

My ref: FBA/Pelham 2024
Your ref: S62A/2024/0032
Date: 18.03.2024

Inquiries and Major Casework Team
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Dear Sirs,

Planning Application Reference : S62A/2024/0032

Notice given: Demolition of 12 no. existing outbuildings/structures, the conversion and restoration of 8 no. existing buildings to form 8 no. holiday cottages and 1 no. dwelling, the construction of 3 no. single storey dwellings. The creation of a pedestrian and cycle path link.

Proposed Development: At land to the West of Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath

This letter is written in response to your letter of 23.02.2024, which gives notice of the above application by Pelham Structures Ltd. (the company) and I am writing to object to the above stated proposed development / details of it.

I confirm that I own and live at my address below, and am therefore a resident of Mill Lane, having lived here for over 32 years.

My objections to the above proposed development include the following reasons:

(A) The Unsuitability of This Proposed Development and Similar Previous Applications for Development

1. Uttlesford District Council (UDC) / The Inspectorate (on appeal) have previously refused consent to applications by the company for very similar proposed developments within the last 5 years.
2. The said refusals are a clear indication of the unsuitability of the proposed development by the company. Please note:

UTT/22/1261/FUL - refused by UDC

UTT/17/2499/FUL - refused by UDC (and by the Inspectorate upon appeal)

3. Furthermore, the Essex County Council Highways Department did not support the proposal by the company under the application reference UTT/16/3697/FUL, as a result of which, I believe the company withdrew its application.

4. This quote from the reasons given by UDC is informative by way of a more detailed assessment for the most recent refusal :

“The proposed development would constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt and additional harm would result from the loss of openness. The harm by reason of its inappropriateness and loss of openness is not clearly outweighed by other considerations. There are no very special circumstances associated with this proposal that would outweigh the harm identified, therefore it fails to meet the tests found within paragraphs 147, 148 and 149(g) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy S6 of the Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 and National Planning Policy Framework (2023)”.

5. There is no evidence of which I am aware that has changed the pertinence of the reasons given at paragraph 4 above. Nor has Mill Lane changed in its size or capacity to support a greater volume of traffic. I believe that the proposed development remains an inappropriate development for the above and other reasons including:

- a. The proposed development site is allocated as Greenbelt land, and wildlife will lose their habitat if the proposed development takes place. Protected species will be threatened.
- b. There is a risk that the development of Greenbelt land could increase flooding due to surface water accumulating. Flooding caused a fatality on the Stortford Road and the risk of increased flooding should be avoided.
- c. It is highly likely that if development arises, it will lead to further development/ extensions, exacerbating the stated risks.
- d. Development is likely to have a detrimental impact upon the openness of the Greenbelt land, and the proposed new dwellings will not be a positive contribution towards the character of the village setting. The proposals for development fails to demonstrate that ‘Very Special Circumstances’ exist to develop the land.
- e. The proposals do not address local housing needs, and are likely to put additional strain on an already overburdened community infrastructure in Hatfield Heath, including upon parking, the GP surgery, sewage management /a sewage farm that overflows.
- f. The proposals do not give recognition to the historical importance of the site, and the current planning application increases the number of buildings to be demolished from 10 to 12.
- g. There is every likelihood that approval of the proposed holiday homes will lead to applications for these to be converted to permanent homes in the near future. In this regard, this application is likely to be a ruse for the intended building / conversions to become permanent homes.

Expert Evidence of the Unsuitability of the Proposed Development

6. The concerns that I and other residents of Mill Lane have in relation to this

application led to the commissioning of an expert opinion by EAS Transport Planning Ltd (EAS), who have provided an 'objection letter', which I attach in support of this letter.

7. The letter by EAS concludes that further development is not suitable for reasons of the threat to highway safety. Local, regional and national policies have been considered when assessing the matter.

