

Green End Barn
Wood End Green
Henham
CM22 6AY

16 April 2013

Dear Sirs

Fairfield Planning Application

I would like to make the following points of objections to the application.

UTT/13/0808/OP

Fairfield Site Station Road Elsenham Bishops Stortford Herts CM22 6LB

Objections

This proposal should not be seen as 'just' for 800 dwellings on 51ha, but clearly as phase 1 of a 3,000 dwelling development on the 265ha under the control of the applicant. This is not made explicit in the submitted material, but not denied by the developer. Even the 800 dwellings would almost double the size of Elsenham (around 1000 existing dwellings) and be far too much development added onto a small settlement. It is much more sustainable to add urban extensions of this scale to the main towns in District (Saffron Walden, Gt Dunmow) with proper access to schools, employment, and retailing and community services. This is the strategy of the emerging Local Plan.

The site has been twice rejected for major development – by Government for the 'ecotown' in 2009 and in the UDC in the Draft Local Plan 2012.

Government identified the following weaknesses in 2009 with this location, and these remain:

Within a water stressed area

Capacity of the local road network

Improved train services at Elsenham would be at the expense of services at other nearby stops

Impact on the character of nearby villages

Loss of agricultural land

Presence of protected species in the vicinity

Generally moderate archaeological potential

Development on this scale should be pursued through the local plan process when all potential sites can be evaluated together through the 'plan led system' advocated by Government policy. The Planning Statement states that the larger scheme is to be promoted through the Local Plan system, the 800 dwelling scheme should not be pursued differently. If permitted it could compromise proper consideration of the development proposal as a whole.

This is an opportunistic application being made in an attempt to bypass the proper process and deny the legitimate involvement of the local community in the planning of its surroundings.

Large numbers of affordable houses would be better located adjoining the main towns where new occupants have family links, not in a remote and cut off location as proposed.

The access roads which serve Elsenham and Henham are winding country lanes with inadequate widths and junctions. The road system is wholly unsuitable for even 800 new houses, let alone 3,000.

Even the size of Elsenham as proposed would be too small to support a supermarket leading to shoppers using cars to access existing stores. It would also be too small to attract significant employers and the station would encourage a commuter settlement.

The eventual development would create the coalescence of Elsenham and Henham causing loss of identity and character. Furthermore the countryside setting around Elsenham and Henham would be destroyed by this development.

Yours faithfully

Alexander Pilcher