

Subject: Redevelopment of Multi-storey Car Park, Earls Way

Ref: 04/03193/FULL1

Residents Objections

Planning Policy

- Planning brief specified mixed usage with leisure facilities.
- Development to be stepped away from the residential properties towards the commercial.
- Landscape design to include the retention of trees covered by the TPO

Site Considerations

- Proposals are excessive in both bulk and scale and have no architectural merit.
- Orchard Grove is a residential area of 100 years standing. The building as proposed both in design and position is incompatible with the existing houses.
- There is a public right of way (opposite 17 Orchard Grove) across the site.

Special Considerations

- Tree preservation order no. 5, 1950 protects the hardwood trees between Orchard Grove and Earls Way. Majority of these will either be removed or damaged during construction.

Neighbours

- The height and proximity of the building to Orchard Grove will constitute an invasion of privacy. The front living / bedrooms will be overlooked at one end of the road by the new flats and at the other by users of the car park. Rear gardens will also be overlooked.
- The building will block natural daylight and the early morning sunlight.
- Noise from the new building is likely to be 8 times greater than the existing car park.
- Deliveries will also be made on a 24 hour basis
- Light pollution will also be present on a 24 hour basis both from the sales area and the car parks.
- Noise and atmospheric pollution during the construction period will have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of the residents whether inside or out.

Surrounding Areas

- The existing road system is already inadequate with severe congestion in Station Road, Spur Road and Sevenoaks Road during peak periods. The positioning of a large store will exacerbate these problems.
- The increase in traffic will not only affect Orchard Grove which is already used as a “rat run” but also the surrounding area including the Knoll Area, Tubbenden Lane, Hillcrest and Tower Roads etc as users try to avoid the War Memorial.
- Parking will be a problem during the construction period while the car park is closed. Where will current users, which include both commuters and office and shop workers, park? Presumably in the surrounding residential streets.
- Similarly where will the contractors and site workers vehicles be parked?
- The presence of a large store selling not just foods but clothes, electrical goods etc is bound to adversely affect the commercial viability of existing shops in the High Street.