



Merrow Residents' Association
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Planning Services
Guildford Borough Council
Millmead House
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5th October 2025

Dear Mr Thompson

25/P/01156 | Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for means of access to the site, for the phased development of a residential-led mixed-use development at land at Gosden Hill Farm.

We write to object to the above outline planning application and recommend that it be refused.

We are a residents' association with about 500 members. We represent local views on many issues that affect Merrow's residents including planning applications, local amenities and services. We also combine efforts with other organisations to protect our environment.

We are extremely disappointed that the outline planning application does not provide a four-way junction with the A3 on the Gosden Hill site and that no mitigating measures are being brought forward.

When this strategic site was examined in public by the government inspector there was a great deal of discussion about the impact of the traffic that would flow from this new development if all the elements in the Local Plan policy A25 were to be included. *The inspector said that the A25 Gosden Hill provides a park and ride facility and part of the sustainable movement corridor and contributes towards a new railway station. He went on to say that the Council has prepared the Submission Local Plan on the assumption that the A3 Guildford Road Investment Strategy (RIS) scheme will be delivered. This part of the A3 suffers from peak period congestion and experiences a higher than average number of incidents. An improvement of the A3 through Guildford was included in the first Road Investment Strategy (RIS1) announced in 2015 as a scheme to be developed during Road Period 1 (2015/16 to 2019/20). Potential options for a scheme between the A31 and A320 are being considered by Highways England as part of a wider study to identify an*

appropriate scheme to facilitate economic growth. Work has been undertaken on the feasibility of these options and the investigations have had a positive outcome. He went on to say that there is still uncertainty over the timing of the project and the earliest date it can start is 2024 with completion in 2027. The strategic sites and other allocations are not necessarily individually dependent on the improvement scheme but together they would have a cumulative impact. In the Statement of Common Ground between the Council and Highways England, it is agreed that, based on the assessed trajectory of Local Plan growth up until 2024, the impact to the A3 will unlikely to be of a scale to prevent progress of the Local Plan at this stage. But planned development in the later stages of the plan period may be affected by the delivery of the A3 improvement scheme and this has implications for delivery rates at the Gosden Hill Farm, Blackwell Farm and Slyfield Area Regeneration Project sites.

Then the Inspector went on to say, however, it is important that the Plan remains robust, it incorporates a trigger into Policy ID2 Investment Strategy to review the transport evidence base in the event of a material delay or reduction in scope of the RIS scheme; the outcome of this review will determine whether development can continue to be completed in accordance with the Plan trajectory or whether there will need to be a review of the Plan.

We now know that National Highways do not currently support any improvement to the A3 around Guildford and therefore this planning application should fall back on mitigation to offset the lack of any improvements to the A3. Subsequently Policy A25 of the Local Plan was reviewed by GBC and emphasis was placed on the mitigation measures that must be put in place. However we find that not only has the application discarded the possibility of a 4 way junction on the Gosden Hill site, on the basis that there is no land available for the northern section of a four-way junction, but has also concluded that there should not be a new rail station on the site and closes off that option completely and for all time by suggesting that no land should be safeguarded for a railway station. This therefore runs against the views of the Inspector and the basis on which Policy A25 appears in the Guildford Local Plan.

In the absence of a 4 way junction there will be a totally unacceptable build up of traffic in Burpham, which is bad enough already, when the new homes, the new Park and Ride and the new schools are constructed and occupied. We appreciate that detailed documentation has been submitted with this planning application to explain the developer's position on the additional traffic that will take place when the site is developed but it is based on an incorrect premise that traffic levels in Burpham are acceptable at the present time- which they aren't. One example is the quite normal traffic congestion around the Aldi supermarket that occurs during their opening hours. It is clear to us that this will only get worse if the Gosden Hill development goes ahead in its present suggested format.

It is our view, therefore, that this development of the Gosden Hill site should not go ahead at all and this application should be refused since the conditions laid down in Policy A25 of the Local Plan have not been met and no mitigating measures are being put forward by the developer to offset the proposal that there would not be a four way junction with the A3 on the site and there would be no new railway station.

Our view on this conclusion could be amended if the developer were to put forward clear and substantive proposals for a link road running across the site, parallel to the A3, and joining the A 247 at Garlick's Arch in accordance with paragraph (2) of the Transport Strategy of Policy A25 of the Guildford Local Plan.

We now turn to the GBC Strategic Development Framework Supplementary Planning document adopted on 21st July 2020 *which refers to the site's southern boundary which is formed mainly by the Guildford to London Waterloo rail line (also known as the New Guildford Line). The SPD states that this offers an important opportunity to connect development on the town's eastern flank to the town centre by rail, in order to reduce car travel. Land and proportionate financial contributions will be required to be made available for the Guildford East (Marrow) railway station.*

We appreciate that this SPD is not binding but it is indicative of GBC strategic thinking at that time. This SPD adds to our concern that no railway station is now contemplated on the Gosden Hill site and this must be reviewed if the application is to go forward otherwise the application is not sustainable.

Policy A 25 of the Guildford Local Plan stipulates that the development of the site is, amongst other things, dependent upon the Sustainable Movement Corridor(SMC).We have searched as far as we can on the documents accompanying this application but can only find one relevant reference on page 26 of the Planning Statement to the SMC. This states that the provision of the eastern route section of the SMC is compliant as this is directly informed by the SMC SPD. So far as we can see Guildford Borough Council has decided that no such SPD shall be produced and the statement appears on their website at <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/27184/Sustainable-Movement-Corridor>. This note is intended as a position statement on the SMC. It states that the note has not been subject to public consultation and has not been adopted as planning policy. The note is intended to provide comment and direction on current expectations in relation to the SMC, specifically in the absence of a dedicated SPD.

We find it surprising that there is no definitive and substantive reference to the SMC in the planning application and that the reference to GBC's position appears to be incorrect. In addition, we are very concerned that it will be virtually impossible to have a SMC running through Burpham and therefore the whole objective of the condition does appear to be unachievable.

We are also very concerned at the phasing of the various developments on the Gosden Hill site. It is suggested that the completion of the new roundabout access to the A3 will not be completed until after the 150 homes have been constructed in phase one. We understand the rationale for this proposal but if planning consent were to be given to Martin Grant Homes this condition must be absolutely watertight to ensure that the development of the c. 630 homes in phase 2 do not take place until the new access to the A3 and the improvements to London Road have been completed.

We have noted the substantive comments and objections raised by Surrey County Council, Surrey Highways, the Environment Agency, Thames Water and the Burpham

Neighbourhood Forum. It is clear to us that significant amendments will need to be made to this planning application before it can proceed towards determination and for that reason we reserve the right to comment further as and when any amendments to the masterplan are posted.

In conclusion we recommend that this planning application be refused since there will be no four-way junction with the A3 on the site and conditions in Policy A 25 in the Guildford Local Plan cannot be met. The outline planning application is not sustainable.

Yours sincerely

Keith C Meldrum CB
Vice chairman