

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 Bougnague

Customer Details

Name: Dr Maurice Sauer

Address: 140 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6NE

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
- Out of Character
- Traffic Volume

Comment: I'm keen to see development of the town centre end of Goldsworth Road. However, I have many concerns about the scale of Application 2020/0568.

Objections based on WBC Core Strategy:

CS1, CS21, CS24. Contrasting with Strategy aims relating to height, scale, massing and visual impact, it seems inappropriate and unjustified to have such a development outside the town centre (as bounded by Victoria Way) especially given that it is immediately adjacent to and rises ~ 20% higher than the landmark Victoria Square (VS) development. Further it is substantially higher than the development previously approved for this area in 2016. Rather than enhancing the street scene, because of excess height and mass, this will have negative impact, undermine the VS development in many ways and visibly shadow it from the western perspective. Other commercial and domestic buildings west of Victoria Way will be dwarfed. Further this would not represent good design since it compromises the character and appearance of nearby areas; it ill provides for gradual decreasing of height from the VS development moving out of the town centre towards more residential areas making for poor blending with the older existing properties.

CS7. On the subject of biodiversity, the application fails to make adequate assessments to evaluate how the development contributes to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and to determine that it will not have a potentially harmful effect. Similarly, under CS8 (Biodiversity; Thames Basin Heath) the outcome of habitats regulation assessments applying to potential impacts on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas (SPA) remain unclear.

CS10. This provides an indicative housing density of 200 dwellings/ ha minimum. Although there is no maximum density set, it is difficult to see how it could be justified to push the density up by x4 to the 839 dwellings/ha in the current application. This also represents a substantial increase from 746 approved for the superseded 2016 scheme which may have been more appropriate to a development (just) outside the town centre. CS 10 states that higher density will be permitted where it can be justified in terms of sustainability and where the character of the area would not be compromised. Clearly a development of this density could not fail to radically change the character of the area (taken with the VS development). It seems inappropriate that such a high proportion of Woking's new homes target (965 of 2,300 between 2010 and 2027) should be met in a single high density development and again, particularly given that there are 400 homes to be provided within VS. There could well be negative impact on other current lower density developments around Woking.

CS11 addresses the housing mix. Only 24 of the 965 homes (2%) are 3 bed and thus suitable for families. This represents a poor mix which does not address local needs.

CS 12 requires that affordable housing shall represent 40% of dwellings in new residential proposals of this size. It is wholly unacceptable that a meagre 5% affordable homes is proposed in this application particularly given that no justification for this is provided.

CS17 (Open space, green space and sport). The provision of small planted areas and roof gardens appear to be a rather tokenistic nod to the provision of proper amenities. Safe children's play areas, outdoor recreation/sports facilities, etc. are required to promote good health and what is planned is totally inadequate to the needs of such a large number of residents.

CS18 & CS21. It is not clear if adequate assessments have been made to ensure sustainable transport for what is likely to be a substantial increase in the number of commuters from Woking. This given the additional commuters arising from the VS development. There is likely to be substantial impact on traffic flow along the relatively narrow and width restricted Goldsworth Road unless adequate provision is made. A seemingly trivial example, but the sensitivity of Goldsworth Road traffic flow to minor influences is emphasised by the total blockage of the eastbound lane caused by cars accessing MacDonalds drive through on a number of occasions immediately after cessation of Covid-19 lockdown.

CS19 & CS16 (Social and community infrastructure). There is no clear Council provision for increased social and community infrastructure (schools, kindergartens, GP surgeries, youth clubs, community centres, etc) to accommodate this and the VS development. Services are already at their limits and timely planning for and delivery of additional services should be tied to the development.

CS 21. The Design & Accessibility Statement fails to give reassurance about the development's suitability. Parking. The assumption is made that most of the residents will not have cars (216 parking spaces, 916 dwellings). If this is ill founded, it is unclear how this substantial increase in

requirements for parking spaces in the vicinity would be met.