

Planning Application
Land West of Robin Hood Road, Elsenham
Planning Inspectorate Reference: S62A/2023/0026
Uttlesford District Council Reference: UTT/23/2622/PINS

Representations from: Elsenham Parish Council

By email to: section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

January 2024

Elsenham Parish Council has considered the documents relating to the above application, and wishes to make objections as below.

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1. Site access

The obvious difference between this application and its predecessor, UTT/19/0437/OP, is that the previous application specified access from Rush Lane, whereas the present application stipulates access from Robin Hood Road. The revision gives rise to a number of issues.

Road width

Robin Hood Road is of restricted width, such that two cars of normal size pass only with difficulty. It is now proposed to include a footway on the western side, adjacent to the application site. The innovation would be welcome in itself, but, remarkably, it would lead to a reduction in the road width over the northern part of Robin Hood Road, as is apparent from *Site Access Arrangements* (DWG-06). It is evident that a large vehicle such as a refuse vehicle will take up virtually all the road in any event - see *Site Access Refuse Vehicle Swept Path Analysis* (DWG-07). The proposed one-way working over the northern section is most unlikely to prove viable during the construction phase, when many large vehicles, often longer than waste lorries, would be using Robin Hood Road in both directions. The proposed access is clearly much inferior to the approved access via Rush Lane.

Safety

The constrained width and the constant flow of vehicles during the construction phase must result in concerns regarding pedestrians. These include residents of Robin Hood Road, residents of Fuller's End via the Fuller's End railway pedestrian level crossing, and local walkers. There do not appear to be any proposals to ensure their safety.

Tree T60

It is explained that one-way working would be necessary over the northern stretch of Robin Hood Road because the road would not be widened in order to protect a mature highway tree, clearly indicating that the tree in question is to be retained (*Transport Statement*, 4.4). Its position indicates that it is to be identified as T60 ('Tree Crowns Plan', *Tree Report*, Appendix VIII). However, in the table 'Treework for development at Robin Hood Road site', T60 is marked '*Remove*' *'For new footpath'* (*Tree Report*, 6.2.3). There is thus inconsistency between the *Transport Statement*, which indicates that T60 would be retained, and the *Tree Report* which states that it would be removed. This is an important matter. If T60 was removed, it would presumably enable all of Robin Hood Road to be widened, obviating the need for one-way working over the northern section. If T60 was retained, then it should be marked 'Sever ivy at base', as with T59, since both trees are heavily overgrown.

Turning head

It is proposed to utilise and extend the existing turning head at the south of Robin Hood Road in order to provide access to the site. The turning head is used for parking by Network Rail vehicles if there is an issue concerning the railway pedestrian level crossing. Typically, two large vans are involved. There does not appear to be any alternative provision, giving rise to safety concerns if Network Rail cannot access the crossing quickly when necessary.

An arrow on the plans points to 'Relocated turning head', but it is not actually shown as might be expected (*Site Access Arrangements*); it cannot be seen elsewhere in the plans, such as on the *Development Layout*.

Annotation

It is not easy to locate particular features from the plans as presented. It would help considerably if the names of the houses on Robin Hood Road were included. These are available from Uttlesford - see <https://udc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8de6663b65c84fb699a718eac0fa926d>

Summary

The Parish Council cannot regard the proposed access arrangements as satisfactory - they are clearly much inferior to those agreed for the application with access from Rush Lane.

2. Road access

The applicants refer to the NPPF:

The latest NPPF at paragraph 111 says that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe (*Transport Statement*, 3.1, p. 7).

Reference is also made to Uttlesford District Council policy:

In terms of transport policies, the following are considered relevant:

TA1 Accessible Development:

- ❖ Capacity of the road network must be capable of accommodating the development safely and without causing severe congestion.
- ❖ Development will be managed so it improves road safety and takes account of the needs of all users (*Transport Statement*, 3.5, p. 12).

The authors appear to regard these references as sufficient, and are seemingly unaware that Elsenham's position means that cumulative impacts on the road network are already severe.

Elsenham is very curiously situated. It has a railway station, which makes it a target for developers, and yet the road links are peculiarly inadequate. The main route out of the village is through Stansted Mountfitchet, via the unique configuration at Grove Hill, and the continuation via Lower Street and Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet. The unpredictable delays and difficulties, particularly at Grove Hill, are so acute that some residents frequently have recourse to wholly unsuitable narrow winding country lanes as an alternative. Any serious attempt at an assessment of existing conditions would show familiarity with these various difficulties and impediments to vehicular progress. But these are matters of which the applicants show no knowledge.

The insufficiencies of the road links to Elsenham have been confirmed in important decisions. Central to the rejection in December 2014 by the Local Plan Inspector of a previous draft Local Plan was the inadequacy of the road links to Elsenham. Moreover, the Inspector into the appeal against rejection of the proposed plan for up to 800 dwellings between Henham and Elsenham, UTT/13/0808, accepted the approach of the Local Plan Inspector, and concluded that the adverse

impact on the surrounding road network was sufficient in itself to refuse the appeal; his view was confirmed by the Secretary of State in August 2016.

The Local Plan Inspector decided as long ago as December 2014 that the road network could not cope with further development. He could not have taken account of houses already scheduled but not yet occupied, since he was concerned with conditions on the ground. A close reading of his Report suggests that he felt that the road links were already inadequate:

My overall conclusion on the evidence is that there are severe doubts that Elsenham could overcome the connectivity disadvantages of its location sufficiently to be regarded as consistent with national policy or effective in being able to secure sustainable development (*Examination of the Uttlesford Local Plan: Inspector's Conclusions*, 2.16).

The Parish Council's analysis shows that as many as 1,420 further dwellings will be built in the village in the period since the Inspector decided in 2014 that a further allocation could not be sustained; see the Table below.

