

Tollesbury  
MALDON  
Essex

Date:

Planning Services  
Maldon District Council  
Princes Road  
MALDON CM9 5DL

Dear Sir / Madam

**Re: Gladman proposal for houses, Mell Road, Tollesbury, planning ref 19/00837/OUT**

I strongly object to this proposal for the following reasons:

### **1. Land Supply and Housing Need**

I think this development is unnecessary and inappropriate because:

- Maldon District Council's "Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement" (Mar'19) shows there is more than the required 5 year housing land supply;
- The LDP does not allocate any housing to Tollesbury;
- The LDP anticipates only 100 houses over 5 years across the whole District on "Windfall Sites" such as Mell Road: not 90 houses on one site all at once;
- Tollesbury's "Housing, Employment and Business Needs Survey" (Apr'17) found that only 43 households wished to move within Tollesbury but the proposal is for 90 houses.
- The LDP states: "*outside of defined settlement boundaries, planning permission will only be granted where the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is not adversely impacted*", and the Policies Map for NE Maldon District shows that the site is outside Tollesbury's "settlement boundary".

### **2. Sustainability**

- The LDP requires that developments "*seek to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private vehicle*"; that the Council will "*reduce the District's over dependence on the car, reduce carbon emissions, and benefit the health and wellbeing of residents*"; and it includes objectives "*to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases...*" Also the NPPF states that "*... appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes*" should be ensured.

Another 90 houses without at least 90 local jobs will increase the need to travel – and with a poor rural bus service that will be mostly by private vehicle.

- The LDP states that "*the Council will seek to ensure all new developments are well connected to existing public transport routes*" and that "*all development will ... have regard to ... proximity of local transport*".

However there is no railway station in Tollesbury; only a poor rural bus service – definitely not the ½ hourly service referred to in Gladman's application; and the bus stop is over 600 metres from the proposed site.

### 3. Natural Environment

- The NPPF states that “*development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions*”.

Building here will not improve the environment for these species. There are birds in red conservation status here including Skylarks, Lapwing, Starling, Fieldfare, House sparrow, Linnet, Yellowhammer, and Corn bunting. On the Skylarks Gladman’s own documentation states for instance that there would be a “*loss of winter foraging and roosting habitat, and that it is not possible to recreate the arable stubble habitat that skylarks use as a forage resource during winter.*”

The disturbance to wildlife during the build phase and the early years of the estate could lead to permanent losses and Gladman have provided no evidence that it would not do so.

- The NPPF refers to protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, “*recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*”, and the LDP states that “*the Council’s priority is to protect the countryside for its intrinsic value*”, and that “*development will be largely restricted in the countryside to protect its character and attractiveness*”.

A housing estate will damage the landscape and beauty of the countryside, not protect or enhance it.

- The NPPF states that authorities should “*limit the impact of light pollution on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation*”.

The builder may install low-pollution street lighting but residents will undoubtedly install garden and security flood-lighting which will not limit light pollution at all on this naturally dark landscape, which has always been so.

- The NPPF states that authorities should “*protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their amenity value for this reason*”.

This is a tranquil area where people walk to relax. A housing estate simply cannot as quiet as a field.

### 4. Character, history, distinctiveness, amenity

- The LDP states that the District “*will retain the identity of our villages*” and the NPPF states that developments should “*add to the overall quality of the area*” and “*[be] sympathetic to local character and history, including the... landscape setting...*”

Tollesbury’s identity is “*The village of the Plough and the Sail*”. This field has been ploughed for centuries and replacing it with housing and dog walks is not retaining its identity.

- The LDP states that all development will have regard to “*the impacts upon the amenities of neighbouring properties*” and that “*All development must ... protect the amenity of surrounding areas taking into account... outlook... [and] visual impact*”.

The Mell Road houses and the footpath to the South of the site have an open outlook across this land. Building houses here will remove the amenity.

- The LDP states “*It is important that any growth would [reflect] the size ... of the settlement.*”

Tollesbury has nearly 1200 houses and the proposal is to build another 90 all at once. A step-change increase of 8% is certainly not reflecting the size of the settlement.

- The LDP states that "*growth will be concentrated in the most sustainable, accessible and appropriate locations, taking into account constraints and the need to protect valued local countryside.*"

It is clearly not sustainable to build 90 houses in a remote rural location where there are not 90 jobs, there is only a poor rural bus service, and there is no safe walking or cycling routes out of the village.

The site is not in the most accessible or appropriate location, given that the only access route is through the village centre, where the resulting increase in traffic will increase the existing road safety risks.

There are no constraints on building in Maldon District, as the council has allocated – and delivered more than the required 5-year housing land supply, none of which is in Tollesbury.

Building on an agricultural field does not protect valued local countryside.

## 5. Education

- The NPPF states that "*it is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available*".

Another 90 homes will almost certainly cause some children to have to travel to Tolleshunt D'Arcy school, over 2 miles away. It is a CofE school, so not an option for some families. The development would therefore reduce parental choice.

D'Arcy school's admissions policy prioritises children from various villages but the list excludes Tollesbury. Children are therefore likely to need to go to Tiptree, 6 miles away.

There is no safe walking or cycling route to anywhere outside Tollesbury, so sending children to these other village schools will cause increased costs to Essex County Council school transport.

## 6. Gladman's engagement

- The NPPF states that "*Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community ... is important*", and that applicants "*...should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority ... as early as possible*".

Gladman did not engage with the local planning authority at all. Their engagement with residents was wholly inadequate as they initially only sent leaflets to about two thirds of the village, and have still not sent leaflets to some households; they provided no deadline for comments in their leaflet; and they declined requests to meet residents.

## 7. Infrastructure

- The LDP states that all development will have regard to "*the capacity of local infrastructure*".

The local electricity supply already suffers regular outages, and sewage already overflows after heavy rain.

## 8. Road safety

- The NPPF allows Development to be refused "*if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety*".

Tollesbury has a serious risk with HGVs passing through the village centre to the industrial area, where they are unable to pass parked cars, and resort to driving on the pavement.

Residents whose front doors lead directly onto the pavement, and pedestrians using the narrow and non-existent pavements in the village centre are just a few inches from articulated lorries, transporters, yachts being towed, and buses.

90 more houses without 90 local jobs, and with only a poor rural bus service will certainly increase traffic in the village, both in terms of residential traffic and extra delivery lorries. This will undoubtedly increase the risks for pedestrians in Tollesbury.

Yours faithfully

Name (print):

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