

The Planning Inspectorate

22 November 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Land East of Elsenham Station - Ref: S62A/2022/0012

I am writing to object most strongly to yet another speculative and totally unsustainable planning application in our area. As a long term resident (over 25 years), it is with great sadness and frustration that I have seen so many speculative proposals for building in this area approved, resulting in unsustainable growth and a total destruction of Elsenham's essential village character. Common sense prevailed with the rejection of past bids for a 10,000 property ecotown and developments of 3,000 and then 800 houses but we have now surpassed this latter number of new builds with a whole raft of piecemeal approvals which have resulted in extensive over-development. There is absolutely no way a further 200 homes can be absorbed. The area is being punished for the failure of the local authority to produce a timely or any Local Plan over many years and I ask the Inspector to provide protection against this blatant developer opportunism.

My objections are:

- **Unsustainability:** A previous application for 800 houses on land included in the current application was refused by the Secretary of State in 2016 on the basis that it was unsustainable. This new planning application for 200 homes, when taken with developments already completed, in progress or approved, would take the number of additional dwellings in the area since 2016 to over 1,000 dwellings, i.e. above the level that was judged by the Secretary of State to be unsustainable. Just because this level of building has been reached incrementally does not make it any more sustainable.
- **Pressure on inadequate public transport and road network:** There is already insufficient local infrastructure or a wide enough range of facilities within walking or cycling distance to support the current level of development, let alone the needs of a further 200 homes. Most residents in the area have to travel to Bishop's Stortford or Saffron Walden to shop and go even further afield to work. Contrary to the developer's statements, public transport is not excellent and buses are particularly limited. Consequently most people have to use a car. Increased traffic from existing developments already causes extensive delays and queues, especially through the key bottlenecks in Stansted of Grove and Chapel Hill. The rural network of roads through Ugley and Ugley Green consists of dangerous lanes, blind bends and a narrow, single-file railway bridge.
- **Lack of school places:** Elsenham Primary School is already full and all secondary age students need to travel out of the village. Lack of local schooling will generate yet more car traffic.
- **Loss of key agricultural land:** With recent varied global pressures that have impacted supply chains and raised the cost of living, including the price of food, governments around the world are looking to increase energy and food security. It is not sustainable to lose the Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural land that comprises this proposed site.

I am sure that, for the above reasons, you will reject this application.

Yours faithfully

Simon Price