

PUBLIC PLANNING OBJECTION

Land around The Broadway and Church End

Great Dunmow | Planning application UTT/26/1635/OP

Document: Plain-English Master Objection

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Status: FINAL SUBMISSION DOCUMENT

Companion documents: Executive Summary, Technical Planning Objection, Local Plan Review and NPPF Review

Decision requested: Refuse the application. If the Council is not ready to refuse, delay determination until the missing evidence is supplied, checked and made public.

1. Why I am objecting

This application asks Uttlesford District Council to approve the principle of building up to 850 homes around The Broadway and Church End. The plans also show a school site, healthcare space, shops, community buildings, sports pitches, open space, roads, walking and cycling routes and drainage works.

The need for new homes does not justify approving a substantially enlarged development while its harm, infrastructure requirements and promised benefits remain unresolved.

The Council is being asked to approve a permanent change to one of the most sensitive parts of Great Dunmow. It should refuse the application because important harm and infrastructure problems remain unresolved. If it is not ready to refuse, it should not decide the application until the applicant has supplied the missing evidence and the relevant public bodies have checked it.

The main concerns are:

- the proposal is substantially larger than the Local Plan expected;
- it would erode the countryside gap and change the historic setting of Church End;
- formal ecology objections remain unresolved, and archaeology, flooding, drainage, agricultural-land and contamination questions remain open;
- National Highways has issued a holding objection, while the traffic, construction and public-transport case remains incomplete;
- healthcare, education, electricity and policing capacity have not been secured; and
- many claimed benefits are still land, floorspace or intentions rather than funded services with binding delivery dates.

Before permission is granted, every assessment, contribution and promise must be based on the full 850 homes and the development's cumulative effect alongside other growth.

2. The proposal is larger than the Local Plan expected

The Local Plan expected about 715 homes on this allocation. The application seeks up to 850: an extra 135 homes, or about 19% more.

The applicant estimates that the development could add about 2,142 residents. On that estimate, the population of Great Dunmow North ward could increase by about 42%.

Those are not small differences. Every extra home adds demand to the same roads, surgeries, schools, sewers, drainage systems, shops, car parks and emergency services.

The Council must therefore ensure that:

- all technical assessments use 850 homes, not 715 or an earlier scheme;
- the population assumptions follow from a complete bedroom and tenure mix;
- infrastructure contributions reflect the whole development; and
- the cumulative assessment uses one complete and consistent list of other relevant developments.

No assessment based on an incomplete scheme or an outdated development list should be relied upon.

3. Church End, the valley, heritage and archaeology

The countryside gap and Church End's identity

Church End is one of the oldest and most distinctive parts of Great Dunmow. Open countryside still separates it from the main town and allows St Mary's Church to be seen in its valley setting.

In 2007 the Council studied land around the Stebbing Road approach, Church End and The Broadway. It warned that development there would spread the town onto highly visible farmland, weaken Church End's separate identity, add traffic to narrow historic roads and risk harming views of St Mary's Church.

The Council-approved 2009 Town Design Statement also says that the agricultural landscape on both sides of The Broadway should be protected. It warns that development near St Edmunds Lane could leave the Chelmer Valley as little more than a strip of land surrounded by housing.

The adopted Great Dunmow Design Code continues that protection. It describes Church End's rural village character as arising from its separation from the main town. It requires important views, heritage settings, historic lanes, protected hedgerows and panoramic views across hills and valleys to be conserved or enhanced.

The application must be tested against the real experience of Church End: its lanes, valley, church, historic buildings and remaining open approaches. A narrow landscaped strip is not the same as the existing countryside gap.

Previous decisions on overlapping land

In 2019 a Planning Inspector dismissed an appeal arising from planning application UTT/18/3157/OP for 50 homes on the field east of Bigods Lane and north of The Broadway. Official plans show that the whole appeal site lies inside the present application boundary.

The Inspector described the field as inherently rural and part of the attractive Chelmer Valley. The decision found that housing would strongly urbanise an important approach to Church End. The present proposal is far larger, yet the applicant has not clearly explained why those site-specific harms no longer matter.

In February 2020 the Council refused UTT/19/1802/OP for up to 115 homes on overlapping southern land. Its conservation and landscape advisers said that the open agricultural land explains Church End's farming origins, preserves separation around St Mary's Church and Crouches, and forms part of the broad, rural approach to Church End. The refusal found harm to Church End Conservation Area, Grade I listed St Mary's Church and Grade II listed Crouches.

