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Sent: 14 March 2023 21:18
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning application S62A/2023/0015

The Planning Inspectorate
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Ref: S62A/2023/0015
Grange Paddock, Ickleton Road, Elmdon, CB11 4GR

I am writing to submit my objection to the above planning application.

The proposal is for an unsustainable development in an unsustainable village; Elmdon is designated as such due to its lack of services. Elmdon offers no services beyond a monthly church service, an occasional event at the small village hall and access to a high quality recreational ground. Elmdon does not have a school, public house, post office, doctor, dentist, shop or train station. Contrary to the application, Elmdon has neither a childminder or public bus service. The bus service is limited to a term time only school bus. The Design and Access, Heritage, Landscape and Planning Statement states this application would “ represent sustainable development..... in a location which has good access to local services and in particular many of which would be accessible on foot”. There are no services other than the few previously stated. Use of a car for anything other than visiting the church or village hall is essential.

The proposed site, which sits wholly outside the village development limits is a sloping, elevated site and therefore prominent in the landscape. There are widespread panoramic views that would be marred by the development especially from parts of a nearby bridleway and from sections of the ancient Icknield Way. The proposal states ‘the application site doesn’t protrude into the panoramic vistas of this locality.’ This is untrue.

The loss of biodiversity is not quantified but it is hard to see how loss can be avoided with the removal of 29 trees and a not insignificant length of hedgerow.

The Village Design Statement (VDS) for Elmdon is a detailed document compiled following extensive consultation and village participation, created to guide and inform development in Elmdon, nearby Duddenhoe End and surrounding hamlets. The VDS has been completely ignored in this application. Guidelines in the VDS include:

- maintain the low density character of the villages and favour small two or three bed family homes
- future development of more than one dwelling should prioritise previously developed sites and not be on greenfield sites
- development should be sympathetic to the rural nature of the villages
- new dwellings should not impact on the views of the countryside from the rear and between dwellings

In contradiction to these guidelines the proposed development contains a number of four and five bedroom houses in a more urban style circular development. As stated in the VDS, Elmdon ‘is a linear village.....any additional housing should be proportionate to what is already there and should not change the character of the village.’ This development would increase the housing stock by 12%, is this deemed proportionate? The proposal is unsympathetic to the rural ‘evolved over time’ nature of the village. The application states there will be street lighting, incongruous in a village where there is none. Elmdon would acquire a significant area of light pollution in an elevated position.

The proposed site is Grade 2 land, graded as good agricultural land, which goes against prioritising development of brownfield sites. Should we really be losing farming land of this quality given the UK’s poor food self sufficiency levels?

The proposed site sits along Ickleton Road, narrower in parts than the claimed 6m width. Due to the majority of housing along this road having no off road parking, the road is, generally on one side of the other, full of parked cars. Driving into the village from the east one invariably has to drive along Ickleton road on the wrong side. It is also stated the road has lane markings, these are only present on the approach to the junction with the High Street, some distance from the proposed site. As a safety concern, it should also be noted that schoolchildren wait for the school bus opposite the proposed access site. The additional trips created by a potential extra 36 cars, plus deliveries and visitors would only serve to exacerbate the problems already seen on this road. The TRICS databases used to generate vehicle trip generation were taken from sites that are ‘urban areas’ or ‘edge of town’ where public transport would be accessible.

Given the rural nature of Elmdon with no public transport and thus total reliance on car use, this data lacks relevance, understating the number of potential vehicle trips.

There is a lack of clarity regarding allocation of affordable housing. The application is being made for 18 'market' houses, with no application for any form of affordable housing. If the application were to be successful would the applicant be held to providing such housing? Elmdon already has a (flat) amenity space by way of the recreational ground, could the proposed playground and amenity space become further housing?

In 2018 the site was submitted as part of UDC's 'call for land' but was dismissed as unsuitable due to the village being unsustainable. Nothing has changed in the intervening years, Elmdon is still an unsustainable village.

The applicant states " the plan would only cause limited harm to the openness of the countryside which would be outweighed by the scheme's very significant benefits" It is unclear what these 'very significant benefits' are. The 'balance of good' has not been met and tips strongly to this proposal causing great harm with no real benefits.

As the planning inspectorate will be unfamiliar with the area, I hope a site visit would be undertaken prior to a decision being made.

Michelle Letch

Sent from my iPad