

(Submission from Cllr Jenny Sandum and Cllr Paul Thorogood, ward members for Feering & Kelvedon)

Dear Madam Chairman and planning committee members

We have two main concerns and we will try to keep our submission to 90 seconds on each.

## PART ONE - Design & Layout

We are very disappointed Bloor Homes has not taken on board the many concerns this planning committee voiced in December last year, regarding the reserved matters application for a 162-homes development in Feering.

The proposed housing estate **still** does not take into account the village character of Feering, and **largely** ignores the National Planning Policy Framework, the Essex Design Guide, **and** Feering Parish Council's own adopted "design guide", which **should** be treated as a material consideration.

Feering is set to **double** in size once the new A12 four-way junction is built, and if Bloor's current design and layout is allowed to go ahead, the character of the village will be severely diluted.

The developer's proposed 3-storey flats no longer overlook properties in Inworth Road, but they **are** still contained within these plans.

This is very disappointing because there are currently **no** 3-storey flats in Feering, so these proposed flats will set an unwelcome precedent for new developments.

Sadly residential flats are a necessity in urban areas, due to lack of space. That is **not** the case in a semi-rural setting.

Flats can and should be avoided where possible. An excellent example is Goldsmith Street — a new development on the outskirts of Norwich.

The estate is built to Passivhaus standards, a rigorous system that reduces a building's ecological footprint.

The architects **rejected** the modern standard of having wide boulevards and **instead** put the rows of houses closer together.

This enabled them to fit in more self-contained houses with gardens, **rather than blocks of flats**.

Bloor's current plans were devised in a pre-Covid-19 world.

In Lockdown UK, there are two classes of people — those **with** gardens and those without.

We, as councillors, have been helping to run the local Coronavirus Support Group, and have struggled to access and check on residents living in social housing flats in Kelvedon; they are hidden from view and could easily be forgotten.

Typically, in flats there are shared communal spaces both outside and in — making a household-level quarantine difficult. Without their own gardens, parents struggle to keep children exercised and entertained.

The land on which these proposed Bloor flats would be sited, is at one of the **highest** points in Feering. They look dark, gloomy, daunting and prison-like — they will **dominate** the Feering skyline.

If these flats were removed from the proposals and replaced with terrace-style housing with gardens, it would go a long way in making this development more palatable.

## PART 2 - SUSTAINABILITY

When we build today we **need** to think about the future we are building for. Our climate is changing, and the UK Government's direction of travel is for zero emissions to be achieved by 2050.

In February this year, the Court of Appeal ruled the Secretary of State had acted **unlawfully** in regards to Heathrow's planned third runway, by failing to take into account the Paris Agreement on Climate Change when supporting the expansion of Heathrow Airport. The Government was told to go away and think again. If it wants to resurrect the project,

the Government will have to do a proper appraisal against **all** the climate impacts over the **lifetime** of the project.

The judgment suggests that for every major new development there will have to be a **clear** demonstration that it fits in with the Government's own climate change laws. That means adopting **much** higher standards for energy efficiency, with renewable heat from heat pumps, and solar thermal, geothermal, biomass or stored heat technologies.

Energy is not the only resource that is likely to become scarce. New housing should **also** conserve water by capturing rainwater and reusing grey water.

As far as we are aware, **none** of this is happening with Bloor Homes' proposals.

## CONCLUSION

The future of Feering is at a crossroads. This development **COULD** set a gold standard in reflecting the village's character and in providing sustainable living for future generations, but it currently fails on both counts. It is our view that these plans should be refused or at the very least again be deferred — they **could** and **should** be so much better.