The site's allocation in the new Local Plan changes the policy position that applied when the earlier proposal was refused in 2020.

That refusal nevertheless remains important site-specific evidence of the harm caused by developing this land. Those concerns have not disappeared simply because the site has now been allocated.

Gladman's own Planning Statement accepts that the development would harm Crouches Farm and would also harm St Mary's Church and the Great Dunmow Conservation Area. This is permanent heritage harm caused by the proposal. It must be assessed together with the wider damage to Church End's historic setting, the Chelmer Valley landscape and the cumulative effect of development across the site.

The Council should explain openly how the much larger current scheme overcomes those earlier factual findings.

Landscape harm would remain

The proposal would replace a large area of open land with houses, roads, lighting, traffic and everyday activity. Buildings could be up to 12 metres high. Their number, height and combined mass would create a major built presence in the valley. The development would also be highly prominent in views from Beaumont Hill across the Chelmer Valley towards Church End and St Mary's Church. Roofs, upper storeys, lighting, traffic and everyday activity would permanently urbanise those views.

Figure 8 in the accompanying evidence appendix records the public ground-level view from Great Dunmow Recreation Ground towards Church End, representative of views from the Causeway. The open agricultural foreground and mature tree belt create a distinctly rural setting, with existing buildings largely contained behind the vegetation. The application would introduce extensive new built form into this view, eroding the open countryside and changing the established settlement edge.

Figure 9 records the corresponding drone view from above Beaumont Hill across the Chelmer Valley towards Church End and St Mary's Church. It shows the breadth of the open valley landscape and the visual relationship between Beaumont Hill, the agricultural land, Church End and St Mary's Church. Development across the application site would introduce extensive built form into this open view.

Even after allowing 15 years for the proposed planting to mature, Gladman's own landscape work says significant adverse effects would remain to the farmland, the character of the site, The Broadway, the public footpath crossing the northern part of the site from Bigods Lane (FP/21/18), the public footpath crossing the southern part from St Edmunds Lane (FP/82/18), and Broadway Cottage.

It also predicts significant cumulative effects for B1008 users and for people walking along the Bigods Lane footpath.

Planting cannot restore the countryside gap once it has been built on.

Those are long-term admissions made after the applicant assumes that its planting has matured. Landscaping should not be treated as an answer to the underlying harm.

The Second World War defence line

The River Chelmer valley contains a recorded chain of Second World War pillboxes and former defensive positions. Fifteen Essex records describe structures facing across the river, overlooking the open fields and guarding Church End Bridge.

Historic surveys recorded twelve structures as standing and three as destroyed. Their current condition and collective significance must now be established by a proper site inspection. Uttlesford's 2023 Landscape Character Assessment identifies the pillboxes as distinctive features of the General Headquarters defence line.

The applicant lists some individual records but does not assess the surviving structures as one group. Its separate Heritage Impact Assessment does not address the pillboxes or the stop line. Before deciding the application, the Council should require a current inspection, assessment of group value and analysis of views across the valley and links with the river, bridge and St Mary's Church.

Archaeology must be understood before permission

The applicant's cultural-heritage chapter says that geophysical survey found anomalies that could be prehistoric or Roman. It also records a possible Roman cemetery about 340 metres south-west of the site, near St Mary's Church, and other Roman finds nearby.

Essex County Council's 2019 advice on the overlapping southern land identified cropmark features and potential prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval remains. It recommended trial trenches followed by open-area excavation where necessary.

The wider evidence reinforces that concern. A public Archaeology Data Service record describes a Roman linear settlement along Stane Street in Great Dunmow, with a cremation cemetery, possible shrine and occupation from the first to fourth centuries. Historic England also records Great Dunmow at the crossing of Roman roads and identifies Roman activity in the Church End landscape.

The site's Roman or prehistoric anomalies require proper investigation.

The Council should require the Historic Environment Record search, archaeological adviser response, evaluation strategy, trial trenching and reporting before the principle and layout are fixed. The work must cover access roads, drainage, utilities, earthworks and building platforms. Significant remains should be preserved in place where necessary. Fundamental archaeological questions should not be left to a vague condition after outline permission.

