

Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/2023/0016 Warish Hall Farm, Smiths Green Lane, Takeley, Essex, CM22 6NZ

I find it staggering that Weston Homes consider it suitable that only a matter of weeks after losing their appeal against their application UTT/21/1987/FUL, they now have broken down the original application to try and subvert the planning process, the views of the elected representatives of the community they seek to destroy, their neighbours and not least the Planning Inspectors views. Not satisfied with an application to the local authority, UTT/22/3126/FUL which has yet to be determined they have decided to subvert the will of the local electorate, the will of the locally elected representatives and place a third application for this unwanted development.

These proposals destroy important and ancient habitat. This agricultural land has been growing crops for some 1000 years. The Domesday book records St Valerys Priory and surrounding communities. Jacks Lane linking churches in Takeley and Little Canfield is a further example of the history of our village. Despite the political changes the views of the Housing Secretary has not changed, homes should be beautiful, built on brownfield sites. Local residents are going to be included in the decision process for planning, housing targets no longer considered mandatory. These proposals are in direct contradiction to this statement, being completely on a greenfield site currently producing cereal crops to support the UK's food supply. As a country we are going to increasingly rely on cereal crops through reduced meat consumption and the switch to biofuels.

Writing in the Daily Express, 23rd December Minette Batters, NFU president, highlights the importance of British Agricultural. "British food produced to world leading standards, but according to the previous head of MI5, Baroness Manningham-Buller, it is also critical to our national security that we have a domestic food and farming industry". This development is proposed on quality agricultural land, which we must not destroy, to be replaced by boxes. Many new homes being built in Takeley Street remain unsold, these houses are not needed.

The contribution these fields make to the rural lifestyle of Takeley MUST not underestimated. Footpaths crisscross the area and provide residents with important leisure facilities, which are the primary activity in the area. This area, linked to the ancient hedgerows and woodland within the district encourage biodiversity, forming environmental corridors. Destruction of this habitat will result in significant loss of important habitat. The grazing deer that enjoy access to this area will be forced to graze the verges and greens around Smiths Green and Warish Hall Lane with increasing risk to vehicles using the lanes. Excessive and inappropriate development such as being proposed has caused the UK to suffer significant loss to our biodiversity. The Department for Rural Affairs has produced the 25 year Environmental Improvement Plan, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-improvement-plan/environmental-improvement-plan-2023-executive-summary>, the 10 main goals being:-

- Goal 1: Thriving plants and wildlife
- Goal 2: Clean air
- Goal 3: Clean and plentiful water
- Goal 4: Managing exposure to chemicals and pesticides
- Goal 5: Maximise our resources, minimise our waste
- Goal 6: Using resources from nature sustainably
- Goal 7: Mitigating and adapting to climate change
- Goal 8: Reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards
- Goal 9: Enhancing biosecurity
- Goal 10: Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment

These proposals fail all of these principles and goals.

Residents well being and mental health is supported by the green spaces and wildlife that inhabit these areas. The simple joy of hearing birdsong and seeing rare species such as Cuckoo's must not be underestimated. Likewise watching deer in the woods. These simple joys will disappear under the concrete and tarmac of this development, with the increasing pressures and stress that will follow. Despite extensive development in the area Takeley still retains much of its rural heritage, this development will destroy this forever. UK's government policy is to enhance biodiversity not to destroy it by inappropriate developments.

Our area linked to Hatfield Forest ancient woodland will be irrecoverably damaged by increased human interaction. Destroying important ancient habitat and areas that we MUST be protecting to maintain the biodiversity of our area.

The roads around Takeley are already at capacity. Additional traffic that this development will generate will only cause further significant delays, and of course contribute to global emissions. Drivers frustrations at resulting delays are likely to cause more frequent accidents. Uttlesford's aim is to be carbon neutral, this development can only contribute to global warming, by the greater impact of additional traffic. Traffic is generated not only by private cars but by additional delivery vehicles, waste lorries, visitors and the like servicing the development. This development proposes additional access onto Smiths Green. This is an unlit restricted Lane bordered by common ground with village green status, clearly not suitable for any additional traffic. Smiths Green and The B1256 junction is regularly underwater. Significant improvements and maintenance would be required for the additional traffic. As a mother I would not allow my children to walk down this lane as part of their journey to school, it can not be considered as safe. The location of this site can only promote private car usage, for many journeys there is no practical alternative.

