



WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

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Planning Department

Mole Valley District Council

Pippbrook

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Surrey, RH4 1SJ

21 October 2024

Dear Piers, Margaret and Hazel

MO/2024/1228 Land at Milton Court Lane, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3GA

Outline application with all matters reserved except for means of access for a residential development of up to 86 dwellings including public open space, landscaping, surface water drainage, earthworks and all other associated infrastructure.

I refer to WVA's previous letter of objection dated 2 October 2024 and subsequent email correspondence with Margaret and Hazel.

As a past resident of Westcott, Margaret will recognise the concerns WVA continually raise on behalf of its residents about congestion on the A25 Westcott Road. We are motivated by a desire to be able to access essential services and amenities in Dorking and the train stations. Being unable to do so is bad for the Dorking economy and the congestion caused by the current sinkhole issue shows how severely congestion impacts trade and the general wellbeing of the population.

Access to Dorking is one of the principal reasons WVA objected to the inclusion of Sondes Place Farm and Milton Court Farm in the new Local Plan and we will continue to object to subsequent planning applications until the impact of these sites on existing over-stretched or inadequate infrastructure is properly mitigated.

You only have to look at the size of WVA's petition objecting to Sondes Place Farm application to understand the weight of opinion on this matter in Westcott.

We were pleased that Hazel supported our position on Sondes Place and Milton Court through the Local Plan consultation period as our Dorking Hills county councillor and we also acknowledge that she was a part of the team which was instrumental in the delivery of the cycle connection (NCR22) between Westcott and Dorking some years ago, though it was a shame not to be able to connect it with Curtis Road at that time. It should not mean that we do not continually keep the original objective under review and now is one such opportunity.

We are now at a very critical point in time for Westcott and the villages to the west of it and we need to see more of the impact of Milton Court Lane and Sondes Place Farm developments mitigated by the S.106 and S.278 package for these sites because:-

1. we understand that LCWIP funding has been redirected away from the Westcott to Dorking corridor to the north of the district;
2. NCR22 floods between Westcott and Dorking and is in desperate need of refurbishment with a permeable surface. Funding has still not been allocated to do this by the county council;
3. MVDC footpaths alongside the A25 are not sufficiently wide for two people to safely walk abreast or pass, for a wheelchair, a children's buggy or pram;
4. 33% of pupils of Surrey Hills All Saints School come from the Dorking direction, 43% within Westcott and the balance from the villages;
5. Westcott's allocation of 123 dwellings in the plan is further growth.

Given the lack of safe and compelling alternatives Westcott residents and visitors are heavily dependent on the private car or bus to get to and from Dorking and all of the above has to be addressed to stop them being caught in ever-increasing congestion.

Surrey County Council’s Strategic Highway Assessment Report – October 2021 states at paragraph 4.1.7:-

“The level of service of the A25 / Vincent Lane junction in the Do Something scenario deteriorates to F during the AM peak and is likely to require some form of mitigation measure in terms of highway layout. However, the need to limit travel by private vehicle should not be overlooked as this has the potential to minimise congestion in this location. The allocation sites at Milton Court Lane and Sondes Place Farm are relatively close to the town centre amenities and its public transport links. High quality pedestrian and cycle links linking these sites to the town centre and railways stations would provide minimise [typographical error in report noted] the need for travel by private car”.

No improvements have been delivered to this junction since 2021 and it is well known that there is no identified physical solution to do so. It therefore highlights the added importance of identifying “some form of mitigation” to optimise the efficiency of the A25/ Vincent Lane flow during peak. There seems to be an opportunity to utilise a MOVA (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation) system to achieve this. The Surrey CC Highways consultee response for MO/2024/1258 refers:-



APPLICATION NUMBER	MO/24/1228
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DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING ROADS
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER 1992

Location: Land at Milton Court Lane, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3GA

Development: Outline application with all matters reserved except for means of access for a residential development of up to 86 dwellings including public open space, landscaping, surface water drainage, earthworks and all other associated infrastructure.

Contact Officer	Matthew Strong	Consultation Date	12 August 2024	Response Date	18 October 2024
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The proposed development has been considered by THE COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY who recommends an appropriate agreement should be secured before the grant of permission.

S106 Payments

1. A contribution of £5,000 to go towards a validation exercise for the traffic signals MOVA system.
2. A contribution of £4,600 towards the auditing of the Travel Plan.

S278 Works

3. The development hereby approved shall not first be occupied unless and until improvement works have been provided at the following locations:

- (i) The junction where Hanover Court meets Milton Court Lane;
- (ii) The junction where Nutcombe Lane meets Westcott Road;
- (iii) The junction where Drill Hall Road meets Westcott Road;
- (iv) The junction where Station Road meets Westcott Road;
- (v) The footway between Drill Hall Road and Station Road; and
- (vi) Milton Court Lane.

These shall be provided in accordance with the approved plans, Drawing Numbers:

0001 P06, 0010 P03, 0011 P03, 0012 P01, 0013 P02, 0014 P02, 0015 P02.

Thereafter these shall be retained and maintained for their designated purposes.

Most of the recommendations in Surrey CC Highways consultation response to MO/2024/1258 dated 18 October 2024 are very welcome. But we believe, given their 2021 assessment, **the applicant should be contributing more than £5,000 to a MOVA validation exercise.** It is a shame that SCC has already taken 3 years to commission the MOVA validation and I do not know what this study will cost or what the recommended technology solution it identifies will cost to install or monitor. WVA believe a £5,000 S.106 contribution is considerably less than the required level of mitigation for this scheme for the congestion issue. There should be a S.278 for this item as well. Sondes Place should also contribute a significant sum towards MOVA in S.106 and S.278. Please use this opportunity to properly fund the study and the solution for the established congestion issues that these schemes will increase.

Policy INF1 of the new 2020-2039 Local Plan reads “*The Council will work with Surrey County Council to produce a Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, which will identify and deliver an increase in the extent of the walking and cycling network, plug gaps in the networks and/or integrate new development into the networks*”. The A25 corridor between Westcott and Dorking is one such gap where more investment is needed. This is even more important now that Sondes Place Farm has consent for 144 dwellings and a school access and drop-off which did not previously exist as well as the potential for 86 more dwellings at Milton Court Lane.

I have now spoken with the owner of Nutcombe Lane which is the separate proposed access for pedestrians and cycles from the Milton Court Lane scheme. This landowner agreed with me that it makes a great deal of sense to **make another attempt to at least secure a pedestrian and cycle link from the scheme to Curtis Road, linking through to NCR 22 at the same time.**

I have previously highlighted the land MVDC owns to the east of the application site (Tutts and Champions). With further investigation, negotiation with tenants or Sutton and East Surrey Water who also have land here, or even using its CPO powers, there is potential to deliver improved access for this scheme and the wider community. It only requires an access strip.

We urge MVDC and SCC to object to this application until these valid concerns have been properly addressed by the applicant with input from MVDC and SCC.

Yours sincerely,



James Leaver, Planning Lead - Westcott Village Association

CC Cllrs Abhiram Magesh, Leah Mursaleen-Plank, Chris Budleigh