Reference	Date of Approval	Description	Number	Status
UTT/2166/11/DFO	15 Aug 2012	Orchard Crescent	53	Complete
UTT/12/6116/FUL	7 Feb 2014 (appeal)	Old Goods Yard	10	Complete
UTT/13/2917/FUL	23 July 2014	Hailes Wood	32	Complete
UTT/15/1121/FUL	9 Dec 2015	Hailes Wood, additional	3	Complete
UTT/14/3279/DFO	1 May 2015	North of Stansted Road	155	Complete
UTT/15/2632/DFO	5 Feb 2016	South of Stansted Road	165	Complete
UTT/17/0335/DFO	6 July 2017	Elsenham Nurseries	42	Complete
UTT/17/2542/DFO	22 Dec 2017	North of Leigh Drive	20	Complete
UTT/19/0462/FUL	6 Nov 2019	West of Hall Road	130	Commenced
UTT/19/0437/OP	4 Sep 2020 (appeal)	South of Rush Lane	40	Detailed application submitted
UTT/21/3269/DFO	1 June 2022	North-west of Henham Road	350	Commenced, c. 20 occupied
UTT/21/2461/DFO	5 April 2023	West of Isabel Drive	99	Commenced
UTT/22/2760/PINS UTT/23/2063/DFO	11 April 2023	East of Elsenham Station ¹	200	Detailed application submitted

UTT/22/2174/PINS S62A/2022/0007	14 June 2023	South of Henham Road	130	Detailed application awaited
UTT/20/2908/OP	15 June 2023	South of Bedwell Road ²	50	Detailed application awaited
Small schemes	Various	Various	36	
TOTAL			1,515	
Total after 2014			1,420	
Total after 2020			829	

There can be no doubt that the cumulative impact on the road network of this application and all the others which have been passed recently in Elsenham would indeed be unacceptably severe. It is not a question of the number of dwellings included in the present or any future applications; the road network is inadequate now for the number of homes already committed.

3. Cumulative impact

Elsenham has been subject to a great deal of housing development over the last ten years (see the table in 2. above), which is the more remarkable in view of the inadequacies of road access.

The number of households in Elsenham is shown in the 2011 census as 980. Excluding the 40 in Rush Lane, the total approved since 2011 is 1,475, and the percentage increase since 2011 is thus 151%.

It is notable that a large number of applications have been approved since the appeal regarding south of Rush Lane was allowed in September 2020, shown as the five rows after Rush Lane in the table above, with a total of 829 homes. The assumptions as to supply and viability which were appropriate when the south of Rush Lane application was determined are thus no longer valid.

The view that Elsenham is not now suitable for further development is confirmed by Uttlesford's new Local Plan, where the Regulation 18 Consultation was completed recently. Elsenham is ranked as a 'Local Rural Centre'; but, unlike other settlements in the same category, no proposals are made for further development in the Consultation. The explanation is as follows:

Elsenham:

This settlement contains a number of sites suitable for development, but they already have planning permission and there is already over 1,000 homes coming forward at this settlement. The assessment process did consider other sites, but these were not considered to be appropriate (UDC, *Housing Site Selection Topic Paper*, 3.35).

Uttlesford's 'Call for Sites' exercise in mid-2021 resulted in the promotion of dwellings across the district totalling more than five times the number needed. The Parish Council holds that in the changed circumstance since the Rush Lane application was approved, it is not essential that the site under review should be included,

4. Landscape and open space

Access

The Parish Council holds that the impact on the landscape has to be seen in the context of the large amount of development already approved in the village.

The housing permitted, and now completed, on the site south of Stansted Road (Franklin Drive) ends to the south at what should be regarded as the natural limits of the village. The boundary between this area and the site under consideration to the south is marked by a charming sunken lane with overhanging trees, footpath 29, of a type not found elsewhere in Elsenham and rarely in the wider area. Walking down this lane, the meadow now proposed for housing is experienced as an area of pasture on the left. The field itself, despite the railway, helps to mark the separation between the hard edge of Elsenham and Fuller's End, a delightful small hamlet with several thatched dwellings. Many of the properties are individually listed as Grade II, and make a unique contribution to the hamlet.

The footpath which traverses the site, FP28, is well-worn, attesting to its popularity as a resource. Most of the recent major developments in the village have included footpaths which were formerly in open space and are now (or will be) within or adjacent to built development. In summary, these are:

Extension to Hailes Wood, 35 dwellings, UTT/13/2917/FUL and UTT/15/1121/FUL

FP21 runs to the south of the site, formerly a field under cultivation and now developed.

North of Stansted Road, 175 dwellings, UTT/14/3279/DFO and UTT17/2542/DFO

FP31 runs to the west of the site which was formerly a field under cultivation. The footpath is now merged into a development road.

South of Stansted Road, 165 dwellings, UTT/15/2632/DFO

FP30 runs to the east of the site, which was formerly a large expanse of open fields under cultivation.

West of Hall Road, 130 dwellings, UTT/19/0462/FUL

FP13 runs through the site, which was formerly a large expanse of open fields and is currently an extensive building site.

North-west of Henham Road, 350 dwelling, UTT/21/3269/DFO

FP21 is a favourite with local dog-walkers and now crosses the access road to the building site.

West of Isabel Drive, 99 dwellings, UTT/21/3269/DFO,

FP31 runs along the western boundary of the site. Also Wood is on one side; the former open fields on the eastern side are now being transformed into a new housing estate.

East of Elsenham Station, 200 dwellings, UTT/22/2760/PINS

FP15 runs at a little distance parallel to the northern boundary. In due course, a large new housing estate will be clearly visible to the south, rather than open fields.

South of Henham Road, 130 dwellings, UTT/22/2174/PINS

FP13 cuts through the field, which is currently used for grazing livestock.

South of Bedwell Road, 50 dwellings, UTT/20/2908/OP

FP 29 cuts through the site, which was formerly woodland and open field, and is now approved for housing.

The applicants state:

6.8 PRoW 13-29 (Receptor H)

Public Footpath PROW 13-29 (Receptor H) extends through the southern part of the site connecting Rush Lane with Robin Hood Road. Upon completion users of PROW 13-29 will pass through new landscaped public open space within the site. There will be a high level of change in views from the current situation resulting in a moderate - major adverse effect for footpath users. In the longer term - once the proposed landscaping has established - views will be softened by the surrounding trees and planting and the level of impact of the new properties on the receptor will be reduced to moderate adverse (*Landscape and Visual Appraisal*, 6.8).

The Parish Council holds that in view of the wholesale loss of public footpaths in the open countryside, the last vestige of access represented by FP28 should be valued and retained.

Landscape

Two paragraphs are worthy of quotation:

Geographically the site is closely related to the urban form of Elsenham and includes few features of landscape value. Most noteworthy at a localised scale are the peripheral hedgerows and a number of mature hedgerow trees (*Landscape and Visual Appraisal*, 4.35).

Perceptual (Scenic): The site is not considered to have any unusual scenic or unique characteristics. However, the site is reasonably attractive being an enclosed field with a number of mature hedgerow trees on the settlement edge (*Landscape and Visual Appraisal*, 4.40).

