



Land South of Kingfield Road and East of Westfield Avenue,

Westfield, Woking, Surrey, GU22 9PF.

Appeal by Goldev Woking Ltd

LPA Ref: PLAN/2019/1176

PINS Reference: APP/A3655/W/20/3265969

South Woking Action Group

Summary of Proof of Evidence of Mrs Katie Bowes

- 1.1 My name is Katie Bowes, I am a local resident and a member of the South Woking Action Group. I live in the Willow Reach development which is located directly opposite the proposed development site.
- 1.2 My husband and I moved from London to Willow Reach to purchase a family home. The Willow Reach development and the surrounding area with its village feel, out of town centre location but large selection of amenities on our doorstep appealed to us because it was so far removed from the overdevelopment and apartment towers of London. This proposed development in terms of its scale, height and density appears reminiscent of the London style apartments that my husband and I moved away from.

- 1.3 Willow Reach, where I live is a new build development, the scale and density of this development was a departure from the existing character of the neighbourhood. However the predominant style of terraced homes, with 5 apartment towers which blend in to the rest of the development and do not stand out compared to the homes, is a design that respects the characteristics of family style homes with gardens that exist in Kingfield and Westfield. Additionally the location of the apartment blocks was designed in such a way to not impact the existing dwellings neighbouring the development but rather those within the Willow Reach development. Additionally Willow Reach development provided a significant benefit to the community with the regeneration and remediation of the Westfield Tip site, the decontamination and flood mitigation for Hoe Valley, the creation of a 63 acre Wetland Reserve, two new footbridges and a significant contribution (1/2) towards WBC's housing provision requirements for the year (292 dwellings per year). Woking Borough Council's Planning Committee's approval summary for the Willow Reach development concluded that Willow Reach provided 'a high quality residential environment that makes best use of urban land without detriment to the character of the area, neighbours amenities or the wider environment'. Balance is possible with new development and indeed in this area.
- 1.4 The proposed development if the appeal is successful would be detrimental to the character of the local area and does not appear to have any real benefit to the community to justify the significant impact it would have. Additionally the Hoe Valley ward has been the consistent focus for housing development since 2018/19 and Goldev's proposal only seeks to significantly heighten this imbalance of development in the Hoe Valley ward versus other wards within Woking.
- 1.5 Willow Reach development meets the parking standards required by Woking, however with the flats only having one allocated parking space, and with most residents of those flats owning more than 1 car, these cars are then parked on the pavement. This creates issues for pedestrians, poor

visibility for other drivers and in some instances may impede emergency vehicle access. On match days, football fans park in the visitor spaces and alongside the pavements within Willow Reach creating more chaos to an already difficult parking situation. Using Willow Reach as an example residents of the proposed new development may also have more than one car, those visiting the medical centre or football stadium are likely to drive, what this is likely to create is more inappropriate parking within Willow Reach and the other sites that neighbour the proposed development.

- 1.6 South Woking Action Group was formed in July 2019 following a significant number of concerns raised by local residents about the size, scale, density and impact this proposed development could have on the local neighbourhood. The core group of committee members quickly gained hundreds of local residents as supporters of SWAG who shared the same concerns regarding the proposed development and also concerns about the viability of the scheme and also relationships between Woking Borough Council, Woking Football Club and Goldev Woking Ltd.
- 1.7 This appeal should be refused, the potential negative impact of this proposed development on the local area far outweighs any perceived benefit of a new football stadium and is no longer supported by Woking FC itself. We would welcome a Willow Reach style family housing style development, respectful of policy compliant densities, with sufficient parking, offset by necessary investment in local highways, local education provision and local parking solutions.