

Statement of objection to application No. 20/00685/FUL.

Proposed shop at Wethersfield Village Hall

Since this project was first mooted much has changed. At that time the proposal was relatively modest but it has since grown into a major project including the complete redevelopment of the club cellar and a significant extension to the front of the building. Additionally since the Corona crisis a pop up shop has been established in the village club which, although only open for a short period each day seems to be satisfying the requirements of local residents and anecdotal evidence would suggest that a majority of local people would prefer to see this shop formalised which could be done at vastly less expense than the current project. Indeed a neighbouring owner has indicated that he would be prepared to provide the land required to improve the access for the benefit of disabled people.

A survey of passers by collected 92 signatures of objection to the current proposal and support for the club shop. Almost all local residents fear the effect the development will have on traffic, parking and safety and are frankly incredulous at the casual attitude of the ECC Highways Department who seem unaware of the true situation on this forecourt which is often obstructed by delivery vehicles and poor parking. The proposal will actually reduce both the parking and the space for circulation.

Finally the proposed shop is clearly too small to be an adequate village store. The actual shop is only about 17m² whereas the club shop is over 40m² and is already very full. The notion of spending £200,000 or more on providing less than 20m² of retail space seems rather absurd.

Nick Godley