The Parish Council would not want to quarrel with these assessments. Elsenham does not offer any areas of designated landscape. But local residents have seen the steady erosion of the limited landscape available, and they are bound to value more highly what little is left for them to enjoy. The field which is the subject of the application is one of the few remaining open spaces in the village, following over-development elsewhere. The cumulative effect of the loss of open countryside in a rural location should be included in any assessment of the impact.

UDC Policy S7 reads, in full:

The countryside to which this policy applies is defined as all those parts of the Plan area beyond the Green Belt that are not within the settlement or other site boundaries. In the countryside, which will be protected for its own sake, planning permission will only be given for development that needs to take place there, or is appropriate to a rural area. This will include infilling in accordance with paragraph 6.13 of the Housing Chapter of the Plan. There will be strict control on new building. Development will only be permitted if its appearance protects or enhances the particular character of the part of the countryside

within which it is set or there are special reasons why the development in the form proposed needs to be there.

Specifically, this proposed development:

- Does not need to take place there;
- Is not appropriate to a rural area;
- Would not protect or enhance the particular character of the part of the countryside within which it is set;
- Does not offer any special reasons why it needs to be there

Hedgerows

The quotations under Landscape above from *Landscape and Visual Appraisal*, 4.35 and 4.40, both refer to the 'mature hedgerow trees' on the boundary of the site. Elsewhere, it is stated:

Well established hedgerows with a number of mature hedgerow trees are located along these boundaries providing a high degree of visual containment (*Landscape and Visual Appraisal*, 4.28).

It is regrettable, therefore, that as much as 60 metres of hedge are proposed to be removed (*Tree Report*, 5.2.3, H56, Hawthorn etc, *Remove about 60m*).

The impact on the southernmost house in Robin Hood Road, Meadow View, will be particularly severe, and has not been considered. It is directly opposite the turning head which is proposed to be extended in order to give access. At present, Meadow View is well protected by a substantial hedge. Under these proposals, it will be exposed to the prevailing south-westerly winds (see the windrose for Stansted Airport, *Air Quality Statement*, Fig 6.1).

Village Green

Reference is made to the 'village green' (*Design & Access Statement*, Fig. 5.1, 6.6). The area indicated is in fact the Memorial Garden in the centre of the village. The narrow strip of grass in front is very far from what is normally understood by the term 'village green'.

Summary

The impact of those proposals, if implemented, would be profound, mostly on account of Elsenham's much diminished landscape and open space resources. In the view of the Parish Council, the proposals are not compatible with District Council Policy S7 and Policy S8, regarding the Stansted Airport Countryside Protection Zone.

5. Parking

The total number of on-site parking spaces is given as 89 (*Application Form*, 10). The applicants refer to Essex Parking Standards (*Design & Access Statement*, 10.3), but they do not seem to be familiar with Uttlesford's *Local residential parking standards 2013*, which are included on the Inspectorate's website for this application within 'Questionnaire and supporting documents'. The difference between the two standards is that Uttlesford stipulates three parking spaces for houses of four bedrooms or more, whereas the Essex standards stipulate two spaces for all dwellings of two bedrooms or more. In both cases, visitor spaces are 0.25 per dwelling, rounded up.

The number of residential units is given as 13 with four bedrooms and a total of 27 with either two or three bedrooms (see the table in the corner of *Development Layout*). The calculation according to the Uttlesford standard is therefore:

$$(27 \times 2) + (13 \times 3) + (40 \times 0.25) = 54 + 39 + 10 = 103.$$

The total given by the applicants of 89 is thus 14 short of the correct number, which is one more than the third space for each of the four-bedroom house.

Furthermore, although the number of visitor parking spaces is quoted as ten, it has only been possible to locate five on the *Development Layout* plan. For the record, these are:

Next to Plot 14:	1 space
Opposite Plot 26:	1 space
Opposite Plot 30	1 space
Outside Plot 31:	2 spaces
Total:	5 spaces

The total number of parking spaces lacking is thus $14 + 5 = 19$.

No doubt it will be claimed that the *Development Layout* plan is illustrative only, that the present application is for 'up to' 40 dwellings, and that any necessary adjustments will be made when the detailed planning application is submitted. However, the Parish Council knows from experience that if an application for 'up to' 40 dwellings is granted, the applicants will be most unwilling to reduce that number later. For that reason the Parish Council maintains that the applicants must show now that 40 dwellings can be readily accommodated on the site, with due provision for parking - and this they have failed to do.

Finally, such visitor parking spaces as have been located are very unevenly spread around the site as a whole, in contravention of the usual standards.

6. Three overarching objectives

The 'three overarching objectives' in the NPPF, Paragraph 8, are cited (*Planning Statement*, 4.4), but there is nothing to suggest how the applicants think they might be met.

It is likely that, as with other developers, there is an implicit assumption that all development must in itself be a good thing. But that is not so. The massive scale of development in Elsenham since 2011 (see the table in 2. above) means that no benefits from further development are to be obtained.

The village is in fact at bursting point. There is insufficient provision regarding employment, shops, doctors' surgery, sporting facilities including changing rooms, community hall and meeting rooms, and cemetery space.

The piecemeal development to which the village has been remorselessly subjected has not been accompanied by a concomitant increase in facilities. There are no social or economic benefits from further development.

7. Five-year housing land supply

It is stated that as of 1 April 2022, Uttlesford Council had a housing supply of 4.89 years, and thus lack a five-year supply. The data is now out of date. The latest Uttlesford 5YHLS statement, included in the 'Questionnaire and supporting documents' section on the Inspectorate's website for this application, shows that as at 1 April 2023 the housing supply was 5.14 years, and thus above the minimum threshold of five years as set out in the NPPF.

The arguments put forward by the applicants based on the previous lack of a five-year supply are now rendered invalid.

8. Sustainability

The consultants' lack of first-hand knowledge of Elsenham and the area means that they make some egregious errors.

A table is presented which includes journey times (*Transport Statement*, 5). The bicycle times for all the destinations in the table from and including Stansted Pharmacy are hopelessly optimistic. It should be stated whether the times are to or from the destination, or an average of the two. The reason is that all these destinations, except one, are in Stansted Mountfitchet, and the times to and from will vary considerably via the nearest route, Grove Hill (the clue is in the name). In any event, the route is unsuitable; local residents living in Stansted Road, Elsenham, will confirm that no-one cycles to Stansted Mountfitchet for any reason.

