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The Independent Planning Inspector
Tendring District Council Draft Local Plan Consultation
c/o Mr Simon Meecham
Tendring District Council
Council Offices
Thorpe Road
Weeley
Essex CO16 9AJ

Ms Carol Bannister
9 Waylands Drive
Weeley
Essex CO16 9JS
[redacted]

27 July 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Tendring District Local Plan – Publication Draft – Section 2

I would like to submit the following comments and objections to some of the proposals in this consultation document.

The Parish of Weeley comprises two comparatively small villages: Weeley Heath with a housing stock of approximately 260 dwellings, which as the result of a number of fairly recently successful planning applications is due to increase in size by an unfair 27% and Weeley with almost 500 homes situated north of the railway line. The latter is currently experiencing an increase of approximately 10% in its housing stock, which seems a reasonable figure for the smallest of the seven Rural Service Centres.

We are told in **Paragraph 3.2.1.3.1** of the **Spatial Strategy** that the Rural Service Centres will accommodate a modest increase in housing. Furthermore, we are told that the Local Plan identifies opportunities for smaller-scale growth and that proposed housing allocations are at a level that is fair, achievable and sustainable for each of the settlements. Yet the bulk of the allocation is at Weeley with **at least** 280 dwellings including mixed use south of Thorpe Road, plus 24 at the Council Offices (a much needed facility) and just 35 by the Montana Roundabout in Little Clacton, with none at any of the other Rural Service Centres. This appears unjust and disproportionate for Weeley particularly when **Policy LP1 (Housing Supply)** includes this land south of Thorpe Road as one of its **Strategic** Allocations with its own Policy **SAMU5**. It has been promoted by Rose Builders Ltd (The sponsors of the Red Arrows at Clacton Airshow) and lies directly behind 20 new properties recently completed by the same developer. Yet in addition to being much valued agricultural land, it also forms an integral part of Weeley's heritage and historical rural landscape. Barrack Field and Hospital Field can be traced back to Napoleonic times and form part of the setting of the listed St Andrew's Church – the '**church in the fields**'.

The vast majority of residents in Weeley feel let down by those who should be looking after their best interests and surely to allow development on this historically important rural area would be contrary to **Paragraphs 7 and 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Policy SPL1 (Managing Growth)** and **Policy PPL9 (Listed Buildings)** of Tendring's Draft Local Plan. Weeley village, which has 8 listed buildings,

is an agricultural/equestrian/tourist area and expanding the Settlement Development Boundary by such a considerable extent in this most valued part of the village would be causing overriding harm to its character and identity. It would most certainly not be contributing to 'preserving and enhancing the quality of existing communities and their environs' as required by **Policies SPL2 (Settlement Development Boundaries), SPL3 (Sustainable Design), PPL3 (The Rural Landscape)** and **SP5 (Place Shaping Principles)**, but instead would be going some way towards destroying a village steeped in history. Furthermore, the Plan would be failing to meet **Objective 7.**

The developer has already established a legal interest in the land and the building company, which appears to have mushroomed in size during recent years, has expressed the possibility of providing a small number of 'almshouses' on any sites within Weeley that they manage to have included in the emerging Local Plan. Interestingly, this is already in the process of being achieved in Lawford through a private limited company named Lawford Housing Enterprise Trust, set up by the developer and a small group of Lawford District and Parish Councillors acting as individuals. Coupled with the fact that the Bespoke Articles allow the Trust's name to be changed at any time surely, this information indicates the possibility that a certain degree of collusion might be taking place.

Policy SP 5 also aims for North Essex to create well-connected places that prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport services above the use of the private car. Given that the busy and often congested B1033 passes through the village, from where there is also a network of other narrow, winding country lanes providing access to neighbouring villages, it is evident this could be difficult to achieve and potentially dangerous to attempt in this particular area.

