



To: The Planning Inspectorate
3rd Floor
Temple House Quay
2 The Square
Bristol BS1 6PN

Cc: The Planning Committee
Uttlesford District Council
Council Offices
London Road
Saffron Walden CB11 4ER

Dear Sirs

We write in reference to the planning proposal at –

Grange Paddocks
Elmdon
Saffron Walden

Which is logged in your system under reference S62A.2023.0015

I am afraid we consider this proposal as being wholly unacceptable for a number of reasons.

Site

This is a greenfield site outside the village development limit and were this proposal to be permitted, it would likely open the floodgates for further developers.

The planning document S7 – The Countryside sets out three criteria for development on greenfield sites -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1115786/Local_Plan_Policies_Checked.pdf

It would seem to us that this application does not meet these criteria.

The site is on high ground and would be an eyesore visible from its surroundings including from the historic Icknield Way.

Sustainability

Elmdon is officially classified as an “unsustainable” by Uttlesford District Council. We have no amenities (shop, school, surgery, pub, train or bus service) or opportunities for employment.

Traffic and Safety

Development on this site would increase the danger on Ickleton Road which is already a dangerous, narrow and very congested road.

Landscape and Environment

- **Heritage:** The Conservation Area Appraisal identified important views in the 3 main approaches to the village, which would be seriously impacted by a development on this site, close to the Icknield Way.
- **Habitat:** The application involves the felling of up to thirty mature trees (we count twenty nine on the proposal) and the removal of much hedgerow.
- **Loss of habitat:** This development would mean a loss of habitat foraging for existing protected species such as Bats, Badgers, Barn Owls and Great Crested Newts.
- **Light pollution:** Elmdon is one of very few villages with no streetlights, in line with The Dark Skies Initiative. Street lighting and, inevitable, added security lights in this elevated site would impact views of the night sky.

Flash Flood Risk

Houses opposite the site have been subject to flash flooding during sudden heavy rainfalls (which are becoming more frequent due to climate change), causing damage to buildings. Existing drainage system is very old and broken. Floodwater frequently by-passes the already inadequate drainage ditch alongside Ickleton Road.

Village Design Statement

Considerable time and money has been spent on the recent Village Design Statement which was accepted by the whole village and this proposal has completely ignored its contents and recommendations.

Housing Need

It has not been established that there is a need for 18 expensive houses. Uttlesford District Council has already met most of its 5-6 year supply ambitions and needs and is expected to achieve its target later this year. Elmdon has recently had new houses built in appropriate infill positions, e.g. The Glebe, Church Farm and Newland House (by the sports meadow). There are potential brownfield sites available in the village for other such houses to be built. What we actually need, in order to meet declared demand, is a small number of affordable houses utilising brownfield (certainly not greenfield) sites.

Sewage

There is no detailed strategy for sewage. The village infrastructure is lacking and will not support further housing without very significant development.

Inaccuracies/Inconsistencies

There are several glaring inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the application not least of which is the statement that we have frequent bus services. There are NO bus services connecting us to our surrounding towns and other villages thus the occupants of these houses would be bound to have to commute by car (probably 36 additional cars) to schools, doctors, the railway station and nearby towns for shopping and services thereby increasing traffic on our narrow and broken roads.

Guidelines

Surely the following should be taken into account. This proposal surely drives a coach & horse through them all.

- 1] Village Design Statement

https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/9610/Elmdon-Village-Design-Statement-2019-/pdf/Elmdon-VDS-hi-res_compressed.pdf

- 2] Elmdon Conservation Area Appraisal

https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/4148/Elmdon-Conservation-Area-Appraisal/pdf/Elmdon_CAA_05_Dec_2014_Low_res.pdf?m=635533697002630000

- 3] Uttlesford District Council Local Plan 2005

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/local-plan-2005#:~:text=The%20Adopted%20Local%20Plan%202005,planning%20decisions%20within%20the%20district.>

- 4] National Policy Planning Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Sir,

We urge you to refuse this application.

Yours sincerely,

Michael & Penelope Gaine

