

GVG NEWSLETTER

November 2013



Beware Guildford's Perfect Storm

Sadly we've seen again recently the damage that forces of nature can wreak when certain fundamental elements combine.

Here in Guildford, albeit thankfully on a different scale, we've got the makings of our own 'perfect storm'. Coming together, in an impending surge, are a significant number of large developments:

- Waitrose** - foodstore
 - North St** - major retail expansion
 - The Station** - shops, offices, homes & hotels
 - Cathedral** - new homes
 - University** - new faculties & homes
 - Local Plan** - impact of new homes, offices, mixed use & industrial units
- plus:
- Green Belt** - threat to the Green Belt, AONBs & villages

Collectively, these elements will have a huge, lasting impact on our town and borough.

GVG is all for growth. But it has got to be planned! **We need that master plan and we need it NOW!**

Let's Have a Plan!

Where's the sense in letting all these developments happen piecemeal? Where's the co-ordination? Where's the assessment of the combined traffic & transport impact? Where's the co-ordination of architecture & design?

The new Local Plan is not going to turn this floodtide. It isn't designed to do that.

If we don't start down the masterplan road right now, we will sink under a tidal wave of piecemeal development.

However, the combined power and impact of the developments can be turned and channelled to our advantage.

Taken as a whole, the additional income to the Exchequer - development levies,

incremental future business rate income and innovative tax structures etc - could be used imaginatively to fund major infrastructure projects such as:

- a new bridge over the railway,
- improving the A3,
- pushing traffic out of the town centre,
- building cycleways & public spaces and
- opening up the riverside.

That's all exciting, isn't it? But it's not going to happen unless we all **push for that master plan NOW!** Join with GVG and **lobby your councillor.**

Onwards & Upwards!

Of late, much local attention has been focused on the Local Plan process and the Council's outreach on its 'Issues & Options' consultation.

GVG's interest in the Local Plan revolves around what elements might help or hinder a proper master planning exercise. Crucial to the latter is its timing. It is important that the Master Plan guides and informs the major developments that are looming, starting with North Street.

The Master Plan will also help ensure that all the Local Plan strands join up in a cohesive, logical manner and that the Local Plan does not unwittingly frustrate long term infrastructure initiatives by unfortunate and conflicting development designations.

Last but not least, a Master Plan will help defend against opportunistic developers who may seek to lodge applications, relying on contentious interpretation of the National Planning Policy Framework, otherwise known as the 'Developers' Charter'.

Try Some Time Travel! Send Us a Postcard from the Future!

Imagine it is now 2030. Fast forward and turn up in Guildford sometime that year:

- What has changed that you like?
- What has changed that you don't like?

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- What's retained its original appeal for you?

We've produced a document, '**Guildford on the Way**' that offers a vision of the future. You can find the document and an electronic postcard template on our website www.guildfordvisiongroup.com.

Follow the link to the document and you'll see some sample postcards on p.9 onwards.

Send us a postcard with YOUR remarks. Keep them snappy! Get your children to submit their thoughts as well. The exercise is all about their future, after all.

We will submit all those we receive **by 25 November** to the Local Plan team at GBC as part of their consultation re the Local Plan as part of our response to Q12.

But still keep them coming after that date as we will use the evidence as we continue to push for a masterplan.

We've settled with GBC and Waitrose

While we can't talk about the terms of the settlement, we are glad we have reached an agreement.

As you will have seen from our agreed Press Release, Waitrose have committed to keep the impact of traffic under review.

The process of seeking a Judicial Review has helped us identify some interesting aspects to planning in Guildford and has informed our campaign to achieve a master plan.

Our Next Public Meeting – 20 January 2014

Join us on Monday 20 January at the Baptist Church, Millmead at 7.30pm. We'll bring you up to date on our campaign, we'll explain how we're approaching the Local Plan process, and we'll review some of the major development strands, eg North Street. All good stuff so do come along and join in. Your views are important.

Your Contributions

Our thanks again to all those who have contributed to date. Our campaign has inevitably incurred costs (QCs don't come cheap!) so **if you feel you are able to contribute anything from £10 to £1,000, please get in touch with Yvonka** at action@guildfordvisiongroup.com.

Visit our website www.guildfordvisiongroup.com for a host of material about our campaign and the issues involved.