

**From:** Mike Marriage [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 06 September 2023 21:47

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

**Subject:** OBJECTION TO: 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)

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to strongly object to the 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 one of the founders of the *STOP The Warish Hall Development* group, established to oppose development on this site and the other two sites which formed part of the the application UTT/21/1987/FUL. I will quote the Inspector's Report from that appeal decision as I believe he summarised most of the issues very effectively.

*STOP The Warish Hall Development* currently has 592 members, demonstrating the weight of public opposition to this application. We are not anti-development, NIMBY or against new homes being built in Takeley. What we are against is the destruction of this specific area around Prior's Wood and Smiths Green which forms the rural heart of our community. Please don't let that rural heart be destroyed.

### **1) Adverse impact on landscape character and countryside.**

It is important to note that Weston Homes at their recent and unsuccessful S62A hearing for the adjacent "Jacks" site, argued that the inspector's negative response to UTT/21/1987/FUL was due specifically to Bull Field. Unsurprisingly, they are now attempting to argue the opposite.

I will quote the inspector from UTT/21/1987/FUL, as his words are still totally relevant:

*"23. ...with regard to Bull Field (west and central areas), Bull Field (east), Maggots Field and Prior's Wood, these areas of the appeal site are of a more open character and make an important contribution to the semi-rural, agrarian nature of the area to the north of the built-up areas of Takeley and Smiths Green. ...*

*25. ...In addition, the quality of the experience for users of PROWs 48\_40, 48\_41 would be diminished, given the proximity of the proposed housing. It would create an urbanised environment through which the footpaths would pass in place of the current agrarian field, within which and from which, views of Prior's Wood are enjoyed. The urbanising effect of the proposal may be seen from the appellant's submitted LVIA Views and "before and after" visualisations<sup>11</sup>. By so doing, the intrinsic character of the countryside would be adversely affected by the proposal in conflict with LP Policy S7...*

*26. ... Bull Field and Maggots form part of the wider open countryside to the north of Takeley and Smiths Green, and are an integral part of the local landscape character. They share their affinity with the countryside. This gives this part of the appeal site a high susceptibility to change, despite the presence of nearby urbanising influences."*

As someone who regularly uses the public rights of way and informal paths in Bull Field and Prior's Wood, I can confirm that they are enjoyed by a huge number of local residents. They are likely the busiest footpaths in the village and would be greatly diminished by this application.

## **2) There is no reason or justification for the development to be located in this sensitive location.**

Please note that since the original appeal, the housing supply in Uttlesford has increased significantly and I understand from councillors that it is now in excess of 5 years. This reduces the justification for this development. Moreover, public benefits such as a medical facility no longer form part of this smaller development. To quote the inspector:

*"27. In my judgement, the development would introduce an urban form of development that would not be sympathetic to the local character and landscape setting, and notwithstanding the mitigating design measures to create green infrastructure and character areas of varying layouts and densities, in the context of Policy S7 and what I heard, I consider that no special reasons have been demonstrated as to why the development, in the form proposed, needs to be there.*

*28. Against this background, I consider that the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on local landscape character. It would change the intrinsic rural character of the area by introducing built development into a rural setting thereby severing the connection of Prior's Wood with the open agrarian environment to its south."*

## **3) The development in within the CPZ.**

To quote the inspector:

*"31. ...in particular Bull and Maggots Fields being within the countryside and open, I consider it would have its character changed by the introduction of new development. In this regard, it would result in a reduction of the open characteristics of the countryside around the airport..."*

*33. ...the proposal would nevertheless result in an adverse effect on the open characteristics of the CPZ in conflict with LP Policy S8."*

## **4) Effect on the significance of heritage assets**

The inspector identified harm to a number of heritage assets, most of which was due to development of Bull Field. The current application has done little more than lip service to address the damage to the setting of the heritage assets and their important connection to open countryside and Prior's Wood.

To quote the inspector:

*"42. While modern development has intruded into their settings to the east and west, their settings to the north include the open aspect of Bull Field, across its agrarian landscape to Prior's Wood. This makes a positive contribution to their significance. By introducing development into this area, the proposal would fail to preserve the settings of these listed buildings, thereby detracting from their significance."*

This finding still entirely applies to the current application.

## **5) The effect of the proposal on the adjacent ancient woodland at Prior's Wood**

It is important to note that Prior's Wood, as an Ancient Woodland, has a value well beyond a simple collection of trees. Therefore, the harm to the woodland must be assessed beyond simple physical damage but also to the setting, tranquility, public enjoyment, light pollution and ecosystem. For instance, I have regularly witnessed Red Kites nesting in Prior's Wood and hunting over Bull Field. This development would severely disrupt that connected habitat.

This application would unequivocally damage all of these aspects. A 15m buffer zone is already meagre for such an irreplaceable asset, however, this application has build form well within 15m of the wood, with a hard surfaced path and track to the north. Even worse in the "pinch point" at the entrance to the site. Here a two way road would sit entirely within the buffer zone and sever the wood from the village.

The ongoing development on "7 Acres" has already caused significant damage to the woodland, damage that will never be repaired. For Bull Field to be developed too would be an absolute travesty.

The wood and it's setting are enjoyed by hundreds of locals a day. This is possibly the most devastating aspect of this application and one that was severely underplayed by the original inspector. Harm to Ancient Woodland can not only be judged by physical harm to trees. For the many reasons lists above, I respectfully request that you refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

Mike Marriage

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