

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 15 March 2023 15:12

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

Subject: S62A/2023/0015 -Grange Paddock, Ickleton Road, Elmdon

TO: WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

Re: OBJECTION TO THE PROPOSAL FOR UNSUSTAINABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OF GRANGE PADDOCK IN ELMDON. Ref: S62A/2023/001

I strongly object to the proposed development for a number of reasons, all of which were raised when the previous application made in 2018 to build an estate of 30 houses on this land was refused. It appears that the developer assumes by decreasing the number of properties on the site, it will be more acceptable. Judging by the overwhelming response of the village, this is not the case. It is most likely that should this development be approved, other applications will soon follow, on this and other greenfield sites in the village; the developer owns a significant amount of land in the area.

We have lived in Elmdon for 32 years, during which time, there has been building of individual properties and conversions of existing buildings, all without damaging the character and feel of the village, which is perfectly acceptable. The proposed development of an 18 house estate is most certainly not acceptable. People choose to live here because it is quiet and an escape from the 'rat race'. Urbanisation of the village should not be an option.

Road Safety

The proposed development of 18 houses would undoubtedly bring an additional 36+ cars to the village. It is not viable to live in Elmdon without a car. Most houses here have one or two cars, with the larger properties having three or four. We have no facilities within the village and cycling to reach shops, doctors, schools, trains, etc., isn't an option unless very fit, due to the steep hills on approach from all sides and the distances involved.

Elmdon is accessed by three roads, all of which are narrow. The picture below shows Heydon Lane, one of the three, which is at the opposite end of the village to the proposed development. It is the route used to get to the A505 and M11 (toward Cambridge). Two cars can just about pass each other here but it is also used by tractors, combine harvesters, oil tankers, etc. Villagers on foot, often with children and dogs, use it to access a footpath which drops down onto the road, just around the blind corner. There is another, very popular footpath further along, again on a blind corner. There is no way to get off the road, due to the high banks and hedges each side, making it extremely dangerous. It's also a popular cycling route. The additional 36+ cars brought into the village plus service vehicles, would greatly increase the risk to both pedestrians and cyclists along here. In addition to this, Heydon Lane becomes Hertford Lane a little further along. Hertford Lane being a Protected Lane (Ref: UTTLANE1) is another reason it should not be subjected to such an increase in traffic.



Our driveway is just to the left of the picture. It serves ours and three other properties.

Even with the current volume of traffic, pulling out of here is hazardous.

It is necessary to edge forward far enough to be able to see traffic coming around the bend to the left,

by which time, the nose of the vehicle is in the path of traffic coming from the right.

The additional traffic generated by the proposed development would obviously pose an even greater risk.



The proposed development would be accessed from the Ickleton Road, shown in this picture, which is usually reduced to a single lane due to on road parking and often totally obstructed by oil tankers, farm vehicles, etc.

It is very difficult to navigate safely. The development would be just to the left in this picture.

In addition to this, the Ickleton Road becomes Quickset Road just past the proposed site. Quickset Road is another Protected Lane (Ref: UTTLANE3).

Sustainability

Elmdon does not have the facilities to cope with an additional 50+ residents that the 18 houses would add to the community. Local schools are oversubscribed and the nearest shops and doctors' surgeries are 5 or more miles away. The village hall is barely adequate for the existing villagers. The playground included in the plan as an 'enhancement' is not necessary and potentially a problem regarding maintenance and safety in itself.

Having raised two boys from birth in the village, I never felt the need for a 'formal' playground. There was plenty to occupy them; cycling, building camps, playing in the mud..... A 'natural' playground that many children would be envious of.

Historic Environment

Concerns regarding the proposed site have been raised by a Historic Environment Consultant: "The Historic Environment Record identifies the proposed for development as being within an area of potentially sensitive archaeological deposits at the edge of the historic settlement of Elmdon. The proposed development lies in close proximity to Elmdonbury, a site which encompasses the Scheduled Monument of Castle Grove a ringwork 370 metres northwest of Elmdon Church (SM1011780, EHER3878) as well as the historic farmstead. The proposed development has the

potential to impact the setting of this scheduled monument. Further west is the Scheduled Monument of Dagworth moated Site (SM1012055, EHER124) formerly Dagworth Manor House. Within the vicinity of the proposed development prehistoric pottery has been identified indicating occupation in the locality (EHER46378). Ring ditches have also been identified through cropmarks to the north of the proposed development (EHER16273). There is therefore the potential for roadside development, prehistoric and medieval features within the proposed development site.”

There are many listed buildings in Elmdon. It is important to preserve the existing environment in which they are set and a modern estate will most certainly not achieve that. The proposed development would immediately ruin the setting of the first listed building on the Ickleton Road, The Hoops, which is opposite the site.

Location

The proposed development is on an elevated site, overlooking the adjacent properties and invading their privacy. It would be highly visible from the Icknield Way and other footpaths and bridleways on the opposite hillside. Currently Grade II agricultural land used as grazing, the site provides ideal habitat/foraging for the abundant local wildlife, including bats, barn owls, badgers and deer.

Flooding/Lack of Drainage

There is inadequate drainage in the Ickleton Road area generally, which has caused frequent flooding to existing properties during/after sudden rainfall, which is becoming more frequent. Obviously any building on the adjacent, raised land along with the removal of hedgerows, trees and grassland which provide natural drainage, will only exacerbate this problem.

Housing Need

Whilst I am in favour of low cost housing generally, I am not sure that Elmdon is the right place for it, due mainly to the lack of facilities mentioned previously and the expense involved living here generally. There is very limited work in the area. Commuting by road or train is often essential. Cars are costly to run and train tickets aren't cheap. The 'low cost' houses included in the development are obviously there purely to tick the 40% box to obtain planning permission for the very profitable four and five bedroom houses, which aren't needed in the village.

Lack of Consultation/Communication

I am pretty disgusted by the claims that the applicant 'enthusiastically sought to work with the residents of Elmdon to develop the details of this application before it is formally submitted'. I don't consider 48 hours' notice of a brief presentation to qualify for this statement. I, personally was away for the few days that this happened. Other than this, to my knowledge, there has been no communication from the applicant, no flyers, nothing in the Village Gazette (our local publication) or even on the Elmdon social media website. The only way I have been kept informed is by the ECG (Elmdon Community Group), which has been outstanding in the way it has kept the villagers updated.

As for the other comment made by the applicant that "The scheme that has now been developed will make a lasting positive contribution to the village, including supporting its services and providing a significant number of affordable dwellings for local residents, and their children and grand-children", I see no evidence of any lasting positive contribution. How can the loss of a precious, irreplaceable greenfield site in exchange for an unnecessary housing estate, to the detriment of not only the immediate location but the village as a whole, be considered a 'lasting positive contribution'? Neither am I sure what is meant by 'supporting its services'. Am I missing something? There are no services..... The only reason the affordable housing has been included at all is not out of consideration for the villagers but simply because it is a requirement for planning permission.

I therefore very strongly object to the proposed development which is obviously based on financial gain with no consideration for the village or its existing inhabitants.

Finally, I really hope that a site visit is conducted before a final decision is made so that you can see for yourselves the impact this development would have on our unique, unspoilt, historic village.

Thank you
Deborah Izzard