

## **THE PLANNING GROUP**

### **Report on the letters the group has written to Guildford Borough Council about planning applications submitted during the period 1 January to 30 June 2016**

*During 2016 the Planning Group has consisted of John Baylis, Gordon Bridger, Amanda Mullarkey, David Ogilvie, Martin Taplin, Anthony Umney and John Wood. Ian Macpherson has been invaluable as a corresponding member.*

The Planning Group has continued to meet every three weeks at the Guildford Borough Council (“GBC”) offices.

During the first six months of 2016 there were 1,405 planning applications recorded at GBC. This is possibly a record number of applications in a six month period. There have been many very minor applications and it begs the question whether the planning system is over complicated and, in some cases, strictly necessary. It should be possible to streamline the system and requirements so that not all these applications require so much time spent in dealing with them through the medium of the planning system. There appears to have been a proliferation of applications for Certificates of Lawfulness and perhaps this has made a difference to the number of applications we are currently seeing. We sifted through these applications and looked in detail at 95 of them over this period. The Group wrote 45 letters to the Head of Planning Services on a wide range of individual planning applications. This means we wrote about nearly half the applications we looked at – is the quality of applications submitted falling?

As usual, the most applications in a single category we wrote about was about signs, mainly hanging or projecting, in and around the High Street Conservation Area. We wrote 13 such letters (only 5 in the previous six months) either because we considered they were too large (there is a general presumption that the maximum size should be no larger than 600mm x 600mm) or because the proposal was that they should be internally illuminated (GBC policy precludes such illumination in this area). In every case the officers in GBC agreed with us and thus, of those 13 applications, 12 were refused and 1 was withdrawn. This would suggest that applicants either do not think to consider the normal requirements here in Guildford or they are trying it on.

Of the remaining 32 applications to which we made comment 2 were supporting letters, 6 applications were withdrawn, 10 were refused, 9 were approved and 5 have not yet been decided. Only two appeals were submitted against the 22 refused applications and neither of them has been decided. This shows a good record of decision making by GBC on the applications where we wrote objecting to the proposals – few of those refusals have been challenged. Sometimes some of the withdrawn applications are subsequently resubmitted after amendments have been made. Only 9 applications out of our 45 letters

of objection were approved and for 3 of those our letter was not recorded as having been received and one was recorded as “no objection”!

Any reader who wishes to see how this 6 month period compares with previous periods should look at the “Summary of Outcomes” which follows the appropriate report on the Society’s website at <http://www.guildfordsociety.org.uk/planning.html> .

During the period under review there have been a number of significant planning applications made. The first one we considered was the revised plans for **15/P/00012: Land at Wisley Airfield, Hatch Lane, Ockham, GU23 6NU**. Rather than repeat what is written it is suggested the reader should scroll down to the first application which follows on the next page. Whilst GBC refused the application, an appeal has been made against that decision and the Inspector will no doubt give his opinion shortly. Even if the appeal is dismissed there will, undoubtedly, be another amended application to follow in due course.

The next large application we considered followed hard on the heels of the Wisley amended plans. This was **16/P/00027: Land at Dunsfold Park, Stovolds Hill, Cranleigh** where up to 1,800 residential units and a whole host of other buildings of one sort or another were proposed. Dunsfold Aerodrome does, of course, fall under Waverley BC jurisdiction. GBC were asked for their opinion because of the implications such a large development would have on our area. Traffic emanating from that location would likely find its way onto the A281 and in turn exacerbate the traffic problems in the Guildford gyratory system. We and GBC expressed considerable reservations but on 14 December last Waverley BC have resolved to give consent for the development subject to referral to the Secretary of State and no receipt of a direction calling-in the application. Councillors voted 10 for and 8 against. This development could have serious repercussions for the wider Guildford area.

**16/P/00752: Wey Corner, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4TT** was an application for the demolition of the existing building and the redevelopment of the site to provide two four storey buildings comprising 56 residential units. We fully support Walnut Tree Close as a residential area. However, in this case we were concerned that the site is in a flood zone, the density was too high and insufficient provision had been made for parking. However, GBC have approved the application.

**16/P/00923: Guildford Plaza (former Burymead House), Portsmouth Road, Guildford** proposed assisted living accommodation for older people with additional facilities. We do not disagree with the concept of providing accommodation for the elderly but there were so many aspects of this application with which we could not agree. Please see the full report that follows on page 13 et seq. for our detailed concerns about this application which has subsequently been withdrawn. We hope that a revised application will be more suitable if one is put forward.

**16/P/01290: Land at Guildford Park Road surface car park.** This site is owned by GBC. The proposal was for the redevelopment of the site to provide 160 residential

apartments and houses together with a 5 storey 541 space multi-storey car park and 825 sqm. of flexible commercial floor space on the ground floor of the multi-storey car park. We objected to this application for a number of reasons including our concern that the development would seem to be a continuous long wall of building of up to 7 stories high; that no provision has been made for a proper pedestrian tree lined link from the cathedral and university to the town and station; and we are concerned that the multi-storey car park would remove the possibility of providing the route for another road river crossing to take traffic away from the current gyratory. At present the application has not come before the planning committee for a decision.

The case officers at GBC do take our letters into consideration but they do not always take the same view as us. However, we are pleased to report that in the majority of cases where we made an objection to an application, those applications are either refused or, alternatively, are only approved following subsequent amendments to the original application either to take account of our objections or have conditions attached to the planning consent.

The details of our letters follow below and if any reader wishes to look at any of the applications, the plans, the design and access statements, the officer's report to the planning committee and the decision notices they can find all the information required at <http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/publicaccess> . Type in the application number, click "Search" and click on "Documents" when the Summary page has been loaded. You will then be able to click on the information you are seeking and it usually downloads a pdf document.

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS between 1 January to 30 June 2016**

### **15/P/00012: Land at Wisley Airfield, Hatch Lane, Ockham, GU23 6NU**

**Proposal: Phased development of a new settlement of up to 2,068 dwellings incorporating up to 100 sheltered accommodation units and associated infrastructure including accesses onto the A3 (Ockham Interchange), Ockham Lane and Old Lane and revised access to Elm Corner, a primary/secondary school, community provision, nursery provision, health facility, a local centre (incorporating food & drink, retail, a visitor centre and offices), employment area, 8 travellers pitches, sports and recreational facilities (incorporating a floodlit sports pitch and pavilion).**

We had written in February 2015 to object to the original proposal and amended plans had been submitted. Most of our objections still stood. These were:

1. This site is in the green belt, albeit significant parts of the site are previously used land and are laid to concrete.
2. The appropriate approach to realigning the boundaries of the Metropolitan Green Belt is through the medium of the Local Plan – exposed thoroughly to public scrutiny in a way that the treatment of planning applications to the Local Authority do not begin to facilitate. We therefore considered the application is premature.

