

## **BLOOR HOMES' PLANNING APPLICATION UTT/13/1618/OP AT WALPOLE PARM**

This application should be refused for reasons very similar to the refusal of application UTT/13/1203/OP at the adjacent Bentfield Green site across Pennington Lane, Stansted because:

1. It would have an unacceptable impact upon the countryside and is therefore contrary to Policy S1 - development outside the main urban area
2. It would have an unacceptable impact on agricultural land and is therefore contrary to Policy ENV5 - protection of agricultural land
3. It would have an unacceptable impact on the protected Pennington Lane and is therefore contrary to Policy ENV9 - historic landscapes.

Stansted Mountfitchet has expanded over recent years but has never breached the brow of land where Walpole Farm is located. The urban settlement has been contained to the south of Walpole Farm to ensure that it remains screened from the rural landscape passed through as one travels along the B1383 in the area known as Ugley Flats with the parishes of Stansted Mountfitchet and Ugley. The only exceptions to this have been to allow a modern farmhouse to be built on the west side of the B1383 at Walpole Farm in support of the agricultural business and to permit the construction of a modern church in a secluded location on the east side of the B1383 as a community benefit with little landscape impact.

The community, the parish council and the district council have been scrupulous in maintaining the separation between town and country in this prominent location. That is why development limits exist to exclude all land north of the Hargrave Park development. The exclusion includes Walpole Farm. Policy S1 remains as relevant now as when it was adopted in 2005.

Development on this site would be on agricultural land that stretches northwards to the parish of Ugley. Once the principle has been established that a large part of this agricultural land can be developed, protection of the remaining agricultural land towards and into the Parish of Ugley will be at risk. Policy ENV5 should be enforced at this location.

Pennington Lane is a protected lane. The development is immediately adjacent to the southern part of the lane and will have a detrimental urbanising impact. A pre-school facility is proposed at the site. It is suggested that some facilities at the nearby Bentfield Primary School would be located to the application site. There will inevitably be educational business between the two places. Parents taking and picking up children from both schools will need to pass between them quickly. There will be no direct vehicular connection between them. Pedestrians may have to use Pennington Lane to access the site from Hargrave Park estate. This will introduce unnecessary safety hazards for parents and children. A pavement cannot be provided in Pennington Lane without undermining its protected status. The

application should be refused because it is contrary to Policy ENV7 and its protection of Pennington Lane.

The planning system was founded on the presumption that development should be allowed unless there are sound reasons why it should not take place. Conversely, a landowner should be refused the right to develop his land in order to protect people from pollution, to protect the natural environment, etc. etc.

So the presumption is favour of sustainable development in the NPPF is nothing new, apart from the introduction of the word “sustainable”. This means all development should last for future generations. That does not make this application any more acceptable. Nothing has changed in recent years to cause the council to want to approve this application at this location. Not even the NPPF and the absence of a 5-year land supply makes any difference. This site has not been suitable for development in the past and it remains unsuitable, as the council’s policies set out.

**Cllr Alan Dean**

**Member for Stansted South 18.07.13**