

QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE ON 7 February 2023

Item 6:

1) South Woodham Ferrers Town Council

Dear Councillors of the Planning Committee,

As you will have read from our written submission on the planning application for Oaklands Meadows in South Woodham Ferrers, South Woodham Ferrers Town Council does not support this application.

Our reasoning is the impact on existing residents of South Woodham Ferrers through congestion and road safety, the absence of a thorough assessment by the Highway Authority...as well as drainage and sewerage concerns.

In SWF Neighbourhood Plan our residents accepted the need for extra housing and that SWF must take our fair share of any new development in Chelmsford district is not in dispute.

SWFTC accept that the applicant has made some progress in alleviating concerns since the master plan submission, but it is felt it's too little.

Why? Well, there are concerns about extra traffic travelling clock-wise around the Town, along Ferrers Road, as it seeks to avoid the congestion and junctions created by the Development. Despite the developers traffic modelling seems to suggest a miraculous fall in traffic after development.

There are also concerns that the Developer has still not considered further pedestrian crossings and safety features along, both, Burnham Road and Ferrers Road, which would mitigate the impact of this for all residents.

It is anticipated that the monitoring surveys will be undertaken until the development is complete and a further year after.” The question is whether this will be sufficient to prevent existing South Woodham Ferrers residents from being significantly inconvenienced by the new development.

SWFTC remains concerned the ultimate capacity constraints of the A132 Lower Burnham Road (the main road out of the town towards Rettendon) and its apparent conflict with the Chelmsford Local Plan May 2020 which states: “Capacity improvements to the A132 between the Rettendon Turnpike and South Woodham Ferrers, including necessary junction improvements to be brought forward as early as possible in tandem with the delivery of development to mitigate its impact.”

City councillors should weigh up what does ‘early as possible’ mean and given this was cited in Chelmsford Council’s recent submission to Maldon District Council’s outline planning for the Althorne development as a reason for objection there¹, why doesn’t it apply to this development?

With regard to the mitigating measures and ‘improvements’ the applicant propose are made to the “Shaw Farm” roundabout, on which the BP garage is situated, SWFTC have concerns that the developer does not consider the increase in delay caused by the additional vehicles from the Development of 44 seconds for eastbound journeys and 72 seconds to be ‘significant’ and ‘over capacity’ and that these will be addressed with the proposed road engineering and alternative travel options.

Cyclists and pedestrians going from the new development to our existing town are still not well serviced either with their shared cycle/pavement. Especially along Hullbridge

¹ CCC’s Althorne development objection: “*These are forecast to be over capacity by 2036, and traffic modelling for Chelmsford’s Local Plan identified significant constraints*”.

Road which is the main route from the proposed development to the Railway Station, currently only measuring 2 metres across in place instead of the 3 metres required in LTN1/20.

The offer of increased bus provision is appreciated to help alleviate the inevitable rise in road vehicle numbers due to the expansion of the town from the developer.... but and like Essex County Council in their report ...our councillors have concerns about the length of commitment to supporting these services from the developer, especially given that a car can make the journey in less than half the time the bus takes.

Turning to rail and with the apparent reducing and downgrading of train capacity on the Southminster-SWF-Wickford rail branch line by the Department for Transport/Greater Anglia. Many commuters and leisure travellers to London tend to favour car travel to the better served Wickford station, and this doesn't appear to have been taken into account by the Applicant in their traffic modelling.

With the projected developments here and along the railway corridor to the east of our town, seemingly promoting and relying on the rail service to mitigate traffic impact, SWFTC believe that Developers, Essex and District Councils should be lobbying for improvements in rail services, otherwise South Woodham Ferrers will choke on traffic.

The disposal of sewerage from the new development is an on-going concern, despite a new pumping station proposed for existing properties, and city councillors are asked to seek assurances from Anglian Water that the sewage from this does not impact on extra outfall and pollution into Fenn Creek and the River Crouch.

There are concerns regarding surface water drainage from the East of the site via the existing ditch that runs by the side of the Garden of Remembrance, under the railway

line and across Compass Gardens. There is no indication of where the water would drain to or how it would find its way to the River Crouch? Please do ask this question.

