

Ann Helmke

From: [REDACTED]
Sent:
To: Planning
Subject: Ref 6/2019/1370/MAJ

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Dear Sirs

I am writing to object to the proposed erection of 26 dwellings and associated access in Firs Wood Close, Northaw. This area of land is protected Green Belt and this proposal would violate the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. In addition, because it does not adjoin another settlement within the Green Belt it also fails the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment. Any development would contribute to the urban sprawl between CUFFLEY and POTTERS BAR, and would be contrary to the openness and permanence of land protect by the Green Belt policy. The proposed area is located off the country lane, Coopers Lane Road, which has a speed limit of 60mph where the entrance is situated on a slight bend, and cars do travel at this speed. Visibility is reduced during the summer months due to the growth of vegetation. It follows that the more cars using this entrance, the increased risk of accidents.

Coopers Lane Road has no pavement and only experienced cyclists would be advised to venture down this lane due to the narrowness and lack of stopping areas.

There is no public transport, no bus stop or train station within walking distance (unless you are extremely fit and have at least an extra half an hour to spend on additional travelling time). The result of the remoteness of the site would mean that all residents would need the use of a car to access shops, services, employment and schools.

Any pedestrians would be vulnerable, but children especially would not be safe walking down this road.

This would result in at least an additional 50 cars using this access and needing parking facilities.

I read somewhere that it is proposed people could walk down the bridle path up to Northaw village to catch a bus.

This path is not suitable for walking with buggies and is only an accessible route in daylight as it is pitch black at night time, with no lighting (I know, I have tried!). I would imagine that the buses that pass through Northaw are infrequent, at best. Again, this would add an extra 30 minutes to most people at each end of their journey.

The additional 50+ cars needed by the residents of these 26 dwellings would virtually double the number of cars currently using this Close. This would result in a rise in the pollution of the area, I believed the Councils aim was to try and reduce pollution.

Isn't the plan to have zero emissions by 2030?

This leads me on to the vitally important issue of wildlife in the area. Fir and Pond Woods Nature Reserve is opposite the entrance to Firs Wood Close. This is an ancient meadow and woodland dating back centuries. The Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust has just received funding from the Environment Agency to undertake a large scale restoration project to improve and conserve a number of nationally rare habitats.

These include wet woodlands and lowland fens (one of the rarest in country with only 20 hectares left). New ponds are planned - these link with three wildlife ponds being located IN Firs Wood Close - providing open water habitat for dragonflies, damselflies and amphibians such as the great crested newts (a protected EPS species, which benefits from the strictest legal protection). There are set trails used by wildlife through the woods, across Coopers Lane Road and through Firs Wood Close. These would be severely disrupted by residential development.

I believe many of the animals and plants within the area are protected (NERC Act and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) Development would affect the Environmental Agency's target for habitat creation for which the funds have been given.

There is no mains sewage in the area. The sewage treatment unit in Firs Wood Close is designed to deal with the waste from the existing houses and would not be large enough to cope with an additional 26 dwellings.

I sincerely hope that common sense will prevail and that this application will be rejected.

Yours sincerely
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