

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)

Weston Homes have placed before the inspector the blueprint for the proposed local plan, which is to be placed before the councillors committee for consideration. Cherry picking elements that support their application. Ignoring elements that their designs and application will not comply with. UDC's planning director, Dean Hermitage, addressing the Local Plan Leadership Group meeting on the 4th October stated that the blueprint at its current point of progress bears NO WEIGHT in decision making. This statement was confirmed at UDC's cabinet meeting on 16/10, council went further suggesting that this plan is only phase 1 and it is very likely that a revised plan will be required with a new period of consultation. NPPF P.48 states that the earlier the plan is on its journey the less relevant it is on current applications. Further consideration would need to be given to the level of objections. Despite the plan in its current iteration only just being approved for initial consultation it has already seen significant opposition. Therefore the plan and policies that direct planning decisions can only be the 2005 plan.

UDC have recently released their 5 year housing trajectory. This confirms that as at April 2023 there is a 5.14 housing supply. This is further boosted by some 1680 approvals during the first half of the year, equivalent to an additional 2.18 years. Therefore there is no presumption in favour of development.

It is stunning that the applicants suggest that 96 properties, 274 bedrooms will generate only 47 am journeys and 49 pm journeys pm, this is fanciful.

The 2021 traffic survey was conducted as a desk based survey, any traffic survey conducted at this time is distorted due to Covid. Subsequently further details have been provided including the accident adjacent to the proposed access point, not included within the Motion report. Concerns were raised by a lack of assisted pedestrian crossing adjacent to the exit of the estate. The revised crash data highlights the number of incidents around the 4 Ashes Junction. It fails to record the fatal and near fatal accidents in Parsonage Road.

Parsonage Road is already at stress levels. It is narrow and has to provide access to the Weston Business Park, the new car park and the industrial units under construction. Which by the very definition will increase HGV's using this restricted access. Significant development is taking place to the north of this site which must result in considerable additional traffic. For safety reasons cyclists use the pavement. There are no plans to upgrade this road or pavement. Essex Highways propose a cycle way to Stansted Airport. Running from the north of the A120 and stopping at Coppers End roundabout. This will be a cycle way to nowhere, along with many others in Takeley. There is no dialogue with Manchester Airport Group.

Gear Change details the government's approach to future investment in cycling published by the Department for Transport, details the principles for investment in new infrastructure and the benefits which can be derived from raising the bar in terms of the quality and comprehensiveness of cycle networks.

Specifically it details how improvements will be made to the national cycle network with the aim of making the entire network either off road or traffic calmed by 2040 (59% of the network current consists of on-road routes). Beyond this core commitment, the document details key design principles for new cycle infrastructure as follows:

- Cyclists must be separated from volume traffic at both at junction and on links
- Cyclists must be separated from pedestrians
- Cyclists must be treated as vehicles, not pedestrians
- Routes must join together
- Routes must feel direct, logical and understandable
- Routes and scheme must account for how users actually behave
- Purely cosmetic alterations should be avoided

- Barriers, such as chicane barriers and dismount signs, should be avoided
- Routes should be designed only by those who have experienced the road on a bicycle

Parsonage Road itself is a prescribed route for tipper lorries travelling towards Elsenham and quarries. HGV vehicles accessing the new industrial units being built behind Weston Business Centre can only access via Parsonage Road. There is no separation between cyclists and vehicles. The road itself is restricted and not safe for cyclists and lorries travelling in the same lane.

The pavements on both sides of Parsonage Road are unacceptable for any significant increase in traffic. Cyclists use this pavement as Parsonage Road is unsafe. I have used this pavement and have to step off the pavement onto the grass verges to allow cyclists, mobility scooters, parents with their pushchairs to pass. The surface is broken and potholed.

There are no cycle routes proposed along this section of the route. Cycle lanes are suggested north of the A120 to Cooper End Roundabout. Not even connecting with employment centres in the airport. Essex CC are very good at producing cycle routes to nowhere.

Within Stansted Airport employment is NOT centralised around the terminal. With 195,100 square metres of commercial property already approved (UTT/22/0434) Many employment locations will be outside of 8 kilometres cycling range. Shift work, poor weather conditions all discourage cycling. There is no direct bus service between Takeley and the employment centres around the airport. Challenging alternatives promote reliance on private car journeys. Weston Homes and Essex Highways have NOT produced viable and workable alternatives.

Uttlesford's own code, Building for a Healthy Life, based upon national guidelines, England's key measure for design quality specifies that designs should exclude single point of entry for cyclists and pedestrians. Footpaths through to Smiths Green are proposed as the additional entry/exit points. Given that Smiths Green is NOT recognised as being safe for non motorised transport this leaves only one point of entry for pedestrians, and that exit is compromised with additional traffic, including HGV's all utilising the single point of entry. Attempts to use Smiths Green for pedestrians particularly with mobility issues would leave UDC in breach of equality legislation. The report further highlights that cycle routes should be separated from pedestrians by at least white lines. This is not practical along Parsonage Road.