Finally, and this is particularly important. SWF Town Council feel particularly let down that our submission had to be made before sighting Essex County Council's Transport Assessment. And that the consultation period wasn't extended to allow sufficient time to assess it, with just one week separating its publication and the meeting here tonight, and after the public consultation has closed. It cannot be fair to our residents to have to assess applications blind to standard expert advice and SWFTC ask the committee to ask itself whether if a decision to approve is made tonight it will be a rushed one...which may open the City Council to legal challenge.

Thank you for your time.

2) Mr B (Local Resident)

6 February 2023

Ref Planning application 21/01961/OUT Reviewed at CC Planning Meeting 7 February 2023

Agenda item 6; 21/01961/OUT & 21/01961/FUL LAND NORTH WEST OF HAMBERTS FARM, BURNHAM ROAD, SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS, CHELMSFORD

OBJECTION The application should be rejected. The assumptions and results of the Traffic Assessment are inconsistent and the conclusions cannot be considered 'safe'. The proposal does not meet the requirements of NPPF 110,111, 112 (see attachment 1)

SCP consultant report not mentioned in the Planning agenda

A crowd funded independent report assessment of the Transport Assessment for the latest submission of 21/01961/out was submitted to the SWF Town Council, CCC and Essex Highways December 2022. Key issues were

- The traffic volumes should be tested to at least 2033 not 2026.
- The applicant should revisit the way in which they modelled the junctions.
- Needed to test for more robust traffic conditions using up to date volumes.
- Calibrating the base models to reflect observed queues
- Use representative number of pedestrians on the crossings (only seven pedestrians use each crossing in any one hour)

SCP recommendation;

Refuse the application both on highways safety grounds and likely severe

adverse impact it will have on the road transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion) does not meet NPPF Para. 111. As set out in Paragraphs 110 and 111 of the NPPF, the mitigation proposed by the Applicant sufficient to prevent a severe cumulative impact. Therefore, we recommend that this application is refused.

Essex Highways recommendation

It is lacking in detail all the key issues raised in SCP reports 2021 and 2022 despite having sufficient time to make comprehensive responses. Their report was written 10 days after the closing date and all comments had been received.

Highways concluded the modelling was accurate which was confirmed by their own independent consultants, Jacobs. They concluded that the traffic assessment and proposed road designs were safe and would reduce traffic delays during the morning peak. This is reflected in the Planning agenda pack for 7th February 2023

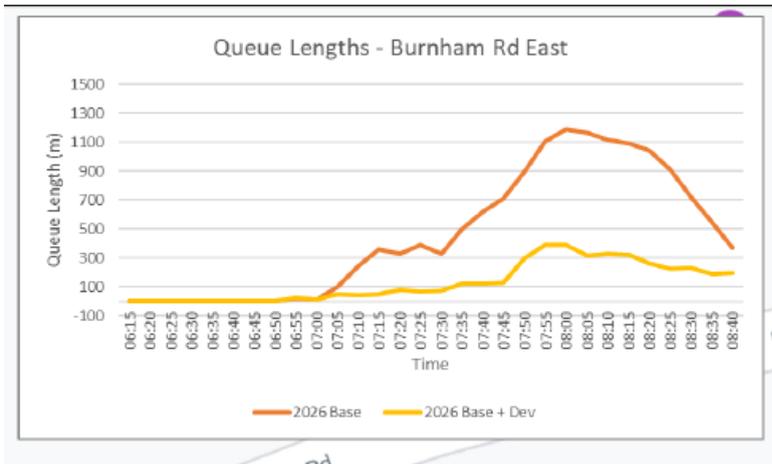
2011 census data has been used despite 2021 data being available before writing the updated Traffic Assessment

ERRORS identified by A Brunning C. Eng.

There are significant errors in the complex VISSIM model casting doubt on the conclusions that the output is accurate. It is clear that the model has not been checked or correlated properly

Examples of ERRORS in 'VISSIM Model Assessment' not identified by the audit process;