Agricultural land and soils have not been assessed

The applicant says that it submitted a separate Agricultural Land Quality Report, but no identifiable report has been published with the application. This matters because the site covers about 69 hectares and is mainly arable farmland.

The available general mapping does not establish how much of the site is Grade 2, Grade 3a or Grade 3b. Before determination, the Council must require publication of the promised report or an adequate detailed field survey showing the agricultural grades, the loss of best and most versatile land and the arrangements for protecting and reusing the soil resource.

4. Wildlife, ecology and aerodrome safety

Incomplete species evidence

The Environment Agency and Essex Wildlife Trust have both issued holding objections on ecological grounds. The Council should not determine the application until the information they require has been supplied, independently checked and accepted.

The applicant mapped one pond on the site, ten more within 250 metres and another six within 500 metres. Only two ponds were sampled for great crested newt DNA. Access was not granted to eight of the closer ponds.

The Environment Agency's formal response confirms that the great crested newt evidence is inconclusive because ponds were inaccessible and the available DNA results were indeterminate. It requires further survey work or an appropriate precautionary mitigation strategy.

The applicant must resolve the inaccessible ponds, show the position across the whole site and provide the licensing evidence needed for the Council to rely on that route.

The complete 209-page Essex Field Club records report used for the applicant's desk study has now been obtained. Its terms say that the searchable report should be placed in the public domain when used for a planning application. It also says records should be checked for updates if used after six months.

Nearby records include lapwing and hobby. The applicant's surveys also recorded a peak of 133 bat contacts at one point, with timings suggesting a possible nearby roost [REDACTED]

The Environment Agency also requires the applicant to account properly for the site's ditches, minimise and justify culverting, protect Markshill Wood and provide a habitat management and monitoring plan lasting at least 30 years. Essex Wildlife Trust requires the same unresolved ecological matters to be addressed before withdrawing its objection.

An absence of site records is not evidence of absence where the survey or records search is incomplete. Residents do not have to prove that protected or notable species are present before the applicant completes the assessment needed for a lawful decision.

Otters and the River Chelmer corridor

A resident video records two otters entering the River Chelmer beside Great Dunmow churchyard on 25 April 2023 at 9.16 pm. The original video has been preserved. The Essex Field Club's search of the surrounding area also contains three otter records, including one from 2016. Together, this evidence shows that otters use the nearby River Chelmer corridor.

The applicant must provide a current survey by a competent ecologist covering the site and its connected River Chelmer corridor. It should include riverbanks, ditches, culverts, riparian vegetation and crossing points. It must assess construction disturbance, lighting, habitat loss, fragmentation, drainage, road access and safe movement. Until that work is complete, the Council cannot safely treat otter presence or effects as resolved.

Dark routes and long-term management

Church End and the Chelmer Valley are much darker at night than built-up Great Dunmow. The development would introduce streetlights, house and garden lighting, headlights and lighting from the school, sports areas and local centre.

The applicant has not shown how genuinely dark routes will be kept along the river, hedgerows and mature trees. The Council should require a complete lighting plan with existing and proposed light levels, operating hours and enforceable controls.

Habitat protection also needs named ownership, funding, inspection and long-term management. Ecological promises should apply across the whole site and survive changes of landowner or developer.

Stansted Airport's holding objection

The applicant's checklist says a wildlife hazard assessment is not applicable because the site is outside 13 kilometres of Cambridge aerodrome. That does not address Stansted Airport.

On 27 July 2026 London Stansted Airport's safeguarding authority issued a formal holding objection. It said that ponds, reed beds, swales, attenuation basins and other open-water features could attract hazardous birds and increase bird-strike risk.

Stansted requested changes to the water and planting design. If the features cannot be designed to drain quickly, it requires a Bird Hazard Management Plan. It also requested controls on upward light spill and notifications for cranes or tall construction equipment.

The Council should not determine the application until Stansted confirms in writing that its holding objection has been resolved. The applicant should provide the current safeguarding-map check. A Cambridge-only checklist entry is not a site-specific aviation-safety assessment.

5. Sewage, flooding, drainage, the river and contamination

Sewage capacity

Uttlesford's Stage 2 Water Cycle Study records that Great Dunmow's water recycling works needs further investment before it can support all planned growth.

