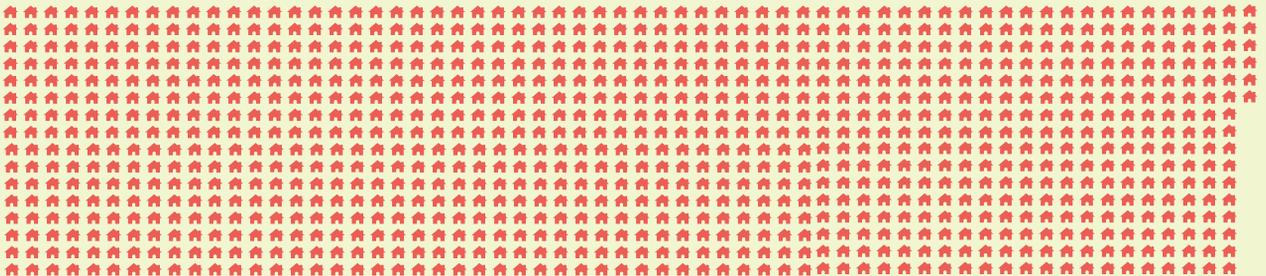
**This scenario raises the density of the development to 982dph.**

Either density is uncharacteristically high compared to the surrounding area. SWAG support the use of 982dph. This is not only because of the precedent set by Willow Reach and the fairer representation of bulking, but also because the application emphasizes this split throughout the application.

Willow Reach Density (80dph)



Proposal’s Density (982dph)



# What should I include?

## Amenity

### **Core Strategy (2012)**

- This development risks harm to our area's environmental amenity through light, noise and vibrations, contrary to **CS21**.

### **Woking Design SPD (2015)**

- According to **p47**, this development needs to better protect the area from light pollution. Especially as it is tall.
- The shared outdoor space is cramped, and small. It will not allow the variety of use required by **p49**.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)**

- The existence of a large stadium creates an area where the fear of crime is a reality and not inclusive. It could undermine the quality of life for residents. This is not allowed according to **127f**.



## **Amenity**

“A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.” (Planning Portal)

# What should I include?

## Affordable Housing

### Core Strategy (2012)

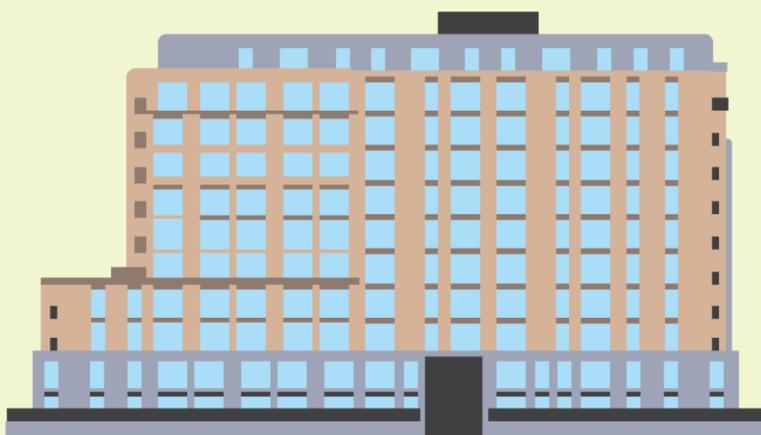
- The proposal offers 18% affordable housing on-site. That's far off **CS12**'s requirement of 40% on Brownfield sites.
- **5.88** requires an *independent* review of the viability to allow for the reduction in affordable housing.
- The proposal segregates the community in the proposed affordable housing. This is not allowed by **CS12** because of the unbalanced community it creates.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

- Housing mix does not reflect the affordable housing demand required by **62**.

### Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2018)

- Three bedroom houses are most in demand for affordable housing (**p30**). This proposal offers almost entirely 1 and 2 bedroom units.



“A capacity of 10,000 was originally requested by the Football Club.”

- Councillor Azad (WBC Deputy Leader)

“We have been told that is the size Council require, not what we might wish for”

- Rosemary Johnson (WFC Chair)

# What should I include?

## Design

Design is a huge part of our potential objection. It relates to all aspects of built form and function. Design is subjective, so, any parts that you don't like can be included.

