

**From:** R Howard [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 July 2025 21:58  
**To:** Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Signed version S62A/2025/0107 Former Friends School Field, Mount Pleasant Road Saffron Walden CB11 3 EB.

Applicants name for Planning Application:- Chase Homes  
Address for the planning Application:- Former Friends School Field, Mount Pleasant Road Saffron Walden CB11 3 EB.

I object to this planning proposal on the following grounds: -

1 The proposed development is located within zone 6 of the Saffron Walden conservation area, and if it is permitted to take place there will be a very significant loss of a large amount of open space. The value of this open space has been recognised by the 2018 Saffron Walden conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposal.

As the open space includes a large amount of playing fields which were well used for a variety of sports, (not just football) by the community until the site was closed in 2017, it would be a great loss to the community if most of the fields were permanently lost. Within their application (sec 3.4 Planning Statement) Chase Homes states "The field is not open to the public and there is no interest in re-opening the facilities".

I cannot find within the submitted paperwork any evidence to support this claim and I do not agree that this is the case. I would also imagine that Sports England would also not agree as they objected to the 2019 planning application on the grounds of lost playing field area.

The Gibson Legacy, existing school buildings and our cultural heritage is being ignored. Both the Bell College and the Friends schools were left by the Gibson's to the town for the benefit of the community, particularly educational benefit. It is recognised that sport is a great educator.

2 I also feel that the impact of the new housing development immediately adjacent to a specifically protected conservation area (re-named existing woodland by the developer) would have a very negative effect on the wildlife there, due to the noise light and the proximity of humans and domestic animals. In addition to this the biodiversity within the small amount of open land remaining would be negatively affected by the development.

3 Road congestion and road safety, particularly for children. The exit/entrance on to Mount Pleasant Rd, with restricted views, present an increased danger

on an already busy road. Not only will the exit be used by the new development but also the meeting hall, sports facilities and the large car park behind the the the main building on the current development.

Parking along Peaslands and Mount Pleasant Road from which the site is accessed has been disallowed during weekdays to clear the gridlocked traffic and provide a link road bypassing the town centre through Saffron Walden. Unfortunately, because of this the existing already considerable flow of traffic has increased further, including very large lorries and without the parked cars more traffic travelling this route it appears to be exceeding the speed limit. This is a considerable hazard to the very large numbers of children on route to the nearby three schools to which the roads provide access. This congestion and road safety problem will be very much increased with yet more traffic accessing and leaving the houses /flats outlined in the proposed development, together with the other users outlined above.

Whilst it is true that car ownership is lower in the centre of town and the many retirement homes, this development does not fit that profile. Saffron Walden has limited local employment especially as commercial sites are sold off for housing development, resulting in a high level of commuters. The train station is some way away from the town and it is often impossible to find a parking space in the very large carpark at Audley End. I therefore suggest that vehicle ownership on this site will at least average 2 cars per household and not 0.9 proposed. I note that the data used by the developer is from 2021 and "In order to protect against disclosure of personal information, records have been swapped between different geographic areas"

4 Loss of mature trees, in order to locate the sports facilities in a very tight space, install the path and facilitate access to Mount pleasant Road. I also note that tree maintenance is not part of the Landscape Maintenance plan.

5 The open sports area is extremely reduced and is heavily encroached by houses and trees, despite the evidence submitted on cricket ball trajectory, it is common sense that footballs and cricket balls will exceed the boundary outlined. The space allotted has also resulted in very limited parking for the sports ground, forcing users to park on the access roads.

6 Whilst the allocation of social housing meets the criteria for a new development over 10 houses, it should be noted that in the existing development there is no social housing, I would like that taken into consideration. I would also query the need for 4 bedroom social housing.

7 There has been no public consultation or engagement over these proposed plans.

8 There is no provision for informal recreation.

9 The images used to illustrate the effect on existing dwellings have been taken when the trees are in full leaf, using a low view point and an extremely wide angle lens, to give the best possible outcome for the developer and ignore the fact that the majority of trees on this site are deciduous.

Please could you acknowledge the receipt of this e mail, as I would like to attend any public hearings by the planning inspector if appropriate regarding this issue.

Regards Ralph Howard

