

National Transport Casework Team,
2nd floor, Lancaster House,
Hampshire Court,
Newcastle Business Park,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7YH

Your Ref: NATTRAN/SE/S247/792

Dear Sirs,

6th March 2013

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Re: College Road, Haydon Place and York Road, Guildford, GU1 4NQ

This letter constitutes notice to the Secretary of State on behalf of Vision for Guildford Limited ('GVG') objecting to the making of an Order under section 247 of the above Act stopping up parts of the roads described above and a length of an unnamed footpath connecting York Road and Haydon Place all as described in the deposited draft Order and plan.

The circumstances which give rise to this proposal have their origins in the Bellerby Theatre and North Place Day Centre Planning Brief Supplementary Planning Document January 2011 which stipulated that this site owned by Guildford Borough Council ('the Council') would be best suited to a retail led mixed-use development including housing, with preference given to food/convenience retail. Whilst the SPD was finalised in consultation with the County Council's Transport Development Group it provided no encouragement to any end user that the site could be accessed from York Road via an all-movements priority junction. Indeed the draft SPD specifically provided 'An all-movements priority junction is unlikely to be acceptable due to the form of the junction and the land take required.'

In April 2011 the Bellerby Theatre site was marketed by the Council for sale with the adopted SPD having been amended following submissions on behalf of Waitrose and reading 'Site access from Leapale Lane (western end) and College Road (southern end) should be explored. Access to the site via A246 York Road, including a restricted left-in/left out T junction, could be an option.' Following extensive evaluation of all the bids received the Council announced in September 2011 that Waitrose had been accorded preferred bidder status, with conditional contracts being exchanged in February 2012.

The submission of the Waitrose planning application in June 2012 provoked widespread concern with its proposal that vehicular access to the Bellerby Theatre site would be provided through a new all-movement (both left and right turns) traffic signal controlled junction on York Road. The junction was also to incorporate an at-grade pedestrian crossing in place of the existing subway under York Road. A flurry of additional highway information and modelling received by the Council on 9th August, 23rd August, 5th September, 6th September and 11th October 2012 has not allayed those concerns.

The Council nonetheless granted planning permission on 20th December 2012 under reference number 12/P/01020 ('the Planning Permission') but GVG anticipate High Court proceedings will soon be launched seeking to quash that permission. Additional proceedings by a disadvantaged under bidder can still not be entirely discounted. In any event as Waitrose have yet to complete their purchase of the Bellerby Theatre site they are not in a position to implement the Planning Permission or provide the new highways shown on the

draft Order plan. There are four trigger events needed for the Council to be able to compel completion of the purchase and as far as GVG is aware none of those conditions precedent have yet been satisfied.

The intended closure of the areas marked 3 and 4 on the draft Order map, which are intended to form part of the surface car park for the new supermarket, remove the most direct pedestrian route to the town centre from the large residential area north of York Road in which The Guildford Children's Centre and Sandfield Road School are also located. The loss of the subway beneath York Road will accompany the footpath closure with its replacement being a staggered signal controlled pedestrian crossing with a refuge in the centre of York Road. Apart from safety concerns for nursery and primary schoolchildren as well as seniors we believe the technical information supporting the creation of this new signalled junction in York Road fails to take into account its wider impact on the town's gyratory system and in any event warrants independent scrutiny by the Secretary of State.

We also believe the local community are largely unaware of the proposed stopping up Order that was advertised during the Children's Centre and School half terms. There are no site notices exhibited at either end of the busy subway nor when an inspection was made on 5th March are there any such notices posted at either end of the proposed length of footpath to be closed. Not only is there a dearth of publicity surrounding the proposed closure the community know nothing about the programming and sequencing of the works. If, notwithstanding the objections received, the Secretary of State is minded to confirm the Stopping Up Order GVG believe there must be a firm published timetable in place which will ensure no closures of footpaths and highways occur until the replacement facilities have been completed and are capable of being used. Those facilities should all form part of the adopted public highway and not just be permissive.

In summary GVG, a single issue entity campaigning for an holistic approach to the planning of Guildford, believes the draft Order is premature for the reasons given and has not been adequately advertised. By copy of this email we are inviting Waitrose to withdraw the section 247 application failing which we urge the Secretary of State to require the draft Order to be re-advertised if and when Waitrose are able to implement the Planning Permission.

If neither Waitrose or the Secretary of State feel able to entertain these requests then we wish confirmation of the proposed Stopping Up Order to be dealt with at a public inquiry please, when GVG intend to present evidence from its consultant traffic engineers and make such further representations as the then circumstances require.

Yours faithfully,

G.D.BLAND
Director
Vision for Guildford Limited