Saying that an improvement is planned is not enough. Before homes are occupied, the Council needs to know what will be built, who will deliver it, when it will be complete and how many homes can safely be occupied beforehand. It also needs confirmation that the local sewer network can carry the additional flow without relying on tankers.

Anglian Water supplied a year of flow readings, but the spreadsheet does not explain the units, permitted limits or allowances for other approved developments and therefore gives no clear public answer on remaining capacity. Anglian Water must provide a clear public statement explaining present capacity, permitted limits, planned improvements and enforceable occupation limits.

Drinking-water pressure is already failing residents

The Environment Agency's formal response says the applicant has assumed a connection to a nearby Affinity Water main but has not provided confirmation that sufficient supply capacity is available. It requires written confirmation of demand, supply arrangements, reinforcement, strategic dependencies and infrastructure phasing for the homes, school, local centre and other uses.

Residents at Great Dunmow Grange, a development approved for 790 homes, have told the BBC that their water pressure has repeatedly fallen to a trickle or stopped altogether. Some say the problem has

continued for months and has affected showers, washing machines, cooking and the basic needs of families with children.

Affinity Water said the extensive development, ongoing construction and hot weather had strained demand. Great Dunmow Town Council called for urgent action and assurance that the wider network is resilient enough for the town's continuing growth.

This is a direct local warning. Existing residents are already losing a reliable water supply when household and construction demand combine. Before approving another 850 homes, the Council must require a scheme-specific assessment showing available pressure and capacity, peak and hot-weather demand, construction demand, cumulative development, required reinforcement, delivery dates and enforceable occupation limits. Existing residents must not be left with failing pressure while new development is connected.

River water quality

The Environment Agency's latest displayed classification for this part of the Chelmer is from 2022. It records Moderate ecological status, Poor phosphate status and Poor dissolved oxygen. Sewage discharges are identified among the catchment-level reasons.

The latest published classification already records a water body under pressure. Because the applicant has supplied no sufficiently current cumulative and no-deterioration assessment, the Council cannot be satisfied that the development would avoid further deterioration.

The Council should require the latest Environment Agency data and any seasonal monitoring needed to establish the current baseline and protect the river from deterioration.

Flood risk and surface-water drainage

Roofs, roads and car parks will greatly increase hard surfaces. The drainage design must show where rainwater will go, how the system performs in extreme rain, what happens if a component fails and who will maintain it.

The Council's June 2024 flood assessment and the applicant's June 2026 Flood Risk Assessment do not examine the same red line or use the same River Chelmer model. The Council assessed 70.32 hectares using the 2020 Chelmer model. The application covers 68.35 hectares and relies mainly on a 2010 model that the applicant describes as partly superseded.

The Council identifies this as one of Uttlesford's sites most affected by river flooding, surface water, climate change and access problems. It records possible flooding on Bigods Lane and requires safe access for residents and emergency vehicles. The applicant has not reconciled those findings with its different boundary and older model.

The applicant's preliminary drawings show surface-water routes crossing the site, ditches to be filled or diverted and a possible culvert that was not confirmed during survey. The applicant says no Sequential Test is needed. The Council's strategic assessment says the test must be confirmed and that the Exception Test was required for the strategic site.

The Environment Agency's formal response confirms that surface-water, reservoir, sewer and groundwater flooding were not considered in detail. It requires the Council to address those risks and the emergency-planning and rescue implications before determination. The Council must also obtain the Lead Local Flood Authority's complete assessment.

Essex County Council must state clearly which Sustainable Drainage Systems standards apply to this application. Its substantive response must address storage, discharge rates, climate-change allowances, exceedance routes, blockage, maintenance, adoption, water quality and cumulative downstream effects.

The combined effect of development on water, drainage and the River Chelmer

Major developments already built, approved or proposed around Great Dunmow—including those around Tesco, Woodlands Park, Great Dunmow Grange and the Broadway site—add roofs, roads, parking and other hard surfaces within the same wider catchment. Their attenuation ponds and SuDS systems do not remove runoff. They store, control and ultimately release it through sewers, drains, culverts, ditches and watercourses towards the River Chelmer.

