**UPDATE - GUILD LIVING PROPOSALS**

**WICKES/HALFORDS SITE**

**Amended Planning Application**

The Town Centre site in Harefield Road, currently in use by Wickes and Halfords stores, is again up for re-development. This is the story so far…..

In 2018 Canada Life and the Watkins Jones Group proposed to demolish the two stores and erect three tower blocks (one of 12 storeys) to provide 264 self-contained units. No car parking would have been provided for residents, except disabled spaces. This gave rise to immense opposition from North Uxbridge Residents. Six Petitions were raised in local roads and many letters of objection submitted. NURA’s objection pointed out the relevant Planning Policy, which states that high-rise development ‘……should only be considered in areas whose character would not be affected adversely by scale, mass or bulk of tall or large buildings.’ The likelihood of parking abuse in the already congested local roads was fully addressed. Planning Permission was refused and the potential Developers did not appeal and sold the site.

This experience brought home to us the vulnerability of North Uxbridge to a development proposal of this type. NURA’s aim is to support any development proposal which could benefit the Town Centre and be reasonable to the environment enjoyed by North Uxbridge residents.

We were, therefore, very pleased when Guild Living came forward with a proposal which has the potential to meet both these objectives. In summary, it is an approach which would enable older people to downsize into an attractive setting, with easy access to the Town Centre. It has ‘stepped’ levels of accommodation and care, with an impressive range of facilities – both for their Residents and also open to the immediate community. It did, however, include one 8 storey block: this represented our main reservation.

The NURA Team held many meetings with Guild, both face-to-face and virtual, which resulted in NURA giving support to the original Planning Application, with reservations. The Team has recently met again with Guild to maintain our concerns, mainly regarding the height of the block. We are very pleased that Guild have now taken these on board in their re-submission by –

* reducing the height of the tallest building from 8 to 7 storeys by reducing the number of apartments from 194 to 182.
* removing a top part of the building along Harefield Road to create stepped massing up to 5 storeys.
* setting back the building, offering space for landscaping and tree planting along Harefield Road.

We felt that, for a later living environment, a lower building mass is more appropriate, both for future residents and the greater amenity of North Uxbridge.

**NURA will now be indicating support to the Re-Submission, without qualification and is encouraging residents to give support.**

This can be done by visiting the Hillingdon Council Planning Website under reference **16299/APP/2020/3313** to make comments. The closing date is 25 March 2021, but comments received later will still be taken into account until Committee Reports are written. If you wish to view the latest changes, you can ‘view documents’, scrolling down to those dated 10-03-21.