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From: Chris Pickard | Critical Divide <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 05 December 2020 17:01
To: DevelopmentControl
Subject: PLAN/2020/0568 (Goldsworth Road)

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PLAN/2020/0568 (Goldsworth Road)

To Whom It May Concern from Mr Christopher Pickard, 176 Centrium, Station Approach, Woking GU22 7PE

I object to the proposed development (PLAN/2020/0568)

Having spent over two years as a resident of the Centrium overlooking the Victoria Square development, with all the noise and disruption it has caused, I would hardly welcome another major project right in front of my apartment which will almost certainly wipe out any remaining view I have. But I appreciate views are not a reason for complaint, although why you build towers like Victoria Square and then put a building site in front of them, lowering the rental value for many years to come, I can't quite fathom unless the Council has some considerable surplus funds.

If it is not loss of view, the new development certainly infringes privacy and light, and combined with the Victoria Square development will mean many apartments (certainly all in the Centrium looking west) and many other buildings will be blocked from any direct sunlight for most of the year.

So let us address some more focussed issues.

1. Has anyone done any tests for sound? Living in the Centrium it is very obvious that the noise of trains in the apartments has been greatly amplified following the construction of Victoria Square as you are putting the trains in basically a concrete tunnel with no escape for the noise, other than to bounce off the buildings. The project for Goldsworth Road can only make this considerably worse and impact more residents. I suggest you make a proper study to find out the real impact on sound these constructions have long term (not even considering the noise to be created by the construction itself over several more years).

2. If the aim of these developments is to encourage people to visit or live in Woking, then I am afraid in some cases it is having the opposite effect. The disruption to the traffic flow caused by the Victoria Square construction, and which would be made worse by the Goldsworth Road project, has made many people choose to avoid Woking altogether.

The project to widen Victoria Bridge to change the traffic flow will almost certainly create even more disruption over many months to the traffic, and if the Goldsworth Road project was to occur at the same time it would cut many of us off, or lead to lengthy detours, which we have found ourselves having to take to visit Morrisons, the town's major supermarket, which has been almost cut off from many residents for several weeks at a time.

Has a proper study been made to the impact on the traffic flow of having the bridge widening and Goldsworth Road development happening at the same time?

If the traffic disruption continues many people will choose not to come to shop in Woking and that could be the death knell for many of the businesses (shops, restaurants, etc) who have suffered so badly during 2020. If you end up with an empty shopping mall, you have big problems.

3. It would seem sensible and prudent, given what has happened in the world over the last 12 months, for the Council to wait on any decision to proceed with the Goldsworth Road development to see exactly how the Victoria Square development beds in, as a second such development may cause major financial damage to the first, leaving Woking with two white elephants (three if shops continue to close their doors in the shopping centre) and leaving the tax payers a large bill to help dig the Council out of a hole it has dug for itself.

A final observation I would make is that the city of Las Vegas found itself the target for much negative PR, as visitors complained of the city being simply an ongoing building site, giving nobody any chance to actually enjoy improvements that have been made. Having made the large investment in Victoria Square, it begins to look as if the Council doesn't care if the existing residents get to benefit from it.

If you do go ahead with the Goldsworth Road project I suggest as compensation you do not take any council tax off any residents located close by, or overlooking the site, that will have to go through another number of extra years of disruption. There is no need for Woking Council to miss out on the tax, as this could be levied directly against the developer should they be serious of their intentions.

I commend the Council for trying to bring life back to the centre of Woking, but there is every chance that the Goldsworth Road development if it goes ahead will be the straw that breaks the camel's back of many of the current residents. I for one will certainly consider leaving Woking if the development goes ahead as I see no point living next to another major building site for two or three years at the very least.

Sincerely,

Christopher Pickard

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