

From: Joanna R Lloyd [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 August 2020 15:46
To: DevelopmentControl
Subject: PLAN/2020/0568 - Letter of Objections

Joanna Lloyd and David Lucking

Road,

GU22 7XN

August 2020

From:

41 York

Woking,

Surrey

4th

Dear Brooke Bournague,

Objections to Planning Application PLAN/2020/0568 Land to the North and South of Goldsworth Road, Woking GU21 6JT

We object to this planning application in the strongest terms. It is totally inappropriate in height, proportions, bulk, density & use. The scale, massing and design is more in-keeping to an inner city location rather than a Surrey town. We object on the following planning policy grounds:

Policy CS1 states proposals “could include tall buildings....but without compromising on its character & appearance & that of nearby areas”. While this a town centre proposal, the negative visual impact of these proposed tower blocks is felt by a considerably larger area and in a detrimental way. It creates a visually high skyline of buildings where there was none before. There is nothing attractive about a mass of tower blocks.

The character and appearance of nearby areas in Goldsworth Road, Oaks Road, and over the railway in Mount Hermon ward, which consists exclusively of terraced and semi-detached houses, many from Edwardian and Victorian era will be totally totally compromised.

Woking is a town not a city.

Policy CS2 states that proposals should have “high quality, well designed public spaces” and “add to its (town centre’s) attractiveness”. Yet a series of 5 tower blocks will only create unpleasant micro-climates and wind tunnels for pedestrians like the ones that have already been created in and around the town centre area.

The current pandemic must now be considered in the planning process – residents stuck in flats without personal gardens is undesirable and does not help the physical and mental health of residents.

Policy CS10 states that the indicative housing density range should be 200 dwellings per hectare minimum. This proposal has 839 dwellings per hectare. This is an excessive increase and cannot be justified in terms of sustainability or character of the area. Both are compromised.

The tallest tower exceeds that of the current town centre construction which is already a blight on the skyline. It adds nothing to an already characterless town centre that is being realised as a destination for cars with nothing for existing residents but a visual mess, windswept urban corridors and a vast increase in pressure on local amenities and services.

As with all the recent large town centre developments, the ground floor shop units will remain vacant and will in years to come be allowed to change use to ground floor flats and thus creating a dead streetscape.

Inventing a skyline with no character adds nothing to the character of the town except a series of unpleasant wind tunnels for those at pavement level.

This is radically changing the character of the area.

Policy CS10 says that Woking will build 2,300 new homes in Woking Town Centre between 2010 and 2027. This development provides 965 new homes, together with other current proposals and constructions this is in excess of requirements laid down by the Councils core planning strategy.

Policy CS11 requires a mix of housing types and sizes. This proposal appears to be flats. The Woking 2027 Core Strategy states that there is an anticipated increase in the elderly population, if that is so, then proposals such as this one are not going to deliver housing for the local population that is appropriate.

Nor do tower blocks engender the “creation of a strong community spirit” (Woking 2027 Core Strategy).

Policy CS12 The planning application states affordable housing as 5%. Policy CS12 requires 35%. It fails to deliver sufficient affordable housing.

Policy CS18 The provision of yet more flats is clearly aimed at the London commuter population. The rail services are clearly struggling to cope with the current numbers of users.

Policy CS 21 states that development should be attractive with its 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. However, the proposal does not fulfil this criteria. Buildings in the area are only 2,3, 4 storeys high.

This proposal is definitely not a positive contribution to the street scene, which will become a windswept micro climate. This development is higher than any other on the town centre proposal (Victoria square is up to 34 storeys) and it is also higher than the previously approved scheme (up to 39 storeys). This is a negative contribution to the character of the area, it neither respects or compliments existing buildings.

Policy CS 24 states that future development should be well-suited and sensitive to its location to protect the Borough’s different character areas. This proposal clearly does not fulfil this policy requirement.

Finally, we would like to state that the local population have endured many years of noise & air pollution, as well as massive disruption to the town centre and local roads caused by on going town centre construction and by Days Aggregates. It seems that the new town centre could be a very large white elephant given the current circumstances - which are possibly changing peoples habits forever. The addition of yet more tower blocks will have a detrimental impact on the character and design of the town.

This may not be the appropriate time to be considering large planning applications.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Lloyd and David Lucking