

Jamie Jamieson
6 Cambria Court
Church Street
Staines
TW18 4XY

7th February 2013

Mr Paul Tomson
Planning & Housing Strategy
Spelthorne Borough Council
Council Offices
Knowle Green
Staines-Upon-Thames
TW18 1XB

Dear Mr Tomson,

Ref Nos. 12/01700/FUL and 12/01704/CAC: Development of 96 – 104 Church Street, Staines-Upon-Thames, TW18 4DQ, for Residential Use

1. Background

I write on behalf of the Staines Village Committee – the Staines Village Committee (SVC) is the managing committee for the Staines Village Residents & Traders Association (SVT&RA). The SVT&RA is an association registered with Spelthorne Borough Council and represents the residents and traders within Staines Village (an area largely co-terminus with the Staines Conservation Area).

2. General Comment

The SVC is broadly in favour of re-development of the current Staines Business Park for residential use but is of the opinion that this should be done in such a manner as to:

- a) Improve rather than detract from the life of the current residents; and
- b) Preserve the nature of the Staines Conservation Area.

Further, the SVC considers that the development should adhere to the principles behind the 'Staines-Upon-Thames' initiative in that it should improve the image of the town and assist in its rejuvenation.

3. Site Planning and Layout

3.1 Height of the Retained Wall

The residents of Island Close and Numbers 114 to 152 (even numbers only) Church Street have enjoyed the privacy provided by the site wall for over thirty years and indeed many residents bought their properties in the expectation that this wall would remain. The reduction of the site wall to heights between 5m and 3.5m will result in a gross loss of privacy for these residents and the SVC therefore objects to this wall being reduced in height.

3.2 Location and Height of the Blocks of Flats

The location and height of the proposed blocks of flats will result in a loss of privacy for the residents of Island Close. At four stories high these blocks exceed the height of the surrounding buildings most of which are two stories high and a few of which are three stories high. The SVC objects therefore to the location and height of the blocks of flats.

3.3 Occupancy of the Blocks of Flats

The developed site is unlikely to be adopted by Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC) and therefore some form of managing company – funded by the residents – will need to be created to ensure the site is maintained in keeping with the standards currently extant in the immediate area and in line with the preservation of the Staines Conservation Area. The incorporation of social accommodation will therefore result in additional lifetime costs to SBC which could be avoided by not including social accommodation or mitigated by the inclusion of a shared ownership scheme. Further, there is a shortage of sheltered housing for the elderly and this site with its close proximity and easy access to the town centre would be an ideal location. Opportunities to create sheltered housing schemes in safe communities with good, mobility scooter and wheel chair friendly, access to all the required shops and facilities occur very rarely. It would appear a shame to waste this one. The SVC therefore requests that consideration be given to incorporating a change of use for the social housing element of this proposal.

3.4 Sewerage

The public sewerage sump in Church Street located between the old 'Cock Inn' public house and 57 Church Street was subject to considerable upgrading works to allow it to cope with the extra usage generated by the Two Rivers shopping complex. The SVC has seen no evidence that the current public sewerage system serving the local area can take on the extra loads generated by 51 new dwellings housing some 100 people. The SVC is therefore minded to object to the development on the grounds that insufficient research has been carried out on the possible impacts on the local public sewerage system unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the capacity of this local sewerage system is sufficient to handle the extra loading generated by this development.

4. Traffic and Parking Issues

4.1 Current Situation

Access to this part of Church Street is limited to its junction with the Wraysbury Road and Bridge Street at its eastern end and by its junction with the Wraysbury Road at the western end.

At peak traffic periods the eastern end log jams and there are considerable delays for drivers arriving at and leaving the Church Street area. The refurbishment of the old Courage building on Bridge Street, once occupied, will only serve to worsen this situation by creating extra traffic from the M25/A30 and via the Two Rivers shopping complex.

The western end of Church Street is used to access current businesses in the morning and depart for the M25/A30 in the evening. The road is narrow with parking allowed on one side only. There are frequent occasions when a stalemate occurs between incoming and outgoing traffic. This has led to a number of unpleasant road rage incidents and

some of our residents no longer feel safe when driving this route during peak traffic periods.

4.2 Developed site

Once the site is developed and occupied, there will be increased conflict during peak time traffic flows with up to 60 new residents' vehicles trying to leave Church Street at the same time as the existing business traffic (servicing businesses in 100 Church Street, the Givauden office and the offices at 59/57 Church Street) will be trying to arrive. The reverse will occur during the evening traffic peaks. Further, the developer has used outdated survey data to estimate the number of extra cars that will be generated as a result of this development. The developer's traffic survey did not take into account the effects of traffic contra flows and underestimates the number of extra cars that will be generated: consequently it is flawed.

Therefore, as a condition of planning consent we request that the developer works with Surrey County Council to improve access from the western end of Church Street and its junction with the Wraysbury Road – this to reduce traffic stalemates and road rage.

We also request, again as a condition of planning consent, that the developer works with Surrey County Council to incorporate improvements for traffic access to and egress from the eastern end of this part of Church Street.

4.3 Parking Issues

The Maltings development (on part of the old Courage site) has experienced considerable problems with rogue parking by non-residents in its car park. This often resulted in Maltings residents overloading the parking space within the rest of the area. The problem was only solved by the installation of an electronically controlled gated entrance to the Maltings car park. It is almost certain the similar rogue parking will occur once 96 -104 Church Street has been developed as a residential site unless a suitable system of entry control is installed. The SVC therefore requests that the installation of a suitable system of entry control should be a condition of planning consent – this entry control to be fully functional before the first new residence is occupied.

4.4 Traffic Speed Control

There is a 20 mph speed limit from 57 Church Street to the western end of Church Street. The area is defined only by signs at each end – these signs are easily missed by drivers entering the area. The increased traffic during and after construction (other than at peak times) is likely to ignore this speed limit with the consequent increased risk of accidents to both pedestrians and vehicles. To mitigate this risk, the SVC requests that either increased road surface signage is, or additional 20mph street lamp mounted, roundel signs are, provided, prior to the start of any site work, and that the provision of this extra signage should be made a condition of planning consent.

5. Demolition and Construction Traffic

The western end of Church Street is narrow and congested – as mentioned in paragraph 4.1 above. This element of Church Street cannot handle heavy traffic and any significant traffic flow increases are likely to give rise to increased road rage incidents and hold ups. The SVC requests as a condition of planning consent that during the demolition and

construction phase all site traffic should access and egress the site via the eastern end of Church Street at its junction with Bridge Street and the Wraysbury Road.

6. Questions

If you have any questions on the above, please do not hesitate to e-mail me or call me on 07785 760638.

Yours Sincerely

Jamie Jamieson

Jamie Jamieson

Speaker

Staines Village Committee

Speaker@stainesvillage.co.uk

Mobile: +44 (0) 7785 760638