### **Woking Design SPD (2015)**

- The development does not sit comfortably within the area, required by **p35**. It is cramped and lacks an open feel.
- The building footprints are oversized compare to the area. The lack of outdoor space exacerbates the enclosed area (**p46**)
- The prevailing urban scale is important in **p47**. The grain, height, massing and bulking is a significant departure from the area. The overbearing square blocks inherently have a large mass.
- The roof offers no visual interest, is not detailed enough, and fails to respond to neighbouring buildings, as required by **p48**.
- The proposal fails to realise opportunities required by **p47**, by not increasing the connectivity of the area **p66**.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)**

- The poor layout and design of the development means it is inappropriate and fails to fulfill **127b**.
- The bulk, massing, density, height, proportions and layout are not sympathetic to local character. It is contrary to **127c**.
- The lack of improvement to local character, and fundamental damage to the way the community functions is in conflict with **130**.

# What should I include?

## Traffic

Traffic being influenced by the economy, and the influx of residents to the Borough, makes their traffic assessment's assumptions inappropriate.

62% of residents commute by car. There is no reason to think this development will be different.

**If you have photos of the traffic, send them in with your objection!**

## Parking

Again, **send in photos** if you have them.

### **Parking Standards SPD (2018)**

The Council requires parking spaces according to this document.

We've done some calculations and found that the Stadium alone requires:

- 278 normal spaces
- 365 disabled parking bays

It has only **~60 spaces** for officials and disabled visitors during matches. This is 583 spaces short, or 9% of the requirement.

The residential aspect requires a minimum of 791 spaces according to policy. It provides **791 spaces** including visitor parking. Only 725 are allocated spaces. However, current car ownership in the borough is 1.4 per household (**Woking Demographic Profile**). This is not reflected in the proposal.

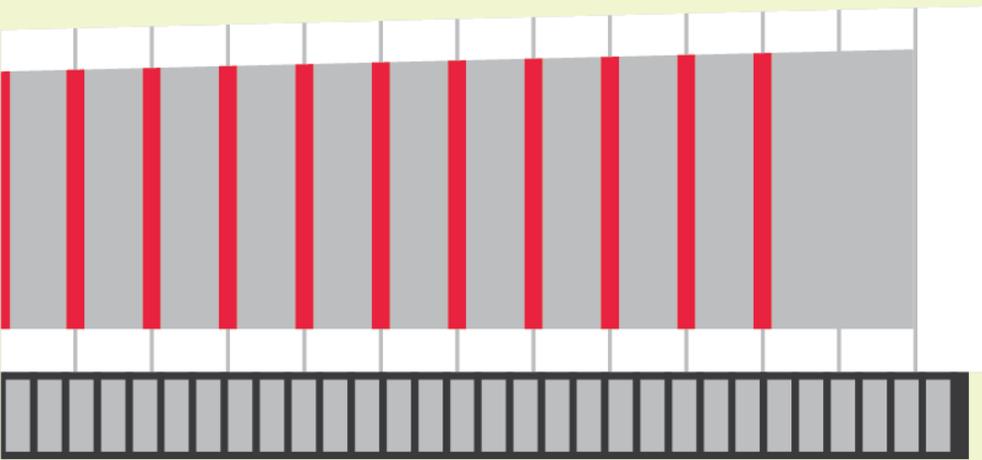
# What to avoid?

There are things that you should probably avoid. These things aren't "material considerations" (they can't legally influence the decision), and include:

- Effects on property value
- Loss of a private view (although overbearing, privacy, and public visual amenity are considered)
- Matters covered by other laws (such as private disputes)
- Covenants and byelaws (though these can be a matter for the courts)
- Anything personal about those applying for planning permission

For more information, and to keep up to date, visit

[www.southwokingactiongroup.org.uk](http://www.southwokingactiongroup.org.uk)



# How should I write it?

Remember, a template isn't the most effective objection. Add your unique flair to your writing. Below is an example structure on how you could write your objection.

[Date]

Dear Mr. Bailey,

I'd like to object to **PLAN/2019/1176** and **PLAN/2019/1177**.

**Bulk it out with your objections, for example...**

The proposed blocks are Tall Buildings. According to the Woking Design SPD (2015), they are not allowed outside of the core of the Town Centre as defined in the Core Strategy (2012). This proposal therefore contradicts policy CS1 of the Core Strategy.

[Your name]

[Your Address]

Try to get your objection in before the **10<sup>th</sup> January 2020**. If you're late, not to worry! You can submit up to the date that the Council reaches its decision.