

Planning Committee

22 November 2022

Late Representations

Since the last date for the submission of views on applications/matters before the Committee this evening, representations in respect of the under mentioned applications/matters have been received. The letters, copies of which will be available for inspection by councillors at the meeting, are summarised below.

Item 5 – Planning Applications

21/P/02232 – (Page 25) – Debenham’s, Millbrook, Guildford, GU1 3UU

Since the publication of the Committee Report on 15 November, a further four letters of objection have been received. The following points are noted:

- this development will define Guildford for the next century;
- the proposed building will become the dominant feature of Guildford’s gateway to the River Wey, towering over the bottom of the High Street;
- the developers could deliver us something better, taking into consideration the natural aesthetics, heritage and sensitivity of the site;
- the current application has extraordinary mass, bulk and an unremitting largely red brick façade;
- the developers having overpaid for the site will have to persevere at this scale to get their money back. Their build costs have rocketed since they bought the property. There are probably many unforeseen expenses which will emerge as they undertake the construction and will need to be provided for;
- the development is driven by economics, not aesthetics;
- does the Planning Committee have a complete view of how the town centre is going to be developed? The proposed redevelopment of the Debenhams site lies within the plans for the Council’s long-term vision for the town centre, but there are conflicting issues meaning that they are not fully joined up;
- the proposal is still too big and bulky and would have an adverse impact on its sensitive surroundings;
- the space around the buildings has been poorly thought out;
- 4 St Mary’s Terrace further comments regarding daylight and sunlight. GIA state 'reasonable assumptions can be made as to the internal layouts of the rooms behind the fenestration'. I should highlight that Point2 had assumed two of my rooms broadly 33% of their actual size which is hardly a reasonable assumption. Point2 say they have updated their measurements but have not disclosed the revised SqFt measurements of my rooms. In order for this to be verified, I ask that you request Point 2 provide this information;
- 3 St Mary’s Terrace further comments regarding daylight and sunlight. GIA write 'the results of the technical analysis are not found within the application documents therefore it is recommended that this is supplied by Point2'. Point2 subsequently supplied these measurements on 3 November - screenshot attached. Point2's SqFt measurements of 3 St Marys Terrace are also inaccurate;

- Given GIA conclude there would be some daylight and sunlight transgressions to both properties, one would think it would be even more imperative for room analysis to be accurate to ensure the impact categorisation is correct. We have repeatedly given Point2 every opportunity to measure in person to ensure accurate results but they continue to refuse. As highlighted by Right Of Light Consulting in their recent correspondence to you, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure all data is accurate in order to make a valid decision on this application. Should it be approved using incorrect information then please understand residents may seek legal advice to challenge any decision by way of a Judicial Review.

Further, an additional 33 letters of support have been received. These note that the revised plans would regenerate this prime town centre location with a new, residential-led mixed use development of 185 new homes, shops, cafes and bars. The plans will also deliver a wide range of benefits for the local area. Most significantly opening up the river side and improving the appearance/ street scape and public realm at the bottom of the high street. Hope this project will be the catalyst the spur further investment into improving this area of the town, dismantling the gyratory system, prioritising spaces for people and making the most of the river as an asset to the community.