(B) Reiteration of My Objections to the Development Proposed by the Company

Increased Traffic / Congestion / Road Safety / Pedestrians

8. The current application by the company is very similar to its previous proposals for the development of the same land. Mill Lane remains exactly the same size of road as it was previously. It is a narrow country lane with a dead end. The only vehicular access into / out of Mill Lane is via the turning into Mill Lane from the Stortford Road (A1060). The proposed development by the company will increase traffic, add to congestion and affect road safety for vehicles as well as for pedestrians and cyclists. My concerns include:

- a. [REDACTED] It is already hazardous for me to attempt to walk on Mill Lane from my house [REDACTED], to the pavement on the main road (Stortford Road A1060). The likely added traffic due to the proposed development would further increase the vehicle traffic on Mill Lane and make it more difficult for me and all pedestrians using this part of Mill Lane, including families with young children, school children using Mill Lane to get to / from the bus stop on the Stortford Road; walkers and dog walkers, cyclists etc.
- b. Mill Lane is not wide enough to accommodate two passing vehicles. This means that if turning into Mill Lane from Stortford Road, and traffic is approaching from Mill Lane towards the Stortford Road, it will not be possible to turn off the main road, which could be dangerous and cause holdups on the Stortford Road as well as on Mill Lane itself. Gridlocking is also a real concern, especially because there is nowhere for cars to turn around on Mill Lane in the vicinity near my property, and leading up to the Stortford Road, or pull away to enable passing vehicles safe access. Also, visibility into Mill Lane is limited if travelling from the Bishops Stortford direction into Mill Lane, and more traffic approaching from Mill Lane could also require vehicles stopping suddenly on the Stortford Road, causing an accident risk.
- c. I do not want my drive to be used as a passing place or for turning around by passing traffic, and am concerned at the potential damage to our driveway. Cars have turned into my drive several times in the past, which is an unacceptable invasion of my property and privacy, and is a risk to my safety.
- d. There are at least 2 existing businesses operating from Mill Lane, which cause increased traffic on Mill Lane. I do not want to have even more traffic backing up to /

from the Stortford Road in front of our house, blocking access to our drive. The said issues regarding log jams would also cause difficulties for emergency vehicles reaching us and other residents of Mill Lane.

e. When trying to accommodate vehicles coming from the opposite direction, drivers often edge up close to my wall, and as a result, it is now badly cracked and in need of repair. This is an unacceptable practical and financial burden upon me as a pensioner.

f. Mill Lane is in need of repair and resurfacing. There are already potholes and an uneven surface on the lane due to the large lorries and increased traffic. The expected extra traffic, if the proposed development proceeds, will exacerbate the situation.

g. The likely added volume of traffic due to the development would increase noise and air pollution. With backed up traffic outside our property, we would be adversely affected by the noise and pollution.

Other Applications for Development

9. I believe that there is also a planning application for development (reference UTT/22/1947/FUL) at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath. In my view it would be a failure of duty by those concerned, to consider applications for the development / redevelopment of land and premises that are located on Mill Lane / require Mill Lane to access the main road (the Stortford Road), without full and thorough regard for the impact of the proposed re-development upon the residents of Mill Lane of all the applications made for development, because of the stated likely impact.

10. Therefore each of these applications should be assessed with full consideration of the other application, as there is a likelihood that the approval of one will lead to the approval of the other, impacting even more upon building on Greenbelt land; the increased traffic using Mill Lane and the related issues highlighted above.

11. The articulated and other large lorries and vans that are used by the current business operating at the site already cause considerable traffic and pedestrian problems. The proposed re-development and related additional traffic will compound the problem. These large lorries often start using Mill Lane as early as 4.00 am and as late as 9.00 pm, including weekends. Further development will impact upon the already unsatisfactory situation.

Proposals that are not Viable / are Inaccurate Regarding the Widening of Mill Lane

12. I believe that the proposed development by the company includes reference to the widening of Mill Lane. This is not feasible at the start of Mill Lane and in the vicinity of my house. I believe that it will not be possible to widen the road without legal permission. It is therefore not correct to say that widening can take place as a matter of course.

13. The narrowest section of the lane, outside my house and that of my immediate neighbours, cannot be widened due to the boundaries of the care home on one side and our properties on the other. I believe that this extremely important fact has been omitted from the application by the company, as a result of the details it has provided are incomplete.

Conclusion

14. I do not consent to the proposed development by the company, for reasons given by me, and as highlighted in the assessment by EAS. I believe that the proposed development presents multiple risks that will have a detrimental impact upon the wellbeing and safety of residents, pedestrians and other essential users of Mill Lane.

I therefore request that the application be refused.

15. Given the seriousness of likely impact of this application by the company, I request that the matter be considered via a hearing rather than via a review of the papers, and that those seeking an opportunity to speak to the panel be afforded the opportunity to do so.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs F Ahmed