3. The Society is concerned that this development may be too large to be assimilated as a housing scheme and yet too small to be a viable new community. This is a further aspect which needs to be addressed as part of the assessment to be made in the review of the local plan. A key part of the evaluation of whether this site is suitable for it to be included in the Local Plan will be an assessment of issues relating to access and transport. Wisley Airfield is located in a rural area relatively remote from other settlements such as Woking and Guildford. The evaluation will need to consider the extent to which bus services and cycle routes to neighbouring towns and railway stations can realistically be achieved in order to ensure that, in terms of transport, a sustainable development can take place such that the traffic generated by this major development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area.
4. We have several strong reservations on the proposed layout, but note that this is only an outline application. We are troubled that the linear nature of the proposed development, whilst broadly following the alignment of the runway, will not contribute to a cohesive community, will spread the visual impact from its surroundings and, therefore, will have a substantial adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt which is not demonstrably outweighed by the benefits of consenting to the proposals.

*(Refused and appeal started)*

**16/P/00027: Land at Dunsfold Park, Stovolds Hill, Cranleigh**

**Proposal: New settlement with residential development comprising 1,800 units (Use Class C3); 7,500sqm care accommodation (Use Class C2); a local centre to comprise retail, financial and professional, cafes/restaurant/takeaway and/or public house up to a total of 2,150sqm (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5); new business uses including offices, and research and development industry (Use Class B1a and B1b) up to a maximum of 3,700sqm; light and general industry (Use Class B1c and B2) up to a maximum of 7,500sqm; storage and distribution (Use Class B8) up to a maximum of 11,000sqm; a further 9,966sqm of flexible commercial space (B1(b), B21(c), B2 and/or B8); non-residential institutions including health centre, relocation of existing Jigsaw School into new premises and the provision of a new community centre (Use Class D1) up to a maximum of 9,750sqm; a two-form entry Primary School; open space including water bodies, outdoor sports, recreational facilities, canal basin and nature conservation areas; public transport routes, footpaths and cycle ways and landscaping; removal of three runways; all related infrastructure including roads, car and cycle parking, energy plant and associated equipment, water supply, telecommunications, drainage systems and waste water treatment facilities; and the demolition of 8,029sqm of existing buildings and the retention of 36,692sqm of existing buildings, for their future use for a specified purpose as defined by the Use Classes as specified in the schedule of buildings and their uses.**

As can be seen, this was an application which, if approved, would have far reaching consequences for the borough and the local villages. We considered the application is

premature with respect to Waverley's Local Plan. In the context of the Local Plan it would be quite wrong to consider this application for 1,800 new homes when the application itself states the opportunity to increase this to 3,400. This greater total would provide 34% of Waverley's requirement and at one third of the total is surely very substantial. It is one of the key functions of the Local Plan to consider infrastructure requirements, and the fully developed Dunsfold site would be of strategic importance in the Borough and a major driver of new infrastructure. The damage which granting permission to this application would cause is that infrastructure appropriate to 1,800 dwellings (and the considerable increase in commercial space) would be out of place and inadequate were the number of dwellings to be increased to 3,400. The Local Plan will set the long term housing on the site and the infrastructure required for it.

*(This application has been made to Waverley Borough Council and we have become involved in view of the impact such a large development would have on traffic in and around Guildford. GBC have also commented and raised a number of additional concerns as this development would affect the wider Guildford area. Waverley BC has decided that, subject to referral to the Secretary of State and no receipt of a direction calling-in the application, permission be GRANTED)*

**16/P/00028: Pannell House, Park Street, Guildford, GU1 4XB**

We were concerned that the proposed alterations to the ground floor fascia do not sit happily with the style of the existing floors above. The grey façade and the three large grey windows shown on the application elevations are visually less interesting than the present facade.

*(Approved. Our views were reported but not agreed with.)*

**16/P/00104: Robin Hood, 38 Sydenham Road, Guildford, GU1 3RH**

We objected to the previous application 15/P/00997 on the grounds that it represented a gross over-development of the site. This proposal was for the construction of a wine bar and 3 apartments with parking after demolition of public house. Although the height has been reduced by one storey the footprint, covering the whole site, has not. We therefore continued to object.

Furthermore, we considered that if the site is to be redeveloped it should be part of an overall development with the adjoining Bright Hill car park. The car park is identified as a potential redevelopment site for housing in the draft Local Plan July 2014 now under revision and in previous Council papers.

*(Refused)*

**16/P/00117: 22 Friary Street, Guildford, GU1 4EH**

This proposal was for various signs and an internal display case for the Thaikhun restaurant. We objected to the projecting sign because at 900mm x 435mm it is too large for the street scene.

*(Refused)*

**16/P/00120: Warren Farm, White Lane, Ash, Guildford, GU12 6HW**

We did not object to this application for 58 houses but we did believe that more of the group of trees in the centre of the site should be retained as part of the layout. This is partly to enhance the attractiveness and character of the housing layout but also as a means of achieving an immediate environmental benefit for the development through the retention of more mature trees.

*(Not yet decided)*

**16/P/00130: 102 Nightingale Road, Guildford, GU1 1EP**

The Society considered the proposed development to erect 6 two bedroom flats following the demolition of the existing two storey dwelling was unacceptable because of the cramped parking layout and two of the bedsit units will be too small to achieve an acceptable quality of living accommodation. In addition we considered the loss of planting/greenery at the entrance to the parking spaces would be detrimental to the setting of the development and the nearby area of Nightingale Road.

*(Approved. GBC case officer did not agree with our views)*

**16/P/00141: Treetops Boarding Kennels, Old Portsmouth Road, Peasmarsh, Guildford, GU3 1LN**

We objected to this proposal for the erection of up to 36 dwellings partly because the development of this site would be prominent from both the A3100 Portsmouth Road (one of the major approach roads into Guildford) and from the London to Portsmouth railway line and partly because the site of this proposed development forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt, the Surrey Hills AONB, and the Area of Great Landscape Value. Additionally, the site forms part of the St Catherine's Conservation Area. Aside from the detrimental impact on the rural character of this area, this proposed development is in clear conflict with the planning policies which relate to the above designations.