A second table is presented in the same section purporting to give times for the 7 and 7A bus service, based on the belief that service 7 takes the route from Bishop's Stortford to Stansted Airport, and that 7A takes the return route from Stansted Airport to Bishop's Stortford. The assumption is wholly erroneous. Furthermore, the table suggests that these buses call at Takeley, which again is wrong. It is unfortunate when transport consultants show an inability to read a bus timetable correctly.

Finally with regard to Section 5, the railway station does not provide a half-hourly service between London Liverpool Street and Cambridge.

9. Natural springs

The outline application for the same site with access from Rush Lane noted that:

The north-eastern corner of the paddock has several springs, creating flushed and boggy areas near Robin Hood Road (UTT/19/0437/OP, *Tree Survey*, 3.2).

No further mention of the springs was found in the detailed application which followed that outline application (UTT/23/2028/DFO), and no mention has been noted in the application now under discussion, including the *Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy*.

It is known locally that natural springs are to be found on the site, on the eastern side generally. Parts of the site itself, within the memory of some inhabitants, were given over to water meadows. The area of Robin Hood Road nearest to the pedestrian railway level crossing is always wet - not, as sometimes assumed, through a burst water main, but from the springs.

Clearly a comprehensive professional study is needed as to the location of the springs, the effect of covering the area with houses and hard-standing, and whether any measures could be taken to

alleviate the effects. The possibility that piled foundations would be needed has not been considered:

The construction of houses and associated roads, drainage and other utilities within the study site would involve the mechanical excavation of foundations and trenches, which would result in widespread impacts where these are planned. The depth of these impacts are likely to be between 500mm and 1m deep, and would be likely to severely truncate or entirely remove any archaeological remains which may be present within areas that are developed (*Heritage Statement*, 5.2.5).

It has been assumed that the buildings will have strip foundations (*Noise and Vibration Assessment*, 5.21).

The assumption is obviously questionable.

10. Permanent pond

The applicants regard the inclusion of standing water as both an attractive and a functional feature of their proposals:

The attenuation basin is a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) which will provide an attractive environment with green features and biodiversity enhancements. The attenuation basin is to include a permanent pond . . . (*Design & Access Statement*, 8.3).

In addition, new wetland habitats are proposed as part of the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS). Whilst the design of these features will focus on their primary function (drainage), they have been designed to hold standing water throughout the year, with marginal, aquatic and wet wildflower grassland planting proposed to maximise opportunities for wildlife (*Ecological Assessment Part 1 of 3*, 5.3.7).

Elsenham is close to Stansted Airport, and permanently wet ponds are not acceptable to the Airport authorities, owing to the risk of bird strikes. The applicants need to think again.

11. Heritage Asset: Wells Cottages

The heritage assets affected by the proposal include the Grade II listed Wells Cottages in Robin Hood Road, close to the junction with Rush Lane (*UDC Conservation - Comments*, 3.0). It is known that the cottages have no foundations. There is much concern at the prospect of a large number of large construction vehicles threading their way at regular intervals and over an extended period through parked cars on Robin Hood Road, creating inevitable vibration as they change gear, particularly on leaving the site and making their way slowly uphill.

The applicants refer to the NPPF as follows:

Paragraph 199 requires that decision makers give great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets when considering applications that could affect an assets' significance. It also makes clear that great weight must be given irrespective of the degree of harm which would result (*Heritage Statement*, 2.3.6).

However, there is nothing beyond this statement to suggest that any weight has been given to the possible harm from vibration caused by construction vehicles to Wells Cottages.

The situation concerning the possible effects of vibration on buildings is described elsewhere by the applicants as follows:

. . . Vibration from road traffic can also be airborne. Such airborne vibration is transmitted as a low-frequency sound wave and is often perceived when the sound wave causes windows or other objects to rattle.

. . . In general, vibration is only perceptible in residential situations when the building is close to a railway, construction site or very close to a road that carries large and heavy vehicles (*Noise and Vibration Assessment*, Appendix A).

The description fits the situation of Wells Cottages with regard to possible construction traffic in Robin Hood Road very well. However, it is clear that the main report, prior to the appendices, is concerned with the effect of vibration on the human body, and vibration was measured only at 'Position 2', adjacent to the railway (*Noise and Vibration Assessment* 3.93, 3.97, 4.13). The conclusion is:

Vibration is therefore not considered to be a material constraint at the site and it is not considered further in this report (*Noise and Vibration Assessment*, 5.31).

There is a duty to preserve the listed buildings in Robin Hood Road. There have been no other recent developments with potential impact on Wells Cottages. The Parish Council considers that, should the application be considered for approval, the applicants should arrange a comprehensive, professional survey of these heritage assets before and after construction, with a commitment to make good any damage which has occurred.

12. Gardens

Garden sizes should conform to the *Essex Design Guide*, that is, 50 sq m for one-bed and two-bed dwellings and 100 sq m for three-bed dwellings and above.

Nothing has been found in the application documents to indicate the proposed garden sizes. It is understood that the *Development Layout* is to be regarded as illustrative only, pending a detailed application. Nonetheless, the Parish Council holds that it must be shown that the specified number of dwellings can be accommodated if the application is to succeed.

13. Railway pedestrian level crossing

Approval of the application could only lead to increased use of the unmanned pedestrian level crossing at the end of Robin Hood Road, particularly in view of its proximity to the revised proposed access to the new development. The applicants refer to:

These existing footpath links offer routes for pedestrians to the centre of Elsenham, including for dog walkers and journeys by foot to the primary school (*Design & Access Statement*, 5.2)

It is clear from the accompanying Fig. 5.2 that the shortest pedestrian route from the proposed development site access to the school, and also to the Crown pub, is over the

pedestrian level crossing, and then via the public footpath (yellow broken line), to emerge on Hall Road a short distance from its junction with the High Street.

But this route via the dangerous pedestrian railway level crossing should not be promoted for primary school children, for obvious reasons. It should be noted that the previous proposal whereby access to the site would be gained from Rush Lane is open to no such objection.

14. Play area

It must be a matter for great concern that the children's play area is shown on the *Development Layout* in the corner of the site closest to the railway pedestrian level crossing. It is understood that the plan is indicative only, but experience suggests that approval of a layout as part of an outline application is often used to support the same layout when a detailed application is made.

