

**From:** Tom Bishop [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 July 2025 21:59  
**To:** Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Objection to Planning Application S62A/2025/0107 – Former Friends School Site

**RE: Objection to Planning Application S62A/2025/0107 – Former Friends School Site**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to formally object to the above planning application for the redevelopment of the former Friends School playing fields and associated buildings. While I understand the need for development, this particular proposal raises several serious concerns relating to traffic, heritage, community amenity, and the loss of recreational space.

### 1. Increased Traffic and Highway Safety – Mount Pleasant Road

Mount Pleasant Road is already under pressure from increasing traffic volumes and limited capacity. This proposal will significantly exacerbate the situation by increasing vehicle movements associated with 75 new dwellings, service and delivery vehicles, and clubhouse activity. The road is narrow, lacks continuous pavements, and is used by pedestrians, schoolchildren, and cyclists. Any intensification of use poses **a direct threat to highway and pedestrian safety**.

### 2. Impact on Conservation Area and Local Character

The site lies within the **Saffron Walden Conservation Area (Zone 6)**. The introduction of dense residential development, a clubhouse, and the associated infrastructure will **irreversibly alter the character** of this historically significant and currently tranquil green space. The loss of openness, increased lighting, noise, and activity are wholly inappropriate within a designated conservation area. This proposal is at odds with national and local heritage policies that require development to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of such areas.

### 3. Potential Disturbance from Clubhouse Use

While the application mentions a clubhouse and changing facilities, it is unclear whether this will be restricted solely to sporting purposes. If used for **parties, functions or entertainment**, this risks introducing **significant noise and disturbance** to an otherwise quiet, residential area. This is especially concerning given the proximity to neighbouring homes on Mount Pleasant Road, The Avenue, and Greenways. No sufficient mitigation or management strategy has been presented to address these concerns.

#### 4. Loss of Valuable Playing Fields

The application would result in the **permanent loss of historic playing fields**, which once served both the school and local community sports clubs. With an ongoing shortage of accessible **football and rugby pitches** in the area, this is a significant and unjustified loss. The existing designation of the land as **‘Protected Open Space: Playing Fields’** and **‘Protected Open Space of Environmental Value’** reflects its ongoing community and ecological importance. The proposal contradicts national and local planning policies which seek to protect open space unless it can be clearly demonstrated that it is surplus to requirements—something that has not been evidenced in this case.

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In light of the above, I respectfully request that this application be **refused** in its current form. The proposed development would lead to **detrimental impacts on traffic, residential amenity, local heritage, and recreational provision**—all of which are contrary to the principles of sustainable and balanced development.

Yours faithfully,