

From: Mr & Mrs Gheorghiu-Currie

Sent: 8th March 2023

To: Section 62A Applications section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk;

Subject: Response to the proposed development at Grange Paddock, Ickleton Road, Elmdon Ref: S62A/2023/0015

Dear Sirs,

We are writing to object to the above planning proposal. We fundamentally disagree with the conclusions reached in the application.

The assessment of the planning balance, as set out in the application, is not based on a full or complete appraisal of all sustainability matters (of the economic, environmental and social impacts of the development) and there are a number of inconsistent and potentially misleading statements made in the application which also need to be corrected.

In no particular order, we oppose the development for the following reasons:

- Elmdon is a very rural setting (c.120 dwellings) and is classified as an unsustainable village by Uttlesford District Council. There are NO amenities within or near to the village.
- There is neither employment nor services in Elmdon; no school, no day care; no surgery, no shops, no public transport, no public house (this has been closed for nearly a decade and remains closed today!).
- The development site location does NOT have good access to local services, and nothing is “accessible on foot” or safely by cycling (every route in and out of Elmdon is along narrow, hilly, country lanes which are not safely commutable by foot or cycle). Anyone living in Elmdon needs a car!
- The development is disproportionate in size causing a major change in the look and feel, character charm and low density of the village, having an adverse impact on all current residents. The development would increase the village by 10-15% which is NOT sustainable.
- The proposed development is elevated above the rest of the village in a prominent location. It will be highly visible from the main approach to the village and from all around the village.
- The site is a greenfield and will result in loss of open countryside, loss of habitat and putting biodiversity at risk.
- There seems to have been limited attempt to understand the existing strains on the local infrastructure and negative impact the development will have on all utilities: waste collection, sewage capacity, potable water, storm water drainage, broadband, etc...
- The flood risk of the new development has not been adequately assessed nor has it taken recent flooding events on Ickleton Road into account; any development at a higher elevation to the current properties increase the overall risk of flooding events.
- Transport and traffic concerns are not fully addressed in the Transport Statement which when taken into account would suggest the NPPF criteria is not met to support the development:
 - There are NO bus services from Elmdon, except school buses and therefore any new residents will need to commute by car (there is no public transport, bus or rail, in walking or cycling distance!)
 - Ickleton Road is inadequate, narrow, pot-holed and unsafe for current traffic and cyclists. It is already highly congested due to the lack of off-street parking,
 - Adding 40+ cars (as indicated on outline layout) plus utility and delivery vehicles would exacerbate the dangers, with the proposed junction location being at the most congested point of Ickleton Road.

- Proposed development will create increased urbanisation, increasing noise, traffic and light pollution. Elmdon is one of the few villages with no streetlighting so any development with lighting will spoil the views of the night sky and change the current character of the village.
- The nearest primary school is in Chrishall which is at capacity and the nearest secondary schools are in Newport and Saffron Walden, both over 5 miles away.
- There is NOT an “unambiguously need” for predominately 3 and 4 bedroom houses in Elmdon.
- Affordable housing provision is not well defined and is still to be negotiated, therefore at risk of adequate delivery.
- The only genuine community benefit is the ill-defined playground, for which an outline application process does not result in a binding commitment.

In further support to the points raised, the proposed development is also contrary to many planning aspects of the Village Design Statement, adopted by Uttlesford District Council in 2019:

Guidelines for development	The proposed Grange Paddock development
new developments should maintain the scale and low-density character of the village	the development is of a huge scale in proportion to the village and Ickleton Road
development should be well integrated with the surrounding landscape	the development is on an elevated and prominent position and in NO way integrated
development should be sympathetic to the rural nature of the villages	the development will significantly increase the urbanisation of the village with no actual infrastructure and amenities to support and sustain it
development should prioritise previously developed sites and not be on green sites	the development is on a greenfield site
favour small 2 or 3 bed family homes (i.e. starter homes for new families or downsizing home for older residents)	the development does not address an identified housing need in Elmdon – over 80% of the properties will be 3+ bedrooms with 50% being large and expensive 4 and 5 bedroom homes.
protect the open landscape and landscape views around the villages	the development will be highly visible on the approaches to the village and from the Icknield Way path
street lighting and external lighting should be kept to a minimum	the erection of any streetlights is not in character to the village and given the elevated position any additional lighting will not result in unnecessary and avoidable light pollution.
development should consider the limitations of the narrow road network, the narrow winding lanes to be conserved	the traffic, transport and utility need of the development have not considered the nature for the narrow roads into the village.
development should be sympathetic to the rural nature of the village.	due to its size and location, the development is NOT integrated or sympathetic to the current rural nature of Elmdon

The proposed development will an overbearing presence on Elmdon and is inappropriate. It will result in significant harm with adverse impact on the Conservation area, listed buildings, all residents and local environment for limited, if any, social or economic gains.

We see NO “wide-ranging benefits” to the community and therefore the planning balance falls heavily in favour of opposing the development. The proposal does NOT represent a sustainable development.

We strongly believe that appropriate additional housing can be delivered in Elmdon in a much more sympathetic and harmonious manner: on previously developed and infill sites, at a lower scale and density and in a more gradual manner to conserve the rural character of the village and area.

Yours sincerely,

Mr & Mrs Gheorghiu-Currie