The apparent provision of play equipment as shown on the *Development Layout* is not generous. Elsenham children regard the provision of at least one swing as basic to any play area worthy of the name. The inclusion of a single picnic table smacks of desperation. The provision of three boulders in the corner is suggestive of an eye to economy rather than play value.

15. Public Right of Way

PRoW 13/29 traverses the area. The applicants' intentions need to be made clear. It is stated that

The existing Public Right of Way through the site is proposed to be formalised and enhanced within the new development (*Design & Access Statement*, 15.4).

But there is nothing to suggest what this means. The *Development Layout* shows the line of the existing PRoW as a straight broken blue line through the site, annotated 'Elsenham 29'. But it does not appear possible that this line could be maintained if the development proceeds as shown. There is a proposed new footpath which takes a route from the start and finish points of PRoW 13/29. If it is proposed to divert the PRoW onto this footpath, then the applicants should say so, and the necessary permission will need to be obtained.

The 'Design Parameters Plan' (*Design & Access Statement*, Fig. 9.1) shows salmon-coloured hatching in areas including the apparent line of the new footpath. But there is no key as to the significance.

16. Community Involvement

The applicants' *Statement of Community Involvement* makes clear that there has been no community involvement. It is accurate, so far as it goes. There was indeed a meeting on 21 October 2019 regarding the outline application (UTT/19/0437/OP), with access from Rush Lane. That is now over four years ago. The statement that 'The Parish Council and local residents have been consulted at each stage' must be understood to mean that the usual consultation was available via PINS for the Appeal relating to the Rush Lane application, and via the District Council for the Reserved Matters Application, and via PINS again for the present S62A application. There has been no further consultation between the applicants and the Parish Council. The Parish Council emailed the Agent, 22 December 2023, but without reply.

The District Council's *Statement of Community Involvement* (2021) includes:

Prior to submission or during determination of an application, discussions will be held between planning officers, and applicants and representative of the parish council to

discuss issues such as infrastructure, amenities and matters subject to any S106 (6.8).

No such discussions have been held. Elsenham Parish Council cannot agree that any community involvement worthy of the name has taken place with regard to this application.

17. S106 and the new Community Hall

Adopted Uttlesford Local Plan Policy GEN6 requires the provision of infrastructure to support development. The Parish Council considers that a contribution should be made towards the provision of the village Community Hall to assist in bringing it forward and because future residents are likely to place additional demands on it as well as the other social infrastructure in the village.

Elsenham currently contains two community halls: the Village Hall and the Memorial Hall. The existing Village Hall was built in 1984/85 and forms part of the Elsenham Church of England Primary School. The hall is a joint-use hall and the facilities are shared by three parties: the Primary School, the Elsenham Village Hall Charity (the Village Hall Management Committee, VHMC) and the Incumbent and Church Wardens of Elsenham (Elsenham Church). Because of this sharing arrangement, each of the parties has exclusive access to and use of the hall at different times, but it is predominantly used by the primary school during school hours.

The second hall is the Memorial Hall which is located on the Elsenham playing field. That building was completed in 1987 and although of a limited size, offers accommodation to a wide range of local organisations and businesses. It has a maximum capacity of 80 people.

Both halls were built to serve Elsenham prior to its expansion post 2012. In 2011, Uttlesford District Council proposed that three large developments then under consideration should contribute to a new Community Hall to serve the additional population through the provision of land and financial contributions. Outline planning permissions were granted for the three developments, two of which have taken place and been completed. Land has been provided for the new Community Hall and contributions towards its construction have been received by the District Council on behalf of the Parish Council. The third development, on land west of Hall Road, stalled, but full planning approval was obtained in November 2019, and work commenced on site in September 2023. Provision was made for a contribution to the Community Hall in the S106, and the first instalment has been paid to the District Council.

Elsenham has seen considerably greater growth than was anticipated when proposals for the Community Hall were first drawn up and contributions calculated. Furthermore, due to the time that has lapsed, the cost of the Community Hall has increased so that the previously agreed funding can no longer finance the construction of the hall. The additional population from other recent developments is also placing pressures on the existing village halls and it is becoming more pressing that a new Community Hall become available.

The Parish Council is in a position whereby it is faced with a constantly increasing village population, but without the funding to make provision for a necessary Community Hall. The Parish Council considers that the current application site will place further additional pressures on the current village community infrastructure and therefore seeks a contribution towards the construction of the new Community Hall, costings for which have been obtained.

In September 2022, Elsenham Parish Council requested that provision should be made for a contribution to a new Community Hall as part of the response to the S62A application for 130 dwellings to the south of Henham Road, Elsenham (S62A/2022/0007; UTT/22/2174/PINS), and the request was agreed by the Inspector (*Decision Notice and Statement of Reasons*, 75-77). It is considered that a proportionate contribution based on the agreed contribution

should also be applied to the current application site, and would be both justified and necessary to mitigate the impact of this development. The site is appreciably nearer to the proposed location of the Community Hall than the site to the south of Henham Road.

The agreed contribution for the 130 dwellings to the south of Henham Road is £310,000. The calculation of the requested amount for the present application is therefore: £310,000 / 130 X 40 = £95,385. The application for 130 dwellings stipulated that the payment should be in two instalments. It is suggested that for 40 dwellings, it would be appropriate if there is one instalment, payable before first occupation, and, as before, index-linked from the signing of the S106 until payment is made.

The draft Business Plan included below as an Appendix sets out the justification of the need for a contribution. Without this contribution, the Parish Council considers that this proposal will have an unacceptable impact on infrastructure, contrary to Policy GEN6 of the adopted Local Plan and the NPPF. It is understood that Uttlesford District Council in its role as consultee will support the application for a contribution.

This request is made without prejudice to the Parish Council's response to the planning application as a whole.

Conclusion

It has been shown that the site access from Robin Hood Road is highly problematic, and there are issues regarding road access to the village which the applicants do not understand. Many of the issues which arise are on account of the large amount of recent housing in the village. For example, it makes what limited landscape remains the more precious, and Policy S7 cannot be satisfied. The applicants do not understand Uttlesford's parking standards, and the three overarching objectives prescribed by the NPPF cannot be met, and claims as to sustainability are erroneous. Uttlesford is now able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. The applicants do not have regard for the natural springs on the site; at the same time, their proposals for a permanent pond would not be agreed to by Stansted Airport. Due regard must be had for the possibility of damage through vibration to the Wells Cottages heritage assets. Garden sizes must meet Essex standards. In general, the applicants have failed to show that 40 dwellings can be accommodated on the site, whilst satisfying all the relevant policies. There is danger associated with probable increased usage of the Fuller's End pedestrian railway level crossing, including through the suggested proximity of the children's play area, and the provision in the play area is obviously inadequate. The proposal regarding the public right of way which traverses the site needs to be made clear, and there has been no community involvement in the application.