UDC created Countryside Protection Zones (CPZ) to the North of Takeley. These were created to protect Takeley from the greed of developers, to prevent coalescence of communities and to maintain the original vision for Stansted Airport as an airport in the countryside. These proposals break all of the rational behind the CPZ. The CPZ is supported in the emerging local plan. The NPPF recognises this and confirms "Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans". Development to the north of Takeley has been refused maintaining the open countryside. This development is unprecedented, if approved it will open the floodgates to further developments in this area. This field, described as an extension to Priors Green by the developers is in reality a standalone overcrowded block of boxes. When the original Priors Green estate was proposed, to help mitigate the impact on adjoining properties promises were put in place to ensure that there was no access from Jacks Lane Bridleway, in direct contradiction to this promise developers plan access to the Jacks Lane from their estate. Clearly defined boundaries defining the extent of Priors Green development this development falls outside of these boundaries and the development boundaries for Takeley. Contrary to the NPPF requirements there is NO infrastructure to support this development. The NPPF provides great weight to ensure that new properties are sustainable. Further, NPPF states in rural areas "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities". These properties are not sustainable in this location, nor can they promote any vitality to the existing community.

These proposals are for 40 boxes, a density that is totally out of keeping with the area. Many of the properties adjoining this area are listed cottages and we have a duty to preserve our heritage and the settings in which they reside for generations to come. Development and the resulting traffic this will generate will irrecoverable damage our heritage. Parking, particularly for visitors is restricted, given the lack of alternative transport to the site overspill parking will occupy Smiths Green verges, resulting in verge destruction. The developers are so concerned at the lack of parking they are offering to employ a parking company to monitor parking on the roundabout, this arrangement will push parking to surrounding roads and verges. There is no indication what street

lighting will be installed. Surrounding streets do not have any street lighting, yet street scenes supplied to support this development include lighting columns.

Healthcare in the village is limited to one very oversubscribed pharmacy and two private dentists. Waits for doctors appointments are averaging at three weeks. Involving journeys to Great Dunmow or Bishops Stortford. Our local hospital trust, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow is ranked 174 out of 178 English hospital trusts, with only 54.8% of A & E patients being seen within 4 hours. East of England ambulance trust ranks 9th out of the 11 ambulance trusts. April 2023 data, as published in the Daily Mirror.

Pupils attending secondary schools have to travel either to Great Dunmow or Bishops Stortford. Travel is only by road. Access to after school clubs, Saturday sports are likely to be severely restricted due to the travel problems. There is very little alternative activity for teenagers in the village. With little activity in the village coupled with the density of the development can only increase antisocial behaviour, an increasing problem in the area.

Water supply to our area is limited and often restricted due to inadequate supplies. This was highlighted by a recent house fire after which Mr Maher, the local fire station manager, said the firefighters "worked incredibly hard" with a limited water supply service. Following the fire local villages have reduced water supplies whilst levels are restored. Clearly, two house fires at the same time there would be insufficient water for the fire service to operate effectively. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Item 17 of the constraints list is [REDACTED] ct. Takeley. Thames Water provides foul water treatment. It must be recorded that Thames Water treatment plant does not cope with the amount of effluent arriving at their works regularly discharging untreated sewage into Pinceys Brook. 1062 hours in 2020 and 1281 hours in 2021, 701 hours in 2022 reflecting the drought, with the developments already under construction elsewhere in Takeley the pollution can only get worse. The scheme does NOT provide any details on how foul water will be connected to the sewage system. Existing homes in Jacks Lane and Smiths Green have private sewage treatment systems.

Electricity supplies to the surrounding areas are delivered via overhead cables, by there very nature this limits supply. Electricity outages in the area are not uncommon. This development with it's dependence on electricity supply, heat pumps, car charging points, cooking and the like will put significant pressures on the already limited supply.

Homes in Jacks Lane currently enjoy open vistas across trees and greenfield land, which is why many of our neighbours chose to live here. These proposals will see these open views destroyed to be replaced by fencing and housing. Dark night skies will be replaced by reflected street lights. Destroying the environment in which we live.

