

Response to the proposed development at Grange Paddock, Ickleton Road, Elmdon. S6A/2023/0015

From: Dr Philip and Mrs Jan Leighton, [REDACTED]

Introduction

Elmdon is a relatively isolated rural village. In the main it is a quintessentially attractive English village of considerable charm: the Conservation Area covers the historic part of the village stretching along selected lengths of the radial roads which converge at the central village green and area around the church. The historic part of the village is little changed and principally consists of a number of Listed Buildings, many of them with thatched roofs. Trees and hedgerows play an important part in contributing to the quality of the area and the views into the settlement along the three main routes are the most important. Open spaces and gaps between houses contribute to the look and feel of the village.

Objections

1. To date, recent development has taken place on the lower slope to the south of Ickleton Road, below the historic and listed housing, thereby retaining the character of the Conservation Area. The proposed development, on the north slope is sited above the rest of the village, in a very visible and prominent location. This will create an overbearing presence on the village, having an adverse impact on the Conservation area and the listed buildings within it, thereby changing both its look and feel. Elmdon will no longer be the quiet, historic Essex village it currently is.
2. The proposed development will create increased urbanisation as evidenced by light and noise pollution and increased traffic.
 - a. New internal roads for the 18 proposed houses will undoubtedly require street lighting, which will have a deleterious effect on the character of the village and the aspect of the Conservation Area. The new houses themselves will be illuminated, often with outside lights. This will create prominent light pollution given the proposed elevated location.
 - b. Clearly 18 houses will bring more than 18 cars, perhaps 2-3 per household. This will bring significant congestion (see below).
3. There is neither employment nor services in Elmdon; no school, shops or public house (this remains closed). Further, there is no unmet housing need within Elmdon (this was established in a housing needs survey in 2015), therefore these houses will be bought by people moving into the village, who will commute for employment to London or Cambridge. As there is a minimal bus service (no regular service only a school bus) they will commute by car. Ickleton road is already highly congested since, due to the lack of off-street parking, many residents park on the road.
4. Lack of school provision in Elmdon is a further issue. The nearest primary school is in Chrishall and the nearest secondary schools are in Newport and Saffron Walden. Capacity for primary schooling in Chrishall seems limited.
5. Given the climate crisis we should be thinking about everything through the prism of climate change, such as not building in areas where everyone has to commute by car, or saving

energy by not installing street lights. Also, to be assessed is the capacity in utilities and services: waste collection, sewage capacity, potable water (we note that the mains water pressure is already low), storm water drainage. 'The pressures to urbanise the countryside are largely antagonistic to dealing with climate change' (Lord Deben, Chairman of the independent advisory Climate Change Committee.)

6. The Uttlesford Local Plan adopted in 2005 states that "The rural nature of the District is recognised for its intrinsic character and beauty, its value for agricultural production and its biodiversity. The strategy is to conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness and historic character of these rural settlements and support this character and the thriving rural communities within it"