



WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Mr James Leaver



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Councillors Margaret Cooksey, Abhiram Magesh,
Chris Budleigh and Leah Mursaleen-Plank

Mole Valley District Council

Pippbrook

Dorking

Surrey, RH4 1SJ

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Dear Councillors

Thakeham Consultation – Land at Milton Court Lane, Westcott Road, Dorking

You will be aware that Thakeham are running a consultation for Land at Milton Court Lane.

<https://thakeham.com/land-development/our-developments/milton-court-lane-dorking/>

You will also be aware that this is a proposed housing land allocation which Westcott residents have been opposed to and that WVA has been pleased to represent them over recent years in the Reg.18 and Reg.19 reps, and The Green Belt Review attached and in response to the Compendium of Minor Updates and Alterations. Ref: Green Belt Review:063 Dorking ref: DK11 Address: South of Curtis Road.

Most recently we made representations to Natural England in relation to the Surrey Hills Natural Landscape (formerly the AONB) boundary consultation and many of the points we made are relevant to the potential negative impact that this site would have on this landscape.

The Thakeham consultation website directs responses to them and as these responses seem unlikely to be made public, WVA would like to make you aware of how we responded.

WVA said "no" to all three questions and provided the following statement:-

Westcott Village Association (WVA) does not support the provision of only 40% affordable homes. We believe the regular policy position in CS4 is insufficient provision for a Green Belt site that is not allocated for development in the current Local Plan. The recently consented development at Sondes Place Farm will provide 50% affordable homes. This was a key component in the Inspector's decision in consideration of the very special circumstances and planning balance.

For the same reason we do not support "the minimum 10% biodiversity net gain elements of the proposal". 10% is now planning policy. We think Thakeham's proposal should be more ambitious.

The draft site layout provides insufficient detail to alleviate WVA's concerns. These are the impact of this potential scheme on the AONB and Ranmore, adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt between the settlements of Dorking and Westcott and the impact that vehicle movements associated with 86 additional dwellings will have on the A25 Westcott Road and Dorking road network which already operates over capacity. We are also concerned for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians using Cycle Route 22/ Bridleway 110 which shares the vehicular access to the site marked with a red arrow. The access marked with an orange arrow is a private lane.

We should add that we have previously noted in response to MVDC consultations that, in the event that this land is allocated, there is potential for vehicular access from Curtis Road as it is over MVDC owned land. This, we believe,

1. would help to mitigate the effects of additional congestion on the A25 Westcott Road and Dorking gyratory system. This road network operates beyond capacity already and has no identified engineering solution. WVA believe that no further allocations should be made or schemes consented which feed onto the A25 Westcott Road until a proven long-term engineering solution has been delivered

2. would prevent the potential danger of vehicles associated with 86 additional dwellings sharing Milton Court Lane with Cycle Route 22 and Bridleway 110

We believe the developer should be required to negotiate a safer vehicular access from Curtis Road with MVDC as MVDC has the ability to negotiate as landowner. The developer would also need to negotiate pedestrian and cycle access with the owners of Nutcombe Lane (marked with a yellow arrow on the draft site layout) if this is to be delivered.

When the Curtis Lane Industrial Estate was built some years ago there was a planning condition which required a substantial tree and vegetation screen to be planted and established at the western end before development could commence. This was to ensure that the impact of the scheme on the AONB and Ranmore was mitigated. The same principles should apply to the delivery of this land.

In summary we believe Thakeham's consultation for a planning application in Spring 2024 is premature for a Green Belt site that is not allocated for development in the current Local Plan. The scheme lacks ambition and is a long way off demonstrating very special circumstances on planning balance.

In the event that this site is subsequently allocated for housing development, the same principles should apply to ensure a genuinely sustainable scheme.

Yours sincerely,



James Leaver

Planning Lead, Westcott Village Association

Cc Paul Goddard – WVA Secretary

Piers Mason – Head of Planning, MVDC

CLr Hazel Watson – County Councillor