

UTT/23/O246/PINS | Consultation on S62A/2023/0015- Application for outline planning permission for the erection of 18 dwellings including provision of access road, car parking and residential amenity space, a drainage pond, and communal open space, with all matters reserved for subsequent approval except for means of access and layout | Grange Paddock Ickleton Road Elmdon Essex

**Objection to the outline planning permission:**

Mark and Sally Lafferty

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

We object to the above application for outline planning permission. The proposed development will introduce built form into the countryside with urbanising effects to the village leading to material harm to the distinct rural feel and open countryside character of the area.

Elmdon is not a sustainable village. It is void of services and facilities, causing sustainability concerns and a heavy car reliance.

In the committee report it lists the benefits, adverse impacts and neutral aspects of this development in 13.16.4 – 13.16.6. Whilst 18 houses would boost the district’s housing supply I am led to believe that Uttlesford is a few months away from reaching its development target. I do not feel that putting 18 houses on good quality farmland outside an unsustainable village with no amenities where there was (in a housing needs survey in 2015) shown to be no housing need where the habitants would be dependent on cars is appropriate. There must be more suitable locations within Uttlesford. In addition, they identify the public open space and play area as a benefit. The location is not in the village, and is very unlikely to be truly available to the public once maintenance is in the hands of a residents of the new development. It does identify the adverse impact on “The Hoops” and loss of trees but fails to identify the increased risk of flooding and increased cars on the road. In Neutral they have stated the loss of agricultural land – this is Grade 2 agricultural land situated within the “Elmdon Chalk Uplands Landscape” which should be protected. This should be regarded as a significant adverse impact of the proposed development.

The adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits, there is no reason why the development needs to be at that site, outside the village settlement. The development will dominate the streetscene within this countryside setting. The site access is impractical and dangerous. The addition of 18 houses to Elmdon would put pressure on an already full to capacity village school in Chrishall as well as doctors surgeries.

Houses and access to the site:

In the committee report it states in 13.5.5 that they will be two storey height. Due to the higher elevation on that site of Ickleton Road the scheme would materially impact adversely on dwellings on the North side of Ickleton Road. They would block the light and result in the houses being overlooked. This includes a Grade II listed house “The Hoops”. The existing and proposed site section is shown from Elm Court. This is misleading in terms of the impact on The Hoops and 1-6 Ickleton Rd as there is a greater height difference between the proposed development and the current properties on Ickleton Rd. The proposed development would be seen from the road as well as the footpaths at the top of Hollow Road.

In the committee report 13.3.11 they say that there are accessible local services, I am not sure which services they are referring to as there are no local services in the village. They make a reference to a pub and childminders in the village. The pub has not been open since we moved into the village in 2015. The childminders they are presumably

referring to “Little Angels Childminding” which appears on google maps. This business closed in 2019. In summary, Elmdon has no shop, no pub, no school, no public bus service available. There are no local services in Elmdon.

They make a point in the committee report of having wheelchair accessible houses in 13.6.8, it is important to highlight that the current pavement down Ickleton Road to the Church is not wheelchair accessible due to being too narrow in places and obstructions. On their plan, it also includes a pavement which currently does not exist on the north side of Ickleton Road.

The application includes a misleading report on public transport to and from the village. The 444 bus does leave the village in the morning and return in the afternoon as it is a secondary school bus service and is term time only. Bus 31 goes from Chrishall, there is no safe route to walk from Elmdon to Chrishall apart from over the fields on a footpath. Bus 7 and 101 goes from Ickleton where there is no way of walking safely to Ickleton from Elmdon. Bus 132 is from Saffron Walden which again is not a safe or plausible walking distance for someone wanting to access a bus service. Therefore the only viable method of transport in and out of Elmdon is by car.

The proposed site access for vehicles is dangerous. It is on a blind corner which has already caused many near misses as cars have left Alfreds Shot house. In addition, the roads accessing the village are not suitable for increased traffic and two members of the village have had an accident while leaving the village at the Royston Lane, Quickset Road crossroads towards Ickleton in the last 6 months. Both serious accidents when the police were in attendance. On the <https://www.crashmap.co.uk/Search> there are 2 further serious incidents logged at the same site from 2018. The Site Plan is misleading in this respect as it does not show the bend in the road immediately to the North East.