Attenuation ponds reduce an immediate peak by releasing stored water over a longer period. Across numerous developments, delayed releases may overlap, prolong high water levels and leave the river and drainage system less time to recover before further rainfall. If ponds are full, saturated, poorly maintained or overtopped, emergency overflows may add to flooding. The cumulative assessment must model flood duration, consecutive storms, overlapping discharges and recovery time—not only the theoretical peak from each site considered separately.

Historic waste and contamination

The applicant's Phase II site investigation identifies a historic refuse tip about 18 metres south-east of the site. It considers possible movement of contamination and ground gases and also identifies made ground, potentially infilled features and historic workings nearby.

The report says the investigation was limited, contamination can be variable and missed, construction-worker risks were not assessed and further waste sampling may be needed.

Before permission, the Council should require a site-specific historical review, sampling plan, gas and groundwater monitoring, laboratory results, remediation and waste-management plan, construction-worker controls and independent validation. Limited clean samples are not proof that every historic waste-related risk has been ruled out.

6. Roads, buses, parking and construction

The full transport case is not complete

The traffic assessment for all 850 homes must be completed, published and independently checked. It must cover the A120, M11 Junction 8, St Edmunds Lane, Braintree Road, Stortford Road, Church End, Bigods Lane and Church End Bridge.

It must also include school traffic, every relevant development, real queues, unsafe crossings, narrow roads, town-centre parking and the seven-year construction period. Route names and broad traffic percentages are not a substitute for junction results, safety evidence and workable drawings.

The submitted Environmental Statement says that completed traffic flows, driver and pedestrian delay, pedestrian amenity, fear and intimidation, and accident and safety assessments were still to follow after the traffic model. Those matters are needed before the Council can decide whether the access and routes are acceptable.

National Highways' holding objection

On 6 August 2026 National Highways issued a holding objection and recommended that the application should not be approved before 2 October 2026. The missing Transport Assessment Addendum and strategic modelling prevent it from verifying the development's effect on the A120 and its junctions.

The submitted figures identify about 558 two-way vehicle trips in the morning peak and 447 in the evening peak, with approximately 99% of development traffic expected to travel south towards Church End and the A120 corridor. The Council should not determine the application until the missing evidence has been published, independently reviewed and National Highways has issued its further response.

Church End Bridge

The bridge-specific evidence appears in the June 2025 Statement of Common Ground between Essex County Council and Arup. An official assessment rated the bridge for vehicles up to 7.5 tonnes. Essex County Council requires a 40-tonne rating and says strengthening or replacement may be needed, including for special construction vehicles.

Before permission, the Council should publish the completed assessment, agreed works, funding, delivery date and route for heavy construction traffic while the bridge remains restricted.

St Edmunds Lane and construction traffic

The applicant predicts up to 100 construction delivery vehicles each day. That means 200 movements, with about 80% expected to be heavy goods vehicles mainly using St Edmunds Lane. On the busiest days, that is about 160 HGV movements.

St Edmunds Lane is a residential 30 mph road where parked cars can prevent two-way traffic. The applicant proposes moving some parking off the carriageway to retain 5.5 metres of clear width. Its own material acknowledges that Essex County Council guidance indicates 6.75 metres for a bus route and that this width cannot be achieved.

A 5.5-metre width has not been shown to provide safe passing space for the proposed tippers and articulated vehicles. The applicant must identify the actual vehicles and account for mirrors, trailer movement, bends, pavements, parked cars, oncoming traffic, buses and vulnerable road users.

The issue is not limited to construction. The applicant's permanent traffic work identifies the St Edmunds Lane/The Broadway and St Edmunds Lane/Braintree Road junctions for assessment. It also maps routes from the development towards the A120. The occupied development must therefore be tested as well as the temporary lorry route.

Before either use is accepted, the Council should require:

- daytime, evening and overnight parking surveys under realistic conditions;
- a plan for displaced parking and the effect on adjoining streets;
- route-wide swept paths and opposing-vehicle conflict tests;
- modelling for all 850 homes and cumulative growth;
- an independent road-safety audit covering children and vulnerable users; and
- completed air-quality, dust, noise and vibration assessments.

Public transport must work for real journeys

Active Travel England has formally identified serious accessibility concerns. It says there are no public-transport stops with a regular service within the recommended distance of the site and that the two regular stops relied upon by the applicant are more than one kilometre from the centre of the development.