*(Refused)*

**16/P/00151: The Drink, Bar Mambo and 1-5 The Quadrant, Onslow Street, Guildford**

This proposal was to amend one of the planning conditions made when the original application was approved. The applicant wished to alter the external appearance and finishes of the development. The Society found it difficult to establish exactly what is proposed from the many and complex series of drawings forming this application. However, we objected to this application which proposes to replace solid facing materials (including copper) with frameless glazing. The application is for a night club which, by its very nature, is a night time activity. We were concerned that extensive areas of glazing with internal lighting within the building would cause undesirable light pollution. A further concern is that these areas of glazing could be lit with coloured lighting (similar to that which exists above the Onslow Street entrance to The Friary) and/or used for advertising the activities at the club. We considered this would be detrimental and out of character with Guildford Town Centre.

*(Approved. It is disappointing to note that although our letter was recorded under consultee consulted no mention was made of it in the case officer's report.)*

**16/P/00160: 43 High Street, Guildford, GU1 3DY**

Proposal: Advertisement consent for a television in shroud depicting various video and still advertisements (Santander).

The Society opposed this application because we believe that shop windows displaying moving visual images on display screens, particularly in the historic High Street, are not acceptable. We consider they would be detrimental to the attractive character and, additionally, we were concerned that consent could set a damaging precedent.

*(Refused)*

**16/P/00222: Land at Manor Farm, The Street, Tongham, GU10 1DG**

**Proposal: Hybrid application for a) Outline application for the development of up to 254 residential dwellings on 13.15 ha of the site and b) Full planning permission for the change of use from agricultural land to use as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) on 17.7ha of land to the east of Tongham Road.**

The Society objected to this application because it proposes a major housing development on a large 'green field' site. The application site is designated in the adopted Local Plan as 'Countryside beyond the Green Belt' (Policy RE4) and it also forms part of the 'Blackwater Valley Strategic Gap' (Policy R11). This proposed development is clearly in direct conflict with the planning policies which relate to this land and, in consequence, the application should be refused.

The Society is mindful that GBC is in the process of reviewing its Local Plan. However, prior to the adoption of a reviewed Local Plan, we are firmly of the view that it is premature to permit any development which is in such fundamental conflict with the present adopted Plan.

*(Refused in October 2016. It is interesting to note that the case officer recommended approval.)*

**16/P/0300: 7-11 Swan Lane Guildford GU1 4EQ**

We objected to Lakeland's application for an illuminated fascia sign and a non illuminated projecting sign because the cut out lettering is backlight with uniform LED lighting over the whole fascia panel and this is far more obtrusive than external lighting or halo lighting to the lettering that would be acceptable.

The hanging sign is described in the application form as 800 x 960mm and dimensioned on the drawing as 600 x 960. In both cases we consider the hanging sign to be over large in this narrow street. A 600 x 600mm hanging sign would be acceptable.

*Refused)*

**16/P/0313: 133-135 High Street Guildford GU1 3DP**

We objected to this application from Massimo Dutti because we are of the view that one hanging sign will be sufficient. If permission is granted to the two hanging signs sought

this could lead to an over proliferation of hanging signs in the High Street conservation area.

*(Refused. Both signs were refused)*

**16/P/00369: 144 High Street & 3 Milkhouse Gate Guildford GU1 3EX**

**Proposal: Advertisement consent to display two internally illuminated static signs for The Alley Bar on the front of 144 High Street and above the entrance into Milkhouse Gate.**

We objected to this retrospective application for internally illuminated signs for we believe this to be inappropriate in the High Street conservation area. We also considered the signs to be of poor design and quality. We also felt the menu board, being wider than the pilaster to which it is attached, would degrade this architectural feature.

*(Refused – the case officer wholeheartedly agreed with us.)*

**16/P/00375: 133-135 High Street, Guildford, GU1 3DP**

**Proposal: Advertisement Consent for graphics on the hoarding surrounding the property.**

We supported the objections to this application from Massimo Dutti set out by Holy Trinity Amenity Group, and also pointed out that this High Street property is located in a sensitive position in the High Street immediately adjacent to the Grade I listed Guildhall.

*(Withdrawn)*

**16/P/00380: Debenhams, Millbrook, Guildford, GU1 3UU**

We considered the application for whole shop window vinyls to the Debenhams shop front would degrade the store, the quality of the street scene and the town. We felt that the large advertising sign at the car park entrance would divert the eye from the more essential “Parking” sign and it would litter the street scene. In addition we objected to the tall totem flag poles and large attached illuminated signage. Their size and brashness is inappropriate at the bottom of Guildford High Street conservation area.

*(Part approved and part refused. The car parking sign was approved but all other signs, totem poles and vinyl graphics were refused.)*

**16/P/00389: 7 Market Street**

We objected to the whole fascia sign for iSmash being lit up with LED lighting and consider it would be too bright and intrusive and out of character in this conservation area. We would prefer to see the lettering halo lit or externally lit.

*(Refused)*

**16/P/00402: Hitherbury House, 97 Portsmouth Road, Guildford GU2 4DL**

The Guildford Society has had three meetings with regard to this proposal for the restoration, refurbishment and conversion of the existing office building, and the erection



of a three storey side extension to provide seven flats (3x1 bed, 3x2 bed & 1x3 bed). It fully supports and endorses this sympathetic conservation and extension to this important Norman Shaw designed property. The completed works will enhance the street scene in Portsmouth Road.

*(Approved. It was good to see that we were one of three bodies to support this application and there were no objections received.)*

**16/P/00662: The Casino Nightclub, Onslow Street, Guildford**

The proposal was for a variation to approve revised drawings showing the removal of the double height lower basement, addition of two set back floors of the building, revisions to the design to incorporate the need to cater for progressive collapse and internal layout changes.

We considered the proposed increase in height and bulk shown in the elevation drawing to be unacceptable and so great as to warrant a new application. They are so different to those of the previous 03/P/02069 that they are not at all what the inspector saw when deciding the appeal on 3/P/02069. The height has increased by over 10m, from 58.05 to 68.65 above the datum, 32.6m. The increase is about 40%. Furthermore the step-backs at the left hand side of the drawing have been removed. This is very much more than a variation of condition. We consider that a new application should include a new Planning Statement and Visual Impact Assessment, especially because the site lies in a Conservation Area.

*(Refused and appeal started. The case officer agreed completely that the amendments sought by this application were so different to that originally approved that it could not be considered under the “non-material amendment” system (S73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. They went further to say that even if it could have been considered as a full application it would fail to succeed. Interestingly, the appellant’s principal argument in the appeal documents is that the application should be considered under S73. )*

**16/P/00683: Castle Gate House, 8 Quarry Street, Guildford**

We asked that the Conservation Officer carefully monitors the proposed work with regard to the preservation of heritage features, especially the panelling and the chimney breasts including consequential support to upper floors following proposed removal.