Planned improvements to the A12, A120 and A133 will take many years to deliver and would not even solve the existing traffic problems experienced in Weeley, where the local road systems including Clacton Road, the B1441, and the B1033 leading to Frinton and Walton via Thorpe-le-Soken are already heavily congested, particularly during the holiday season <u>and</u> at rush hour times throughout the year. Bus and rail services are limited, Weeley is not on the fast direct line to London Liverpool Street and our local B roads and narrow winding lanes are not safe for cyclists. Moreover, the majority of these lanes do not have pavements and cannot safely accommodate pedestrians. Consequently, such expansion, including all the proposed development in Frinton and Walton that would generate still further traffic and congestion through our village, would be unworkable in the area bringing misery to existing residents, who would also be living by a building site for many years to come, (for the more elderly for the rest of their lives) thus causing a detrimental effect to their health and wellbeing. The situation would be contrary to **Policy CP 1 (Sustainable Transport and Accessibility)** and also to **Policy HP 1 (Improving Health and Wellbeing)**, which aims to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. Furthermore, the serious issues relating to the high number of recent fatalities on the A133 between Weeley and Clacton need to be addressed <u>before</u> any large-scale development is even considered as a possibility for this region.

There appears to be a significant amount of contradiction within the document. For example, **Policy SP 6 (Spatial Strategy for North Essex)** tells us that development will be accommodated within or adjoining settlements according to their **scale, sustainability and existing role** and that future growth will be planned to **ensure settlements maintain their distinctive character and role.** Consequently, there is no

justification for the residents of Weeley to be treated in this callous manner whereby an increase in the housing stock of at least 304 properties constituting an increase of at least 62% will be forced upon them in an area that is most dear to their hearts.

The bus and train services remain limited with periods of longer than an hour for a significant number of the buses and trains running between Clacton and Colchester, few in the evenings and with no trains on Sundays but that is the price we pay for choosing and wanting to live in a peaceful, rural, farming area. However, the preamble to **Policy SAMU5 (Development South of Thorpe Road, Weeley)** in Section 9.5 states *"The Council will work with Network Rail, bus and train operators and developers to explore opportunities to make improvements to Weeley Station. This will include improvements to the facilities, frequency of services, the interchange between bus and rail transport and to* ***support development around the railway station*** *that would help to facilitate this".* Yet, Tendring District Council appears to be doing nothing to deal with the problem of the station forecourt being cordoned off since April 2017, by the owners of the adjacent scrapyard who have filled it with old vehicles.

The enclosed photograph shows the Heras fencing lined with opaque black material that now encircles an area, which has, until this situation occurred, been used by rail passengers for many, many decades as a drop off point and for car parking. No vehicles have previously been left there overnight and although, currently, the unmanned station is used by a relatively small number of passengers these people need to feel safe when accessing and leaving the platform but this right has now been taken away from them. Local residents are protesting to Network Rail, Greater Anglia and Tendring Council about this unresolved situation only to be told by Network Rail that the land was obtained by adverse possession, which is ridiculous and more so since Land Registry details indicate that the forecourt was sold for £37,000! To add insult to injury Tendring District Council appears reluctant to even insist that a 'change of use' planning application be submitted. This is an ongoing problem, yet Council Officers and a small group of District Councillors from other areas continue to quote the presence of a station at Weeley as being one of the main reasons for proposing to allocate such a disproportionate number of new dwellings in our village. Furthermore, this is despite the fact that no allocations have been made in Alresford, Great Bentley and Thorpe-le-Soken, three other Rural Service Centres, which also have stations. I am aware, however, that they have all suffered from recent permissions being granted to opportunistic developers.

