

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 Sacha Crowe

Address: 3 Portsmouth Close, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2NW

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Comment: We strongly object to this Planning Application for the following reasons:

There are a number of significant reasons why this application should not be approved which are stated here:

- Boundaries: This application constitutes a significant and irreversible expansion of Saffron Walden's boundaries. Once completed, this estate would in effect join Saffron Walden and Seward's End which must be well beyond any reasonable expectation for those who have chosen to live in the village of Seward's End. This is technically a Swards End development and would more than double the size of the existing ancient village. There are no amenities in Seward's End and therefore all the residents of the new estate will travel into Saffron Walden for shopping and to access services.

- Environmental Impact: The estate will destroy a significant tract of BMV arable land which will remove the habitat for a range of wildlife that is found on the land including deer, and which will cause a significant net increase in CO2.

- Flooding: Despite the reference to a sustainable drainage system, it is obvious that this will not cope with the ever more extreme climactic conditions that we experience. For anyone who has driven along that stretch of Radwinter Road in heavy downpours they will have been met with water sheeting across the road dangerously, flooding at the lowest points and in freezing conditions the twisty narrow entry into Saffron Walden becomes like an ice-rink.

- Traffic: There are already applications for other building projects within the Boundaries of Saffron Walden to build care homes, new retail outlets and housing which will all potentially add to the number of cars using this stretch of Radwinter road.

This is the main artery that links a number of villages East of Saffron Walden with the M11, Audley End Station and routes into the south of Cambridge and it meets a choke point at the junction with Thaxted Road. Particularly on days when there is bad weather, there are significant delays with traffic trying to move through the town and further reducing air quality.

The new estate with 233 houses will probably add upwards of 300 vehicles wanting to use this stretch which will create more traffic, more accidents, more pollution and make it dangerous for those trying to be green and travel on their cycles or on foot along this narrow and congested road.

Any realistic estimation of traffic must be assessed against post-Covid traffic levels during term-time, (particularly on a rainy day) when traffic levels are significantly higher and it is absolutely clear that we are at, if not already beyond, maximum capacity

Views: The sight lines into this estate will destroy the views from one of Saffron Walden's most popular walking and cycling paths on the north side of the valley. Any suggestion that the estate will be almost invisible under the tree line is wrong:

Unfortunately, it seems I am unable to provide photographic evidence with these comments but I will seek to forward these by other means

Photograph 1 shows views onto existing Linden Estate showing that houses built here are clearly visible to the right with the proposed location of the new estate to the left

Photograph 2 demonstrates the plot where proposed estate would be situated is highly visible from multiple vantage points along walking and cycling route on north side of valley as the estate would be built up the side of an incline with a significant height differential, irrevocably destroying the view.

There are further reasons which could be stated for rejecting this application such as the pressure put on local resources and facilities (in particular the shortfall of school places, and the hugely oversubscribed GP surgery) which without significant further investment will create more pressure on local services - these points have been well made by other commenters.

The final point we would like to make is that, as we understand it, the new local plan for Saffron Walden and Uttlesford is under consultation, with a theme of 'Towards Zero Carbon' There should not be such a significant expansion of Saffron Walden's boundaries without an opportunity to assess it in light of the local plan which is expected in 2022. Destroying good quality arable land and building an estate over it cannot contribute to a proper Carbon reduction strategy

There can be few living in east Saffron Walden or Swards End who would welcome such an enormous project that will completely redefine the boundaries of both locations.

There is of course a discussion to be had about development around Saffron Walden and how to achieve it in a sustainable manner, but this application is wholly without merit and with no positive aspects for the existing community and infrastructure at all.

Therefore we call for this application not to be approved.

Sacha Crowe and Lindsay Harrington