



## UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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The Planning Inspectorate  
Room 3/J Kite Wing,  
Temple Quay House,  
2 The Square,  
Temple Quay,  
Bristol,  
BS1 6PN

11<sup>th</sup> April 2025

Your ref: S62A/2025/0077

Our ref: UTT/25/0151/PINS

Please ask for [REDACTED]  
email: [REDACTED]

Dear Major Case Work Team,

### **Town and Country Planning (Section 62A Applications) (Procedure and Consequential Amendments) Order 2013 (as amended).**

#### **Consultation on S62A/2025/0077**

#### **Land Adj. Land West Of High Street, Stebbing**

Thank you for your letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 advising of your receipt of a valid planning application for the development outlined above. The Council, as Local Planning Authority considered a report in relation to this submission at their Planning Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025. The report is attached for information.

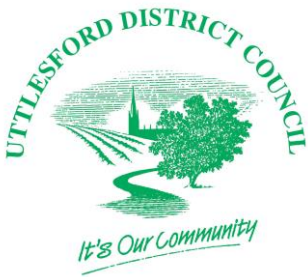
Given the unique nature of this application process, the Planning Committee requested that the report provided an overview analysis of the proposed scheme; with the limited information that was available to the Planning Service at the time. In this regard, the Planning Service was asked to provide their views on the indicative benefits, adverse and neutral impacts of the scheme in order to assist the Planning Committee with their consideration of this application.

In addition to the comments highlighted within the report, the Planning Committee wish to set out the following objections:

#### **1) Heritage**

The proposals would have a harmful impact on the setting of the scheduled motte castle by impacting on important views of the scheduled monument within the landscape and on its visual relationship with the historic settlement along High Street; they would also impact on the Grade II\* listed Stebbing Park and Conservation Area by encroaching on open fields that contribute to its prominence and openness.

The Local Planning Authority has a duty under Section 66(1) 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting and significance of any features of special architectural or historical interest.



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Having regard to the guidance in Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Local Planning Authority has considered the public benefits associated with the development but concludes that these would not outweigh the harm caused to the setting of the designated heritage assets. The proposals are thereby contrary to paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV4 of the Uttlesford District Local Plan and Policy STEB1 of the Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan.

### **2) Character and Appearance**

The application site lies outside the defined settlement development limits of any village or town as defined by the Uttlesford District Local Plan as Adopted (2005) and is thereby located within the countryside. The proposal would introduce a sizeable new development to an area of open countryside. The proposals by reason of its sitting, size and scale would have an unacceptable harmful impact upon the rural character and appearance of the area and loss of open green space. There is no substantive justification for the proposal specifically relating to the developments needs to take place there or being appropriate in the countryside.

The introduction of the development will also impact views from inside and outside of the application site. The proposals would significantly harm the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside resulting in landscape and visual effects from a number of publicly accessible viewpoints and failing to perform the environmental role of sustainability, contrary to the scheme would not comply with to the advice in paragraphs 180(b) and 135(c), Policy S7 of the Uttlesford District Local Plan (as adopted) and policies STEB4, STEB6, STEB7 and STEB9 of the Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan.

### **3) Local Green Space**

The proposal would represent an unacceptable form of development resulting in a detrimental and harmful impact on the designated Local Green Space. Such inappropriate development would result in demonstrable change to and the loss of part of the Local Green Space, this harm would be contrary to Neighbourhood Plan Policy STEB4 and paragraphs 107, 152, 153 of the NPPF. The harm caused by the development is not clearly outweighed by the very special circumstances.

### **4) Development of Grey Belt Land**

The proposal involves the loss of Local Green Space (LGS), which is designated within the Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan. Policies and decisions for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with national policy for Green Belts set out in chapter 13 of the NPPF. The committee report attached with this letter includes the LPA's consideration to the Green belt policies, however further the following includes an assessment regarding Grey Belt.

Grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143 of the NPPF, this includes:



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- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

In this case the introduction of the built form on this undeveloped site would lead to encroachment into the countryside, which goes against the principles of safeguarding rural areas.

The encroachment impact is considered to result in significant harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside resulting in landscape and visual encroachment effects. Preserving this undeveloped site is vital for maintaining the environmental and aesthetic value of the particular part of the countryside.

As such it is considered the site strongly contributes in assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and therefore is not considered as Grey Belt.

### **5) Ecology**

It is noted the committee report considered the holding objection raised by the Council's ecology consultant. I confirm following the submission of further information from the applicant our ecologist has now removed the holding objection. A copy of the consultation response is attached for your reference.

### **Determination of the Application**

As per the validation letter received the Local Planning Authority is requested to provide comments in respect of the manner in which the application is to be determined. The following sets the Local Planning Authority consideration of these matters:

#### **Heritage**

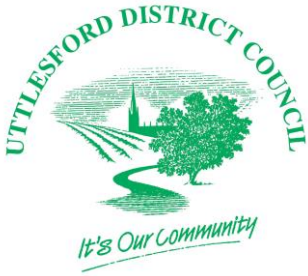
Following the submission of consultation comments by the Council's Heritage Consultant and Historic England the heritage concerns raised are not overly complex to assess and there would be no need for evidence to be tested through formal questioning.

If the applicant was required to provide a rebuttal or further evidence on this matter it will likely be report based provided by experts on these matters, as such it is not considered there is a requirement for the a Hearing to assess these points.

It can reasonably be expected that this matter can be considered through written representations, without the need for an advocate to represent them.

#### **Character and Appearance**

The submitted plans clearly demonstrates the proposal will have a significant change to the immediate character and appearance of the site which is considered harmful.



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It can reasonably be expected that this matter can be considered by the Inspector through written representations.

### Local Green Space

Whether the proposal would represent an unacceptable form of development resulting in a detrimental and harmful impact on the designated Local Green Space is a matter of balanced planning judgement. It can reasonably be expected that this matter can be considered through written representations, without the need for an advocate to represent them.

The main issues are clear in that it involves the impact to heritage assets, character and appearance of the site and local green space. These matters are as set out on the submitted plans and the consideration of these matters can be considered by the Inspector through written representations. The Council will be happy to consider any further information the applicant wishes to submit, however it is considered a hearing would not be required to establish and consider these issues.

In this case the issues are not complex and the Inspector is not likely to need to test the evidence by questioning or to clarify any other matters. The points raised by the Local Planning Authority can be clearly understood from the documents submitted

### Consultation Documentation

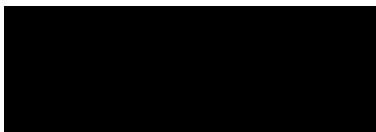
The following documentation is provided as part of the Uttlesford District Council's consultation response in which should form part of the Inspectors assessment of the proposals.

- Officers Committee Report
- Committee Late/ Addendum List
- UDC Ecology Consultant Revised Comments
- Recommended Conditions
- Minutes of the Planning committee Meeting (to follow)
- S106 Agreement (to follow)

### Summary

Taking into the above comments the Council as Local Planning Authority **objects** to the above mentioned development.

Yours Sincerely



  
Director of Planning