



Merrow Residents' Association  
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Mr J Busher  
Planning Policy  
Guildford Borough Council  
Millmead House  
Guildford  
GU2 4BB

10<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Dear Mr Busher

**21/P/02232 | Demolition of existing building and erection of two buildings comprising residential accommodation (Use Class C3), retail floorspace (Use Class E) and cinema (Sui Generis), erection of a retail pavilion (Use Class E), together with car and cycle parking, plant and all highways, landscaping and other associated works. | Debenhams, Millbrook, Guildford, GU1 3UU**

We wish to object to the above application.

We wrote to list our earlier objections to this application in a letter of the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2021. Even though some amendments to the earlier plans have been submitted it is unfortunate that most of our earlier objections haven't been overcome.

1. One of the buildings is too close to the river which interferes with the riverside walk. One means to expand the West side's (riverside) river frontage width (and green area's width), would be to inset the external covered walkway/corridor sections so that they fall within the main building blocks' perimeters. We estimate this will give an increase of approx. 2.5 m in width.

Another suggestion to reduce the overshadowing of the Wey would be to consider partial terracing of the blocks on the West side in particular. For example, at the tops of the higher floors of the south block (where there are bands shown in the relevant drawing), insets to create a terraced effect might help. The insets on the upper floors could be used to create useful balcony areas in these buildings that would have views over the Wey valley area.

2. The buildings are still too high. They need to be several storeys lower especially along the river corridor.

3. We are still concerned that the views across Guildford will be severely affected by the height of these buildings. As we said in our earlier letter and as an example the proposed development would obscure the magnificent views of the Surrey Hills AONB from the High Street. There are plenty of other examples.

4. We continue to be concerned that the development would have a serious deleterious impact on buildings close to the site which are in a Conservation Area and therefore contain some unique historic buildings. We believe that the current plans are not in compliance with the GBC Local Plan Policy D3(1) that covers the historic environment.

5. We also continue to be concerned about the documents submitted in the application about financial viability. We would prefer to take more time to get this development right in the centre of town rather than permit tall buildings to be constructed that will irreparably damage not only our lovely town but also the views across it.

We trust that this application will be refused by the Planning Committee and the developer encouraged to come forward with more acceptable plans. If the application were refused it would give the developer more time to produce plans that are in conformity with the aspirations in the Council's 'Shaping Guildford' initiative which covers development in the town's centre.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Strawson  
Chairman