

Good Morning.

Re: Land at Warish Hall Farm North of Jacks Lane Smiths Green Lane Takeley, application S62A/2023/0027

My name is Phillip Bodsworth and I live at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] where we have been resident for over 24 years. The property is an unlisted heritage asset having been built in 1700 and forming part of what was the local pub. It is just one of a number of both listed and unlisted heritage assets that will be affected adversely should this development be allowed to go ahead.

Only last year, a slightly amended version of this application was put forward by Weston Homes as part of a larger application which included other adjacent fields. It was rejected by the planning committee of the local authority and then rejected by one of your inspectors on a number of grounds

(see link https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1152672/7_UTT.21.1987.FUL_-OFFICERS_REPORT.pdf), including that it breached many policies both in the NPPF and the previous local plan. The other fields included in the previous plan have been left unplanted and the developers have made it clear that they intend to pursue other applications in the future. This is, therefore, a cynical attempt to subvert the original inspectors decision by simply breaking down the application into smaller blocks with slight amendments. Despite this the reasons for the original refusal remain valid. The government have stated on numerous occasions that locals should have a say in development of their area, however, locals do not have the vast financial and time resources of major developers to be able to fight against over development. Is it morally right that those with the largest pockets should have a bigger say than those with the most at stake?

Whilst there is an emerging Local Plan at section 18 local consultation, the Local Authority (Uttlesford) stated, at their extra ordinary meeting to approve moving to S18, that due to the lack of time to consult fully with Parish Councils before moving to this stage, that this would be a full consultation and no weight should be attached to this in any planning applications as the total sum of the areas proposed for possible development far exceeded the target number of properties needed and it was, therefore, likely that some of the more sensitive sites may be removed and that Parish/Town Councils would have a say in possible alternatives should they be needed. Had there been a completed local plan and a neighbourhood plan, then it is unlikely that we would be here today. The local neighbourhood planning group are working at a pace to develop a sustainable plan for the village which will ensure that future development is both suitable and in the right place. The recent NP Questionnaire that was distributed to all local households received a response of over 30% and looked (amongst other things) at what, if any development should take place in the village and asked residents to suggest areas where it might be suitable.

Takeley lacks infrastructure to support further large scale development. The roads are insufficient and, in this case irrevocable damage would be caused to an ancient protected lane. The water pressure is insufficient, as highlighted by the Fire Brigade's difficulty in

getting sufficient water pressure to fight a local house fire within the last few months. The water company have leafleted local residents to ask them to reduce their water usage in order to preserve endangered chalk streams – surely any further development risks more severe and possibly terminal damage to these fragile eco structures. There are insufficient medical facilities within the area to cope with the existing population, never mind a large increase.

The area adjacent to where this development is proposed (Smiths Green) has recently been awarded Conservation Area status and this development would have a serious impact on the ancient lane and many heritage assets within the conservation area as well as the overall setting.

This proposal also sits within the Countryside Protection Zone, an area established by Local Authority Planning Policy to prevent the coalescence between local settlements and Stansted Airport. Whilst there have been one or two developments approved within the CPZ over the last few years, there are clear guidelines as to what may or may not be considered. In

The reason that we moved to Takeley 24 years ago was not for the facilities and infrastructure that it provided, but rather for the peace and tranquillity provided by the surrounding countryside. This has been steadily eroded over time. We are not against progress, or development, but it should be proportionate and supportive of communities, not ripping the heart out of the countryside in order to line the pockets of developers.

In summary, this is the wrong development in the wrong place.

It isn't needed (according to UDC councillors there is already more than 5 years of potential building land).

It isn't wanted (the recent Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire responses show that 69% of respondents want less than a 5% increase in local housing in the next 15 years and a further 20% want to see less than 10%) and clearly flies in the face of emerging government policy.

It is opportunistic as it is clearly timed so as to be before any emerging district and neighbourhood plans for the area can be completed.

This proposed development is in contravention of Uttlesford District Council policies ENV3, ENV7, ENV8, ENV9, S7 and S8.

For all the reasons above I strongly object to this development.