In their introduction to this version of the Draft Local Plan the authors have admitted that whilst working to achieve sustainable development, planning for economic growth and aiming to meet the social needs of a growing population, the places that make the Tendring District an attractive place to live, work and visit need to be protected. Yet, **part (h)** of **Policy SAMU5 (DEVELOPMENT SOUTH OF THORPE ROAD, WEELEY)** advocates the provision of a pedestrian/cycle bridge over the railway line as a replacement for the existing level crossing prior to the occupation of the one-hundredth dwelling. How can the Council justify the erection of such a monstrosity that would mar what would remain of the rural backdrop to St Andrew's Church, the listed 'church in the fields? That particular footpath leads to nowhere apart from the church, a private road leading up to a farm and Weeley Woods, which are not open throughout the year. The little-used level crossing is safe and should remain.

The land off Thorpe Road should also continue as much needed agricultural fields and its current ecological value should not be ignored. The vast majority of local residents are adamant that the surrounding magnificent historical rural landscape deserves protection from developers and following the guidance set out in the **NPPF** have shown their willingness to support another far more appropriate and less obtrusive proposal for development on the edge of the village, if indeed Weeley has to accept this disproportionate amount of extra housing.

The car boot field **(Publication SA Ref. WE7)**, incorrectly labelled as 'Land at Hawk Farm', has been submitted by its owner on a number of occasions for inclusion in the new Local Plan. It is on previously used land thus complying with **Par. 111 of the NPPF** and agricultural work has not been conducted there for many years. Although the proposal is for up to 380 dwellings, 2.8 ha of B1 employment land (including a local centre (A1 and D1/D2 use)), land for a primary school together with associated amenity and open space provision, the owner has offered to reduce the numbers to some extent yet the Council has been unwilling to consider his submission, for no good reason, despite the fact that the site is along the same road (B1033, Thorpe Road) as their favoured option **(Publication Ref. WE10)**. Although it sits just before the end of a 40mph limit this is a minor issue, which could easily be altered, yet Tendring District Council remains intransigent and determined to ignore the wishes and reasoning of local residents.

The village has no Doctor's Surgery and the NHS has no plans to provide new surgeries; the small and delightful St Andrew's Church of England Primary School is constantly oversubscribed; ever present sewerage and surface water drainage issues in some areas of the village remain a constant concern whenever heavy rain falls; as previously mentioned, the internal road network consisting of B roads, narrow unclassified roads and surrounding country lanes, was not built for the anticipated increase in traffic and, no, we will not all be resorting to cycling, walking or relying on public transport to reach our destinations. Therefore, the future looks far from bright for our currently vibrant village community.

In conclusion, when considering its adverse effects on the residents of Weeley, the Tendring Publication Draft Plan fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF, particularly in terms of the three important elements of sustainability – economic, environmental and social. Given the reasons set out in this letter, the Plan is not sound and fails to meet all the tests set out in the NPPF. It is not based on rigorous evidence and is not consistent with national policy. However, if **Policy SAMU5 (Development at Thorpe Road, Weeley)** was removed from the Plan and the allocation changed to **Development at the Car Boot Field, Colchester Road**, some aspects of my objection could possibly be removed.

I would also like to request permission to attend and speak at the Examination in Public.

Yours faithfully

Encl. Photograph of Weeley Station
Consultation Letter 08 October 2015
Consultation Letter 07 September 2016

Carol Bannister
(On behalf of Weeley Residents' Action Group)

WEELEY STATION MAY 2017

Mr G Guiver
Planning Policy Manager
Tendring District Council
Thorpe Road
Weeley
Essex CO16 9AJ

Carol Bannister
9 Waylands Drive
Weeley
Essex CO16 9JS

08 October 2015

Dear Mr Guiver

RE: Issues and Options Consultation Document September 2015

I am writing to submit the following comments regarding possible future growth in Tendring.

Although the reduction in total numbers for the area from approximately 12,000 dwellings to 10,000 is encouraging this figure is still far too large for a predominately tourist and farming area, which is bounded on one side by the sea. Furthermore, we are now told that Tendring has not been included in the list of priority improvements for rail services, which will exacerbate the inevitable roads crisis that is bound to arise from these housing targets that are based partially on Government projections. Worryingly, we are also told that the building of 10,000 homes will only result in the creation of an additional 3,000 to 5,000 jobs within the Tendring Peninsula.

