**20-00549-PRE 922-930 Purley Way SPEECH**

I last addressed you just four weeks ago today in relation to a pre-app planning application for 262 flats at Whytecliffe Road South just by the station; I find it immensely depressing that I’m here again to speak against yet another enormous development that both individually and cumulatively will have an adverse impact on the place of Purley.

Because pre-app negotiations are held behind closed doors, I had no idea that this scheme was even under consideration, and to me it’s shocking that this allegedly open and transparent Administration should have been consulting with the developer for such a long time. I see that another meeting was held last week, to which no local councillors were invited – another example of the Council ignoring the views of its residents.

Within the limited time available to me, I address some of the key issues in turn:

* Even the secretive Place Review Panel reckoned that the previous proposal of 9 storeys was too high, so I’m surprised to see that the response has been to come back with a proposal for three blocks of 12, 8 & 6 storeys. Given that Mosaic Place just down the road has 17 storeys and has taken up the slot of the ONE tall landmark building in the 2018 Local Plan for Purley, I don’t understand why such a tall building is even contemplated. What’s the point of having a local plan if its provisions are ignored?
* Para 6.4 dismisses the fact that the habitable rooms/hectare metric comes out for this site at 331 as compared with a recommended number of 45-260 - that is roughly a DOUBLING of the recommended number. In fact, I’ve NEVER seen a Purley application come in with a metric lower than the recommended upper limit, so again, what’s the point of having a local or in this case London plan, if its provisions are routinely to be ignored?
* Quite apart from the overintensive development of the site as a whole, I’m worried by the mix of units proposed, which does not relate to the mix of homes required for Purley, or indeed Croydon. One third are one bed homes and nearly two-thirds are two bed, with just a smattering of six three bed homes. This will create a very undesirable ghetto of a large number of single people cooped up in a huge complex, in a noisy location right on the A23 trunk road with trucks whizzing by day and night, and cut off from the rest of Purley by the dangerous A23 crossing at the junction with Foxley Lane.
* The documentation is suspiciously coy about the number, quality & location of trees which are proposed to be cut down, except that they are inevitably of “little amenity value”. I’m sure that the residents of Coldharbour Lane & Russell Hill Road would beg to differ.

Transport: the planning department’s hostility to cars is well known and fully documented. However, it’s very old-fashioned to think that those of working age will generally commute to London, Croydon or Gatwick by train, because so many more people are active these days in the self-employed economy. Unfortunately, the Council’s hostility to vehicles evidently extends to not providing any parking spaces for those residents who need vans or even motorbikes for their daily employment as electricians, plumbers, Deliveroo couriers etc. By its planning policy, the Council is excluding such residents from this development, and the diversity of the community will be adversely affected.

Finally, I’m strongly opposed to Purley enduring yet another assault on its social fabric, its infrastructure and its population density. Astonishingly, Purley is currently providing about 50%, yes 50% of the annual new homes requirement for the WHOLE of CROYDON. It’s not an exaggeration to say that the cumulative impact of all these developments constitutes suburban character assassination. This is happening through demolition of about 50 large family homes with gardens, coupled with a few large developments such as Mosaic Place (220), a total of about 300 flats in Russell Hill & another 50 at 1-9 Foxley Lane, which is just round the corner, but surprisingly omitted entirely from this documentation. Why is such excessive development being encouraged in Purley without any increase in social infrastructure such as schools, surgeries etc, and even while the Purley Pool almost uniquely in Croydon remains closed? What about the other 26 wards? For some strange reason, NONE of the S106 & CIL cash ever gets invested in Purley, where it’s so desperately needed.

I urge you to consider these points extremely carefully.. Thank you.