A request is made without prejudice for inclusion in any S106 of a contribution towards the new Community Hall in the village.

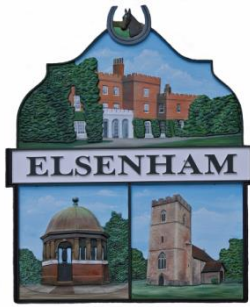
Elsenham Parish Council takes the view that the shortcomings, major and minor, of the scheme are such that it must be rejected.

APPENDIX

New Community Hall

Business Plan

(DRAFT)



ELSENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

New Community Hall

Business Plan

(D R A F T)

Document Control

Approved on behalf of the Parish Council	
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Change History

Version:	Date:	Reason for change:
DRAFT A	January 2021	
DRAFT A2	March 2021	New sections 2.2.4, 4.2, 4.3, 5, 7

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[To be completed]

1. Summary

[To follow]

2. Identifying the need

2.1 Current situation

Elsenham at present has two community halls; the Village Hall and the Memorial Hall, each of which currently offer a range of facilities and services to the village and its community.

2.1.1 Village Hall

The existing Village Hall was built in 1984/85 and is now approximately 36 years old; the hall forms a part of the Elsenham Church of England Primary School, which is located at the eastern end of the High Street, directly opposite to the entrance to Hailes Wood.

The hall is a joint-use hall and the facilities are shared by three parties; the Primary School, the Elsenham Village Hall Charity (the Village Hall Management Committee, VHMC) and the Incumbent and Church Wardens of Elsenham (Elsenham Church). Because of this sharing arrangement, each of the parties has exclusive access to and use of the hall at different times of the week and/or day.

The current hall facilities that are available to users/hirers is the main hall (17m x 9m), a small upstairs meeting room, male, female and disabled toilets, a small, cupboard-based kitchen and good off-road parking facilities adjacent to the hall. The main hall has a capacity of up to 200 people.

The hall is used predominantly by the Primary School, during school hours, Monday to Friday. The Village Hall Management Committee has use of the hall during the weekday evenings and Sunday from 5.30pm and all day on Saturday. Elsenham Church has access and use of the hall during the daytime on Sunday for the holding of church services.

In recent years, Essex Education Authority and the Primary School have introduced a number of alterations to the hall facilities that have changed its use and its availability to the other joint-users. This in turn, has led to the hall becoming more limited in its suitability for use by village-based organisations, activities and social events.

2.1.2 ECA Memorial Hall

The Memorial Hall is located on an area of land within Elsenham Playing Field, adjacent to Elsenham Bowls Club and the tennis courts at the south-eastern corner of the Field. The building was built in 1987 and is now approximately 33 years old.

The hall is owned and managed by Elsenham Community Association (ECA), a registered charity; and although of a limited size, offers rooms and facilities to a wide range of local organisations and businesses. The building provides a main hall (11m x 6.5m), small meeting room, kitchen and servery, male, female and disabled toilets, storage cupboards and an extensive parking area next to the hall. The maximum capacity of the hall is up to 80 people maximum.

The Memorial Hall hosts many of the village organisations and activities, both during the daytime and in the evening, particularly during weekdays. It is also used by various commercial hirers for health-related activities (yoga, keep fit, dance, etc.).

Due to the form and the type of construction used, future expansion of the existing hall is limited and constrained. It is likely that should extensive expansion of the hall be considered, demolition of the existing hall may be necessary to allow a new, larger building to be erected. There are no plans at this time by the ECA to enlarge the hall and add to its facilities.

2.2 Challenges and Limitations

Due to the increasing number and size of new residential developments built within Elsenham over the last 10 years, the size of the village and its population has increased significantly. Over the last 7 years, it is true to say that the village has grown from under 1,000 residential homes to over 1,500 homes in 2021 and this number of dwellings is due to increase further with the addition of further planned new developments.

With the significant rise in the population of the village and the increased demand for community facilities and services that are generated, the ability and suitability of today's Village and Memorial halls to meet these growing demands is becoming more difficult to achieve and sustain.

2.2.1 The Village Hall

The village hall may be regarded as offering limited benefit to the village. However, the following constraints apply:

- Only weekday evenings, all-day Saturday and Sunday evenings are available for public use and hirings.
- The cupboard-kitchen offers very limited/basic catering facilities and space to users and hirers.
- Very little / limited storage facilities for regular hall users/hirers.
- The ongoing requirements and demands of the Primary School/Education Authority can dictate changes to the ongoing usage of the hall.
- It is possible and/or probable that at some point in the foreseeable future, the overall ownership/management of the Village Hall will revert to the Primary School/Essex Education Authority. Should this occur, the continued availability and use of the hall for hire by others (i.e. village organisations, commercial organisations and individuals) is uncertain.

2.2.2 The Memorial Hall

The Memorial Hall is available for use and hire, all-day, 7-days a week and is used by many of the village's organisations, groups, commercial hirers and individuals. However, the following constraints apply:

- The hall and its facilities are limited in size, restricting accommodation for up to 80 persons maximum.
- Limited size of kitchen and its facilities. Kitchen cupboard space shared between regular hall users.
- Adequate internal cupboard storage space; 3 walk-in cupboards off the main hall, but this is heavily in demand by regular hall hirers.
- Meaningful expansion to the size of the existing hall restricted due to structural design and construction-method used for the hall.

2.2.3 Other 'Village Hall' Facilities in other venues

One other building / facility exists in the village that has been used (occasionally) to host certain village activities; this is the Elsenham Bowls Clubhouse, located on Elsenham Playing Field, close to the Memorial Hall. The following constraints apply to its facilities:

- The Clubhouse exists primarily for use for bowling and social purposes by Bowls Club members; there are occasions when the Club committee allows the clubhouse to be used / hired by other, outside organisations and individuals.

- Secondary use of the clubhouse is restricted by the Club committee and only very occasionally allowed.
- Building and site layout has been designed to function as a bowls club, i.e. changing rooms and toilets, a main hall with bar and kitchen (for match lunches, club social activities, etc.) and an external bowling green adjacent to the building.
- The clubhouse is of limited size, similar in size to the Memorial Hall, and therefore space and accommodation is restricted, typically up to 80 people.
- The site of the bowls club and its location close to other buildings and facilities on the Playing Field, effectively limits, or even prevents, any further meaningful expansion of the existing building.