I would now like to address Issue 6 of the consultation document, which deals with options for growth. We are a close-knit community in Weeley, with most of us living in the area because we enjoy our rural environment. Such large-scale proposals for our small village would sentence residents to living constantly alongside gridlocked roads and within a building site for many years to come – it is inhuman and unworkable! Currently, there are less than 500 dwellings north of the railway line and to introduce a further 800, thus almost trebling the size would totally destroy our small rural community. It would be disproportionate and unfair.

It would also be contrary to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 7 Bullet Point 3 (Environmental Role), as in no way would these proposals be 'contributing to protecting and enhancing Weeley's natural, built and historic environment'. For instance, the land south of Thorpe Road has historical significance dating back to Napoleonic times and the parish itself has 13 listed buildings, 8 of which are north of the railway line. It is not simply the buildings themselves that are of historic significance but also their landscape setting. (Par. 28 NPPF)

The B1033 (Colchester Road/Thorpe Road), and the B1441 (Clacton Road) would be unable to accommodate, safely, the large amounts of additional traffic generated by such extensive development. Such large-scale expansion would most certainly not be contributing to supporting a strong, vibrant and healthy community as set out in Section 7 Bullet Point 2 (Social Role) of the NPPF– it would be destroying it! It would annihilate the character and identity of Weeley, thus contravening National Planning Policies.

There is currently no Doctor's surgery in Weeley and NHS policies indicate that a new surgery will not be forthcoming. Colchester Hospital continues to struggle under the inevitable pressure of having to cover too wide an area. We have already learnt that were this level of development to take place, proposals for a new primary school in the village are unlikely to materialise and to where will the secondary age pupils be bussed? There is a limit to the number that can be accommodated at Tendring Technology College.

Partly due to the high water table there are already serious foul water and surface water drainage issues within the village and residents have little confidence that the necessary improvements to the infrastructure would ever actually take place, were approval given for these massive land allocation proposals within Weeley. To date, there has been no confirmation that the necessary funding will be made available and it is apparent that the level of developer contributions in the form of Community Infrastructure Levies would be insufficient to cover the full costs.

We, the local residents, can see that the proposals are unworkable. Bus and rail services are limited, the road network within Weeley and Weeley Heath cannot be adapted to accommodate the inevitable huge increases in traffic flow that would be generated and the existing problems experienced on a daily basis by commuters driving to work in Clacton and Colchester are already diabolical. Furthermore, during the summer months the Colchester Road/Thorpe Road section of the B1033 is already filled with constant streams of traffic as vehicles proceed down to Frinton and Walton. How can it cope with further large increases? And spare a thought for Thorpe-le-Soken High Street!

These proposals, which are purely landowner and developer driven would destroy our rural village and take away productive and much needed farmland, which can never be replaced. Planners are most certainly not treating Weeley in a fair and proportionate way by declaring there is also the potential to expand even further west along the A133 to deliver an additional 2000+ homes and associated facilities beyond 2032!

A more realistically workable option would be that proposed at Hartley Gardens, which incorporates a new link road between 'Bovill's Roundabout' on the A133 and the roundabout junction of St John's Road and Jaywick Lane. It would certainly help to relieve traffic on the existing road network and the developers have already given assurances that the plans are achievable and financially viable.

Further consideration should also be given to developing settlements along the A120 either by the Tendring Central area or near Horsley Cross as it makes far more sense to ensure that a considerable proportion of the increase in traffic, which will be generated from such large expansion, can access a major road more directly. We are told there will be updates to the A12, the A120 and to some extent the A133 yet we know full well there is little if anything that can be done to widen the existing network of minor roads and lanes within the Tendring Peninsula.

