

Comments for Planning Application PLAN/2020/0568

Application Summary

Application Number: PLAN/2020/0568

Address: Land To The North And South Of Goldsworth Road Woking Surrey GU21 6JT

Proposal: Demolition of all existing buildings and redevelopment of the site for a phased mixed-use scheme, comprising 965 residential units (Class C3), communal residential and operational spaces, commercial uses (Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/B1/D1/D2) at ground floor and homeless shelter (sui generis) within 5 blocks of varying heights of between 9 and 40 storeys (plus rooftop amenity) to the north and south sides of the site together with soft and hard landscaping including public realm works, highway alterations to Goldsworth Road, car parking, cycle parking, bin storage, ancillary facilities and plant (Environmental Statement submitted).

Case Officer: Brooke Bougnague

Customer Details

Name: Mr Gordon Dow

Address: 5 Cedar Gardens, St Johns, Woking, Surrey GU21 7JB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Resident (local res.- member of public)

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- High-over density of development
- Impact of development
- Out of Character

Comment: This is yet another development involving multi-storey blocks which are totally out of keeping for Woking. It is interesting that The Proposed Development part of the Planning Statement appears to be silent on the height of the various buildings but I think the highest is 40 or 41 storeys. So even higher than the ones which are currently under construction and which are so unsightly from everywhere in the surrounding areas. The statement mentions the "Woking Tall Buildings' Design Review Panel" having been consulted but I am unable to find any evidence of the existence of such a panel, nor its members.

Also the number of car parking spaces at 1 per dwelling is totally unrealistic. Fine in an ideal world but not in practice.

And assuming these dwellings are all occupied, with many travelling into London, how will the trains cope, assuming traffic levels return to pre-COVID levels?

Some 60% of the units are either studio or 1 bed apartments - is that the sort of properties which are really needed?

Only 5% to the units are deemed to be affordable compared with a requirement of 40%, and the only justification for this is the provision of the homeless shelter and some greenery!

But I would also query the role of the developer, EcoWorld London. They appear to have only been in existence since 2015 in this country, and are largely Malaysian/Chinese/Singaporean owned. Does WBC have some kind of solid financial guarantee which would fund the completion of these buildings should the developer decided to pull out or get into financial difficulty? It is stated that "EcoWorld London is heavily invested in Woking" but no evidence is provided to back up this extraordinary statement, apart from providing premises for the Useful Wood Company.

This planning application should be refused on the grounds that the design is totally out of keeping for Woking, it does not provide the required amount of affordable housing and I would also seek evidence that the developer has the resources to guarantee completing the project.