*(Withdrawn after significant concerns from both Historic England and Design and Conservation.)*

**16/P/00689: The Rose Valley Restaurant, 50-52 Chertsey Street, Guildford**

We considered this application for the conversion of the restaurant to form 1 x bedsit, 1 x one bed & 2 x two bed flats is too cramped and amounts to over-development of the premises. The floor areas are below English Partnership standards.

*(Withdrawn)*

**16/P/00698: 1 Little Warren Close Guildford GU4 8PW**

This is an area of larger houses on good sized plots. This proposal, for the demolition of the existing dwelling and garage and erection of two new dwellings, is at the leading edge

of the area, and it will double the residential density on this site and thus set an unwelcome precedent. The two proposed houses stand well forward of the accepted building line and are therefore out of character with the neighbourhood. The scale and bulk of this proposal is such that it will be visible clearly from the public footpath in the AONB on the other side of One Tree Hill Road. We therefore objected to the proposal.

*(Approved. This might be considered a strange decision considering our objections were also supported by the Council for the Protection of Rural England and the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty officer. In addition there were a further 50 letters of objection. The case officer, however, considered the application to be acceptable and the Counsellors, at a full planning committee meeting, supported that view.)*

**16/P/00706: 10 North Street, Guildford**

**Proposal: Advertisement Consent for the installation of 3 non illuminated fascia signs, 2 non-illuminated hanging signs, illuminated tablet sign for ATM, wall mounted welcome sign, internal negative space vinyls on windows and external window manifestation for Williams & Glyn Bank.**

We were not unhappy with much of what is proposed. However we objected to the two proposed vinyls on windows on the Ward Street frontage as they are not in harmony with the characteristics of the Town Centre Conservation Area. Furthermore they are unsuited to the fine restrained architectural style of the building. The present pattern of light wall and dark windows accentuates the style, and the pattern would be destroyed by the proposed pastel coloured vinyls. Similarly we objected to the proposed window manifestation: a simple ‘&’ on plain glass would be much better, or a reversal of the black and white colouring proposed.

*(Part approved and part refused. The refused aspects of this application related to our concerns.)*

**16/P/00752: Wey Corner, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4TT**

**Proposal: Demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide two four storey buildings comprising 56 residential units including affordable housing (use Class C3) together with associated car parking and landscaping works.**

The Society is in favour of residential development in the Walnut Tree Close area. Nevertheless, we did not believe this application was satisfactory because the 2003 Guildford Local Plan shows the whole of the site to be within the flood plain. As much of the site is flood zone 2 and some in zone 3A, we considered that the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council will be able to advise on the acceptability of the proposals, including the suggestion that, due to raising of the land, the ground floor slab level will be in flood zone 1 except for a small area to the north that will be in flood zone 2 where the affordable homes have been located. We considered it would be important, for the benefit of this development and adjoining sites that any necessary compensatory, or more generally beneficial, flood capacity is provided on the amenity space toward the river. A joined up approach would seem desirable.

In addition, we felt that the residential density of 147.4 dph. is excessive on the river side of Walnut Tree close where densities and heights should be lower than on the west side

of Walnut Tree Close. The excessive density results in the buildings being 4 storeys high close to the riverside with no set back to the upper floor and high parapets to the flat roofs. Flat green roofs with low parapets would be preferable in reducing height, providing habitat and slowing and reducing rain runoff. The angled main public pedestrian route from Walnut Tree Close to the river bank is welcome and desirable but it should be referenced in the design and access statement.

We considered the architectural design to be bland, lacking in modelling and would create a uniform wall of development equal to 5 storeys high when viewed from the tow path due to the storey heights being 4m at ground floor and 3m on the upper floors plus high parapets. The sight angle subtended from the tow path varies from 30 deg. to 47 deg. This is unacceptable. On the Walnut Tree Close side at one point the building is shown rising 15.68m only 2.5m from the back of pavement. A bigger set back is necessary.

Finally, one parking space per two dwellings is considered insufficient. It will not accommodate visitors and will lead to parking on the street. A reduction in density will increase the parking allocation.

*(Approved. The case officer made a good case for approval in her 28 page report to the planning committee.)*

**16/P/00785: 2B Europa Park Road, Guildford**

We objected to this planning application for illuminated signs at the rear of the building because we are against the principle of advertising along the A3. There is a risk that drivers on the A3 will be distracted by this signage.

*(Part approved and part refused. Our concerns were refused.)*

**16/P/00787: 2A Europa Park Road, Guildford**

We objected to this planning application for illuminated signs at the rear of the building because we are against the principle of advertising along the A3. There is a risk that drivers on the A3 will be distracted by this signage.

*(Part approved and part refused. Our concerns were refused.)*

**16/P/00805: Hare and Hounds, 57 Broad Street, Guildford**

We considered the demolition of the existing restaurant/bar and construction of 10 new houses showed a poor layout resulting in very short gardens, some as little as 6.5m long. The basement bedrooms and resulting need for sunken courtyards are over contrived for a site where the development should be straightforward. For example if the three houses in the centre of the site were redesigned to back on to those facing Broad Street there would be no need for basement bedrooms and the gardens could be longer.

*(Not yet decided)*

**16/P/00821: 178-184, London Road, Guildford**

We considered this planning application for the erection of 10 flats following demolition of the existing buildings was not acceptable as the development is too close to London

Road and considerably closer than the building line established by Highclere. In consequence the proposed development represents an overdevelopment of the site that will be out of place and incompatible with the established character of this area of London Road.

*(Refused. The case officer agreed with us.)*

**16/P/00855: 9-15 Market Street, Guildford**

We objected to Fat Face's advertising planning application for a fascia sign, hanging sign and an "A" board because the 600 x 900mm hanging sign is considered too large and should comply with the generally accepted size of 600 x 600mm. In addition "A" boards are not acceptable anywhere where they will hinder pedestrian movement on the pavement.

*(Part approved and part refused. The "A" board was refused but the hanging sign was approved because the sign it replaced was a similar size.)*

**16/P/00916: Garages opposite Portland Terrace, Harvey Road, Guildford**

The proposal was for a detached two bedroom dwelling with an attached garage following demolition of garages. We wrote to object to this application on the grounds that it entailed over-development of this tiny site, and indeed almost covered it with no apparent space for bins or any other amenity. Furthermore the proposed building was not in harmony with the Conservation Area, and was out of context because it fronts directly onto the pavement.

