

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2025 4:59 PM

**To:** Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Re: Redetermination of Section 62A Planning Application S62A/2023/0019

**Redetermination of Section 62A Planning Application S62A/2023/0019: Land to the north of Roseacres between Parsonage Road and Smith's Green Lane, Takeley, Essex CM222 6NZ**

I object to this application to build 96 houses on Bull Field. I strongly endorse the comments I put in previously when this application was considered in October 2023 and subsequently refused in December 2023. I add the following comments.

**Priors Wood**

I am very concerned about the effect this development would have on Priors Wood. The Barton Hyett report on Arboricultural Matters, 2022, does not think that the development would cause any problem to Priors Wood, which is ancient woodland. I disagree strongly with this view. The increase in footfall in the wood would surely be great, with a large number of people very close to the wood and using it for leisure purposes. As they say, it is regularly used by nearby residents but not in the numbers that the development would bring right on its doorstep. I can reassure Barton Hyett about the provenance of Priors Wood as ancient woodland. An entry in the Domesday Book 1086 is as follows:-

**“Hundred of Uttlesford**

St. Valery's holds TAKELEY which Thorkell, a free man, held before 1066 for ½ hide. Always two ploughs in lordship; 3 men's ploughs. 8 villagers; then and later 3 smallholders, now 5; always 2 slaves.

Woodland then and later, 1000 pigs, now 600; meadow, 24 acres; then and later 1 mill now ½. 5 cobs, 4 cattle, 30 pigs, 28 sheep, 50 goats, 5 beehives.

Value then and later £6; now £7.”

St. Valery's Priory was on the site of what is now Warish Hall.

The woodland mentioned is Priors Wood.

**Medieval Earth Works – woodbanks**

There are medieval earthworks, known as woodbanks - in the northwest corner of Priors Wood. Old maps show Priors Wood as being larger than now, extending further north. A plan of Priors Wood showing the earthworks also shows the ditches and banks on the south and north side of the wood as dating from this time. The woodbanks were the enclosures for the pigs owned by St. Valery. These are not mentioned anywhere that I can see in the report on Priors Wood. They are a very important piece of our local history and should be preserved.

**Buffer Zone**

I do not think a buffer zone of 15 metres is wide enough. The Woodland Trust say it should be 50 metres. Putting a row of houses close to the buffer zone and a footpath and cycleway in it must surely compromise it. I presume that there will be lighting along the footpath/cycleway which has not been mentioned at all. The houses along the south side of the wood will certainly have lights, both shining out from the houses and probably security lights, which are extremely bright. At the moment there is no lighting at all on the south side of the wood at night.

In the last year, warehousing has been built in the area to the west of Priors Wood. There is only a narrow buffer zone between the warehouses and the wood and there is a footpath on this, so that has already compromised the wood. I don't know if there is any lighting coming from the

warehouses or along the path but Priors Wood does not need any more interference from development.

Barton Hyett also say that the wood hasn't been managed since Weston Homes purchased it. It certainly was managed for the over 30 years that the then owners of Warish Hall farmed the land, with hornbeams being regularly coppiced, amongst other things. It does need managing but this could be done without a housing development being built.

If I have read the Weston Homes report correctly, they have removed houses from the pinch point at the entrance into the development. I am confused by this as I thought the redetermination was on the plan refused in December 2023.

### **Road Access**

The access to this development will now be shared with lorries going to the warehouses – not a good idea! It also comes off Parsonage Road, which is a busy road already, with new developments on the west side of it and more to come on the east side.

### **Conservation Area**

The Smith's Green Conservation Area was confirmed in December 2023 but had been proposed when this application was being heard in October 2023. The housing proposed in this development will be clearly seen from the north as you come down Smith's Green Lane. It completely alters the open countryside to the north of the Conservation Area, which is cited in the Conservation Area appraisal as an important feature and contributes to the historical character of Smith's Green. Bull field has now been designated as an open space in the Uttlesford Local Plan Reg. 19m, not a development site.

In view of the above, I ask that this Planning Application is refused.

If there is to be a public hearing, I would like to speak.

Patricia Barber

