

To Naomi Reynard, Planning Officer, NHDC, Gernon Rd, Letchworth Garden City.

Re 25/0 1696/OP Land East of Drovers Way, Pirton.

Dear Ms Reynard

I write to you to object to Gladman's plan to build up to 130 dwellings on this land.

1) Development Outside Settlement Boundary, Urban Sprawl and Unsustainable Scale of Development

The site is well outside Pirton's settlement boundary and projects into open countryside resulting in linear sprawl contrary to the character of Pirton.

The proposed 130 dwellings would overwhelm Pirton especially on top of the 78 new homes on Comice Meadows.

Such a development will overload infrastructure and services and harm village life and character.

Pirton has already accepted a 28% increase in housing since 2011—more than Hitchin (12%) Letchworth (15%) or Royston (25%) Gladman's proposal increases that total to 37%.

2) Inadequate Vehicular Access via Cooper's Elms.

This cul de sac is unable to take high traffic volumes of any sort.

Two points of access are required for schemes exceeding 100 dwellings. 130 dwellings will engender around 500 additional car journeys a day plus construction traffic, services and delivery vehicles.

At present waste management lorries mount the pavements causing danger to pedestrians. It seems this would continue to be the case in the proposed development.

The state of public transport in the village is at present deemed marginal and there are no plans to improve it. The additional proposed location is not designed to promote public transport or give priority to pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposal will almost double the use of the Y junction at Comice Meadow. The Holwell Rd passes this junction to enter the village next to a series of terraced houses called the Twelve Apostles - already a hazard with no pavement, and with front doors opening onto the road and waste bins, together with parked cars, running its length.

In the other direction, heading towards the A600 Bedford Rd, all traffic must negotiate Waterloo Lane in Howell which contains a blind sharp bend not wide enough for two cars. My own car bears scratches from driving so close to the hedge in an attempt to avoid aggressive drivers approaching from the other direction. There is no pavement there and pedestrian safety is disregarded.

3) Conflict with Bridleway and Green Infrastructure.

Hambridge Way is a bridleway and a public right of way valued for recreation and countryside access. Vehicle crossing access would pose safety risks to walkers and horse riders and sever the green corridor.

A mature hedgerow (a green buffer) would need to be removed and breaches the green corridor in the Cala Homes scheme,

4) Archaeological and Heritage Constraint

The site and surrounding area are archaeologically sensitive. A new access route would cross as yet unsurveyed land risking damage to heritage sites. There is need for more extensive trial trenching, geophysical surveys, and metal detecting surveys.

5) Views

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6) Climate Policy

The whole of the land is grade 3 agricultural land and should only be used for housing as a last resort. Building on urban sites, brownfield sites and other less productive sites should take precedence. This agricultural land should be left to farm to feed our own citizens so that we are less reliant on imports and the carbon miles they generate.

Indeed where is the plan for carbon reduction and the carbon offset plan — solar panels and low carbon heating?

7) Green Spaces

There is an absence of provision for green spaces including children's play areas. Any designated green space is taken up by a SUDS. Will this suffer the same fate as that of Comice Meadow — fenced off because it is unsafe, overgrown and with no idea how much water is accumulating there? In addition is Gladman expecting to piggy back on those facilities provided by Carla Homes?

8) Water and Drainage

Pirton already has considerable problems with its entire foul water system which is unable to cope with areas of flooding and sewage spillage.

I have recently had an infestation of rats gaining access from my road, Royal Oak Lane, via the sewers. The man designated to deal with this stated that the sewerage pipes for my property are not adequate for the job. This fact could no doubt be multiplied many times throughout the village. Building more houses can only exacerbate the problem

9) Finally

The Carla Homes scheme was carefully planned with community input to respect Pirton's form and setting. Its design included a green buffer, bridleway protection, low density edges and access. The Gladman proposal tramples those principles: breaching the green parkland buffer, introducing urban scale density eastwards and compromising shared infrastructure.

Pirton is a rural village with an identifiable centre and development has in the past been small scale reflecting a diversity of architectural types and periods.

The Gladman proposals would be completely out of character for Pirton and would adversely affect the symmetry of the village.

I object to this development

Yours sincerely

Margaret Arthur