

From: Nick Johnson [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 November 2022 11:11
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Ref. Planning Application S62A/2022/0012 - Land East of Station Road, Elsenham

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to register my opposition to the granting of this Application for the following reasons:

Despite detailed transport assessments, the modelling fails to reflect the daily reality for local residents. The large majority of journeys are made by car, with increasing amounts of congestion, and damage to narrow rural roads, being evident to anyone who actually lives and travels in the area. Driving and, worse still, cycling in the area, is often unpleasant and, at times, downright dangerous. Essex County Council's Sustainable Modes of Transport Strategy 2020 seeks to reduce the amount of private motor vehicles on the highway network during peak times. Existing and further development, as proposed in the application, will make matters worse.

I find the results of the main Transport Assessment questionable. For instance, the surveys of traffic journeys at the pinch points of Grove Hill, Lower Street and Chapel Hill in Stansted are measured in seconds when, in reality, progress through these areas often takes much, much longer. The statement that "an average journey time of under 3 minutes demonstrates that Stansted Mountfitchet does not currently suffer from substantial levels of congestion and delay in the peak travel periods" appears laughable. Ask any local resident.

Assessments of traffic movements on surrounding, rural roads also seems to be understated. For example, Section 4.7.31 describes the situation through Ugley Green as "this road is rural in character and is subject to a number of width restrictions and tight bends. It is therefore considered that this route will only be attractive to local vehicle trips from Elsenham to the surrounding local villages". The reality is that, due to the long term closure of North Hall Road, through traffic along this route has been significant in recent years, with many commercial vehicles exceeding the 6' 6" width limit. This would have been the case at the time of the Assessment.

Despite the ongoing creep of residential development in the area, this is still essentially a rural environment, contributing to important food production, and maintaining precious, green belt assets. The adjacent development of 350 dwellings, currently underway, has already had an adverse impact on the local landscape and wildlife, and resulted in damage to some trees and hedgerows. Development of another 200 houses will add further to the degradation of the local rural environment.

The application appears to be an example of "development by stealth", probably intended to circumvent the earlier refusal of a larger scale development. As is currently allowed, it has been made directly to the Planning Inspectorate, appearing to take advantage of the fact that Uttlesford District Council is in disarray (in designation), and lodged at a time when the Local Plan has been delayed. Government Guidance advises that local planning authorities identify and plan for the development which their areas need, and that planning

ensures that the right development happens in the right place at the right time, benefitting communities and the economy. Approval of this application appears to principally benefit the developer.

Local facilities and infrastructure have been stretched by ongoing development, and the building of additional houses will only exacerbate the situation. Local schools and GP surgeries are struggling to keep up with demand. Apart from Stansted Airport, there are few jobs in the immediate area, and further commuting, and taking children to school, will only add to the amount of traffic on the road or overcrowding on an often unreliable rail network. Local shops are limited, resulting in many car journeys to larger towns such as Saffron Walden and Bishop's Stortford for shopping. Water supplies to the region are under pressure, with low river, ground water and aquifer levels, partly as a result of rapidly increasing numbers of people.

All in all, the quality of life in our village continues to deteriorate because of development which is progressing at a scale that is disproportionate to a level that can be sustained. Approval of another 200 houses will make matters worse, and I urge you to refuse the planning application.

Yours faithfully,

Nick Johnson,

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