

Woking Borough Council
6 April 2021
Planning Committee
Written Update

Agenda Item No.	App no. and site address	Report Recommendation
6a Page 11	PLAN/2021/0059 Land to the north of Old Woking Road and east of Station Approach, West Byfleet	PER

CONSULTATIONS

West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum: The West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum gives its support for the application and does not raise any objections as a result of our policies in the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Development Plan. In particular, we believe the development is particularly beneficial for the following policies:

- Commercial Environment Policies (CE1 District Centre Development, CE2 Retail Space, CE3 Sheer House Complex Mixed Use Development, CE5 Public Amenity Provision)
- Infrastructure Policies (I1 District Centre parking provision, I2 Pedestrian and Cycle facilities)
- Social and Community Policies (S&C4 Library facilities)
- Built Environment Policies BE2 (New housing quality), BE4 (Sheer House Complex development), BE5 (Older people accommodation).

It has been mentioned that there is a single column of protruding balconies on Byfleet Corner that possibly distract from the vertical rhythm of the facade.

The design appears to be of high quality and the public square would be very welcome. We note the style is distinct to the neighbouring Conservation Zones but whether that is a good or bad thing is subjective and a matter for personal taste and thus we have no objection under policies (BE1 Development, BE3 District Centre Development Character). We support this application.

REPRESENTATIONS

Since preparation of the Planning Committee report **x1 further letter of objection, and x5 further letters of support** (including x1 from the Byfleet, West Byfleet and Pyrford Residents' Association and x1 from the Pyrford Neighbourhood Forum), have been received raising the following main points:

Objection

- Loss of privacy and overlooking to Drayton Court caused by the positioning and use of protruding balconies on Block C.
- Single column of protruding balconies near the corner of Block A looks awkward and out of place (is opposite St John's Church and the southern Conservation Area).
- Stark contrast to the neighbouring Conservation Area, particularly on Old Woking Road.
- Historic England have noted that there is harm created.

- Blocky nature of the development is exasperated by the choice of design rather than being mitigated.

Support

- The Byfleet, West Byfleet and Pyrford Residents' Association wishes to support the application.
- Would like to thank the developer Retirement Villages Group and their consultants Keeble Brown for the way in which they have worked with representative groups from within the Community to explain their vision and for their willingness to listen to constructive feedback.
- Also thank them for the manner in which they have involved the broader community through social media.
- The current Sheer House building has been empty for some considerable time and is an increasing and embarrassing eyesore in the centre of West Byfleet; it greatly detracts from many aspects of Village life.
- This development will be a £93 million investment in West Byfleet transforming the local economy; it will provide attractively designed apartments, local shops, community space, a replacement library and many additional trees and garden features. It will restore vitality and a sense of pride to the Village.
- As a resident of West Byfleet would like to confirm support for the Reserved Matters application for the Sheer House site being agreed and passed by Woking Borough Council.
- Development of the now unused, unoccupied eyesore site has been discussed for a number of years. After some false starts there has now been open public consultation on the scheme proposed, involving many bodies including the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum, the Residents Association and the developer applicants.
- Believe the style, uses and design of the scheme will enhance West Byfleet and will breathe vibrant life back into the village.

FLOODING AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Following preparation of the Planning Committee report the applicant submitted (on 31 March 2021) an amended Drainage Strategy report which identifies that surface water runoff post development will be restricted and attenuated in a number of forms prior to discharge in to the public network. A final proposed surface water discharge rate post development from the site for all events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event plus 40% allowance for climate change will be 5 litres per second, thus providing a significant betterment on the existing free discharge rates (97.30l/s 1 in 1 year, 238.80l/s 1 in 30 year and 309.99l/s 1 in 100 year). Assessment of this amended Drainage Strategy report is in-hand with the Council's Drainage and Flood Risk Engineer; as such no change is sought to the recommendation within the report, rather this information is provided as an update.