*(Withdrawn)*

**16/P/00921: Reve Pavilion Surgery, 2A Guildford Park Road, Guildford GU2 7ER**

We objected to this application for two dwellings because: there will be a lack of amenity space; the planned accommodation is very cramped; and this land should be safeguarded to allow for a second road crossing over the railway.

*(Refused. It is disappointing to report that our letter was not recorded nor was it referred to in the officer's report.)*

**16/P/00986: Reve Pavilion Surgery, 2A Guildford Park Road, Guildford GU2 7ER**

We objected to this planning application for a single two bed dwelling because: this will be an overdevelopment of the site; there will be a lack of amenity space; the planned accommodation is very cramped; no parking space is provided; and this land should be safeguarded to allow for a second road crossing over the railway.

*(Approved. It is disappointing to report that our letter was not recorded nor was it referred to in the officer's report.)*

**16/P/00923: Guildford Plaza (former Burymead House), Portsmouth Road, Guildford, GU2 4DH**

**Proposal: Proposed assisted living accommodation for older people (sui generis) comprising communal facilities including, residents lounge, guest suite, health and well-being facilities, restaurant, staff offices, surface and basement car parking, cycle parking, bin storage, plant room, associated hard and soft landscaping, and groundworks.**

We strongly objected to this application and wrote a very lengthy letter setting out our reasons which can be summarised as:

1. The proposal is definitely too high. It frequently references the two blocks of flats, Mount Court and Bishops Court on the Mount, which are universally abhorred in Guildford and are regarded as very unfortunate examples of the architecture popular at the time when they were built: a mistake never to be repeated. Similarly, Burymead House, the old CEGB office block, was much too high. These three buildings, the two blocks of flats and Burymead House are historic monstrosities of a bygone age, examples of what not to do. Any application, like this one, which quotes them in its own support utterly condemns itself.
2. The application includes a Planning Statement by Barton Willmore. The statement makes full reference to the previous scheme 06/P/01430 which was allowed on appeal. It was 3 to 5 storeys high, compared with the 10 to 7, falling to 3 storeys proposed in the application. The difference in visual impact is very substantial as a comparison of the Visual Assessment by Broadway Malyan for 06/P/01430 with the Photomontages by Realm given in Appendix 3b of 16/P/00923 very clearly shows. The differences in impact on the High Street and on St Nicholas church are particularly striking. This comparison demonstrates the substantial visual intrusion of the proposed scheme and gives ample grounds, in our view, for refusal of the application.
3. In essence, Pegasus is trying to squeeze too much development onto this small sensitive plot of 0.38 ha with a proposed density of 270 dwellings per ha. The Plan figure of 70 dwellings, 184 dpha is already as much as the site can take.
4. We note that 06/P/01430 was followed by 07/P/02464 which was refused on 25.01.2008. The scheme was for "Erection of office building arranged over 5 floors, 4 storeys with a recessed 5<sup>th</sup> floor fronting Portsmouth Road stepping down to 3 storeys on Bury Street frontage, with open atrium through centre of building and 62 car parking spaces, 74 cycle parking spaces & 10 motorbike parking spaces within basement level, new access off Bury Street & associated landscaping."The reasons for refusal were the height, massing and scale of the proposed office building is too substantial and overpowering when contrasting it and assessing it against existing lower level buildings surrounding the site. This combined with the closeness to some boundaries would have an unacceptable impact on the established character and appearance of the area and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Millmead and Portsmouth Road Conservation Area and several listed buildings. As such the proposal would be contrary to the provisions of policy SE4 of the Surrey Structure Plan 2004 (as saved by CLG direction on

- 21 September 2007) and policy HE7 and G5 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction on 24 September 2007). The presently proposed scheme 16/P/00923 is very much higher, comes just as close to the boundaries and is therefore even more objectionable. It should be refused outright.
5. The Design and Access statement of the application contains, on page 16, a visual of the approved 06/P/01439 which we consider to be misleading in that it seems to exaggerate the visual impact on Bury Street. We could not find it in the application documents, though we stand to be corrected. On page 30 the statement reproduces the Design Review letter of 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015, though that letter did not endorse the proposed design. The last para of the letter reads “The Panel supports the principle of the proposed development and sees some merit in the design approach but considers that the scale and massing of the scheme at present would be too assertive in the town context and would partially compromise the quality of residential environment that is sought”. On page 46 there is a sketch that exaggerates the size of the two blocks of flats in comparison with the scheme and also exaggerates the set back of the upper floors facing Bury Street (see for comparison the isometric on page 39). All in all we do not find the Design and Access statement convincing as regards visual impact and hold by our opinion that the scheme is much too intrusive.
  6. We have also read the Social Needs Report, and find it very good. We found the following two definitions very helpful: “Extra Care Housing is the term used for a complex of specialised housing for older people that provides a range of “lifestyle” facilities for social, cultural, educational and recreational activities, in addition to services that provide care in a style that can respond flexibly to increasing need whilst helping the individual to retain their place within their existing community. In most Extra Care Housing schemes people enter their unit of accommodation and the care services they receive are delivered into that unit as their needs increase. This is generally referred to as the “integrated model” of Extra Care. Continuing Care Retirement Community is a variant of the Extra Care Housing model but one in which higher levels of care are generally delivered by transfer within the scheme from an independent living unit in which low to moderate care is delivered into a specialist unit or care home. This pattern is often referred to as the “campus” model of Extra Care.” The term “Extra Care” is not used in the Planning Statement of 16/P/00923. Instead the Planning Statement uses the term “assisted living”. Although the Statement gives information on the facilities to be provided, the guest suite, restaurant and well-being facilities, it is silent on the amount of personal care to be provided. It does not even say there will be 24 hour attendance. There is no information on what level of care will be provided. For example, the Social Needs Report includes dementia statistics, but the Planning Statement gives no information if dementia patients can continue to live there. This is quite serious because managing dementia usually means controlling access to the buildings by locked external doors. We would note that a luxury block of flats might well provide most of the facilities promised in the Planning Statement. The Planning Statement does not say whether the apartments will each have their own have lockable front doors:

- this is a possible criterion as to whether a development is C2 or C3. All these points are relevant to the lengthy arguments in the Planning Statement that the sui generis nature of the proposal is such that it is more C2 than C3 and hence should provide no affordable housing. It seems clear to us that the application may satisfy the criteria for Extra Care Housing, but does not satisfy the criteria for Continuing Care Retirement Community.
7. In paragraph 6.49 the Statement quotes from a GBC SPD “The table at 3.19 of the SPD states that elderly people’s specialist sheltered/wardened accommodation and Extra Care housing (in most cases) will be required to provide affordable housing.” The Statement then adduces many arguments as to why the above requirement is invalid. Some of the arguments are specious, for example in paras 6.52 and 6.53 it tries to argue that because gypsy housing is sui generis and does not have to provide affordable housing, therefore the proposal, being also sui generis, does not have to provide. The essence of sui generis is that it is of its own kind and not necessarily anything to do with any other sui generis: the argument is nonsense.
  8. Paragraphs 6.57 and 6.58 seem to be trying to make a case that Local Authorities should not have SPD’s on Planning Contributions and that all such policy should be in the Plan itself. This is surely not reasonable. In para 6.59 it tries to argue that the NPPF “SPDs should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens of development” includes provision of affordable housing. This is ridiculous.
  9. The Society feels very strongly on the social issues of viability and affordable housing. In a case like this, where it is likely that comparatively wealthy people will downsize to move in to the accommodation offered, we believe there should be a contribution towards the extra care some of the less fortunate require. We hope that the Council insists on an affordable housing contribution, even if it is not the full 35%.

