



22<sup>nd</sup> June 2019

## Dear Councillors,

We do hope this letter finds you well.

As Directors of Woking Football Club we are writing to you, as a member of Woking's Planning Committee, in an open way as we approach Tuesday's planning meeting. There has been a lot of noise generated in the past months and our genuine fear is that the core community message of this development has often got lost in the tumult of competing voices, personalities and agendas. In this letter we wish to refocus on the heart of the scheme which we are proud of and are convinced will bring huge and lasting benefit to the Woking that our children and grandchildren will inherit.

This letter is in two parts and we hope you can appreciate it comes from the heart as much as the head. The first part considers the Football Club and the second the long-term community benefit for all our residents; recent months have given added urgency to part two in ways we could never have imagined. We realise there is a lot here, but we are trying to bring focus and appreciate you taking the time to read and consider this fully as we approach decision day.

It's important to firstly point out that we are all local volunteers and, after over 30 years of frustration in looking to improve decaying facilities to keep the club alive, we have invested thousands of hours in shaping a way forward. This means Woking's football club will be secure and sustainable, but the plans also offer huge community benefit. You will know that Woking FC is 130 years old and has helped forge our town. We are Surrey's most successful and historic football club and have produced many of Woking's heroes, bringing cohesion, recognition and identity to our community over many generations – including through the World Wars.

We are sure your inboxes and mailboxes have been full in recent days. There has been support expressed from local VIP's, the Bishop, charities, businesses, schools, sports and youth clubs and, of course, in excess of 5,000 local people. In addition, hundreds of people from overseas have written to the Council – these are people actively engaged and supporting the development. In recent times the Club has been positively profiled in both the national and international press and media. Quite literally the eyes of the world will be watching and waiting for a positive decision on Tuesday.

Of course, Woking FC is second to none as a community club having won many national awards in this field. We serve thousands of the most vulnerable in our town – from dementia sufferers to those with disabilities and schools and youth to those with mental health challenges. We support many charities and work on the ground with thousands of young people – from girls' football and Junior Citizens to Woking Tigers in Maybury, Goldsworth Park Rangers and everything in between. It has been said that, after the





Council, the Football Club is the biggest and most diverse, significant provider of community work in the Borough.

We have to stress that everything here is interconnected; we cannot maintain this community impact without the investment proposed, the new facilities and the footballing success that will enable it. The football team currently has a hugely positive following but will inevitably lose momentum and support which, in turn, will lead to catastrophic decline in the community work. The facilities, on a major underutilised brownfield site, will continue to decay further and require ongoing and costly repair with no obvious solution. Meanwhile other towns and clubs, even in Surrey, are moving forward ambitiously.

**We believe in an ambitious and proud Woking**, a Woking coming out of the shadows and with its head held high - growing, inclusive, attracting business, recreation and prosperity. We believe in a Woking with a 'wow' factor and that the redeveloped stadium and associated regeneration around it will help bring that prestige, pride and economic benefit for many generations to come. However, if this scheme is not supported by our decision makers then we will once again be stuck. Football clubs are fighting to progress and, in our view, it would be a huge backward step, undermine so much that has taken years to build and, in time, could even threaten the club's very existence.

The last 12 weeks have changed so much, and we have appreciated with fresh urgency how timely and necessary the wider aspects of this development are. The COVID crisis has been a tragic and sombre warning to all of us that we simply have not been ready for what is coming.

**Housing** – nationally the shortage of housing is critical for local young people, the vulnerable and key workers; it is not melodramatic to term it a housing emergency

**Health** – right from the start of this process local residents were calling for improved health facilities in their community; in recent weeks our NHS came very close to breaking point. Do we kick the can down the road again?

**Environment** – perhaps the most critical issue for our children and beyond; we note that Woking is ambitious to be the most environmentally friendly community in Surrey.

This development seeks to directly address all three of these issues in one hit – unlike any scheme we are aware of in Surrey in recent memory (please see enclosed note from Savills which we requested for your information):

**Housing benefit** – in one development there will be a provision for the Borough of over 500 affordable housing units; the biggest in Surrey currently and in recent memory.

**Health facilities** – in the face of huge demand a brand-new health facility to provide local health care for 14,000 Woking residents.





