

Comments for Planning Application UTT/21/2509/OP

Application Summary

Application Number: UTT/21/2509/OP

Address: Land South Of (East Of Griffin Place) Radwinter Road Swards End Essex

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of up to 233 residential dwellings including affordable housing, with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and associated works, with vehicular access point from Radwinter Road. All matters reserved except for means of access

Case Officer: Henrietta Ashun

Customer Details

Name: Mr jonathon Toy

Address: Franklands, 2A Walden Road, Swards End Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2LE

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Councillor

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I wish to formally object to this application on the following grounds

Character of the Local area

This application is within the Parish Boundary of Swards End. Swards End is a unique village which dates back to the 1700's. The location of this site will result in the village losing its identity and will see the village subsumed into the town of Saffron Walden. Uttlesford DC should be protecting the historical characteristics of the village. The addition of 233 homes has the potential of increasing the village by almost half and by its very nature will fundamentally change the nature of this area, irrevocably.

Loss of Trees and Landscaping

The area is farmland, rich in biodiversity and the habitat of wildlife, including badgers, deer and a wide variety of birds. The destruction of their natural habitat is irreplaceable and the environmental damage cannot be underestimated. Indeed the environment agency have already stated in their submission that: - "it would appear that the applicant is not replacing high value lowland mixed deciduous woodland habitat like for like...." In fact the destruction cannot be replaced and the development will cause environmental damage which has not been either quantified by the applicant and is, without doubt irreversible

Parking and Traffic

Radwinter Road is already one of the towns most heavily congested access routes in and out of the Saffron Walden Town. The road is regularly congested with tail back on a daily basis as far as the traffic lights at the Printpac junction. There are times on a Saturday when this congestion stretches as far as the junction with Saffron Walden Hospital and this will only increase as the Linden Homes development on Radwinter Road is still not fully occupied. There is not feasible way to improve the road links and any attempt to increase traffic flow can only be achieved by removing the parking for residents on Radwinter Road, This would result in a significant loss of parking for this community. The addition of a further 233 homes will a further 400-500 vehicles using this traffic route. This is unsustainable for what is an an already highly congested road, serving multiple villages between Saffron Walden and Haverhill.

Highway Safety

Radwinter Road, particularly the section from The town to Swards End is a well used cycle and pedestrian route from the village into the town. The road is very narrow and in sections the pavement is not wide enough for pedestrians to pass without stepping out into the road. This includes a section of pathway close to the access to this proposed site. The road is very narrow and has a number of sharp bends, again including section between Swards End and the access to this site. There is no alternative cycle route other than this narrow road and the location of the site will significantly impact on the safety of cyclists and pedestrians alike. Unless speed restrictions to 20mph can be introduced that cover the whole of Swards End and the road into Saffron Walden, there is no doubt that this development will have a detrimental impact on highway safety. In support of this Uttlesford DC and Essex Police, will already be aware that this road has been the site of a number of serious road accidents, including two, near fatal accidents in the past 8 months. The road is prone to freezing and the access point has the potential for increasing serious incidents involving vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Finally I would add this the section of road between Swards End and proposed access point for this site. Regularly floods. On our recent land search of our property, this was highlighted as a "high risk". The road floods due to natural drainage from the land along the road and at times Radwinter Road resembles a river, particularly impact the location of the proposed access point for this development. The farmland offers some degree of protection, but the additional hard landscaping that will be required by this development will significantly increase the risk of flooding. This will impact on highway safety in the area.

Additional Considerations

Whilst it is impossible to assess the other detrimental impact on residents, particularly those in Swards End, there is no doubt that a development of this size, which will result in the village being subsumed into Saffron Walden Town, will see an increase in noise disturbance and light invasion which by its very nature will impact on the peaceful enjoyment of residents in the village, particularly those on Cole End Lane. As Planning officer will be aware environmental pollution can

be created through the natural contours and the fact that Swards End sits on a hill above the development, it is highly likely that any environmental assessment would highlight the likely increase in noise disturbance for residents in the village.

In summary I strongly object to this development. The villages around Saffron Walden are an integral part of the unique characteristics of Uttlesford and Uttlesford DC planning officers and committee need to recognise the role they must play in preserving village life. This development will destroy the village of Swards End as an independent entity, subsuming it into Saffron Walden, ending the nature of village life. This development should be refused as it will set a precedent for other areas and villages around Saffron Walden who will be at threat, should this development proceed.