

Whitfield Parish Council Objection to: DOV/20/00749: Variation of legal agreement (under S.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) to planning permission DOV/10/01010. Whitfield Urban Extension Phase 1 Archers Court Road Whitfield Kent

August 2020

Whitfield Parish Council Object most strongly to this application for variation to the signed and agreed S106 Agreement.

This application has a sorry history of constantly pushing back against all agreements regarding contributions, infrastructure provision, layout and mitigation measures promised to local Residents; all of which originating from the Developer's own initial proposals that were put forward through Masterplanning, SPD process and Outline Planning Applications, to make the applications acceptable and to gain planning permissions and approval.

The Parish Council does not agree that the local population and Dover District Council should continue to let the Developer delay or cancel these conditions and contributions, effectively subsidising the rather inefficient business practices of Halesbury Homes using the Residents' Council Tax Contributions to DDC and KCC to fill the financial void.

Note: The Application incorrectly states that permission has been granted for 246 Units on sub phase 1c. This is incorrect at the time of writing this objection the application has not gone to committee or been approved and is for 236 dwellings.

- It is unacceptable to remove the Dental Surgery from the Health and Social Care Centre. This centre is intended to support the additional health needs for the planned 5750 new homes in Whitfield. There is already a shortage of Dentists in the District so dental service provision is vital for the community. No evidence or justification to support removal of the Dental Surgery from the agreement is included in this application.
- Original trigger points must be retained and honoured. The trigger points were put in the original S106 agreement because they are the points at which these services and elements of infrastructure will need to be provided and properly financed. The fact the developer is financially over stretched does not mean these are not now needed at these points.
- There are no safeguards to ensure that the developer will be in a position to ever make payment of these contributions when new trigger points are eventually reached or to prevent further extensions being requested in the future.
- It is unacceptable to delay the extension of the 61 Bus service to Richmond Park from occupation of the 100th dwelling to the 650th occupation. The Residents here are basically restricted to travel by car rather than Public Transport or via the closed Public Rights of Way. This Bus Service should be provided now.

It is not clear if the extension of the 61 Bus route to include Archer's Place has been dropped completely.

- It is unacceptable to delay the payment of the £3.5M contribution for the Primary School from the 401st occupation to the 1050th occupation.

- It is unacceptable to delay the Sports Facilities contribution schedule by up to 320 residential dwelling occupations.
- It is unacceptable to remove the indexation of contributions in line with Public Highways and Roads Construction Tender Price Index, BCIS General Building Costs Index and the Index of Retail Prices, as originally required by section 13. If the contributions are to be delayed by 5 years or more, then the full real cost, indexed to inflation, should be paid by the developer, not by the local Council Taxpayers.
- It is unclear if the developer intends to fulfil the other obligations under the S106 agreement to provide a Skate Park, Allotments, Children's Play Area, MUGA, Honeywood Parkway works and A2 Crossing contributions as required. These requirements must be properly monitored and enforced by the District Council.
- It is unclear if a more up to date Viability Assessment will be carried out to assess the current situation at current house prices and tax positions etc.

It is difficult to comment in any detail on this application due to the previous Viability Assessment being confidential and not in the Public Realm. The Government pumped money into this project, either by grant or loan, to 'jump start' it but with no details available it is difficult to comment on this aspect of the application.

The Parish Council abhors the rather distasteful use of the current Coronavirus Pandemic to justify and obtain financial gain. The same "Coronavirus argument" is used in another recent application to build a shop on designated Green Space Buffer Zone and Recreational Play Area.

If anything the lessons to be learnt from the past months is the importance of having social community and healthcare infrastructure in place and properly financed in a timely manner.

Halsbury homes have always appeared to struggle to build on this site, whereas other developers in the district, with the necessary knowledge and experience, have no problem building houses efficiently and to schedule. This is not a recent situation brought on by Coronavirus. An indication of the ongoing and long term problems this company have is the fact that they even struggled to source a supply of bricks at the start of the project and that purchasers have to wait for up to 6 months for their new homes to be built while living in temporary accommodation (the usual terms at other developments are exchange of contracts after 28 days).

This ongoing situation raises fears that the development may not be completed by the current developer to a point where the contributions are actually made, leaving a half built development for someone else to sort out and fund.

Whitfield Parish Council object to this application and ask that the Committee reject the application and ensure the original terms and conditions remain in place.