

The applicant has clearly gone to considerable lengths to commission a dwelling that is in keeping with its surroundings and which is intended to respect the most recent demands of ecological design and construction. The design appears innovative and to have minimal impact on the area in which the property will stand.

In the application document, the applicant refers to a great deal of vandalism on the site in recent years. While we are aware of some criminal damage and theft from the adjacent, council-owned allotments, we have not often seen, on our regular walks through the applicant's property, significant signs of anti-social action so we would hope that the applicant's assertion of frequent vandalism is supported by crime numbers.

The application refers to "Essex Saddleback sows (female pigs) [are] being introduced to the site with piglets to be reared in styes built in the lean-to attached to the barn." It must be concluded that the erection of a farmworker's cottage would be principally to ensure the safety and security of the piggery. Since we have serious objections to the keeping of pigs in pens adjacent to the proposed cottage, we feel obliged to object to the construction of the cottage itself.

The proposed pig pen is a relatively short distance (220 metres approx.) from the nearest domestic properties on the east side of Old Hale Way including our own.

On 7th April 2015, DEFRA published a document relating to nuisance smells which can emanate from, among other things, livestock. Articles on the internet strongly suggest that the smell resulting from pig-rearing is worse (i.e. more offensive) than that from other animals. The document states that "if the smell interferes with the quality of life of people nearby (for example, if they avoid using their gardens)" the local Council may be asked to require that the person responsible for the process from which the smell arises take steps to stop or restrict the smell. "The notice will usually be served on the person responsible but can also be served on the owner or occupier of the premises."

There is a further serious concern of an environmental nature for the whole area: the raising of pigs within 200 metres of the river Purwell, into which flow the rivers Oughton and Hiz. These are chalk streams, of which there are only 210 globally – of those, 160 are in England. The proximity of pigs and the inevitable effluent arising from them is highly likely to impact the delicate nature of the streams, already affected by illegal sewage discharges by Anglian Water. To further imperil the environment by introducing pigs would be irresponsible and a potential health hazard since the streams are used by families with young children for paddling or bathing in summer.

As residents in one of the properties nearby and therefore among those most likely to be affected, as well as citizens of this community who wish to preserve as far as possible the pristine nature of our local area, we have no alternative but to object to the project as a whole.