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From: Carl Rolph [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 September 2026 16:22

To: Rachel Beale [REDACTED]

Subject: >> UTT/26/1635/OP — Supplementary representation on housing-market absorption and deliverability [REDACTED] m

Dear Ms Beale,

Please treat this email as a supplementary representation concerning application UTT/26/1635/OP and place it on the public planning file.

HOUSING-MARKET ABSORPTION, DELIVERABILITY AND THE SUITABILITY OF FURTHER LARGE-SCALE DEVELOPMENT

I maintain my objection to this application.

There is substantial visible availability of newly constructed housing on existing developments around Stortford Road and Tesco in Great Dunmow. Current marketing includes homes described as ready to move into, price reductions, part-exchange offers and incentives across multiple available plots.

This does not, by itself, establish the precise number of completed but unsold or unoccupied dwellings. That information should therefore be obtained and verified by the Council before the application is determined.

The present position raises important questions about housing-market absorption, the type and affordability of homes being delivered and the claimed need to release another major site containing up to 850 dwellings.

1. Housing need is not the same as effective demand

The Government's standard method produces an unconstrained assessment of minimum housing need. It does not demonstrate that every proposed site is suitable, that every market dwelling can be sold at the proposed rate, or that predominantly market-priced housing will meet the needs of local households.

The application must therefore be assessed against actual local circumstances, including affordability, tenure requirements, infrastructure constraints, sustainable location and the delivery performance of existing developments.

2. Existing housing availability must be examined

Before permitting another 850 dwellings, the Council should establish:

- how many dwellings on Great Dunmow's existing major developments have been completed;
- how many have been occupied, sold, reserved or remain available;
- how many completed homes remain unoccupied;
- the average sales and occupation rate for each development;
- how long completed properties have remained on the market;
- what incentives, reductions or part-exchange arrangements are being offered;
- whether delivery is proceeding at the rates previously forecast; and
- whether the homes being provided match identified local needs by size, tenure and affordability.

These figures should be obtained from the developers and checked against planning-monitoring records, completion notices, aggregate Council Tax information and other available official records.

3. Risk of oversupplying the wrong type of housing

Continuing to grant permission for large quantities of market housing does not necessarily address genuine housing need.

If completed new homes are taking an extended period to sell, that may indicate problems with price, type, tenure or market absorption. Permitting another predominantly market-led development could increase the supply of homes that local households cannot afford while failing to provide the social rented, affordable and specialist housing actually required.

The applicant should demonstrate who the proposed homes are intended for, what proportion meets evidenced local need and how the claimed delivery rate relates to recent sales and occupation rates in Great Dunmow.

4. Infrastructure consequences arise regardless of sales rates

Even if construction is phased slowly, the development would still require major commitments involving roads, drainage, water supply, wastewater treatment, schools, healthcare, public transport, electricity and emergency services.

Great Dunmow has experienced nationally exceptional housing growth without a comparable increase in essential infrastructure. It would be unsound to commit the town to another large development without first assessing the delivery and occupation of existing permissions and the cumulative infrastructure required by all approved and proposed schemes.

A planning permission could remain capable of being implemented for years. Its infrastructure and environmental consequences cannot be discounted merely because the developer may build or sell the homes slowly.

5. Sustainability and the location of housing

Great Dunmow has no railway station and limited bus provision. Residents of new developments rely heavily on cars for employment, secondary education, hospital care, major shopping and railway access.

Evidence of slow sales or substantial availability on existing developments would reinforce the need to reconsider whether further strategic growth should be directed towards this comparatively poorly connected location.

National planning policy supports housing delivery, but it also requires sustainable development, appropriate infrastructure and the selection of suitable locations. A numerical housing target should not override those considerations.

6. The proposed increase from 715 to 850 dwellings

The adopted allocation is for 715 dwellings. The application seeks up to 850—an additional 135 homes.

The applicant should not be permitted to rely on the strategic justification and infrastructure assumptions supporting the 715-home allocation while simultaneously exceeding that allocation without updated evidence.

The additional housing should be supported by a current assessment of:

- market absorption and deliverability;
- identified local housing needs;
- affordable housing requirements;
- transport sustainability;
- infrastructure capacity; and
- the cumulative effect of existing permissions and developments still being built or marketed.

Requested action

Before determining the application, Uttlesford District Council should publish a verified Great Dunmow housing-delivery and market-absorption schedule covering all major developments completed or under construction during at least the previous five years.

The schedule should distinguish:

- permitted dwellings;
- dwellings under construction;
- completed dwellings;

- occupied dwellings;
- completed but unoccupied dwellings;
- market homes and affordable homes;
- annual sales and occupation rates; and
- remaining committed development.

The applicant should then be required to demonstrate that its proposed housing mix and delivery assumptions are credible when measured against this evidence.

Unless this information is supplied and properly assessed, the Council cannot safely conclude that another 850-home, car-dependent development represents an appropriate, deliverable or sustainable response to local housing need.

The application should therefore be refused or, at minimum, not determined until the existing housing-delivery position, market absorption, housing mix and cumulative infrastructure consequences have been fully established and subjected to public scrutiny.

Please confirm that this representation has been received, placed on the public planning file and brought to the attention of the case officer.

Kind regards,

Carl Rolph
Save Church End