

FAIRFIELD.....THE FIGHT CONTINUES

Longstanding residents will be aware of the long and bitter fights against developments proposed by Fairfield. Their first attempt in 2007 was for 3200 houses between Henham and Elsenham, this development was supported by Uttlesford District Council (UDC). The then Labour Government seized on this opportunity and included the site as an Eco Town of 5200 houses. A long campaign, including a protest to Parliament, dismissed this proposal. UDC then decided that 2100 houses on the site were to be included in the draft Local Plan. Again, a Save Our Villages (SOV) campaign against this proposal was fought at the Local Plan Hearing, and the Plan was rejected as unsound by the Examining Inspector. The plan, in the main, was rejected because of the appalling transport infrastructure around the development.

Fairfield then applied for 800 houses on the same site. The SOV Campaign Team fought this development tooth and nail and UDC planning rejected the application. Fairfield appealed and again an Inspector rejected the application which was endorsed by the then Minister of Housing.

The SOV Campaign Team had, by now, spent some £350K fighting these applications. Raised by resident's fund raising, individual contributions, and Parish Council donations. UDC spend about £3 million on the failed Local Plan. Fairfield, with seemingly bottomless pockets, applied yet again in December 2017 for 350 houses on the site. By December 2019 UDC had been unable to pursue this application because Essex Highways had, unbelievably, not determined whether they were for or against the traffic situation. Fairfield want to drive the traffic from the development through Stansted Mountfiddich.....yes, through Grove Hill, Lower Street and Chapel Hill! You all know how ridiculous this suggestion is. Fairfield then appealed the development for 'non determination' as it had not been heard by the Planning Committee. Essex Highways then finally decided that they did not object to the development.

To make matters even more complicated the latest attempt at a UDC Local Plan was again rejected by a Planning Inspector.

So, on 28th April 2020 we face another appeal by Fairfield to build 350 houses on Henham Parish land between Henham and Elsenham, joining the two villages. If successful we can be sure it won't stop at 350 houses! The Appeal will take place over 7 days and be heard in Saffron Walden Town Hall (in SW Square). Henham Parish Council have again assembled a planning team led by the barrister and planning consultant who have represented us before to fight this application. I am pleased to say that UDC have also formed a team to join the fight against this development.

This Hearing will cost in the region of £50K to fight. If you are already a member of the Henham monthly SOV Lottery Draw thank you for your support. If you are not please consider joining by sending an e mail to Cllr Mark Fisher mfisherhpc@gmail.com who will enrol you. If you consider a donation, of any size, would be appropriate we would be very happy to receive one. Again, please contact Mark.

This is a difficult time in respect of Planning Applications, we also have the 220 houses planned for Bedwell Road on Henham/Ugley Parish Land. We expect an application soon for houses to the south of Vernon's Close. The appeal result for more houses in Chickney Road is expected at any time.

Please make a note in your diaries for the Fairfield appeal on 28th April. We really need as many residents as possible to show their faces so that the Inspector can see the strength of feeling against this ridiculous development.

Nick Baker OBE, Chairman

Henham Parish Council