2.2.4 Meeting rooms

In addition to a large new hall, there is also a need for additional meeting rooms. The Village Hall is used very occasionally for large meetings and for events which demand the maximum amount of available space. The Memorial Hall is used routinely for monthly meetings of the Parish Council and for meetings of committees of the Parish Council and meetings of other bodies. Before the pandemic, it was usual for the Hall to be booked solidly through block bookings, making for great difficulties in arranging either further such bookings or for occasional, one-off, meetings.

The only other available meeting rooms are:

- i. ‘Old Frank’s’, in the High Street, nearly opposite to the school. These are the office premises of the Church of England for the combined parishes of Elsenham, Henham and Ugley. The upstairs room can accommodate a meeting of up to eight persons, with space for about another twenty members of the public. The room is subject to availability, with priority obviously being given to church purposes.
- ii. Village Hall, upstairs meeting room. Access is via a narrow winding staircase, with space for no more than six participants. The room is only available outside school hours, and is unacceptably noisy if there are activities in the hall below

2.3 Future Community Facilities going forward

The aim of the New Community Hall project is to create and build a fit-for-purpose, self-sustaining, multi-user Community Hall that includes rooms and spaces of various sizes for community uses ranging from Parish Council meetings, community meetings, out-of-school groups, village clubs, societies and organisations, exercise, keep-fit and dance classes, through to larger events, including birthday parties, weddings and community fundraising events. In addition, it is proposed that the new hall also incorporate a dedicated Parish Council office, together with team changing facilities to support the Playing Field’s sports facilities. A good provision of storage space within the hall is considered essential. Overall, the new community hall will provide a major part of the facilities needed to support and sustain an ever-growing and diverse village community.

In order to provide sustainability to the new hall, it is proposed, where possible and practicable, to incorporate the latest energy and cost-saving technologies into the design, construction and ongoing maintenance of the building. These goals will include:

- Reduce energy consumption
- Reduce maintenance costs
- Reduce cleaning costs
- Minimise on-site supervision costs, using a combination of technology and trusted-key partners.

3. Validating the Need

Elsenham has grown substantially over recent years with no commensurate improvement, or extension to, its existing community facilities. All of the recent emerging Local Plan strategies have categorised Elsenham as one of the Key Villages within Uttlesford and, as such, it is seen as a major focus for development in the rural areas, with a role as a provider of services to a wide rural area.

In order for Elsenham to be able to achieve this role, the provision of a wide range of community services and facilities is necessary. Good indoor community meeting space is therefore an essential part of achieving this, together with a need to ensure its ongoing sustainability.

3.1 Characteristics for community facilities

A number of characteristics may be used for indoor community facilities in Key Villages such as Elsenham, these being:

- i) A Key Village should feature at least one large facility which offers extended access to all community groups at competitive rates and should also be available for use throughout the day, seven-days-a-week.
- ii). The village should have at least one high quality main hall space suitable for a variety of uses, potentially including club sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions, ideally in a central and accessible location in the community. The facility should also offer smaller, separate meeting spaces and significant storage.
- iii) All facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible. Additional facilities, for example changing rooms, should be fit for purpose and compliant with design best practice (for example Sport England).
- iv) Facilities should include a sizable kitchen/catering area (potentially professionally equipped) for the preparation of food and drink. It is desirable that the hall be licensed, with a personal licence holder, to permit a larger number of events. The facility may also require employed staff.
- v) All new-build facilities should be designed with significant energy-efficiency measures in place. This includes energy efficient lighting (including timers and automatic sensors); double/triple glazing; draught proofing; insulation; appropriate central heating etc. Additional measures, such as the capture and use of grey water, photovoltaic cells, Combined Heat and Power (CHP), should also be explored.
- vi) All current facilities should be upgraded where appropriate and feasible to ensure that management / revenue costs are kept to a minimum.

3.2 Other criteria

Apart from the required facilities, key location criteria also need to be considered, i.e.:

- i) Location within the village centre for easy walking distance for most village residents.
- ii) Site should provide secure parking facilities for those further afield in the parish, or less mobile.
- iii) Potential to integrate and safeguard multiple users, improving utilisation and reducing costs.
- iv) Distance/orientation relative to neighbouring residences to minimise noise disturbance.

Elsenham has only limited “village hall” facilities in other venues:

- i) Elsenham Village Hall – a joint-use hall, large main hall, limited availability and facilities, good parking, but future availability questionable.
- ii) Elsenham Memorial Hall – small hall with good facilities, available 7-days-a-week; good parking and moderate hiring fees.
- iii) Elsenham Bowls Club – private clubhouse, with good facilities but a small main room. Occasional hirings allowed at discretion of the Club Committee.

3.3 Evidence of community consultation and support

A presentation was given at the Elsenham Annual Parish Meeting held remotely via Zoom on 22 April 2021, in order to introduce the idea of the new Community Hall to the residents of the village, and gauge support for the concept. It was explained that funding would be provided via Section 106 agreements with developers, but that it was likely that there would be a deficiency which would be made good through a loan from the Public Works Loan Board, to be financed through an increased precept. A show of hands was asked for on the question as to whether residents would be prepared to agree to an increase in the precept of, for example, 50p/week over 25 years. The result was 17 in favour and 3 against. The degree of support is regarded as promising.