It also finds only one lit walking route towards the town centre and no convenient, fully accessible and lit cycle route meeting the relevant guidance. Some routes rely on remote and unlit sections, while the delivery and timing of the proposed mobility hub remain unclear.

The 333 does not travel down St Edmunds Lane. Its stops named 'St Edmunds Lane' are on Braintree Road beside the junction. The published stop name does not establish any regular service along the lane or through the proposed estate.

The proposed 324 diversion and service increase have no binding operator commitment, complete timetable, secured funding period, first-occupation trigger or fallback. St Edmunds Lane has not been demonstrated to be a suitable regular bus route when the applicant accepts that the 6.75-metre guidance width cannot be achieved.

Before permission, the Council must secure exact routes, stop locations, accessible walking connections, dated weekday and Saturday timetables, first and last services, fares, capacity, funding, delivery triggers and a workable fallback if the proposed service is not delivered.

Emergency access, pollution and disturbance

Parking within the estate must be tested under realistic occupied conditions. Garages should count only where ordinary cars can use them. Fire engines, ambulances, refuse vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists must still be able to move when cars are parked.

The Fire Service's current reply considers existing nearby buildings but leaves access within the proposed estate unassessed. The applicant should demonstrate clear widths, bends, turning places, travel distances, blocked-route resilience and firefighting water supplies before the layout is approved in principle.

The applicant's air-quality work is also unfinished. Its Environmental Statement says the traffic-emissions assessment awaits the traffic model and a construction-dust assessment remains outstanding. Monitoring from 2020 and 2021 was affected by COVID. Later data is included, but there is no close St Edmunds Lane or Church End monitoring for fine particles.

The completed work must cover nitrogen dioxide, PM10, PM2.5, congestion, brake and tyre particles, disturbed road dust, cumulative development and enforceable mitigation.

The applicant expects construction to last about seven years, with weekday work from 7.30 am to 6.00 pm and Saturday morning work. Its noise report does not provide a detailed assessment of construction noise and vibration at existing homes along St Edmunds Lane, Church End and The Broadway.

The Council should require predictions at sensitive homes, limits, monitoring, quieter methods, complaint procedures and enforceable controls on hours, routing and particularly noisy work.

7. Healthcare capacity and access

A building is not a healthcare service

The plans show about 1,400 square metres of healthcare space. No scheme-specific NHS approval, named operator, funded business case, staffing plan or opening programme has been identified.

A building without additional doctors, nurses, appointments, equipment and operating funding would not increase capacity. Moving an existing practice into new premises would not solve the problem if the same staff and appointments were simply relocated.

The two local GP practices have 26,671 registered patients, but the scheme-specific NHS calculation has not been published. Residents cannot see how much proposed capacity would address existing pressure, how much would serve the new homes, whether the calculation used 715 or 850 homes, or which other developments were counted.

Parking at the existing local practices is already under pressure. A new service would attract patients, staff, carers, visitors and deliveries from across Dunmow, not only people able to walk from the estate.

The proposed healthcare floorspace does not guarantee additional healthcare capacity. An existing Great Dunmow practice could relocate or operate a branch without providing additional doctors, nurses or appointments. The facility should receive no planning credit unless the NHS commissioner confirms additional funded GP and nurse posts, increased appointment capacity, opening hours, services and a firm delivery date. Existing healthcare provision must not be reduced or merely transferred from elsewhere in Great Dunmow.

The applicant has not identified the number of healthcare parking spaces. It must provide a plan for staff, patients, disabled users, carers, visitors and deliveries and show how overspill into surrounding streets will be prevented.

For 850 homes, NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board should expressly assess whether a new, separately staffed practice is required. If it proposes another model, it should show an equivalent net increase in clinical rooms, staff, appointments and funded capacity.

Before the healthcare space is treated as a benefit, the Council should require:

- a published NHS assessment of existing premises, rooms, staff and appointments;
- a confirmed commissioner and provider;
- funded additional clinical staff and appointments;
- a funded building, fit-out, equipment and operating plan;
- adequate parking and accessible transport; and
- an opening date linked to occupation, with a fallback if no provider takes the building.

Hospital demand

New residents will also need accident and emergency care, hospital beds, operations, maternity, cancer and outpatient services. For March 2026, the NHS trust serving Broomfield Hospital reported:

- 65.1% of A&E patients within four hours;
- 62.7% of cancer diagnoses within 28 days;
- 54.0% of urgent cancer treatment within 62 days; and
- 50.6% of planned treatment within 18 weeks.