We concluded that there are good planning reasons based on Local Plan policies for refusing this application. The Planning Statement resorts to the NPPF and quotes more than once the NPPF words: “planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits”. We consider that the adverse impacts of the scheme in its present form significantly outweigh the benefits, and that the application should therefore also be refused on the basis of non-compliance with the NPPF.

*(Withdrawn)*

**16/P/00947: Royal Bank of Scotland, 10 North Street, Guildford, GU1 4AF**

We wrote to object to the ‘window pocket signs’ facing North Street if they are internally illuminated as they would detract from the façade of this fine listed building. We considered the Ward Street frontage to be less sensitive, but would object to the proposed digital screen unless it were prevented by condition from displaying moving images.

*(Refused)*

**16/P/01055: The Fountain Head, 20 Quarry Street, Guildford, GU1 3UY**

We were concerned that the documents forming part of the submission for the conversion of this listed building stated that there would be minimal disturbance to the historic structure. However, the drawings forming part of this application were freehand and provided little detail on the changes that were proposed. The Society requested that the Conservation officer keeps a close eye on the detail of the proposed changes to ensure that what is proposed respects the proper preservation of the heritage of this listed building.

*(Approved)*

**16/P/01074: Land within Slyfield Industrial Estate, east of Moorfield Road and Westfield Road, Guildford, GU1**

In terms of what is physically proposed, this application states it to be for the 'construction of an internal access road between Westfield Road and Moorfield Road, including three roundabouts, within the existing Slyfield Industrial Estate'. However, from the design of what is proposed – including the 'spurs' off the roundabout - it is clear that this application is not just for an internal access road but is designed to facilitate further development at Slyfield. The Society is of the view that the information contained in this application is insufficient to enable proper consideration to be given to what is proposed. These proposals need to be set within the context of the Council's emerging proposals for Slyfield and the wider area.

*(Approved. The officer commented on our concerns: "the application is considered to be in accordance with the Council's saved policies of the adopted Borough Local Plan 2003, which forms part of the development plan for the area. The emerging Local Plan has only just recently undergone a Regulation 19 consultation and the outcomes of the consultation have not been fully assessed. As it has not reached an advanced stage, the emerging Local Plan can be afforded only limited weight at this time.)*

**16/P/01168: Connaught House, 255 High Street, Guildford, GU1 3BJ**

**Proposal: Proposed refurbishment and two storey extension to existing office building (use class B1) and change of use of existing A2/A3 unit to two A1 and/or A2 and/or A3 units at ground floor level; revised parking and servicing arrangements and other associated works.**

This application relates to Connaught House, the large and prominent office building situated between Alexandra Terrace and 'G Live' with a frontage onto the Epsom Road/London Road mini roundabout. The proposal is to retain the existing concrete mullion structure for four floors, and add two (somewhat higher floor-to-floor) floors and rooftop plant on top. The elevation of the proposed new work will be predominantly glass with the new extensions slightly set back along frontages to Alexandra Terrace and Epsom Road. The overall floorspace (including plant room) will increase from 3,305 sq m to 5,270 sq m (an increase of 56%). A combination of the height of the additional floorspace together with the new plant will roughly double the height of the existing building.



The Society therefore objected to this application. Connaught House is situated in the town centre Conservation Area. It is a prominent 'landmark' building situated at the entrance to, and on the highest part of, Guildford High Street. The Society considered that in the context of the physical character of this part of the High Street it would be inappropriate and harmful to permit such a large and prominent addition in height to this already over-prominent building. The new upper floors are not stepped back nearly enough: the set back is much less than the set backs of the upper floors of the hotel. And surely the rooftop plant need not be so massive and could be moved towards the back of the building and away from the High Street frontage.

As a final point, the Society wished to express its concern that there has been no opportunity to consider these proposals through a pre-planning consultation. We are mindful that Para 189 of the NPPF states, inter alia, "They (i.e. local planning authorities) should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community before submitting their applications." These proposals would, undoubtedly, have a major impact on this part of the town centre which is also a Conservation Area and we consider there should have been the opportunity for engagement with the local community before submission of the application.

*(Refused despite officer recommendation for approval. The officer noted in his report that "amended plans were received during the course of the application reducing the size of and altering the position of the plant equipment and altering the treatment and positioning of the stair core over-run at the roof level. Given the minor nature of the alterations it was not considered necessary to re-notify neighbouring properties and consultees.)*

**16/P/01243: 2 Tangier Road, Guildford**

We objected to this application for the demolition of a house and replacement with a block of six flats because it would be an overdevelopment of the site and it will be out of character for there are no apartment houses of anything like this size elsewhere in Tangier Road.

*(Refused. It is disappointing to report that once again our letter was neither recorded nor referred to in the officer's report.)*

**16/P/01250: 25 Swan Lane, Guildford**

We objected to this application for street furniture because the proposed tables and seating will be opposite the existing approved seating and tables for Prêt a Manger and will result in an unacceptable reduction in the width of paving for public access.

*(Approved. Here is another example of our letter being neither recorded nor referred to in the officer's report.)*

**16/P/01290: Land at Guildford Park Road surface car park**

**Proposal: Demolition of existing garage buildings and redevelopment of the site to provide 160 residential apartments and houses with associated facilities including**

**private and community amenity space, together with a 5 storey 541 space multi-storey car park (sui generis) and 825 sqm. flexible commercial floor space (Use class A1, B1, and D2) on the ground floor of the multi-storey car park.**

We approved, in principle, the development of this GBC owned site for the proposed use. However, we objected to the current proposal due to the design and layout as follows:

1. The car park and apartments make an almost continuous wall of development up to seven stories high about 220m long. They form, on a slightly smaller scale but on higher ground, a wall of development similar to that proposed by Solum for the station that was recently unanimously refused by the Council.
2. The layout does not provide for a tree lined pedestrian link from the station and town to the University and Cathedral a concept supported by both these important stakeholders.
3. The houses are not integrated with the existing Guildford Park Estate.
4. The parking for the housing is too remote for family dwellings.
5. There is no provision for the possibility of a second road crossing over the railway linking York Road to Madrid Road a route that should be safeguarded, in fact the access to the proposed car park will preclude this.
6. The design and colouring of the car park and apartments is not in keeping with Guildford's Palette of materials.