- 1) Traffic volumes (per hour) used in the model, checked and approved by Essex Highways, underestimate those from previous surveys. These lower volumes will give incorrect model outputs and cannot be used to support this application. e.g.
 - a. Northbound Ferrers Road at KFC roundabout (junction 4) underestimated by up to 20%
 - i. VISSIM; **583 (with Development)**
 - ii. January 2018; 705 per hour (P.C.C; KFC development)
 - iii. October 2020; 655 per hour (Ringway Jacobs for ECC monitoring speed)
 - b. Through traffic; approaching from the Dengie (junction 1)
 - i. VISSIM **853 per hour**
 - ii. July 2017 887 per hour (July 2017 Ringway Jacobs)
 - 2) The **unchanged** Sainsburys roundabout (Junction 2) VISSIM results for 2026 and 2026 + Dev show,
 - a. AM peak B1012 westbound traffic; volume **increase;** from 843 to 1002 per hour
 - b. The vehicle queue delay **reduces;** from 55 to 28 seconds
 - c. the queue length **reduces (see below);** from 1200 m to 400m
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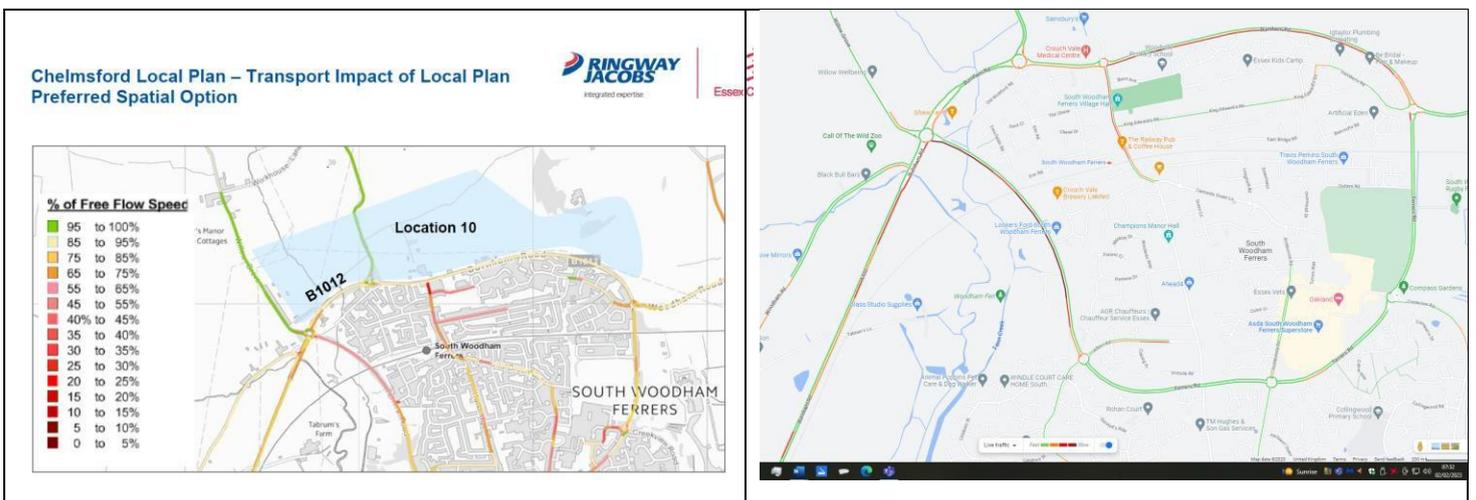


Plot from VISSIM report showing queue length at Sainsbury's Roundabout vs time

- 3) This plan adds 3 Toucan crossings making 5 in total, all acting independently along 2km of the B1012. These with an additional roundabout will cause significantly more congestion along the B1012.
 - a. **VISSIM** model underestimates usage by pedestrians quoting 7 times per hour
 - b. Estimated peak demand for J2 toucan; approx. 260 pedestrians per hour.
 - c. Cycle trips defined at Junction 2 between 08:00 and 09:00 will miss commuter peak The model results declare improved traffic flow and have been accepted by Essex Highways.

Validity of Secretary of State Ruling 2018, (on CCC local 'Plan prepared to provide a new planning framework for Chelmsford to meet local development needs for the period 2013-2036')

Road traffic data presented at the SoS enquiry 2018 declared the B1012 had 85% spare capacity during the AM peak. This is incorrectly being used to justify this submission; In 2023 the road is over capacity causing significant queues and delays see evidence below. This demonstrates Essex Highways recommendations and conclusions in this Traffic Assessment are unsafe and must be rejected.as the proposed road infrastructure will not meet the requirements laid down in NPPF 110,111, 112 (see below)



As presented to the Sec of State 2018
 EOB25 Figure 3-16: P20; AM observed levels of traffic in South Woodham Ferrers 2014-15 declared no congestion. This infers the B1012 has 85% spare capacity
 EB 027 p27 declared the B1012 'Data suggests that this route is not currently heavily congested and is observed to be relatively reliable'.

