



Ian Doyle
Director of Service Delivery
Guildford Borough Council
Millmead House
Guildford, GU2 4BB

Please reply to: Dr John Baylis
Secretary of the Guildford Society Planning
Applications Team
58 Warren Road
Guildford
GU1 2HH

Email: jandmbaylis@btopenworld.com

9th January 2021

Dear Mr Doyle

Location: Land South and East of The Cathedral Church Of The Holy Spirit, **Stag Hill, The Chase, Guildford, GU2 7UP**

Proposal: Demolition of existing Cathedral Close dwellings and erection of 124 no. residential units (including affordable housing) with associated engineering works, access, landscaping, parking and ancillary works.

Case Officer: Kelly Jethwa

This is an important scheme in a very sensitive location. The Society accepts that the evolution of the plans has gone a considerable way to providing a solution on a site, allocated in the Local Plan, that respects the Cathedral and minimises impact. As a housing development in terms of architecture and site plans it is superior to most projects being approved elsewhere in the borough. As detailed in the D&H statement the scheme has been worked on and refined over many variants and now integrates well with its site. The design is good and relates well to the landscaping and the topography.

We note that Historic England have after consultation, accepted that proposed development.

The Society considers that there are several issues that lack full information or require clarification before the application can be forwarded for determination.

A) Landscape and visual appraisal.

We note that the 'Statement of significance & heritage impact assessment' notes --- *'that it is the open land directly to the west and south of the Cathedral that is vital to protecting its setting as a Grade II* listed building. 4.7 It was these areas, together with a much smaller area directly to the east of the Cathedral, that Maufe eventually intended should be kept free of buildings of any kind'*

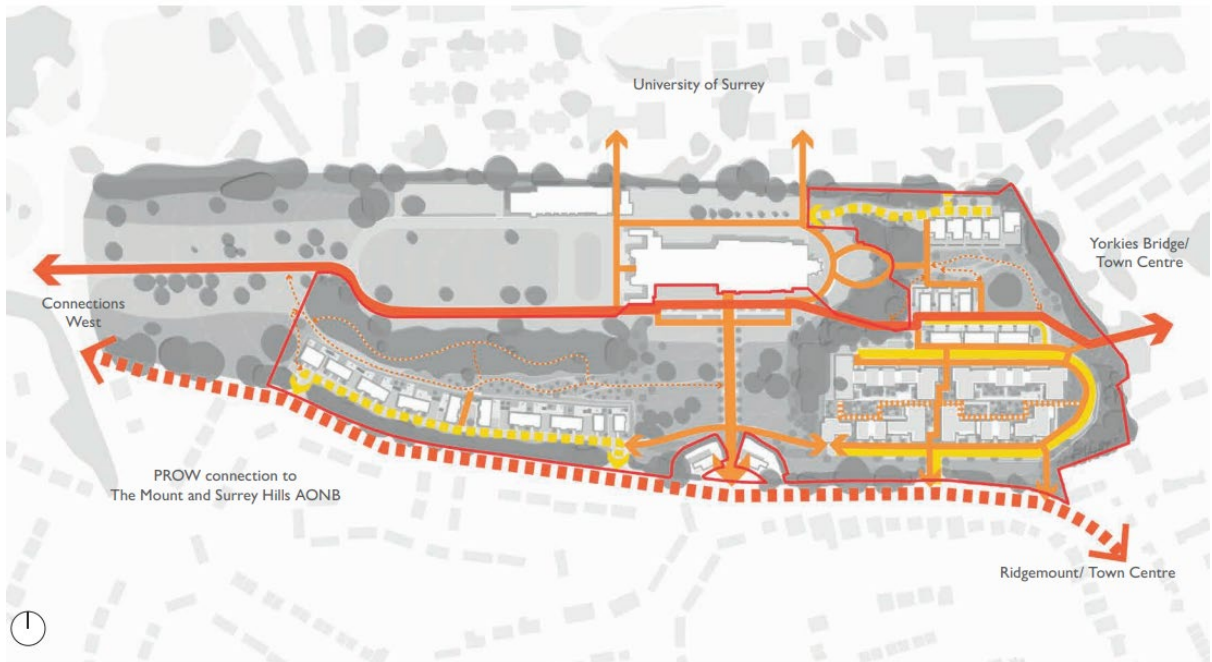
The Landscape and visual appraisal appears to be incomplete for an aspect of the scheme that has been identified as important for the setting of a Grade II* listed building.:

- a. Some of the views have a current picture but no after montage or statement that it is not applicable with a reason.
- b. The Visual Appraisal is also limited as it shows all views with foliage on the trees. For the close neighbourhood views, there should illustrations to show the new development with no leaf cover.
- c. There is no statement as to the possible light pollution at night from a development on a highly visible site.

The Society requests that the development is modelled within VU.City, which is now available to the GBC Planning Team, so its impact can be judged fully in context.

On such a sensitive site and after long debate about views of the cathedral (See Solum Appeal) it is vital the views of the site are shown both at street level and from afar.

B) Access



a. Pedestrian Access

The plans indicate that there will be a pedestrian access to the east through to Yorkies Bridge. The statements do not make it clear if this a committed scheme, have other landowners accepted this as a viable route through?

b. University Access

This is going to be provided at 2 points for pedestrians. In late 2019 the construction of a footbridge linking Guildford Business Park to the University of Surrey over the Wanborough railway line was approved. This bridge, once built, could provide a major desire line for pedestrian and cycling access across the proposed development, Cathedral and University. Has this demand been considered?

c. Vehicular Access

It is noted the access to major portion of the site is via Alresford Rd, Ridgemount and Stag Hill. All these roads have on street parking traffic and could become very congested. Guildford Park Rd is also heavily congested during peak periods.

Arlesford Road is part of a nominated sustainable movement corridor. Recent improvements have seen a cycle cut through upgraded between The Chase and



Arlesford Rd. How a cycle walking route interacts with the site access roads along a narrow Arlesford Rd is unclear.

It is not stated whether the traffic modelling includes deliveries (Vans Mopeds etc) which have experienced significant growth over the last 24 months.

We remain concerned that traffic of all modes in the immediate locality has not been fully considered.

C) Flooding

This has been an ongoing concern of local residents with the proposed plans. The Society notes that Surrey County Council have now expressed concerns on this matter. Is it clear that this development is not going to cause major issues for local residents and also the Cathedral?

D) Sustainability

- a. It is noted that the development will use Gas Boilers. At a time when other large developments in Guildford are adopting more sustainable heating technology this should be re-examined.
- b. The provision of 327 PV cells is welcome, how these are sited is important as they could provide a large reflective surface when viewed from the hills around the site - more details are needed.
- c. The buildings are described as designed to utilise solar gain, they must also be designed to limit solar gain during mid-summer. It is noted that although coated and argon filled windows are specified these transmit far more heat than equivalent walls especially as many windows are of a large size. Shading should be designed into the dwellings.

If these issues can be resolved The Society will support the application.

Yours Sincerely

Dr John Baylis

Secretary - Guildford Society Planning Applications Team