

Reference: S62A/2022/0012 Land east of Station, Elsenham. Outline Planning Application with all matters Reserved except for the Primary means of access for the development of up to 200 residential dwellings along with landscaping, public open space and associated infrastructure works.

17 November 2022

Dear Sir,

My name is Zoe Rutterford. As a Henham parish councillor I represent residents of Pledgdon Green. I have lived and worked in Broxted and Pledgdon for nearly forty years. I travel the local road network by car and bicycle and rely on the local infrastructure and amenities for day to day living. With reference to the above planning application, I wish to lodge an objection on the following grounds:

The range of facilities in Elsenham is limited and insufficient to meet the daily needs of the proposed development. These community facilities would be beyond walking distance for most residents. The primary school in Elsenham is already full. Residents of Elsenham and Henham tend to travel to Bishops Stortford and Saffron Walden to shop.

The daily experience of local people on the roads around Elsenham and Stansted is totally different to the situation modelled in the Transport Assessments. The situation at Grove Hill, Lower Street and Chapel Hill is already unacceptable with extensive queues and delays. Since 2011 there has been a 116% increase in households in Elsenham. I can recall 15 years ago, the car journey to Bishop's Stortford took around twenty minutes. Now, as a result of the cumulative development in this area, it often takes an hour to reach Bishop's Stortford from Pledgdon/Broxted. We are bound to see this journey time lengthen significantly as there are hundreds more houses already under construction locally with no improvements to infrastructure. The congestion I have described would be taken to another level if the proposed development is also allowed to go ahead, while air quality in Stansted would continue to decline. The rural roads through Ugley, Ugley Green suffer from poor highway alignment, have no footpaths or street lighting, and cannot satisfactorily accommodate further growth.

The Developer states that Elsenham has excellent public transport facilities. Buses are limited and residents need to use a car for most activities.

In 2016 the Secretary of State considered that a proposal for 800 dwellings on land included in the current application was unsustainable, and refused planning permission. The Secretary of State also agreed with his Inspector on traffic issues. The Inspector considered that 800 dwellings would bring significant volumes of additional traffic to a village at a significant distance from employment and services. How is it possible that 800 dwellings were rightly deemed unsustainable, but that piecemeal developments amounting to over 1000 dwellings that are already allowed/applied for would be sustainable? If this development is allowed then the total will exceed the number that the Secretary of State considered unsustainable.

The site is Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural land. The UK government is putting new emphasis on our country becoming more self-sufficient in terms of food production. Our generation faces the far-reaching effects of climate change and food shortages. It is obvious that retaining productive arable land is a priority and its sacrifice for further development would be totally unsustainable.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Z Rutterford