*(Not yet decided)*

**16/P/01309: The Gym, Woodbridge House, Woodbridge Meadows**

We objected to this application for substantial signage because the sign No. 10 is too large and too high up and will therefore be intrusive and detrimental to the street scene in Woodbridge Road and Ladymead. Furthermore, the signage will blight the approach to Guildford and we would not wish to see this signage setting a precedent for Woodbridge Road and Ladymead.

*(Part approved and part refused. The sign we were particularly concerned about was refused, along with 5 others.)*

**16/P/01325: Royal Grammar School, High Street, Guildford**

We said that we do not, in principle, object to this application for gates and railings but the railings rise to nearly 2.4m at the western end and we would not wish to see the railings higher than 2m. The railings could set down where the boundary wall sets down.

*(Approved. It is disappointing to report that the officer reported "no objection" from the Society and therefore no consideration appears to have been given to our suggestion that the railings should be stepped down.)*

**16/P/01386: Superdrug, 97-101 High Street, Guildford**

The replacement of the shop fronts of the two separate listed buildings with very different High Street elevations was proposed. We objected to the blocking of the separate entrance to No. 97 High Street with a full width clear glass façade. This proposal will detract from this building's separate identity and from its architectural merit.

*(Withdrawn. GBC's conservation officer agreed with us.)*

**16/P/01388: Superdrug, 97-101 High Street, Guildford**

We did not object to the proposed non-illuminated fascia sign but we did object to the hanging sign for, at 900 x 650 mm, it is too large and bigger than the normally accepted 600 x 600 mm hanging sign in the High Street conservation area.

*(Withdrawn. GBC's conservation officer agreed with us.)*

**16/P/01397: Fairlands Farm, Holly Lane, Worplesdon**

**Proposal: Outline application for the demolition of existing buildings, retention of Fairlands Farmhouse and mixed use development of the site to comprise a new school/education facility with multipurpose sports and community facilities, highway improvements to the A323 including construction of new roundabout, provision of new bus interchange and cycle and ride facility, new community hub with children's nursery, community offices, children's play centre and commercial units, up to 370 residential dwellings, provision of SANGS and landscaped open space.**

We objected because the proposed development is in the Green Belt, adjacent to an AONB and will obstruct the openness of the Green Belt. Furthermore, the site is not identified for development in the Draft Local Plan: it is designated NE3 in the saved 2003 Local Plan relating to sites where "planning permission will not be granted for proposals that are likely to materially harm the Nature Conservation

*(Not yet decided)*

**DECISIONS ON APPLICATIONS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED BUT NOT FULLY RESOLVED AT THE TIME OF REPORTING**

**14/P/02109: Howard of Effingham School, Effingham:**

We objected to this proposal to build a new school and dwellings on green belt land contrary to the saved 2003 Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. No very special circumstances had been put forward to justify this development in the Green Belt. We particularly objected to the Effingham Lodge Farm site for it is also outside the Settlement Boundary. We noted that the Brown's Field site is within the conservation area and part of the site is an area of High Archaeological Potential. In our view this proposal was premature and should await the adoption of the new Local Plan.

*(Refused and an appeal is pending.)*

**15/P/00012: Land at Wisley Airfield, Hatch Lane, Ockham, GU23 6NU**

This proposal was for outline planning permission for the phased development of a new settlement of up to 2,100 dwellings, a school, health facility, a local centre etc incorporating associated infrastructure.

This site is one of the four Strategic Sites in the draft Local Plan and it is in the green belt, albeit significant parts of the site are previously used land and are laid to concrete. The appropriate approach to realigning the boundaries of the Metropolitan Greenbelt is through the medium of the Local Plan – exposed thoroughly to public scrutiny in a way

that the treatment of planning applications to the Local Authority do not begin to facilitate.

We therefore objected on the formal grounds that approval should not be considered until the revision of the draft Local Plan is published – indeed the application was premature. We were concerned that this development may be too large to be assimilated as a housing scheme and yet too small to be a viable new community. We were concerned that the linear nature of the proposed development, whilst broadly following the alignment of the runway, will not contribute to a cohesive community; will spread the visual impact from its surroundings and, therefore, will have a substantial adverse impact on the openness of the Greenbelt which is not demonstrably outweighed by the benefits of consenting to the proposals.

We also pointed out that a key part of the evaluation of whether this site is suitable for it to be included in the Local Plan will be an assessment of issues relating to access and transport. Wisley Airfield is located in a rural area relatively remote from other settlements such as Woking and Guildford. The evaluation will need to consider the extent to which bus services and cycle routes to neighbouring towns and railway stations can realistically be achieved in order to ensure that, in terms of transport, a sustainable development can take place such that the traffic generated by this major development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area.

*(Refused in April 2016 and an appeal is running.)*

**15/P/01317: University of Surrey, Manor Park: increase in car parking spaces up to 2418.**

We objected because when the university was granted outline approval for its Manor Park site we understood that it entered into firm commitments regarding parking to be entirely within its own site and traffic in full knowledge of its planned expansion of faculty buildings and accommodation up to and beyond what has and is taking place. At the very least, we would expect the university to meet all its parking requirements on its own sites and never to request permission to use land outside these sites for parking. In the area of the RSCH there is an extreme shortage of parking for hospital staff and visitors. We would, for example, consider it entirely wrong for the university to be allowed to use any part of the land assigned to the Manor Park P&R, the one planning gain to the town from the Manor Park approval.

*(Despite this application being received in July 2015 it has still not been decided)*

**15/P/01980: Carter and Son Scrap Metal and Breakers Yard, Aldershot Road, Worplesdon, Guildford, GU3 3HF : Erection of 27 dwellings (including 13 affordable homes), accommodation for up to 5 people with autism and an 80 bed dementia care home with all associated development following demolition of all existing permanent and temporary buildings.**

**15/P/01987: Carter and Son Scrap Metal and Breakers Yard, Aldershot Road, Worplesdon, Guildford, GU3 3HF: Erection of 45 dwellings (including 22**

**affordable homes) and accommodation for up to 5 people with autism with all associated development following demolition of all existing permanent and temporary buildings.**

Whilst we acknowledged that this large site has a long established use as a scrap metal and breakers yard, nonetheless, the site is located within the Green Belt where there is a clear presumption against residential development.

