

Representation from Cllr Bagnall

Proposal: Consultation on S62A/2023/0016 – Full planning application for erection of 40 no dwellings, including open space landscaping and associated infrastructure

Location: Land at Warish Hall Farm North of Jacks Lane Smiths Green Lane Takeley

I am the Ward Councillor for Takeley and Little Canfield and the application site sits within Takeley.

I object to this application on the following grounds;

1. The application fails to accord with the Development Plan
2. The application site is in an unsustainable location
3. The applicant has not demonstrated any need for the development to take place in this location

1 – Development Plan

The site sits outside the developments limits of Takeley and clearly sits within the countryside which conflicts with the local policy **S7**.

The site also sits within the Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ), which conflicts with policy **S8**. This is an important policy in the Development Plan, as it seeks to preserve Stansted Airport as an airport in the countryside by preventing coalescence between the built form of Takeley and Little Canfield and the airport.

Significantly, the proposed site lies within Parcel 5 of the Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ). UDC Policy **S8** was first adopted in the UDC 1995 Local Plan where it said “The priority within this zone is to maintain a local belt of countryside around the airport that will not be eroded by coalescing developments”. The CPZ is a well-established and longstanding policy, designed to maintain a local belt of countryside around Stansted Airport.

In 2016 UDC commissioned a study to assess the CPZ. The resulting LUC report concluded that Parcel 5 (Smiths Green) of the CPZ which contains the proposed site would result in an overall HIGH level of harm if this parcel were released.

It should be noted that this site was previously included in an earlier larger planning

application which was dismissed on appeal (Appeal Decision APP/C1570/W/22/3291524 dated 9 August 2022). The Inspector concluded, inter alia, “I have identified that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area in terms of its adverse effect on landscape character and visual impact [and] would reduce the open character of the CPZ”.

I have attached the LUC study on the CPZ along with my representation.

There would also be harm to the historic landscape, in particular;

Policy ENV3 - Open Spaces and Trees

Development would result in the loss of traditional open spaces and other visually important spaces.

Policy ENV8 - Other Landscape Elements of Importance for Nature Conservation

Development in this location would adversely affect landscape elements including hedgerows, larger seminatural or ancient woodlands, semi-natural grass lands and green lanes.

Policy ENV 9 – Historic Landscapes

Development in this location would harm local historic landscapes and protected lanes.

There will be an adverse impact on designated and non-designated heritage assets, including the ‘protected lane’ of Warish Hall Road. Specifically, the proposals would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building, Hollow Elm Cottage, which is contrary to Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

This conflicts with NPPF (2021), **Paragraph 202** being relevant.

2. Unstable Location

Essex CC Highways have made it clear that the location is unsuitable and have a ‘recommendation for refusal’ as this application is not able to demonstrate that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users. This conflicts with policy **GEN1** and the NPPF **paragraph 112** on sustainable transport as residents would be reliant on the use of the private motor vehicle.

The lack of pedestrian footways on Smiths Green and reliance on public rights of way which are isolated and unlit for all pedestrian movements mean that they are not attractive or suitable for general everyday use particularly in terms of personal safety.

National Highways have also raised concerns about the cumulative impact on the strategic road network, given other development, already approved, in Takeley.

3. Need for Development

The applicant has not demonstrated the need for the development proposed to be in this location.

It is important to also add that sufficient development has already been approved in Takeley to meet any potential need more than twice over.

It will be said that Uttlesford District Council only has an 'official' land supply of 4.89 years, however, if you include the recent planning applications that have been approved, by both the Council as well as at appeal, you will see that the correct figure exceeds the required 5 year supply.

I would also question whether the 'tilted balance' is relevant in this case, given that ECC Highways consider this site to be in an 'unsustainable' location.

In Summary

The application site is in an 'unsustainable' location and will likely rely on the private motor vehicle for journeys to local services and for any wider services required. This will have an adverse cumulative impact on the highways network.

The site is clearly in the countryside, contravening local policies S7 and S8, and will also have a detrimental impact on the local wildlife, introducing light pollution that is not currently there.

Development in this location will also have a material impact on the agrarian landscape and the setting of the protected lane.

There will be an adverse impact on 'designated' and 'non-designated' heritage assets.

There will also be a 'cumulative' impact on health facilities, as there is no medical provision within Takeley.

In conclusion, the applicant has not demonstrated that the development needs to be in this location, and I urge you to reject this application.

Geoff Bagnall

Ward Councillor

Takeley and Little Canfield