

[REDACTED]

From: Lucy Dickens
Sent: 01 August 2023 11:52
To: Data Scanning
Subject: FW: 190 Lower Road - 19/00584/OUT
Attachments: Burlington Gardens (kevin).docx

From: Kevin O'Brien [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 25, 2023 9:07 AM
To: planning applications <planning.applications@Rochford.gov.uk>
Subject: 190 Lower Road - 19/00584/OUT

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Attn: Mike Stranks.

Hi Mike,

As a resident and interested party, please find attached my objections to the proposed development above.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Please note that I normally only work Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

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19/00584/OUT – 190 Lower Road, Hullbridge SS5 6BD

120 dwellings on land comprising of 190 Lower Road and land between Central Avenue and Burlington Gardens.

I understand from authoritative sources that Rochford District Council (RDC) are currently exceeding their "Housing Targets" and therefore not in need of additional housing provision currently. Notwithstanding, HPC strongly objects to this development on the following grounds:

- **Land is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt:**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stipulates that "the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belt are their openness and permanence. According to official planning regulations," Inside a Green Belt, approval shall neither be given except in very special circumstances, for the construction of new buildings, nor for purposes other than agriculture, sport, cemeteries, institutions standing in extensive grounds or other uses appropriate to a rural area".

The site is split into two sections, bisected north to south by Burlington Gardens. The largest section being a grassed area to the east of Burlington Gardens and a smaller "brownfield" site on the west side of Burlington Gardens. There is locally held belief that this "brownfield" area was in fact originally built on Green Belt without permission.

Given the level of development that has taken place in Hullbridge in recent years, this site hardly warrants being classified as a "special circumstance" and for this reason should be refused.

- **Overdevelopment both of the site and the village.**

The proposal is to build 120 homes on an area of just 3.4 hectares. This is a level of density (35.3 per Ha) which is too great for this village and certainly is too much for this particular site. Not only that but the village infrastructure is "creaking" already under the pressure of having to try and absorb 500 homes at the High Elms development. An additional 120 homes simply cannot be sustained. Consequently, this development would represent an overdevelopment of the whole village. For these reasons this application should be refused.

HPC are concerned at the amount of car parking space being provided on site. The roads adjoining the site are unadopted and therefore not capable of accepting any parking "overspill".

- **Visual impact of the development.**

- **Design "out of keeping" with the character of the neighbourhood.**

- **The proposed development is over bearing, out of scale and out of character in terms of its appearance compared with existing development in the vicinity.** The site is surrounded predominantly by bungalows and 2.5 storey buildings would be particularly daunting.

- **The loss of existing views from neighbouring properties would adversely affect the residential amenity of neighbouring owners.**

- **Insufficient infrastructure to support any more development.**

Riverside Primary School was due to expand, partially to accommodate children from High Elms. Sadly, the proposed expansion has not taken place and there is no indication currently that this situation is likely to alter in the near future. Riverside Primary School is some 1 1/4 miles (approx. 2 Km) from the entrance to the site. There is no existing bus service passing the development that would serve the school. This would mean that pupils and parents would either have to walk the whole distance to the school along often uneven pavements, which

using the same 80 metres per minute yardstick as quoted in the applicants', Transport Assessment, would take approx. 25 minutes each way for an adult or more when accompanying a primary school aged child. More likely, they would be taken by car thereby increasing traffic levels at peak times, especially in the vicinity of the school. The next nearest Primary Schools are in Ashingdon, Hockley and Rayleigh, all over 4 miles away.

Similarly, the Riverside Medical Practice was set to be expanded. However, NHS input into the expansion was slow to materialise prior to the Covid Pandemic, with the consequence that the well-publicised spiralling inflationary cost of building materials meant the secured s106 monies from the High Elms development was no longer sufficient to fund the additional space required. Whilst the local MP is actively seeking to facilitate a solution to the shortfall in funding for the medical practice, this is unlikely to be forthcoming in the foreseeable future.

Drainage is also a significant problem. In part this is because the site regularly floods following heavy rainfall and partly due to the existing drainage network, acknowledged as being at near full capacity currently. Again, there are no existing plans to further upgrade the network. The applicant apparently has agreed with Anglian Water to utilise a SUDS solution with the aim, no doubt, of regulating discharge into the existing drainage network. HPC are sceptical that sufficient work has been carried-out to ensure that the proposed rate of discharge will not overwhelm the existing network.