Traffic at 7:52 2nd Feb 2023; near gridlock. Long westbound queues at Burnham, Ferrers and Hullbridge road.
 Similar traffic on 24th, 25th 26th Jan 2023 SEE PHOTOS IN ATTACHMENT 2 and 3

Application does not meet the requirements of CCC Local Plan 2021-2036

The CCC local plan, adopted 2020, is to meet local development needs from 2021 to 2036. This Transport Assessment only considers traffic volumes to 2026 and must be re-assessed to include traffic growth to 2036 as required by the local plan.

CCC acknowledge these roads will be over capacity by 2036

CCC objected to plans for 750 new homes in Althorne asserting the main roads (without the development) would be overcapacity by 2036

The revised Phase 1 building plan will block the only route for a by pass. This must be rejected.

- a) 2022 application 245 houses north and east of Sainsburys with space for a northern ring road.
- b) 2023 application 405 houses on the northern boundary which blocks the best route for

a by pass A Brunning C. Eng, SWF Resident

Attachment 1

NPPF requirements for info;

- 110.** In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:(d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
- 111.** Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 112.** Within this context, applications for development should:
- (a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
 - b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
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Attachment 2 B1012 Burnham Road 7:40, 2 Feb 2023 queued over the hill back towards Hamberts Road



Attachment 3, Hullbridge Road 7:46 2 Feb 2023 queued back across railway



3) Woodham Infrastructure Group

During the process leading up to the Committee Meeting on 8 February 2023, important issues have been 'put off' again and again - and now the planning meeting is upon us and we still don't have answers. The two excellent independent SCP reports have been dismissed without any explanation

Here are a couple examples of ongoing problems.

With respect to the VISSIM model, our understanding is that Jacobs only checked the base model and not the model with the junction mitigations in place. The big problem was the way it modelled the mitigation measures. The key issue was the way Jacobs modelled the pedestrian crossing as it markedly underestimated the number of people crossing and as a result it will show a much more positive picture than would actually occur on site. ECC and CCC should confirm that this has been rectified and if so, what are the revised results?

Another key issue which affects the modelling is the design year of 2026 - SCP is saying that this is not realistic based on the scale of development. The building work will scarcely have been started let alone finished. Has ECC ever explained why it feels this is acceptable? This is especially pertinent after a recent enquiry result in which a development was not deemed to have modelled a realistic base traffic flow. (To read this document - noting particularly Paras 21-34 and the conclusion - see: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9x9p79>). Additionally a reduced traffic flow was used in one of the modelling scenarios which was supposed to reflect the sustainable travel measures that would be implemented, but these measures were not deemed comparable with a town the size of SWF. Again, no explanation has been given as to why ECC thinks this is acceptable.

All in all, the planning system here appears to be deeply flawed.

4) [Mr C](#)

Statement by, Director at Phase 2 Planning, agent on behalf of the applicant for 21/01961/OUT & 21/01961/FUL (Land North and West of Hamberts Farm, Burnham Road, South Woodham Ferrers)

Good Evening, and thank you for the opportunity to make this short statement tonight.

As the Committee will be aware from the very thorough Report prepared by the City Council's Planning Officers, the application before you tonight is allocated for development in the 2020 Local Plan, and is also the subject of a Masterplan that was approved by Cabinet in March 2021.

The principle of the development is therefore well established.

The Committee might also have noticed that the application was validated in October 2021, and so it has been the subject of scrutiny for some 15 months before being reported to Planning Committee tonight.

The reason for the lengthy processing time is not because we have fundamentally changed the scheme during that time.

It is because of the diligence that your Officers, and those of the Highway Authority, have exercised in reviewing the information that we have submitted: Analysing it, challenging it, and requiring technical amendments where appropriate.

In consultation with Officers, the proposed highway mitigation measures in particular have been refined, and it is this long process of analysis and engagement that has allowed the Highway Authority to reach its conclusions on the acceptability of the scheme.

On other matters your Planning Officers are satisfied that the development will deliver on the requirements of your Local Plan, and will meet the objectives of the approved Masterplan.

All other consultees, including the Education Authority, the Health Authority, and the Lead Local Flood Authority, are satisfied that, with the mitigation measures proposed, the development is acceptable.

We therefore hope that the Planning Committee will be able to support its Officers recommendation of Approval tonight.

Thank you.