Priors Wood is not only recorded as ancient woodland but also a Local Wildlife Site. Destruction of trees is contrary to NPPF P.175

Correspondence from RPS with regards to damage to historical views is clearly in direct contradiction to surveys by Takeley Parish Council specialist, Brighter Planning Partnership. Who highlight the uniqueness of Smiths Green.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations) Act 1990 places statutory duty on planning authorities when determining applications to have special regard to certain matters. Section 66(1) of the act sets out the general duty of the planning authority when exercising planning functions in respect of listed buildings: in considering whether to grant planning permission for a development that affects a listed building **or its setting** the planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving **or its setting** or any feature of special architectural interest or historic interest it possesses. Section 72 (1) the act states: in the exercise, with respect to any buildings or land in a conservation area, of any powers mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

This development will impact on numerous listed historical assets, non listed assets, including two listed monuments, remains of Takeley Priory, and Warish hall with its moated bridge. The row of trees that Weston Homes, propose to remove as part of their attempt to generate an access point, provides an excellent backdrop to these multiple historical assets whilst shielding these assets from the worst affects of the intense developments on the western side of Takeley. The felled trees could be turned into wood pulp to make paper for all these reports Weston Homes keep replicating.

Uttlesford house prices are 12 times average income, against the Essex average of 10 times. Rental cost follow a similar pattern. Which may explain why many homes remain unsold. People require higher incomes to make property purchases higher income jobs will be London based. Many commuters travelling to London or Cambridge will travel via the M11 creating additional traffic.

Footpath 48/41, Leyfield to Smiths Green will require re routing, it splits the parcel of land earmarked for the Primary School. No proposals deal with this issue. A S278 agreement will be required.

The latest submission by Barton Hayes refers to a 15mtr buffer zone linked to tree trunks. Arboricultural Experts, who are not paid by Weston Homes, refer to a buffer zone extending beyond the tree canopy. That buffer zone must remain as scrubland and not cultivated or used for any purpose.

In the suite of evidence accompanying the 2021/2041 local blueprint the Habits Regulation Assessment Report includes the following

Page 147 - 2.5 Harmful effects from recreational pressure related to increased numbers of people living near by and using sites for recreational purposes. Issues can relate to a range of activities. Whilst activities such as dog walking tend to occur widely, many activities (such as watersports) tend to occur at very specific locations. Impacts vary according to the site, the habitats and species present, the types of recreation use, and the volume of visitors. Impacts include trampling vegetation wear, erosion, increased fire risks (barbeques etc), dog fouling and disturbance. We must preserve the historic soil profile and surface features. Destruction of the wooded corridor on the southern point of Priors Wood to make way for an access road will further isolate and promote an orphaned woodland with little wildlife connectivity to adjoining habitats. Regular updates from our local SSSI, Hatfield Forest, highlight many of these same impacts as causing significant harm to the woodland.

Who will own and maintain Priors Wood. UDC recommends ownership and stewardship be passed to TPC with suitable conditions and contributions for maintenance.

Weston Homes analysis dismisses the safety concerns expressed by inspector Hunt, is this what they think of the future occupiers of their homes that they are willing to place them and their children in danger. Clearly an abdication of their duty of care. Weston Homes do NOT address the safety issues for pedestrians using Smiths Green. They fail to recognise that school buses travel along the B1256, and NOT through Priors Green. Therefore students will need to access bus stops along the Dunmow Road. The proposals, include using Smiths Green as the second route to and from the estate, an unlit lane with no pavements or suitable and safe walking borders. The lack of safe walking or cycling routes along Smiths Green promotes reliance on private car journeys.

Weston Homes dismiss residents concerns that water pressure in our area is problematic and frequently falling below what users would expect. Relying on Affinity Water's response to their query. However, under the Water Act they (Affinity Water) have a duty to provide water to new domestic customers, therefore they are unable to oppose any planning application.

Oxford Archaeology employed by UDC to assess archaeological impact of development around the district included the following statement on Takeley, in particular the importance of the scheduled monuments and the ancient woodland of Priors Wood:

Warish Hall Moated Site and remains of Takeley Priory

"Parts of the scheduled *Warish Hall Moated Site and remains of Takeley Priory* are situated in parcel 1. Adverse, direct impacts upon the scheduled monument could be avoided by preserving all parts of the scheduled monument *in situ*."

The report goes on to highlight the importance of the setting of the ancient monument. "Takeley Priory would historically have served as focal point for the wider farming estate of which the agricultural land and woodland within parcel 1 would have formed a part. This relationship between the priory and these areas is preserved by the visual connection between the scheduled monuments and the land to the south and the name of the woodland, "Priors Wood". The introduction of modern development into the area to the south of the scheduled monument (parcel 1) could harm its setting by reducing the visible and functional connection between the moated site and the agricultural and woodland that was associated with it."

Priors Wood

"Priors Wood is an area of ancient woodland situated in parcel 1. Development which results in the loss or deterioration of woodland would be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons (NPPF P.180). Adverse direct upon the ancient woodland could be avoided by preserving the ancient woodland *in situ*." Wholly exceptional circumstances are defined as national infrastructure projects or similar, this development can not be so defined.

Of Smiths Green the report recommends that development should retain the open views from Smiths Green. This development encroaches on those open views and introduces artificial lighting into an otherwise dark environment.

P 2326 to 2340 highlights archaeological impact on development in Takeley.

I attach some photographs of the area highlighting the challenges that local residents face when going about their everyday lives.

This development is unsustainable and not supported by the local community, I urge you to support the previous decisions and reject this application.