

Ref S62A/2022/0012 Land east of Station, Elsenham.

Mr Gary & Mrs Jane Randall, [REDACTED]

The area around Henham and Elsenham has been blighted by multiple large scale development proposals for close on two decades. Many of the applications and proposals have been refused and were later taken to appeal where refusal was upheld. One plot for development has been refused on appeal twice. A Secretary of State considered a proposal for 800 dwellings on land included in the current application was not sustainable in 2016 and refused planning permission. Why would it now be acceptable? If anything, over development all around Elsenham has strengthened the argument to refuse this application.

Traffic congestion in the area and specifically Stansted is chronic at peak times. Most local residents avoid leaving Elsenham via Stansted through Chapel Hill and Grove Hill due to the constant queues of traffic at a single track traffic light controlled bottleneck at Grove Hill. Then two way traffic up Chapel Hill which is reduced to single track due to parked cars. When previous appeals for refusal to grant planning permission on this plot have been heard, the Secretary of State 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. With local residents already diverting through other routes to come and go from Elsenham many other entirely inadequate and inappropriate roads are experiencing heavy traffic. Ugley village with seven blind 90 bends and a vehicle weight restriction is now a "Rat run" route used as a cut through from Elsenham to the Stansted Road. This road is now regularly used by heavy construction vehicles accessing Elsenham for the many sites in the area already approved and under construction. They should not use this route, but the practicalities dictate that Grove/Chapel Hill route is impassable, Hall Road (Round the airport is too long and alternative). Leaving Elsenham via North Hall Road is not an option as it has been closed to all traffic for two years. Patmore End is single track and also heavily overused. Local residents have had enough! Further development is unsustainable and constitutes over development.

How is it possible that 800 dwellings are not sustainable, but, that piecemeal developments already allowed, or applied for, of potentially over 1000 dwellings is? Piecemeal development has been allowed and considered to be sustainable. If this development is allowed the total will exceed the number that the Secretary of State considered unsustainable. A "Whole picture" view needs to be taken, developers are exploiting and destroying the character of the area. It has to stop.

The primary school in Elsenham is already full, there is no secondary school, the Crown public house is on the cusp of closure, there are four retail units in Elsenham which is insufficient to support the existing community. Facilities in Elsenham are limited and insufficient to meet the daily needs of the existing community without the addition of the proposed development. Required facilities are beyond walking distance for most residents, so car journeys are the only practicality. Residents of Elsenham and Henham tend to travel to Bishop Stortford and Saffron Walden to shop. Accessing either of these involves a car drive out/return through the routes that I have already explained are already heavily congested and frequently closed due to roadworks and flooding. The school run is particularly challenging, residents without school aged children plan their travel to avoid these times. The Developer states that Elsenham has excellent public transport facilities. The buses are limited and residents need to use a car for most activities.

With the increasing need for self sufficiency for the UK with the ongoing and rapidly changing and challenging global situation, how does it make sense to lose Grade 1 and Grade 2 agriculture land to urban sprawl? How is it sustainable to lose such high grade productive agriculture land.

This proposed extension to an already over developed community must be refused.

Gary Randall

Jane Randall