**Environmental statement** – 100% electrical vehicle charging capability and fold up bicycle provision for all – the largest residential development to provide EV charging facilities in the country. This would be a huge statement that Woking is serious about the environment by facilitating changes in behaviour.

Quite simply, as local people, we cannot imagine that any development has offered so much community benefit to the town in one project. Ground-breaking housing, health and environmental innovations alongside an elite sports stadium for everyone.

Failure to politically support this scheme will, to many, help resolve none of these crises and significantly risk some of the town's greatest assets. This scheme has been described as 'now or never' and in terms of what it brings it is. The pieces are all in place, it has taken 30 years to get to this point and we urge you to support the scheme on Tuesday; in so doing we put in place community foundations for the long-term future and welfare of our children, grandchildren and the generations beyond.

Before the evening two of us are available to bring any last minute clarification and answer any questions. Contact details are below.

Yours in anticipation

## The Board of Woking Football Club

Rosemary Johnson MBE, Chairman

Sam Loxton

Neill Morrison ([neill.morrison@wokingfc.co.uk](mailto:neill.morrison@wokingfc.co.uk); 07710738792)

Ian Nicholson. ([ian.nicholson@wokingfc.co.uk](mailto:ian.nicholson@wokingfc.co.uk); 07976 351 891)

Kelvin Reay

*Enc. Savills public benefit comparison note for councillors*



22 June 2020  
200622L Woking FC Benefits of Development Comparison (004)



Planning Committee  
Woking Borough Council

VIA EMAIL

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Dear Councillors

### Woking FC Development Proposal – Land at Kingfield & Egley Road

I write with respect of the applications to be heard at the 23 June Planning Committee. I am the lead Planning Director of Savills South East Planning. Based in Guildford. Savills is the agent for the applicant, providing planning consultancy advice throughout the project, and have worked to achieve the officers' recommendation for approval of the applications.

The Board of Woking FC were interested in how the project compares with others in Surrey and requested this note from us to assist. Savills has reviewed other major schemes in the County to quantify the community/public benefit package to provide context for the Kingfield/Egley Road applications. The summary of our assessment is below.

To compare the proposals at Kingfield to other major **planning consents** in Surrey which provide affordable housing and other community benefits, Savills notes the following:

1. Kingfield is one of the most optimised major brownfield development proposals in Surrey. There is nothing of this utilisation and delivery of housing and community benefit in one location, on brownfield land, which benefits from planning permission elsewhere in the County.
2. The application is the only proposed new football/sports stadium/arena in the County.
3. The majority of other major residential proposals, which have **planning consent today**, are mostly located outside of the existing towns, which include, for example:
  - Surrey Heath – Deepcut Barracks (originally consented in 2013) – 1,200 dwellings (target only 35% affordable);
  - Reigate & Banstead - North West Horley (consented in 2014) – 1,570 homes (only 25% affordable);
  - Reigate & Banstead - North East Horley (now mostly delivered) – 710 homes (only 25% affordable);
  - Waverley – Dunsfold Park (consented at Appeal in 2018) – 1,800 dwellings (target only 30% affordable);
  - Guildford Station – 438 dwellings (consented at Appeal in 2018) – only 10% affordable (this is on Brownfield land).

Whilst these other major housing proposals do provide some form of wider public benefit, these are typically open spaces/SANGs, CIL contributions, local shops and some community provision. These measures are master-planned to mitigate the impact of these developments, to make them acceptable in planning terms.

Offices and associates throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East.

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As it can be seen, **no** other major strategic development proposal in Surrey either has planning permission, or is soon capable of achieving planning consent, which has anywhere near the level of affordable housing and community benefits proposed at Kingfield/ Egley (46-47% affordable housing combined). There are no major Brownfield allocations in 'up to date' adopted Local Plans which meet this level of housing or affordable housing provision either.

In addition to delivery of 504 new affordable homes, the project will also deliver a new 14,000 patient medical centre, contributes circa £10m in Community Infrastructure Levy (education/highways etc) and deliver a 100% enabled electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Thus, the Kingfield/ Egley project goes beyond simply mitigating the impact of the development, as it enables wider community and planning benefits.

I trust that you find this helpful.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Charles Collins", written in a cursive style.

**Charles Collins MSc MRTPI**  
Savills Planning

Copy.

Tom James – Woking Borough Council – Development Management  
Ben Bailey – Woking Borough Council – Development Management