#### Schools:

I have a big concern around the capacity of the nearest schools. Primary aged children are able to apply to go to Chrishall Village School which a Church of England school serving Chrishall, Elmdon and Duddenhoe End. This school is currently at capacity and is already making use of a temporary classroom. It cannot increase its capacity and therefore it would raise the question as to where the 18 house holds children would be able to go to school. The next nearest school is in great Chesterford though with the development around there I believe that school is also at capacity.

The secondary age children apply to Saffron Walden County High School and Joyce Franklin Academy. These secondary schools are at capacity and have ongoing developments in their catchment areas. Beyond this I am not sure where these children would be able to go to school.

#### Development Plan:

The proposed development directly contradicts the village development plan that was written in 2019. This site was also not prioritised for development when there was a call for sites by Uttlesford. Elmdon village has also not identified a need for housing.

#### Sewage:

On the application form it states that sewage is still “unknown”. This would need confirming as the current mains sewage system for 1-6 Ickleton Rd is not suitable for more houses to be added to it. A few years ago there was an overflow in the sewage when there was a higher than average usage over Christmas which led to the system overflowing into the garden at number 5.

#### Flooding:

On the application form it states that the site is not at risk of flooding. This is repeated in the committee report 13.8.7. My concern is that the area is on elevated ground and the road below it, Ickleton Road, has already been

known to flood in 2016 and 2019 which resulted in some of the properties further down the road (Manor Row) to be flooded. By removing established grasslands, hedgerows and trees this risk is only going to increase and by using the governments area flood risk map there is an area further down the hill that is highlighted as High risk. This is less than 100m from the proposed development and is down hill so I consider the development only increasing that risk for houses that are already in existence on the south side of Ickleton Rd. As a house that is on the south side of Ickleton Road and downwards slope I am concerned the this will increase the risk of flooding to our property.

#### Biodiversity and Geological conservation:

On the application form they have said that there are no protected or priority species and no important habitats. This contradicts other areas of their application as well as our own observations.

In the Biodiversity checklist they have stated there are no priority habitats but according to <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> the area is a priority woodland habitat with high spatial priority as well as priority habitat inventory deciduous woodland. In addition, it is a priority area for Countryside Stewardship measures addressing Lapwing Habitat.

The removal of the grassland, woodland and partial removal of the hedgerow will also mean the removal of a habitat which we have seen badgers, owls, woodpeckers and bats in over the years that we have lived in Elmdon as well as great crested newts in the area.

In the Biodiversity checklist they have also indicated that they application does not involve new lighting of green space within 50m of woodland. On their plan they have shown to keep some of the woodland and they have also proposed streetlighting, therefore this is contrary to the biodiversity checklist. They have stated that the application site does not contain trees that have holes and cracks etc. Although I cannot state how old the trees are I can say that from the road you can see trees that contain woodpecker holes and there is a woodpecker that lives in that woodland which is frequently heard. I cannot confirm if it is a greater spotted or a lesser spotted woodpecker but it is in that woodland.

In the Biodiversity checklist they have completed the species evaluation incorrectly as there are species identified in table 3.1 for example Badgers that they have ticked yes for or given a statement to support their answer. They have acknowledged the site includes protected species in the committee report 13.12.

In the committee report in 13.3.12 they state they are wanting to “enhance the natural and build environment, improving biodiversity, minimising waste and pollution ...”. Their plan contradicts this as they are removing woodland leaving a couple of isolated trees and introducing a pond. The increased sound and light pollution will have an affect on any species that could potentially remain in the reduced habitat including the bats, owls and badgers.

They have acknowledged there is a high and moderate impact from the tree removal in 13.9.4. They have highlighted in the report how this is high quality agricultural land and I cannot see why it should be appropriate to convert this to housing when Elmdon is not sustainable, it is outside the village settlement.