Each result was below its stated standard.

The applicant has not shown which hospitals Broadway residents would use, what demand 850 homes would create or how that demand would be met alongside other growth.

8. Schools and childcare

Primary school delivery

The adopted Great Dunmow framework and the application set aside about 2.1 hectares for a primary school and early-years provision. Land shown on a plan is not an open school.

The Council still needs to know how many children 850 homes are expected to produce, who will fund, build and run the school, when it will open and where children will go if it is delayed.

On 5 August 2026 Essex County Council Education objected because the Land Compliance Study referred to in the Planning Statement could not be found. It requires the full report and time to assess it. The Council should not determine the application until that study has been published and ECC Education has completed its assessment.

Helena Romanes traffic must be counted

The Helena Romanes relocation assessment says most pupils currently use dedicated school buses and only 4% are dropped off by car. It does not publish the date, sample size, weather or seasonal basis for that figure.

The 4% is an assumption, not a guarantee of future behaviour after the school moves. The School Travel Plan says its first comprehensive pupil and staff surveys will not take place until September 2027.

The Broadway traffic assessment must therefore test the relocated school's full traffic under realistic wet-weather, winter and bus-disruption conditions. New families should not move in first and wait years for school places or transport to catch up.

9. Housing and affordable housing

The Council needs a clear mix of smaller homes, family homes, accessible homes, homes for older people and affordable homes. The additional 135 homes must bring their proper share of affordable housing and infrastructure, not simply more market homes.

The application form records all 552 market homes and 298 affordable homes as having an unknown number of bedrooms. It gives no total for one-, two-, three- or four-plus-bedroom homes. The Design and Access Statement says that the final mix and tenure strategy remains to be decided.

Without a bedroom, tenure and phasing schedule, the projected population and demand for schools, healthcare, transport, parking and other services cannot be calculated reliably.

Before housing delivery is treated as a benefit, the Council should secure minimum and maximum numbers by bedroom size, dwelling type, tenure, accessible and adaptable standard, older-person or specialist provision and development phase. Affordable homes should be spread through the development and delivered alongside market homes.

Local experience shows why clear protection matters. At Woodlands Park, an obligation for 40% affordable housing was later reduced to 23.7%. Other changes affected environmental standards, a youth shelter, accessible homes, transport payments and open space.

At Great Dunmow Grange, a later agreement removed one form of supported housing and weakened a protection intended to keep some homes affordable if a lender took control.

Those examples demonstrate a real local delivery risk. Broadway's housing commitments must therefore be clear, binding across the whole site and protected against later reduction. Any proposal to reduce them must be subject to public scrutiny.

10. Shops, jobs and everyday needs

A coloured area labelled "local centre" does not guarantee useful shops or services. The Council needs to know what will be provided, who will build and equip it, when it will open and what happens if units remain empty.

The application does not secure a pub, restaurant or comparable evening and social venue within the development. Residents will therefore travel into Great Dunmow for meals, drinks, entertainment and social activities. Many of those journeys will be made by car because of the distance, poor public transport and unlit routes. Town-centre parking is already heavily used. The Co-op car park serves Co-op customers and cannot be counted as spare public parking for 850 additional homes. The applicant must assess evening and weekend journeys, current parking occupancy and cumulative demand from other developments.

The application form leaves proposed employee numbers blank. The applicant's benefits statement estimates only 108 completed-site jobs, including 38 at the school and 37 at the healthcare facility. Those jobs depend on the promised facilities opening and will not necessarily match residents' occupations.

The applicant estimates about 2,142 residents but does not show how many would work, where they would work or how many jobs Great Dunmow could provide. Construction jobs are temporary and do not answer the long-term commuting question.

Before treating the site as sustainable, the Council should require a resident-employment and commuting assessment. It should cover likely destinations, local job capacity, home working, shift patterns, public-transport times and costs, car use, parking and carbon emissions. It should test real journeys to Bishop's Stortford, Stansted Airport, Chelmsford and London.

11. Electricity, policing and community safety

Electricity capacity

UK Power Networks' public information shows that the Dunmow supply point is expected to have less spare capacity by 2030 and that other projects are already seeking connections.

