

## Representation from Cllr Bagnall

### **Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/2023/0019 Land to the north of Roseacres, between Parsonage Road and Smiths Green Lane, Takeley, Essex, CM22 6NZ (Land known as Bull Field, Warish Hall Farm, Takeley, Essex)**

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, if developed, would have a detrimental impact on an Ancient Woodland and the Ecology within the woodland and surrounding area
3. If approved, there would be an adverse cumulative impact on the highway network(Parsonage Road)
4. 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 and semi-natural grass lands.

It should be noted that the Inspector, at the recent dismissed appeal, observed, “notwithstanding the enclosure that is created by the boundary planting, that this part of the appeal site forms a strong demarcation between the countryside and the existing urban development to the south. As such, I consider this part of the appeal site shares its affinity with the countryside with which it forms an integral and functional part.”

**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 and settings of a number of listed buildings, which would be 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. Impact on Ancient Woodland

Whilst this has been covered in general above, as part of ENV8, it should be noted that the application site relies on utilising the ‘buffer’ area as a road/footpath/cycle path, which is not what the buffer area should be.

It is just as it states, a buffer area to protect the trees from harm. If we build roads and a footpath/Cycle path then there will be no protection for the Ancient Woodland and there will be undoubted harm to the root system of the trees.

At the entrance to the site, from the commercial area of Weston Homes, there is a 'pinch point', which is only approx. 7m wide. This would make it impossible to afford any protection for the trees at this point.

In my opinion there would be significant harm to the ancient woodland, both in physical intrusion into the minimum 15m buffer and harm from urbanisation of the land surrounding the woodland, with development enclosing the woodland on its western and southern edges, creating ecological harm to the local wildlife within the agrarian landscape.

### 3. Impact on the Highway

Essex Highways have raised a number of concerns, which may be able to be addressed, however the biggest concern for the residents of Takeley is the 'cumulative' impact on Parsonage Road, where we have seen recent permissions for over 400 houses, which will generate hundreds of additional vehicle movements as well as all the 'construction; movements when developing the sites. On top of that Weston Homes have recently had permission for some 124 parking spaces as well as approval for light industrial units, which will have further vehicle movements.

The Parish Council will be submitting photographs of the existing heavy volume of traffic on Parsonage Road to highlight the current situation and this is before the other developments have been finished and houses occupied. The volume of traffic will be 'overwhelming' for this area soon enough and with an additional 96 homes in this location it will make the situation untenable.

I would request that you satisfy yourself that ECC Highways have assessed the cumulative impact on the road network, as Highways England have noted that with all the recent approvals they have concerns that there will be a cumulative impact on the Strategic Road Network, as highlighted in a previous correspondence dated 22 Oct 2021 stating;

"It has come to National Highways' attention that there has been a number of planning applications around Takeley and Stansted Airport recently. Individually, each application is relatively small in scale, however, in combination all the developments will have a significant impact on the operation of the SRN and its capacity in the area.

It should be acknowledged, any significant future development in this area of the network will be required to produce an up-to-date Transport Assessment including an assessment of the cumulative impact on the SRN and likely require mitigation measures to alleviate the impact on the network."

*I have included this letter and highlighted the relevant text at the bottom of page 2 and top of page 3.*

### 3. Need for Development

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

As already stated above there has been sufficient approvals in Takeley to meet any potential need more than ten times over.

It will be said, by the applicant, that Uttlesford District Council only has an 'official' land supply of 4.89 years, however, there will be a revised figure out at the end of September/Early October, which will provide a clearer picture of the real number of supply.

### **In Summary**

Approval of this application will lead to an adverse cumulative impact on the highways network.

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

Development in this location will have a material impact on the agrarian landscape and the setting of the Ancient Woodland.

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

To conclude, the applicant has not demonstrated that the development needs to be in this particular location, and I urge you to reject this application, given the many harms.

Geoff Bagnall

Ward Councillor

Takeley and Little Canfield