

## Planning Application 20/00352/REM

Despite recent revisions, this development remains far too crowded. The building heights are totally out of keeping with the area and will stick out like a sore thumb. For some reason the Case Officer seems to think that this is a virtue.

Permission to build here should never have been granted on account of road safety issues caused by willfully adding more traffic to the dangerous Tey Road junction, and the fact that the Parish Council and virtually 100% of local opinion were against it for very good planning reasons. Most of the issues, such as the impact of closing Tey Road for sewerage connection, have never been properly addressed. The Planning Officers rode roughshod over residents' concerns with spurious arguments about "adding vitality" to a village bisected by a busy highway with a single primary school and doctors' surgery that are both already full. This whole case has been a monument to the democratic deficit in Braintree District planning matters.

The Case Officer proudly trumpeted the development as "sustainable". But where are the sustainable features to back up his claim? Where are details of renewable heat sources like solar paneling, heat pumps or biomass, or features such as rainwater harvesting? As we enter a Climate Emergency, how can the Council possibly be permitting developers to build all over the countryside without proper sustainable features?

This development will barely help alleviate the housing crisis when fewer than 24% of its bedrooms will be in the affordable category. Many young families need 3 bedrooms, yet only one of the affordable units in this estate fits that category. Why? Because the developer can easily meet the Council's lamentable affordability targets by designating the two and one bedroom units as their "affordable" quota. This is hardly a serious attempt by either developer or Council to address the housing issue.

It would be a token sign that the Council *is* listening if the following points were heeded:

- 1) Strict working hours should be fixed and enforced, with no workers on the site Saturday afternoons, Sundays and holidays. These have been flouted elsewhere.
- 2) There should be no security lighting left on at the site outside working hours. The wording for this is too vague in the case documents.
- 3) White noise reversing alarms should be required all around the site, replacing standard reversing beepers.
- 4) No big billboards or developers' flag displays should be permitted at or approaching the site.

This estate is a prime example of a piece of speculative development that should have been stopped in its tracks right at the beginning of the process on road safety grounds alone, and probably would have been if the Council had got its Local Plan in place instead of wasting time and money chasing its tail with the "garden communities" proposal. Local residents are very bitter about the way this has been handled, and the almost laughable irony that the developer is naming it "*Chalkney Meadow*" is not lost on them. For here is a greenfield site outside the village envelope that had become a wildflower meadow; after the developer has built a housing estate on it, a "meadow" is the very last thing it will be.

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