

From: lorraine Flawn [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2025 10:09 PM
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: 2nd consideration of planning application for the area known as Bull's Field

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Dear Sirs,

Once again I am sitting at my desk on a Friday evening, listening to my dogs barking, about to write to defend a place very close to my heart. I am ironically amused to find that my last missive began thus:

“May I first say that I feel this is becoming more like trial by Iranian court! One thinks one is nearing the end of one’s sentence and suddenly a new charge (or proposal in this case) is launched. Defending Bulls Field, Jacks Lane and Smiths green feels like it needs to become a full-time occupation. Why can the applicant spend as much time as they like preparing submissions, yet those opposing them have very limited time against a backdrop that it is NOT their full-time occupation.”

I am assured that the previous representations will again all be considered as this is not a new application, but a re-hearing of the previous one. So I assume you will already have the rest of that epistle.

I have also taken the liberty of copying a previous piece I wrote as speaking notes at the original enquiry as in fairness it not only remains a central tenet of my objections to the development but perhaps takes on even greater weight against the backdrop of the regulation 19 Local plan which has recently been submitted for consideration and which does not envisage development of Bulls field. Instead, it leaves unmolested Bulls Field, an area both around the ancient woodland as well as butting up against the newly registered Conservation area of Smiths Green (December 2023) as green space allowing a better, uninterrupted view of some worthwhile rural and agricultural landscape.

I had understood that, under the NPPF, wildlife corridors were to be given protection. That appears to be carrying little weight in the current debate. On the face of it we will be left not with “corridors” so much as islands of sanctuary. While I can see that this may not be so destructive for birds, winged wildlife or other insects, I am interested to know how soon we are expecting the deer, muntjacs foxes and others to develop jet-packs? Please note my attachment pleading the case for the preservation of Priors wood to understand how important I believe this ecosystem to be not only to the wildlife but also to the wellbeing of the neighbourhood and local population generally.

I am taking this opportunity to remind you as well, that this field is now on the *very* curtilage of the new conservation area. Had it already been developed would that even have happened? Further, there is virtually NO doubt that the fields on the opposite side of the ancient lane will see significant development of some 1500 houses or more under the local plan currently being inspected. I believe it has been said elsewhere that, given that situation, none of the ‘benefits’ that are supposedly to be associated with this development can be given any weight at all, since they are not site specific and can as easily be attached to any of the further development currently envisaged under that (or any new) local plan. Indeed, it is hard to ever have considered them benefits, more consolation for the ruinous proposals put forward.

The field behind WH buildings has already been developed and it is sad that some of the design plan appears to have been disregarded, including the buffer zone. Further, Hardly surprising given some of the weather we've endured I guess, but the curtilage of the wood and even deeper into it now suffers additionally from significant chunks of plastic sheeting ripped to shreds and hanging from the trees like warped bunting from a zombie or apocalypse movie. It doesn't bode well. I still fail to see how there is room between the existing Roseacres estate and the Woodland to accommodate adequate access for the efficient and safe movement of vehicles, pedestrians, children and animals associated with 96 dwellings. The new WH development on the main A1256 road with its tight space and corners (as well as "annexing" of trees from the flitch) gives me no confidence that this is a high priority for the developer.

Finally, With the other developments envisaged and with pressure already on to change the nature of the protected lane simply to allow safe access to the Jacks lane site (a consideration which seemed to escape the notice of those permitting that development). I would be even more concerned about the ability of the remaining undeveloped land to cope locally with the increasing climate change induced increases in water run-off requirements, probably to the detriment of the woodland, but also to the local ditch and hedge network, and therefore with a detrimental knock-on effect to adjacent properties especially given the expectation of extreme rainfall events (as well as drought) we are increasingly seeing and told to expect to worsen.

Yours Sincerely

Lorraine Flaun

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Protection of Priors Wood

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Lorraine Flawn of [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Thank you for the opportunity to plead further the cause of protecting the Wood known as Priors Wood in Takeley.

Surrounded on all sides by the fields proposed for development is the ancient woodland, Priors Wood which covers 20 acres and was part of a much larger woodland in 1066 and reduced in 1350. It is the last ancient woodland remaining in the village of Takeley. There are medieval earthworks in the north-west corner of the wood and there are many other earthworks dating from this time.

The ancient nature of this woodland has been central to the defence that has been put up against the proposed development, together with its natural beauty and importance as a historic landmark to the inhabitants of Takeley.

Those arguments cannot and should not be diminished but there is an equally relevant set of arguments relating to its place in our neighbourhood today. The wood and surrounding paths and fields are a favourite recreational area, particularly for the many dog walkers living nearby. Many of the recent developments were “sold” on the basis of proximity to in particular Hatfield Forest and the footpath, designated a country park known as the Flich Way. Many of those persuaded to buy have been hugely disappointed not only by the continued and continuing development of the curtilage up to, and in some case encroachment onto the Flich, including the improper removal of some trees. I shared this walk often with my father and our dog in the months and weeks

leading finally to his death from cancer and I know how much the path meant to me and my healthy recovery from his loss. I know too that, especially during the recent pandemic and associated lockdowns, my lane and the paths leading over to the woods became an absolute pilgrimage for many people; families, children and associated pets. With the Forest and the Flich (country park!) closed to the public the sanctuary provided by the woods and the surrounding paths was palpable and, in my view happily, many of those who had not previously discovered the place or the pleasures it offers continue to ply the paths today. It brings to mind the Toy Story allegory where Buzz Lightyear reminded Woody that toys were to play with and to give children happy learning experiences, not to be shut away in museums. So too our woods pathways and fields. My family and I now frequently have pleasant conversations about the landscape flora and fauna we encounter while on the pathways and in the woods with 'neighbours' that we would never otherwise have had the opportunity to meet while out with our own dogs, friends and family.

I can personally vouch for two individuals whose mental health is in a much better place than would have been the case without the woods, the fallow deer, foxes, and other close-up and personal encounters with nature. The deer have already been squeezed out of much of the surrounding area, including the school grounds at the back of my house where they used to rest and graze often. I would hazard a guess that there are a number of children and parents from the Priors Green estate who know WAY MORE about nature than they expected to and have found much joy from doing so. The importance of this, in a time when we are concerned about declining mental health, must not be

underestimated. The old adage it takes a village to raise a child can only take on meaning where the people have safe shared spaces where they can meet others if they wish, yet find serenity and peace if they need that. Under these conditions we all get up close and personal with nature and learn to respect, enjoy and be part of.

But its vital we remember that such places need their space too. People are not looking for the opportunity to live right next door to a dessicated decaying and ultimately dying woodland that not only gives them no pleasure but is on the contrary quite depressing. Instead they want to live within easy reach of a vibrant slice of nature

Bulls Field has been in agricultural use for over 500 years

The view north from my garden, which shares a boundary with Bull's field, has not significantly changes since 1350. Smith's Green and environs comprise one the last remaining un-developed areas reflecting the history of this area of Takeley.

the loss of viable agricultural land and the recreational importance of the countryside in which they choose to live.