

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 929 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 37 storeys (including 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) (amended plans and reports received 13.11.2020).

Case Officer: Brooke Bougnague

Customer Details

Name: Mr Roger Nuttall

Address: 38 Orchard Drive, Horsell, Woking, Surrey GU21 4BW

Comment Details

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

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- High-over density of development
- Highway reasons - parking
- Impact of development
- Loss of privacy
- Out of Character
- Overlooking
- Traffic Volume

Comment: 'New' Goldsworth Development Planning Submission : PLAN/2020/0568

Notes by Roger Nuttall, one of the objectors, copied to the Planning Control Officer and all Members of the Planning Committee

Resident Involvement: Key Dates

Letters to some 'close' residents 16 November 2020

Informed comments required by 12 December 2020

The date of the Planning Meeting 12 January 2011 announced just prior to Christmas ,

Planning Control Officer's Report (85 un-numbered pages) placed on the planning control development portal on 5th January 2020.

Unsolicited comments by the developer ecoworld on their 'Greening Goldsworth Road' leaflet - sent to all Planning Committee members very recently.

The above sequence of resident involvement, with Christmas in between, is probably the shortest time sequence ever for resident involvement, made much more difficult by the late arrival of the Officer's report, and the biased Ecoworld 'Greening Goldsworth' document.

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Comments : Ecoworld leaflet

The Town Centre (ie the InnerTown Centre), comprising the Victoria Square, the new Victoria Place, and the other existing retail and leisure areas are very close to this new proposed development. They will be more than enough 'public realm' areas for the Goldsworth development residents, and do we really need 12 additional shops ?

Green Space: 916% biodiversity increase. A meaningless figure. The artist's impressions showing greenery filling up many of the North-facing room balconies might look attractive but surely must obscure apartment views. These do not seem to appear on any of the elevation drawings put forward by the developer.

The new York Project Project Development is smaller compared to the building put forward in the June 2020 Ecoworld proposal, and will be financed by Woking Council (13 November 2020 Financial Viability Addendum.) As a number of residents have pointed out, this important Town Centre facility must not be linked to the Goldsworth project.

'The height of the tallest building has reduced in response to local feedback' 'Hardly at all' is the real answer, and it still stands taller than the Victoria residential towers in views relative to ground level. It should be remembered that Woking Town Centre tower building maximum heights were not specified in the 2012 Core Strategy, and due to poor 'artist impression' information available to residents and councillors prior to planning approval, very few realised the truly massive heights that have emerged.

Provision of 1000 cycle spaces. Who will actually use cycles? The Woking Inner Town Centre has very poor cycling facilities . The Canal Towpath is unsafe due to nearby water access and criminal activities, there are no proper cycling facilities in the Town Centre itself, and in roads

surrounding the Town Centre, and cycling to the South of the railway will get worse after the problematic road changes planned South of Victoria . Most residents will need cars in the Town Centre, especially if they do not commute, for weekend use, and many other reasons. Electric cars are the green way forward and many are now appearing. This proposed development has a very low level of car parking spaces. Continued Car Club membership is expensive and impractical.

'Designed with neighbours in mind'. I hardly think so, just look at the massive number of objections! The reference back to the 2016 Goldsworth proposal is flawed, as very few residents were aware of this application. The 'near residents' list was extremely small, but very critical. For example no Horsell residents were on the list .

'Your Officer concludes that the scheme provides an acceptable relationship with surrounding neighbours in terms of light, overbearing , and overlooking impacts' . He is very incorrect in saying this. Residents close to the site, in Horsell, in the West approaches to the site, and the high buildings (eg Heights) South of the site will be badly effected , both night and day.

'929 new homes, helping to meet your housing targets '

The actual requirement for new homes in the Borough is under debate at present, and the development of the Masterplan for the Town Centre is part of the discussion.

The mix of accommodation sizes for this application is very poor. The true figures are 16% Studio, 43% one bedroom, 38% two bedroom, 3% 3 bedroom. There is increasing evidence, for very many social and behavioural reasons, that flatted developments need to include a mix of young and older people, including families. This development does not comply in any way with this approach.

'48(5%) on-site affordable homes.....' is an extremely low provision. The 'review mechanism' affording future viability is concealed within Ecoworld's 13 November 2020 'Viability Addendum'. It appears to be a mechanism to increase the number of affordable homes if the financial viability of the development turns out well for the developer. However this will also require the Council to contribute to the cost of this, and will probably involve an even greater Government Borrowing requirement.

The Officer's report includes many of the objections, discusses some of them in detail, but seems to ignore them in his conclusions to recommend planning approval. The relatively few objections tend to be given pride of place.

SADPD Compliance

Anyone examining the present version of the SADPD would realise that the area used by this development is represented by three separate sites: SA11, SA12, SA13, whose total of allowed dwellings is 560. It is sometimes argued that SADPD entries are only an indication of suitable

areas for future development, but in reality other information, including dwelling numbers, is always indicated. This new Goldsworth development is extremely large (929 dwellings), and should be submitted to the Government as a separate SA identity.

Summary

There are clearly many major problems associated with this application, and one committee member may have had significant contact with the developer in the past and with the preparation of the Planning Officer's report.

Given the late presentation of the Officer's report, the planning committee members and residents have not been given sufficient time to examine the complicated and contradictory 84 page report and the many documents confusingly presented by the developer. A fair presentation of the report to the Committee tonight cannot possibly be realised.

In addition, what is the need for haste for this application, given the lengthy lockdown and economic uncertainty ahead?

As the Leader of the Council has said on a number of occasions, she wants to work with residents in developing a Masterplan for developing the remainder of the overall Town Centre Masterplan in the post-Victoria Square period.

Considering the wealth of problems with this impractical application, the application should be refused, and considered again once the Town Centre masterplan has been completed.

I appreciate my comments to you could also be classed as 'unsolicited', but hopefully you will understand why I have sent them .

Roger Nuttall