I would refer to the previous application for this site and subsequent appeal, APP/C1570/W/22/3291524 and highlight the comments made by the Inspector in rejecting the appeal. The development plan for the area includes the Saved Policies of the Uttlesford Local Plan (2000-2011), adopted in 2005. The policies of the Uttlesford Local Plan which are most important to the proposal under this appeal are agreed as Policy S7 - The Countryside, Policy S8 - The Countryside Protection Zone, Policy GEN6 - Infrastructure Provision to Support Development, Policy ENV2 - Development affecting Listed Buildings, Policy ENV4 Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance, Policy ENV7 - The Protection of the Natural Environment - Designated Sites, Policy ENV8 - Other Landscape Elements of Importance for Nature Conservation, Policy ENV9 - Historic Landscapes and Policy H9 - Affordable Housing. Those of relevance, under paragraph 219 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), should be given due weight according to their degree of consistency with the Framework, and I return to this matter below.

The application site is located within the Countryside Protection Zone where LPA Policy S8 seeks to protect the openness of the area and to prevent coalescence. The release of this site for

development would be detrimental to those aims. The form of development and the proposed scale of the development would result in adverse harm to the openness of the Countryside Protection Zone and would help to promote coalescence with the airport. This fails to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, as set out in paragraph 170 of the NPPF. The proposal would not be compatible with the scale, form, layout and appearance with the surrounding area. The environmental harm arising from the proposals would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposals. Therefore the proposals are contrary to Uttlesford Local Plan Policies S7, S8 & GEN2 and do not represent sustainable development and is contrary to the principle of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

The proposals would result in harm to the setting of Heritage Assets by way of a number of Grade II Listed Buildings, specifically (but not exclusively), Warish Hall, Moat Cottage, Hollow Elm Cottage, The moderate social and economic benefits would not outweigh the harm to the setting of these designated heritage asset. The proposal is therefore contrary to Uttlesford Local Plan Policy ENV2 and the NPPF.

The application has no mechanism to secure the infrastructure requirements in respect of affordable housing, health care facilities and education facilities. In addition, there is no mechanism to secure the mitigation measures required to offset the impacts on Hatfield Forest SSSI and NNR. As such the proposal is contrary to Uttlesford Local Plan Policies H9, GEN6 and Policy ENV7, and the NPPF.

Policies refer:

NPPF4 National Planning Policy Framework July 2021

S7 The Countryside

S8 The Countryside Protection Zone

GEN1 Access

GEN2 Design

GEN3 Flood Protection GEN4 Good Neighbours GEN5 Light Pollution

Local Plan

Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 Local Plan Phase.

The applicant considers that the Local Plan 2005 is out of date which maybe the case but, in 2020 Joanna Hill part of the Planning Policy Team Uttlesford District Council 2020 stated that the CPZ (Countryside Protection Zone) is not, therefore in the absence of a new plan the adopted Local Plan 2005 remains valid and the CPZ should still be given weight. The applicant highlights the shortfall in the LPA's 5 year land supply, however if one removes the various buffers required then the target is achieved.

Michael Gove, as the Housing Minister, made the following comments in an interview with Laura Kuenssberg on the BBC, 30th October 2022.

"He said new developments should be "more beautiful", have the consent of the local community, be accompanied by the right infrastructure and protect the environment. The government would do all it could to meet the figure, but added that it would be "no kind of success simply to hit a target if the homes built are shoddy, in the wrong place, don't have the infrastructure and are not contributing to beautiful communities".

"Arithmetic is important, but so is beauty, so is belonging, so is democracy," he had said." This development is not beautiful, not sympathetic to the environment, lacks suitable infrastructure, and will not contribute positively to the local communities and does not have the consent of the local community.

The continued planning applications and appeals submitted by this developer are affecting our mental health and enjoyment of living in Takeley. It is time it stopped.

Over the recent years Takeley has seen an 86% increase in residents, putting great strain on already overstretched local services. In the 2021 census Uttlesford was second to Tower Hamlets for population growth. Takeley residents deserve certainty that their homes and life style are NOT

going to be overrun by houses. That the heritage, the biodiversity, the village atmosphere of our area, is not going to be destroyed forever. Once built over the countryside will be lost to our children and grandchildren forever. These proposals can not be considered as sustainable or responsible. I urge you to reject them in the strongest possible terms.

Mrs Sharon Critchlev.