Both the Grassed area and the "Nevendon Scrapyard" area are known to be contaminated. The Scrapyard area has Hydrocarbon contamination, some metals and some evidence of asbestos. Whilst the grassed area is known locally to have been a storage depot during World War II and would also hold significant levels of Hydrocarbon pollution. Plus, it is also likely to have asbestos buried on site following the demolition of some earlier buildings on site. Clearly, the very pre-existence of these materials poses a significant health risk both to construction workers and future residents without **significant** levels of mitigation.

The site is known to be a feeding area for wildlife. Badgers and Bats most significantly are known to use this site.

No Archaeological Investigation has been carried-out on site and Essex Place Services consider that there is a likelihood that sites and deposits of archaeological interest (particularly medieval) will be present.

- **Increased Traffic Levels.**

The Transport Assessment submitted with the application is seriously outdated. In part it refers to six bus services either passing directly along Lower Road adjacent to the development site or within easy walking distance. Three of these quoted bus services have long been discontinued, two are intrinsically school services operating one bus in each direction on school days (outward in the morning and inward in the afternoon), leaving only the 20 bus service which operates along Ferry Road and then westwards along Lower Road towards Rayleigh and Southend. The nearest operating bus stop to the proposed development site is therefore at the junction of Ferry Road and Lower Road, where the 20 bus stops, some ten to fifteen minutes' walk away.

The same Transport Assessment states that the new development is likely to generate 560 movements per day at peak times (280 in the morning and 280 in the evening). Given the experience of the nearby High Elms development, this figure is clearly too low. Even if these figures were accepted, they take no account of the significantly increased volume of traffic using Lower Road currently, as a consequence of other nearby developments. Lower Road has become a road generally well used to by-pass Rayleigh congestion and gain access to the A127 and A130. The ongoing development of High Elms and the more recent Bloor Homes development in Ashingdon have served to further increase the volume of Heavy Goods and

Construction traffic using Lower Road. It should also be noted that HPC have been advised more than once by Essex Police that they consider that Lower Road is currently too busy to "pull over" vehicles, for to do so presents a hazard to other motorists.

The road improvements at the junction with Watery Lane and the Rawreth Lane Roundabout may have helped the High Elms development and properties from Ferry Road westwards but actually have made minimal improvements to movement along Lower Road east of Ferry Road.

Residents are particularly concerned about the detrimental impact HGVs and Construction traffic is already having on the local road infrastructure (potholes, damaged kerbs etc). Further, it is not uncommon for some HGVs, due to their size, to actually straddle the "white lines" thereby leading to oncoming vehicles having to take evasive manoeuvres and the risks inherently associated with that.

Lower Road is not really conducive to cycling due to the combination of the road width and the general volume of traffic. Whilst the inclusion of bike racks would be a worthwhile addition should the development take place, there is no evidence from the High Elms experience that overall levels of cycling have changed locally.

- **Outdated supporting documents.**

With one exception, a September 2020 Bat survey, all the supporting documents upon which the application relies are four years old and consequently do not reflect the outcomes of the significant changes that have taken place in the locality during the intervening years; as we residents experience on a daily basis and can testify to.

It is generally accepted that assessments/reports greater than three years old are "unlikely to still be valid and most, if not all, are likely to need to be updated". These documents cannot be used in support of this application and, should the development be allowed to progress, would need to be revalidated.

- **Residents don't want any more development.**

Residents are VERY unhappy with the prospect of another large housing development. Despite the significant protest and groundswell of public opinion against the High Elms development, the scheme was subsequently approved by RDC. Residents felt and still do feel, that their concerns were completely ignored and that the outcomes have been to their detriment. It has often been quoted that the original residents feel overwhelmed. The village relatively overnight increased in population size by a third with the addition of the High Elms development. This scheme, if it gains approval, potentially would increase the overall population size to approaching 50% of its pre-High Elms population.

Given the history of this site and the strength of local feeling, if the site is to be developed in any way at all, then surely it would be of more value to the village for the "brownfield" part of the site to be developed into commercial units housing small local businesses and "start-ups".