I cannot agree with the general assumptions about where most housing development should go. For example, why is Alresford not mentioned? It also has a station, albeit like Weeley on the 'slow line', and landowners have been offering sites for development. Why is Alresford being treated as a special area that can escape even limited development? Manningtree is in a strategic position within the Tendring Peninsula as its station lies on the line running between London, Colchester, Ipswich and Norwich. An ambitious plan to provide a 90-minute service between Norwich to London has recently been announced by the Department of Transport thus prompting me to suggest that any land promoted around Manningtree, Lawford and Mistley should be given serious consideration. An additional 900 homes around Frinton, Walton, Manningtree and Brightlingsea seems rather small in comparison to 800 plus a future 2,000+ in the small village of Weeley. So also does a figure of just 1,000 dwellings on either side of the Colchester fringe. Until recently 3,000 on each side was being proposed and a report supportive of these numbers could be seen on Colchester Borough Council's website with references being made to the expansion of Essex University and the development of the 'Knowledge Gateway'. However that report has been removed and without any accompanying explanation a total of 6,000 homes on the fringe has become 2,000 – why?

Why only a total of 300 around the larger villages of Elmstead Market, Great Bentley, Little Clacton, St Osyth and Thorpe-le-Soken when so much is proposed for Weeley, which was defined by consultants Drummond-Hay as a Rural Service Centre where limited new development should take place? Why did TDC planning officers take it upon themselves to re-name Weeley as a Strategic Rural Service Centre with further areas within it that had been rejected by the consultants now being considered as acceptable for development?

There is not a local need for the large numbers that are being quoted and a recently published Housing Needs Report commissioned by TDC admits that one of the factors taken into account when arriving at the target figures is the anticipated London overspill. It would be unfair and disproportionate were Weeley to be swamped by large numbers of people from outside the area. I trust my comments will be given due consideration.

Yours sincerely

Carol Bannister

Mr Simon Meecham
Planning Policy Manager
Tendring District Council
Council Offices
Thorpe Road
Weeley CO16 9AJ

Ms Carol Bannister
9 Waylands Drive
Weeley
CO16 9JS

07 September 2016

Dear Mr Meecham

RE: TENDRING DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN
PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT, JULY 2016

I would like to submit the following comments and objections to some of the proposals in this consultation document.

Policy SP 3 (Providing for Employment), which gives figures for the amount of new employment land to be allocated in North Essex between 2016 and 2033, quotes a figure of 40 hectares for the entire Tendring District. However, far in excess of that amount is entered in the table set out in **Policy PP7 (Employment Allocations)**, which has a total of 63.28 hectares, 10 hectares of which is allocated to the rural village of Weeley. At best, therefore, Weeley would be expected to provide just under 16% of the requirement for the whole of the Tendring District and at worst the figure would be as much as 25%, both unacceptable levels for the existing residents who put great value on the identity and character of their village and the nature of its rural surroundings.

Furthermore, Weeley is a small village, steeped in history, with less than 500 properties north of the railway line and to introduce in excess of 1400 new homes, including some mixed use areas, plus 10 hectares of employment land would be unfair and disproportionate, thus contrary to **Par. 1 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** and to **Policy SPL 1 (Managing Growth)** of the proposed Tendring District Local Plan.

Expanding the Settlement Development Boundary by such a massive extent would totally destroy the rural character and identity of the parish of Weeley and rob the country of much needed agricultural land. There is no way that it would be making a positive contribution to the quality of the local landscape as required by **Draft Policies SPL 2, SPL 3 and PPL 3** and most certainly would **not** be contributing to 'conserving and enhancing the natural environment' but instead would be causing overriding irreversible harm and destroying the natural habitat of the abundant wildlife in the area. Clearly, the proposed sites are environmentally unsustainable.

Policy SP 5 (Place Shaping Principles) stipulates that all new development should respond **positively to local character and context, to preserve and enhance the quality of existing communities.** In no way would this be happening to Weeley, which is that part of the parish north of the railway line, were it to be quadrupled in size. There is no getting away from the fact that Tendring District Council is planning to destroy a village steeped in history and in so doing, would be annihilating a thriving, vibrant village community. **That is NOT within the spirit of the NPPF.**

Policy SP 5 also aims for North Essex to create well-connected places that prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport services above the use of the private car. Given that the busy and often congested B1033 passes through the village, from where there is also a network of other narrow, winding country lanes providing access to neighbouring villages, it is evident this would be difficult to achieve and potentially dangerous to attempt.

