

## Wokingham Town Council

### Comments on Application 170618 – Matthewsgreen Phase 3

#### **GENERAL LAYOUT**

We welcome the provision of footways adjacent to most of the roadways in the development.

The general layout of the development would appear to have one major problem. The three storey blocks of apartments and (in particular Block B) are of an inappropriate scale and mass compared to the surrounding buildings. The roof space gives the appearance of at least a 4 storey building making the apartments overpowering and out of proportion (CP03). The buildings should be reduced in height by incorporating the third storey in to the roof.

The rear elevation of Block B is also immensely dominating having a huge area of blank wall with no windows.

#### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

This development does not provide the required level of affordable housing at only 6 units out of a total of 93. It relies on the shortfall being made up in further phases of the project which as yet are unapproved.

#### **PARKING**

A number of units have cramped parking spaces between the flank walls of the properties. These are believed to be unsuitable for general use by residents due to their size and difficult access. This we believe will lead to on street parking which will cause major issues due to the 5m width of the roadways. Simple mathematics supports this. Two 2.5m wide spaces in an area of 6m in width between two walls. This assumes the buffer area between the spaces and the walls is 1m in total.

The assumed parking parameters are:-

Gap between parked vehicles and the flank walls 0.6m

Width of an average family car (Ford Focus including wing mirrors 2.01m)

Space required to open a door with reasonable access 0.85m

Two vehicles parked as above require 5.2m leaving just 80cm to open one door on each vehicle. This assumes that:

both vehicles are parked within 0.6m of the flank walls

no vehicle wider than 2m is owned by the resident, and

everyone parks within the specified distance of the flank walls

Driving forward into one space will require a space of at least a car width and door opening for the driver to exit, requiring a width of close to 3.45m in a space 3m wide. This is calculated as the sum of car width (2m) plus gap between vehicle and the flank walls (0.6m) plus space required to open a door on one side of the vehicle (0.85m). The parking space width being calculated as the sum of bay width (2.5m) plus buffer around the spaces (0.5m) giving an effective space of 3m. Driver and passengers leaving by opposite sides of the vehicle will be impossible.

We believe such an arrangement to be impractical.

In addition to the above:

access to many of the parking spaces in the development assumes nothing else is parked in the area required to manoeuvre (particularly where parallel parking is employed)

the central area of the site appears to have little visitor/unallocated parking

## **ROAD WIDTHS**

The road widths within the development are stated as being 5m.

Section 4.2.1 of the Transport Statement says that 'a delivery vehicle can safely pass a large car on the main access roads'. This has been shown by a swept path analysis which shows that provided NOTHING else is parked on the roadside or bends access is just about possible.

It assumes a delivery vehicle width of 2.5m and a large family car width of 1.8m. We regret that this analysis would appear to be flawed. It uses vehicle wheelbase dimensions which do not take account of items such as wing mirrors. A Ford Focus is not a large family car but with wing mirrors included it is over 2m wide. A delivery vehicle including wing mirrors is around 2.8m wide. This will give a passing clearance of less than 20 cm. On bends and other areas of the site this clearance would turn into a negative number.

A large family vehicle such as a Ford S-MAX is 2.12m wide when mirrors are included, giving this a passing distance of just 8cm.

We do not believe 20cm (let alone 8cm) clearance provides a safe passing distance between vehicles and allows them to pass 'in relative comfort' as stated in the section.

Section 4.2.4 of the Transport statement states an intention in the 4.1m wide shared surface areas of ensuring 'pedestrians need not feel intimidated by vehicles'. We do not believe this is possible in any shared surface areas.

Section 4.2.6 of the Transport Statement states that the visibility splays are in accordance with guidelines for vehicles travelling at no more than 20mph. In order to achieve compliance how will this speed limit be enforced?

## **CONCLUSION**

Whilst we welcome many of the features of this development we do not support it in its current form for the reasons stated above.

Planning & Transportation Committee

5<sup>th</sup> April 2017