

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 Bounague

Customer Details

Name: Mr Casper Gray

Address: 69 Vale Farm Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6DN

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
- Loss of privacy
- Out of Character
- Overlooking

Comment: Height Scale - Assessment of PLAN/2016/0742 versus PLAN/2020/0568:

PLAN/2016/0742 - Called for the demolition and clearance of the site and erection of a phased development comprising including:

560 residential units.

10,582 sqm of offices.

843 sqm of retail and gym use.

395 parking spaces, public realm improvements and highway works to Goldsworth Road.

Block A = ground plus 34 storeys.

Block B = ground plus 25 and 20 storeys.

Block C = ground plus 17, 14 and 10 storeys.

PLAN/2020/0568 - Calls for the 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.

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).

This is a considerable increase in the number of homes (405 more) and number of blocks for which planning was granted in 2016.

CS 21 says development should be attractive with their own distinct identity, should respect and make positive contribution to street scene and character of the area paying due regard to scale, height, proportions, layout and materials etc. This development is higher than any other on the town centre (Victoria Square is up to 34 storeys) and also higher than the previously approved scheme (up to 39 storeys). Any buildings in direct vicinity and adjacent, except the Premier Inn are 2,3, 4 storeys high. Victoria Square is on the other side of the street, smaller buildings are in between. This is definitely not a positive contribution to the street scene.

This scheme is not paying due respect to scale, height, proportional and layout of the area. While there is Victoria square on the other side of the street and some tower blocks on the other side of the railway line, two sides are residential areas with family houses, many of them from the Victorian era or in keeping with that style. Victoria Square was supposed to be an aesthetic flagship/focal point for the town centre; this takes attention away from Victoria square.

CS 24 states that development in this location should enhance the townscape character of Woking Town Centre, taking into account views and landmarks, appropriate building styles and materials. Note that Woking Town Centre's border is right next to the edge of the development. It is not justifiable and well designed to have the highest town centre development right at the edge for residential areas, the 'peak' should be in the middle and height declining towards the edges of the town centre.

This does not enhance the townscape character, it ruins it. It also undermines plans for Victoria Square to be landmark development, which will impact on sales and rental income of private and

commercial property in Victoria Square.

Density - CS 10 says that indicative density range should be 200 dwellings. There is no upper limit but the 2020 plan is 4 times more than given permission in 2016, thus surely too many. The previous scheme had approx same max height as Victoria Square and almost half as many dwellings, which would have been a lot more appropriate. The previous scheme would have been much better in this regard. What is the justification for this increase in massing, density and number of dwellings?