Aside from the Green Belt policy issues, this site has a long frontage to the A323 Aldershot Road. This road forms one of the principal roads leading into (and out of) Guildford and, as such, special care needs to be given to protecting the character of the area – not just in the interests of protecting the rural character of the immediate locality but also in the wider interests of protecting the setting of the town of Guildford.

Both of these applications proposed a large number of dwellings and some of the development is proposed to be of three storeys in height. Furthermore, in both applications the proposals locate dwellings (and areas of car parking) quite close to the frontage of the site. We considered the size and location of what is proposed represents an unacceptable form of development of the site.

If, given the existing land use, residential development is to be considered acceptable we are of the view that any development needs to be of a form which minimises both the visual impact on the locality and the harm to the openness of the Green Belt. To that end we consider no development on this site should exceed two storeys in height. Furthermore, and importantly, given the long frontage of the site to the A323 Aldershot Road, we considered that in order to maintain the rural character of the area any new dwellings should be set further back from the frontage to the A Class road. That will provide an adequate depth of space for landscaping to allow for more trees and other planting thus helping screen any development from the A323.

*(15/P/01980 was refused in June 2016. However application no 15/P/01987 has not yet been decided a year after the application was registered)*

**14/P/02168: Guildford Railway Station, Station View, Guildford GU1 4UT: A mixed use redevelopment comprising 438 residential dwellings (Class C3 use); station retail/financial and professional services/food and drink and leisure floor space (Class A1/A2/A3/Sui Generis and D2 uses); station and general office floor space (Sui Generis and Class B1 uses); station improvements including new station building with booking hall and concourse (Sui Generis use); replacement station and office car parking, new residential car parking, cycle parking, a Station Plaza including new public realm with hard and soft landscaping, new access and servicing arrangements, plant and associated works.**

We considered the revised application with a new set of drawings. The amended scheme, submitted in November 2015, did not satisfy any of our concerns about the first application. The Group put much effort into the preparation of a 12 page letter of objection which was copied to all Councillors. This letter can be accessed on <http://www.guildfordsociety.org.uk/railway-station-redevelopment.html> . The Guildford Society organized a well attended public meeting in January 2016. Whilst our reasons were many the Councillors agreed with us and our principal objections can best be summarized by the reasons given in the refusal letter as below.

*(Refused. The principal reasons for the refusal were “The proposed development, by virtue of its monolithic scale, unbroken length, largely uniform height and unrelieved mass, would appear as a dominant and incongruous feature in the townscape and would be detrimental to the setting and the significance Guildford Cathedral, which is Grade II\* Listed, and the setting and significance of the Jellico Roof Garden, which is Grade II Listed. Furthermore, the scale, mass and height of the proposed buildings would be overly prominent and overbearing when viewed from the Bridge Street Conservation Area, would adversely impact on the setting of the heritage asset and would be detrimental to its significance. The public benefits arising from the development do not outweigh the harm that would be caused by the development.*

*The development proposed, by virtue of its monolithic scale, unbroken length, largely uniform height, and unrelieved mass, fails to respect the urban grain and varied roof patterns of the town centre and would appear as an alien feature harmful to the townscape in long range views of the site. Furthermore, the scale, height and mass of the proposed buildings would be significantly out of scale and character with the adjoining buildings such as the Billings and Ranger House and would appear overly dominant and incongruous in short range views around the application site.*

*The development fails to secure an appropriate provision of affordable housing and therefore fails to deliver a mixed community or the affordable housing needed in the Borough.*

*The application fails to deliver the transport sustainability measures required to promote sustainable travel choices such as walking and cycling.*

*An appeal has now commenced.)*

**15/P/02284: Land at The Cathedral Church of the Holy Spirit, Stag Hill, The Chase, Guildford GU2 7UP. Proposed erection of 134 dwellings (including affordable) with associated vehicular/pedestrian access arrangements, engineering operations and ancillary works.**

We were concerned that the majority of land for this residential development proposal is on land zoned as open space in the current Local Plan and that therefore this proposal in contrary to policy R5 Protection of Open Space. It is in the public interest that designated open space is preserved and it would be unfortunate to set a precedent for this type of development on designated open space. If the Council considered that this application is a very special case of overriding public interest sufficient to set aside Policy R5 of the Local Plan then the reasons why should be clearly stated and the Council should also satisfy itself that overall provision of open space remains adequate for communities in the vicinity taking account of anticipated growth.

If the Council decided that the development of this land is acceptable in principle then we are pleased to see that our suggestion that there should be a pedestrian processional way created to link to the town centre via the university site and the Council owned site at Guildford Park car park has been included in these revised drawings. We hope that the University and Borough Council will cooperate in this endeavour with respect to their own land holdings.

We note that the 27.6% of affordable housing does not quite meet the 30% currently required in the Local Plan, falls short of the 35% mentioned in the Planning Statement

and provides no social housing. The 27.61% translates to the 37 affordable homes in the application's Masterplan, out of a total of 134 homes. The balance of 97 homes is 81 private homes and 16 tied homes for the cathedral. The scheme also provides a £15,000,000 endowment fund for the cathedral. Again, the Council has to decide whether these provisions are acceptable to the extent that infringing the affordable housing requirement is justified.

There was a further meeting on 8th December 2016 between the society, the Dean and developer's representatives to discuss Linden Homes amended application. No firm objections were raised. No doubt we will be looking at these revised plans formally early in the New Year.

*(Not yet decided)*

**15/P/02354: Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Guildford Road, East Horsley, Leatherhead. Part full, part outline application for the substantive demolition of the hotel buildings and change of use of the retained parts from hotel use (C1) to residential use (C3) (full application) and the erection of dwellings (outline application) to provide a total of 49 new dwellings.**

The Ramada Jarvis Hotel (The Thatchers) occupies a large site located in a prominent position adjacent to the A 246 which is an important approach to Guildford.

The whole of the Hotel site is located within the Green Belt with the undeveloped parts lying outside the village envelope. For areas outside the village envelope there is a clear presumption against residential development. In the consideration of this application there is a need to ensure that any development does not contravene planning policy and, in particular, that any development does not have an adverse impact on the rural character of this prominent rural location.

*(Refused and an appeal is running. The principal reasons for refusal were that the application failed the Green Belt test and insufficient consideration had been given to the loss of a hotel.)*

John Wood

January 2017