

Residents reaction to ecoworld’s announcement to reduce height of “Greening Goldsworth Road” mega development

This is the response to the announcement from ecoworld to reduce the height of the highest building by 4 storeys and the total number of flats by 36 in their planning application for “Greening Goldsworth Road” as outlined in this tweet by Councillor Will Foster:

<https://twitter.com/WillForster/status/1327993519399710723?s=08>

Here a few observation:

- We are glad to hear that ecoworld is aware of residents concerns about the height and decided to act upon it.
- However, taking off 4 storeys might align the height (albeit not number of storeys) with the previously approved scheme in that area, it still does not align with the previous scheme on other massive concerns around the density, scale, massing, mix, separation distance, impact on light and sun within the new buildings and adjacent properties and so on.
- We also believe that with five towers instead of three it will have a negative impact on Woking’s townscape and on Victoria Square as the flagship development, especially since even with 37 instead of 41 storeys it continues to overshadow Victoria Square’s 34 storeys.

For ease of reference, here is a table that compares the current proposal (including latest amendments) with the 2016 scheme:

2016 SCHEME PLAN/2016/0742	2020 PROPOSAL PLAN/2020/0568	COMMENT
Only one side of Goldsworth Road	Both sides of Goldsworth Road	The new development is significantly larger, adding a 29 storey tower block and York Road premises at the other side of
3 tower blocks	5 tower blocks	Two more blocks that are out of sync with townscape: one with 29 storeys plus the York Road premises (funded by council)
10 to 34 storeys high <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block A = ground plus 34 storeys • Block B = ground plus 25 and 20 storeys • Block C = ground plus 17, 14 and 10 storeys 	9 to 37 (previously 41) storeys high <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T1 = 12, 16 and 21 storeys • T2 = 20 and 29 storeys • T3 = 37 (prev 41) storeys • BA = 29 storeys • BB (York road project) = 9 storeys 	The height of the highest tower might be the same as the previous scheme (as per ecoworld’s claime) but the number of storeys is higher: ground plus 34 vs 37 storeys. Also the second highest towers are still much higher than the towers in the previous scheme (two 29 storey towers vs one 25 storey)

560 dwellings	929 (previously 965) dwellings	The number was reduced by 36 dwellings which is still 369 dwellings more
Separation distance was 32 and 35 metres	Separation distance between the blocks is between 26.17m and 20.2m (violating planning policy)	The Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight SPD makes it clear that there should be a separation distance of 30m between buildings three stories and higher. At Victoria square it is between 30 and 40m.
Density: 746 dwellings per hectare (dph)	Density: approx. 807 dph (previously 839 dph)	This density is still significantly higher than the previous scheme and still something more alike to inner city development. For comparison, the density of the two towers in Victoria square is 660 dph.
Impact on adjacent buildings: 34.19% falling below the BRE standard for Vertical Sky Component (access to sun) and 7% below for for No-Sky Line (access to light)	Impact on adjacent buildings: 61.1% are below the BRE standard for Vertical Sky Component (sun) and 66% are below the standard for No-Sky Line (light).	The impact on access to sun and light for adjacent buildings is twice and six times higher in the new development than in the previous scheme.
Out of all habitable rooms, 86% have enough light and 80% enough sun.	Out of all habitable rooms, 1/5 don't have enough light and 1/4 don't get enough sun	Access to sun and light are worse than in the previous scheme. Satisfactory living conditions are not being provided through the site of the new development.
395 parking spaces	216 parking spaces	Even though there number of dwellings is much higher, there are nearly half the number of parking spaces provided.

Please also find attached the independent assessment that we commissioned on the planning application as well as a summary of its finding.

Please do not hesitate to get in contact for any questions.

Best wishes,

Bernadette Fischler and the Oaks and Vale Farm Road Residents Group