The applicant has not shown that firm capacity, reinforcement and energisation will be available for 850 homes, heat pumps, vehicle charging, the school, healthcare space, drainage pumping and local centre.

The Council should obtain a scheme-specific UK Power Networks response covering the point of connection, firm capacity, queued demand, reinforcement, cost, funding and energisation date. Electricity is a separate infrastructure dependency, not a general community promise.

Police capacity

The development would add approximately 2,000 residents. That additional population requires a clear assessment of the policing resources needed during construction and after occupation.

Essex Police has requested £589,664 for officer setup, construction-phase community support, vehicles, charging, number-plate recognition and accommodation capacity.

A financial contribution alone does not guarantee additional local policing. The final agreement must identify what additional officers, equipment and facilities will be provided, when they will become available, which area they will serve and how delivery will be monitored.

12. The combined effect on Great Dunmow

This application cannot be judged in isolation. Broadway will use the same roads, health services, schools, sewers, shops, car parks and town-centre services as existing residents and people living in other developments.

The Council should publish one clear list of all relevant developments and use it in every assessment. It should avoid counting the same spare capacity or promised improvement more than once. It should also test whether several schemes will be occupied before the required improvements are ready.

Identifying a road, electricity circuit, school, surgery or sewage upgrade as necessary is not the same as showing that it is funded, approved and ready before residents need it.

The cumulative assessment should connect the subjects rather than treating each one alone. For example, an impractical bus service increases car use; extra car use affects queues, pollution, parking and road safety; delays to local healthcare increase travel to existing surgeries and hospitals.

13. Every promise must be binding and deliverable

The houses are likely to be built. The school, healthcare service, local centre, bus services, sports facilities and other benefits are less certain.

For every important promise, the final legal agreement must say:

- exactly what will be provided;
- who will provide it and who will pay;
- when it must be ready;
- how delivery will be checked; and
- what happens if it is delayed, reduced or never provided.

The commitments must apply across the whole site even if the land is sold, split into smaller parts or built by different companies. Occupied homes must be counted across the entire development so facilities cannot be delayed by dividing construction into phases.

The June 2026 Planning Statement offers 35% affordable housing, open space, an approximately 2.1-hectare school-site transfer, a healthcare-facility transfer and unspecified highway and transport improvements.

Important matters—including tenure, phasing, management, transfer periods and other contributions—are still described as matters to be agreed. No separate negotiated agreement was identified in the application documents checked through 6 August 2026.

Transferring land or a building is not the same as delivering a funded, staffed and operating school or health service. Showing pitches, a multi-use games area or public open space on a plan is not the same as providing funded maintenance, ownership, adoption and public access.

The final agreement must identify the works, funding, responsible bodies, triggers, deadlines, monitoring, enforcement and fallback arrangements. It must also secure long-term management of sports land, open space, drainage and ecological mitigation.

14. What I am asking the Council to do

I ask Uttlesford District Council to refuse this application.

If the Council is not ready to refuse, it should delay determination until the applicant has supplied and the Council has checked:

- assessments based on all 850 homes and one complete list of relevant developments;
- resolution of the National Highways, Environment Agency, Essex Wildlife Trust, ECC Education and Stansted holding objections, together with the final views of the other relevant consultees;
- a current landscape, heritage, archaeology and countryside-gap assessment;
- the missing Agricultural Land Quality Report or an adequate detailed agricultural-land and soil survey;
- complete sewage, river-quality, drainage, flood-risk and contamination evidence;
- a safe construction and permanent-traffic solution for Church End Bridge and St Edmunds Lane;
- a funded public-transport plan with exact routes, timetables, stops, fares and delivery triggers;
- complete air-quality, dust, construction-noise and vibration assessments;
- confirmed, funded and timed GP, school and childcare provision, together with a scheme-specific NHS assessment of hospital demand and required mitigation;
- a fixed housing, tenure and affordable-housing package based on current need;
- a realistic employment and commuting assessment;
- scheme-specific electricity capacity and energisation evidence;
- a clear local police-capacity and delivery plan; and
- a completed legal agreement containing exact, funded and enforceable commitments.

The Council is being asked to approve a permanent change to Church End and Great Dunmow. It should not do so while basic questions about harm, infrastructure and delivery remain unanswered.

Infrastructure and services must be ready before residents need them—not promised for years later.