Planned improvements to the A12, A120 and A133 will take many years to deliver and would not even solve the existing traffic problems experienced in Weeley, where the local road systems including Clacton Road, the B1441, and the B1033 leading to Frinton and Walton via Thorpe-le-Soken are already heavily congested, particularly during the holiday season and at rush hour times throughout the year. Bus and rail services are limited, Weeley is not on the fast line to London Liverpool Street and our local B roads and narrow winding lanes are not safe for cyclists. Consequently, such massive expansion would be unworkable in this area bringing misery to existing residents, living on a building site for many years to come, (for the more elderly for the rest of their lives) thus causing a detrimental effect to their health and wellbeing. This would be contrary to **Policy CP 1 (Sustainable Transport and Accessibility)** and also to **Policy HP 1 (Improving Health and Wellbeing)** of the proposed Plan that aims to help people have happier, healthier and longer lives with less inequality. Furthermore, the serious issues relating to the high number of recent fatalities on the A133 between Weeley and Clacton need to be addressed before any large-scale development is even considered as a possibility for this area.

There appears to be a significant amount of contradiction within the document. For example, **Policy SP 6 (Spatial Strategy for North Essex)** tells us that development will be accommodated within or adjoining settlements according to their **scale, sustainability and existing role** and that future growth will be planned to **ensure settlements maintain their distinctive character and role.** There is no justification whatsoever, nor indeed justice for Weeley, the smallest in the original list of Rural Service Centres to suddenly be re-classified as an expanded settlement simply because it has a railway station on a slow line. There is no getting away from the fact that the bus and train services are limited with periods of longer than an hour for a significant number of the buses and trains running between Clacton and Colchester, few in the evenings and with no trains on Sundays but that is the price we pay for choosing and wanting to live in a peaceful, rural, farming area. In addition, most adults with any sense and self-discipline and who are physically able to do so, budget in order that they can afford to run a car and particularly in the countryside, in the twenty-first century, nobody has the right to tell them they should leave the vehicle at home and walk or try to travel by public transport instead. This is outrageous as are any plans to turn the village of Weeley into a town without the approval, co-operation and consent of its parish council and existing residents.

The table in **Policy LP 1 (Housing Supply)** indicates that for a district-wide housing requirement of 550 homes per year during the plan period Weeley's contribution would be 304 residential properties, constituting an increase of 62% in the number of homes currently north of the railway line. That in itself is a disproportionate, unfair and unacceptable amount for an existing close-knit community to absorb. However, outrageously, we are told that if the District figure has to increase to 600 dwellings per year, the ENTIRE AMOUNT OF EXTRA HOUSING REQUIRED DURING THE PLAN PERIOD WILL BE DUMPED AT WEELEY, resulting in a total of 1,411 (elsewhere we are told 1,425, as 14 proposed at the top of St Andrew's Road have been omitted), producing a scandalous increase in housing stock for our small village of 300%, in addition to anything between 16% and 25% of the entire district-wide new

employment site allocations being placed in Weeley!!! This would be totally unjustified and an unwelcome, disruptive intrusion on the lives of those of us who live in this delightful village and who recognise these proposals as being unworkable.

