

# 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 Bournague

## Customer Details

Name: Mr Philip Whittingham

Address: The Oaks, Horsell Park, Horsell Woking, Surrey GU21 4LY

## 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
- Overlooking
- Traffic Volume

Comment: In view of the complexity and importance of this planning application it would be appropriate to ensure that all Planning Committee members had an opportunity to review resident submissions well in advance of the planning meeting.

## General

This scheme replaces a 2016 planning application for a development of 125 dwellings. The July 2019 SADPD referred to a possible increase to 560 dwellings, but the present proposal, not covered by an SADPD, greatly increases the land area to accommodate a huge development of nearly 1000 dwellings occupied by 2500 residents, with five tower blocks, some retail and leisure provision, pedestrianisation of part of Goldsworth Road, and accommodation for the York Road Project and the Woking Railway Athletic Club. This seems an extreme increase that is hard to see the demand

The scheme has been developed in conjunction with the Council over a long period of time, totally without the knowledge of residents. The presentation in Woking on January 30th 2020 was not well advertised. Just 62 Borough residents viewed the presentation. Some commented later, mostly unfavourably. Finally some 'near neighbours' have been advised of the very short 4-week period allowed for comments for this complex development, with its awkward presentation of many technical documents. The majority of the 100,000 or so Borough residents will be unaware of the opportunity at all. That is not an appropriate process.

In addition the developer has also been presenting their plans to a 'Design Review Panel', who in reality are a Design South East panel. DSE actively encourage tall building developments and have apparently been employed by WBC for some years. They have commented on the surprising lack of a Master Plan for the Town Centre development.

The development will have a great influence on whether all residents of the Borough will ultimately have a Town Centre they will be proud to visit or live in. In addition residents will face much Town Centre disruption during the eight year construction period (probably longer). In parallel to this there will be much additional disruption if WBC go ahead with other Town Centre developments they have in mind. Given the likely change in workalike patterns post Covid-19, it seems reckless to progress this development without a full understanding of amended future needs.

Tower Heights: The development consists of of 4 groups of residential tower blocks ranging in height from 41 storeys (160m which is as high as a Victoria Square tower block ) to 8 storeys, plus a 7 storey block for the York Road project. Two applications for high tower blocks post-Victoria Square have already been refused.

The mix of dwellings is very poor - far too many 1 and 2 person dwellings. The 48 (5%) affordable dwellings provision is nowhere near the Core Strategy requirement of 40%, but the developer declares that the profitability margin is unacceptable for higher AH provision. It's hard to understand why this was not discovered at an earlier stage of the development planning.

Visual impairment for residents living in the areas surrounding the Town Centre

Extreme visual over-dominance of tall tower blocks

Very annoying light pollution from tower block windows at night (ref Woking Design SPD)

Internal Daylight, Sunlight, and Overshadowing : The GIA report indicates a variable effect for these parameters, depending where residents are situated, particularly with respect to lack of good sunlight in some rooms , and at ground level due to sun shadows, so it is surprising that their overall conclusion says: 'As a result of the many considerations discussed above, the scheme will provide future residents with access to good levels of natural light overall'

Wind Turbulence caused by the high buildings.: The wind tunnel tests carried out show a

reasonably acceptable level of comfort levels, providing certain mitigations prove practical in reality. The tests do indicate a real problem for the very busy Victoria Way section just N of Victoria Arch.

Noise and dust from the South :The developer has identified problems, especially for South-facing residents from their near-railway dwellings, related to the noise created continuously day and night from the increasingly busy DayAggregates site, and the increasing number of through trains following the new Victoria Arch rail modifications. In addition these residents may suffer low frequency disruption, especially at night when the heavy D-A freight trains generally arrive. It is expected that dust created by the increasingly busy D-A activities will also affect residents

Noise and Traffic emissions caused by the A320 (Victoria Way ) will impact on residents .

Poole Road CHP Energy Centre chimney emissions : This development, presently being constructed, will emit NOx and is situated close to the new Goldsworth development.