



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 Proof of Evidence of Neil Jarman

I present evidence as a long-standing local resident on behalf of SWAG. My evidence concerns the developing appeal site SADPD policy, the character of the area, housing mix and parking provision.

1.0 Site Allocations Development Plan Document

- 1.1 At the 2019 Public Examination of the draft SADPD Savills on behalf of Goldev Woking sought the text supporting the site be amended to generally reflect the appeal scheme.
- 1.2 They argued for tall buildings, to remove the specific reference to car parking standards and *“an appropriate mix of market housing to generate the necessary value”*.
- 1.3 At the hearing it was noted that 1,000 dwellings would result in an out of character 330-400 dph. WBC officers advised the site was not suitable for tall buildings, parking standards should be retained (for residential and stadium uses) and retail on the site should be for local needs only. 50% affordable housing was argued because of the public land ownership. There was no justification for a 10,000 capacity stadium, given the small match crowds .
- 1.4 The Inspector rejected Savills proposals in his post hearings letter stating the housing quantum be calculated in line with the lower densities and affordable housing Core Strategy policies.
- 1.5 WBC’s consultation response gives a residential yield for the site of just 93 dwellings.

2.0 The Character of the Area in the Vicinity of the Appeal Site

- 2.1 Core Strategy and Woking Design Guide SPD directs the development of tall buildings in Woking to the town centre the edge of which is 700m north of the appeal site.

- 2.2 A survey of the site surround shows the overwhelming majority of the buildings around the site are 1,2 or 3 storeys only.
- 2.3 At the 2020 Poole Road planning appeal the Inspector noted that areas outside the town centre core with a predominantly low-rise character are not considered suitable for tall buildings.
- 2.4 The officers' report to committee on the application argued that the stadium site would create its own environment. However, that new environment would be limited to the one central boulevard and the short spurs off that only. Outside the site the multiple towers would impact the extensive surrounding residential and leisure areas.
- 2.5 The 29-34m high appeal buildings would tower over existing adjacent residences.
- 2.6 The proposed site density matches that proposed for Woking Town Centre not that for High Density Areas which are seen as a transition between the town centre and the outer areas.
- 2.7 On the west side of Westfield Avenue Willow Reach has a residential density of 80 dph with other roads lower than that.
- 2.8 Before Willow Reach was built the site was subject to a planning inquiry for a Tesco foodstore. The inspector commented that the supermarket building would be totally out of scale with the surrounding dwellings and that the store and Leslie Gosden Stand would in combination also be visually overbearing.
- 2.9 In this case the new residential buildings are far larger in bulk and height than that proposed foodstore.

3.0 Housing Mix

- 3.1 The appeal scheme proposes a substantial over supply of market 1- and 2-bedroom residences and undersupply of 3- and 4-bedroom residences. For the affordable housing there is a significant over supply of 2-bed residences and under supply of 3-bed residences.
- 3.2 The excess of smaller properties would likely put an undue demand on local resources for primary age and younger children in particular.

3.3 Since 2010 there has been an overall oversupply of 1- and 2-bedroom properties of 22% and under supply of 3-bedroom properties of 23% in Woking.

4.0 Parking

- 4.1 Just 60 parking spaces and one coach space are proposed to serve the stadium, the medical centre and retail, being less than 10% of the SPD maximum standard.
- 4.2 Residential parking SPD standards have been upheld at a recent Rydens Way planning appeal.
- 4.3 The ES recognises matchday parking to be an existing problem. Hundreds of local residents have listed parking as a problem in their objection letters. A 50% larger stadium (if used as the appellants believe) would make matters worse.
- 4.4 The applicants' parking beat survey failed to record 120 parking spaces being used specially for the match surveyed off Loop Road, stadium parking in three areas totalling some 123 spaces or 42 cars parked in Turnoak Avenue. Turnoak Lane was identified having many parking spaces when actually has none. The area covered was inadequate too.
- 4.5 Adding signage and a few extra buses will not address the matchday parking issue. More street parking further away will inconvenience more residents and inevitably more will seek to squeeze into inappropriate gaps on roads nearest the stadium.
- 4.6 The disruption caused by stadium parking is not a new issue. The 1997 Tesco Planning Inquiry Inspector noted there was parking on grass verges and concluded *"In my view on match days those living there already experience conditions which are not normally regarded as acceptable within a residential area"*.
- 4.7 The proposed use of Blue and Yellow town centre carparks for stadium users is not credible given the freely available street parking closer to the stadium. Saturday town centre parking for the football stadium would clash with town centre shopping and leisure activities.
- 4.8 Providing the maximum parking SPD standards at the site (or nearby) would contribute significantly to the control of street parking associated with the stadium.

- 4.9 The Stadium plan shows disabled seating in all four stands, but most of those would be distant from the parking area which has no disabled parking bays indicated.
- 4.10 As only 5 visitor parking spaces will be provided, 80 short of the parking SPD rate there is potential for disruption for local residents by visitors parking on local roads.
- 4.11 In particular Willow Reach residents will suffer the cumulative impact of stadium and residential visitor parking.
- 4.12** It is unclear how the 20 tandem parking spaces in the basement of Block 5 will be used as only the eight 3-bed townhouses are expected to have 2 parking spaces.

END