4. Researching possible solutions

4.1 Reviewing design and location criteria

The new facility must meet a number of design and location criteria:

Criteria	Requirement	Approach	Nearest comparator
Size	Concurrent safe use of separate spaces from 30m ² to 200m ²	Flexible spaces capable of being used separately for a variety of purposes	Memorial Hall
Accessibility	Disability-friendly	Disabled toilets for each main space with additional “changing place” for future-proof accessibility	Village Hall Memorial Hall
Noise	Neighbour- friendly	Separation from neighbours to minimise noise disturbance	Village Hall Memorial Hall
Drop-in meeting spaces	Community group and small-business friendly - allowing drop-in WiFi-enabled meeting or work spaces throughout the day and evening	Drop-in business /community group meeting spaces available throughout the day and evening	Memorial Hall No WiFi
Safeguarding	Protecting vulnerable elderly and young	Spaces capable of being “locked-down” when	Memorial Hall

		occupied by vulnerable groups	
Car-parking	Adequate not to exclude residents from within parish but outside village	Adequate parking space to enable concurrent use of the adjacent playing field	Village Hall Memorial Hall
Cycle storage	Adequate to encourage use by all village residents	Per UDC policy ??	None
Centrality	Within village central area to maximise walking	Site is within 800 metre walking distance of the village centre	Village Hall Memorial Hall
Control	Building under Community or Parish Council control	Parish Council favoured	Memorial Hall
Location	Proximity to Elsenham Primary School to provide safe “one-stop” drop-off and pick-up	Site adjacent to existing Elsenham Playing Field	Village Hall
Height	Below that of the immediate environment	Barley House 3-storey flats nearby	????
Style	Imaginative and original so as to extend and renew the distinctive character and traditions of Elsenham built environment	Two-storey pavilion-style within village development framework.	None

4.2 Community Hall location

In 2012 Uttlesford District Council took note of the three large housing applications in Elsenham, and made the decision that provision should be made for a new Community Hall through the Section 106 agreement relating to application UTT/0142/12/OP, whereby an area of land measuring approximately 72.5m X 26.5m would be made available.

The land is situated immediately to the west of the playing field, which is in the ownership of the Parish Council, with access either from Leigh Drive or from Isabel Drive/Southfield Close. The location is such that it is believed that all the criteria included in the table above can be satisfied.

The area is intended to include sufficient car parking space. It is adjacent to the ‘top’ playing field car park and thus car parking could be used in common by both areas, but it is assumed that the Hall will need to include sufficient car parking space for its own purposes.

The transfer of the land to the Parish Council should be achieved shortly, having been delayed through legal complexities.

4.3 Planning implications

The site is within the development limits of Elsenham, on a site which was made available through the aegis of Uttlesford District Council. Provision for the connection of services has

been made in Southfield Close. It is therefore considered that there should be no major obstacles to obtaining outline planning approval.

5. Design evolution

Initial analysis showed that several requirements needed to be met:

- A large main hall.
- Kitchen.
- One large and one small meeting room.
- Ample storage space for the several groups expected to use the hall.
- An office for the Parish Council. At present, the clerk to the Parish Council uses a dedicated room at her own property, an unsatisfactory arrangement which cannot be guaranteed to continue indefinitely. Sufficient space is needed for the possible future accommodation of a second office employee, and for meetings of committees of the Parish Council.
- Changing rooms. As stated above, the designated location of the hall is adjacent to the playing field, which is much used by Elsenham Youth Football Club.

In summary, the requirements are:

ROOM	SIZE (metres)	AREA	COMMENTS
MAIN BUILDING			
Main Hall	10.0 x 20.0	200	Must be larger than existing village hall
Kitchen / food Preparation	8.0 x 5.5	44	
Servery / Bar Area	4.0 x 2.7	10.8	Adjacent to kitchen
Meeting Room 1	8.0 x 5.0	40	
Meeting Room 2	3.0 x 3.0	9	
Foyer / Entrance Area	6.0 x 3.0	18	Typical size, could be larger
Toilets (female)	4.0 x 2.7	10.8	
Toilets (male)	4.0 x 2.7	10.8	
Toilet (disabled)	2.7 x 1.5	4	
Storage Room 1	6.0 x 3.5	21	Tables and chairs
Storage Room 2	7.0 x 2.5	17.5	Regular Hall users?
Storage Room 3	7.0 x 2.5	17.5	Regular Hall users?
Storage Room 4	4.5 x 2.5	11.25	Regular Hall users?
Storage Room 5	3.0 x 2.5	7.5	Hall cleaning equipment / maintenance
Parish Council Office/Meeting Space	10.0 x 5.0	50	External access to/from PC office
Parish Council Storage / Toilet / Misc.	3.0 x 2.7	8	Room to adjoin PC office
Plant / Electrical Room	3.5 x 3.0	10.5	
SPORTS CHANGING FACILITIES			
Team Changing Room 1 incl. toilets	6.0 x 4.5	27	
Team Changing Room 2 incl. toilets	6.0 x 4.5	27	

Officials Changing Room 1 (+toilet)	4.0 x 2.5	10	
Officials Changing Room 2 (+toilet)	4.0 x 2.5	10	
EXTERNAL FACILITIES			
Disabled Toilet	2.2 x 1.5	3.3	Access from outside of building
Toilet (female)	2.2 x 1.5	3.3	Access from outside of building
Toilet (male)	2.2 x 1.5	3.3	Access from outside of building
TOTAL		574.55	

6. The future Community Hall

[Details to follow later]

7. Capital Finance

In 2011/12, Uttlesford District Council made provision for the financing of the Community Hall through contributions from three large development proposals which were under consideration. Two were approved and are now completed. The third ran into difficulties at the detailed application stage and was eventually replaced by a full application, which has been approved and awaits completion of the Section 106 agreement. An extended period of time has now elapsed since the original S106 agreements were concluded, but there was no provision for any of the contributions to be index-linked.

The three developments are:

Outline application	Detailed application	Dwellings	Status	Amount
UTT/0124/12/OP	UTT/14/3279/DFO	155	Complete	£380,000
UTT/15/3090/OP	UTT/17/2542/DFO	20	Complete	
UTT/13/1790/OP	UTT/15/2632/DFO	165	Complete	£330,000
UTT/19/0462/FUL		130	S106 pending	£310,000
Total		470		£1,020,000

Costings have been obtained from reputable undertakings, and the estimates currently available put the total cost of the new hall variously as £1,681,770, and £2,659,600 excluding VAT (which the Parish Council is able to claim back). The figures exclude the costs of fitting out. These figures are of course estimates, and it remains to be seen what quotations are forthcoming when the project eventually goes out to tender.

Several recent applications have been made for further housing developments in Elsenham, some of which have been approved. The Parish Council hopes that further contributions will be available for the Community Hall, although Uttlesford District Council has not proved helpful in securing such provision.

It is suggested that where such funds are made available, the amount should be calculated from the most recent S106 agreement, that is, UTT/19/0472/FUL, on a *pro rata* basis. The calculation would thus be £310,000 / 130 per dwelling.

The Parish Council intends to make good the deficiency through a loan from the Public Works Loan Board, to be financed through an increased precept. Preliminary investigations suggest the requisite amount could be secured through an increase in the parish precept of about £30 pa per Band D household over a period of 25 years. It is understood that such an increase would need to be confirmed through a parish referendum.