

From: Takeley Clerk [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 November 2023 16:59
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/2023/0019 Land to the north of Roseacres, between Parsonage Road

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the information from Weston Homes shown on the PINS website since the hearing was adjourned and to update comments made in our letter of objection dated 4th September 2023.

UDC has since released a statement dated 9th October, advising that they can demonstrate a housing supply of 5.14 years (see attached) and, at the UDC Cabinet meeting on 2nd November, **it was resolved** to designate Smiths Green as a Conservation Area. We understand that a signed notice of Conservation Area Designation will be issued by UDC, dated 7th November 2023.

These updates are material considerations, giving greater weight to S7, S8 and other relevant UDC policies than might have previously been afforded when we first made our comments in our letter dated 4th September. We have previously submitted examples of inspector comments of conflicts with UDC policies S7 and S8, which were given moderate to significant weight at planning appeals when UDC could not demonstrate a 5-year housing supply.

Weston Homes has offered the Parish Council some assistance in explaining the various additional points made in their submissions A-P and the one highlighted as being most relevant is document E – Transport Statement update including responses to Essex County Council comments requesting a safety audit and questions in their earlier response.

These do not address concerns over the harm to woodland created by the access pinch point near the with the industrial area and the proposed foot and cycle links within the ‘buffer zone’.

These concerns were previously described by UDC’s written expert evidence to the dismissed appeal of Land at Warish Hall Farm,

‘8.3 South-west corner of Prior’s Wood It is clear within the Barton Hyett TRRPP that the proposed hard surfaced access road (vehicle entranceway) sits wholly within the buffer zone. This intrusion into the buffer zone is exacerbated further should the 15-metre-deep buffer zone be considered from the woodland canopy.

8.3.1 It is highly likely that the busiest part of the proposed development will be at the entranceway adjacent to the south-west corner of Prior’s Wood. This will likely result in the greatest effect and therefore harm on the woodland.’

We can see no new evidence that the requirements stipulated by Essex County Council can be met at the pinch point from Bulls Field to Weston Homes industrial area as there is not sufficient space for dedicated road, footpath and cycle access without causing harm to the ancient woodland. This harm could be from creating a surface which is suitable for all users and lighting, which would both have a harmful effect on the ancient woodland and on the character of Smiths Green, a Conservation Area.

Access to Parsonage Road is via an industrial estate and business centre. The development has no dedicated access route off a main road and there seems to be conflict for all users with the industrial

area, business centre traffic and car parking. Our reading of the submitted evidence from Weston Homes does not explain how all users will safely access onto Parsonage Road, through this indirect and complicated access route.

There is also no evidence to explain how traffic modelling has responded to the 2014 approval by Essex County Council of this HGV route of up to 400 HGVs per day. Our photographic report of a day in mid-August, where HGVs seems to be well in excess of those recorded in the applicant's data for mid-February. The Parish Council evidence is from a 15-minute snapshot of over 60 photographs taken during that time, showing the sheer weight of traffic that can be experienced on this stretch of road.

We have been assured by Essex County Council planners that the **full permitted use** of the HGV route through Parsonage Road should be taken into account on each new planning application, and this has not happened in this application, as far as we understand.

With reference to the Village Green Status of Verges in Smiths Green, and the explanatory DEFRA guidance we submitted earlier, it is clear that no footpaths or cycle paths can be delivered through verges in Smiths Green without a separate application being made to the Secretary of State and permission cannot be assumed. Due to the lack of street lighting and all-weather surfaces, there is no safe walking or cycling route to amenities within the Priors Green development, nor is their safe walking and cycling access to the amenities at Brewers End, Four Ashes junction.

Please note that Cllr Jim Backus, a member of our Planning Committee wishes to speak on behalf of the Parish Council at the resumed hearing on 13th November.

In the Parish Council's view, the proposal conflicts with the UDC development plan and the harms significantly outweigh the benefits of providing of 96 new homes in this location. We respectfully request that permission is refused.

Kind regards

Jackie

Jackie Deane
Clerk to the Council

Working days Monday to Thursday

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