

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 Stephen Hasler

Address: Prospect House, Walden Road, Swards End Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2LF

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: A development in this location is entirely unsuitable and should not be allowed.

First, this is yet another proposed development on the east side of Saffron Walden, which will require traffic to travel through the town to the major transport routes, the main roads north and south and the railway. The roads through the town from Swards End and the villages are already very slow during the morning and evening rush hours and school runs and these roads simply cannot take more vehicular traffic. Unfortunately, the traffic surveys which the applicant has undertaken do not represent the reality of the traffic on these roads during these busy times.

Second, I note that the applicant proposes that the additional traffic could be managed by the introduction of traffic lights at the High Street end of Church Street and at the junction of Peaslands Road and the Thaxted Road. With respect to the former, surely we are not going to allow our wonderful town centre to be blighted by these traffic lights? The suggestion that these are needed, and the suggested traffic lights at the junction of Peaslands Road and the Thaxted Road, surely demonstrate the impact of the additional traffic due to a development which is on the wrong side of the town.

The application also suggests that there could be a right hand turn filter lane at the traffic lights at the Radwinter Road and Thaxted Road traffic lights. Again the applicant has demonstrated their total lack of understanding of the traffic flows in the town. Traffic travelling in a westerly direction along the Radwinter Road already form a separate right turn lane, to turn into Chaters Hill, at these traffic lights. The applicant is suggesting something that we already have, there is insufficient space to do more.

Third, surface water drainage down the hill from Swards End to the Linden Homes and Tesco junctions is already a major problem. This road floods frequently. In heavy rain, or continuous rain across a few days, the hill down from Swards End to the town becomes a river with the run-off from the fields further up the hill from the proposed development. If the proposed development is allowed to proceed the run-off from it will greatly worsen this situation or will result in many more cars having to find their way through the floods that already exist. The surveys carried out by the applicant do not represent the road down the hill from Swards End in heavy rain, this hill floods badly and becomes very dangerous in such conditions with water running down the hill for days. Further, the impact of climate change and even heavier, prolonged downpours like the one we saw on Sunday 25th July will exacerbate this problem. Any run-off from the hard landscaping of the proposed development will add to the problem and the traffic to and from new development will struggle through these floods. Surely we should not allow development in an area that will subject the new residents to such problems and dangers? I urge the planners to listen to the experience of a Swards End resident who travels up and down this road regularly and to note that the surveys carried out by the applicant do not represent the reality of the current water flows down the road, let alone what will come with climate change.

This large area (17 hectares) is currently agricultural (arable) land. At a time when we should be growing more food for an increasing population it is unacceptable to lose more good quality land. In addition, we should not be building on green spaces at all when there are so many brownfield sites throughout Uttlesford and Essex that should be developed first. We did not object to the proposed installation of solar panels on land between Swards End and Wimbish because that land can be returned to agricultural land in due course. Putting housing on agricultural land results in irreversible loss of food producing land which should be avoided.

We object to this development,

- it is in the wrong place and will create the precedent which will result in the continued expansion of the town to the east, absorbing the village of Swards End;
- it is on the wrong side of town and will create additional traffic into the town from the east on roads that are already overfull from the developments that have already been allowed opposite Tesco, on the Linden Homes site, on the old Ridgeons site and opposite the old Ridgeons site:
- access will use a road which already floods badly;
- it will convert valuable agricultural land into new housing at a time when we need to increase food production.

Steve and Judith Hasler