Also of considerable concern is that although details of the number of dwellings proposed for each of the residential and mixed use sites appear not to be shown within this document we, as residents, are aware that the developer who has already established a legal interest in the land to the south of Thorpe Road, Weeley, to accommodate a mixed use development including 304 properties (beyond the area where his company is already building 20 properties) is also the developer who sponsored the Red Arrows on both days of the Clacton Airshow, a show that Tendring District Council was determined would achieve even greater success than last year. Furthermore, he has also established a legal interest in land off Crow Lane (which leads up to the small village of Tendring) where, much to the despair of residents, he proposes to build a further 307 properties, if the higher density level of 600 properties per year throughout the district is required. Also, this building company, which appears to have mushroomed in size during recent years, has expressed the possibility of providing a small number of 'almshouses' on any sites within Weeley that they manage to have included in the emerging Local Plan. Interestingly, this is already in the process of being achieved in Lawford through a private limited company named Lawford Housing Enterprise Trust set up by the developer and a small group of Lawford District and Parish Councillors acting as individuals. Surely, these facts indicate the possibility that a certain degree of collusion might be taking place.

Currently, a considerable amount of land appears to be available throughout rural areas in the district as landowners are being encouraged to realise there is far more money to be had in selling their land for development purposes than continuing to use it for much needed farmland. In fact, there are far more suitable locations for large-scale developments than Weeley. For example, simply having 1,250 dwellings as Tendring's contribution, during this plan period, to the proposed East Colchester/West Tendring new garden community certainly does not appear to correspond in scale to that which is planned for Weeley, considering that the former should be integrated into the 'Knowledge Gateway' an important area incorporating Essex University. Secondly, the potential of the A120 corridor as an area for future large-scale development appears to have been ignored without adequate explanation.

Plans for such massive over-development would also be contrary to the requirements of **Section 7 of the NPPF** as in no way would it be 'contributing to protecting and enhancing Weeley's natural, built and historic environment'. For instance, the land south of Thorpe Road has historical significance dating back to Napoleonic times and the parish itself has 13 listed buildings, 8 of which are north of the railway line. It is not simply the buildings themselves that are of historic significance but also their landscape setting as explained in **Par. 28 of the NPPF** and in the proposed **Policy PPL 9**. This is particularly so for the picturesque St Andrew's Church, which truly is **'the church in the fields'**. Yet that will all change if 300+ properties within a mixed use development are built on nearby fields and as a result **Objective 7** of the emerging Local Plan, which seeks to conserve and enhance Tendring District's heritage, respecting historic buildings and their settings, links and views, would not be fully met.

The majority of residents in the parish of Weeley are content with their current village centres, namely The Street with the Black Boy Public House and restaurant opposite one end and the general store/post office and part-time bakery near the other. That area is a hive of activity on Saturday mornings when locals spend some considerable time chatting to each

other. The other centre is by St Andrew's School, the village hall and recreation field, which is another meeting place for people from both this parish and the surrounding area. The majority of residents choose to live in Weeley because they enjoy its rural environment, a considerable number having left towns and cities for the countryside. They deserve the right to visit other more urban areas of their choice when they so wish and should not have a new neighbourhood centre as described in **Policy PP3 (Village and Neighbourhood Centres)** imposed upon them. A group of other people who do not live in our village should not have the right to change its nature and identity forever, against the wishes of the vast majority of its residents! We vigorously object to being 'swallowed up' by urbanisation in the form of massive housing estates, employment sites and a new 'village centre' – we will no longer be a village!

Weeley is also a tourist area with a number of successfully run 'safeguarded' holiday parks. People choose to purchase or rent holiday caravans/lodges/chalets in this parish because they value its rural surroundings, public footpaths, proximity to the coast and peaceful way of life. Its current contribution to Tendring District's rural economy should not be ignored. Many people make the conscious decision to holiday in areas that have an equestrian, farming environment, as does Weeley. AN IMPORTANT POINT TO NOTE IS THAT NO MENTION IS MADE OF THE 20 HOLIDAY PITCHES THAT WERE GRANTED AT APPEAL FOR STARENA LODGE, CLACTON ROAD, WEELEY IN JANUARY 2014. THE WORK HAS NOW COMMENCED ON THE SITE, WHICH ALSO INCLUDES 4 CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL USE RESIDENTIAL CARAVANS AND HAS BEEN RENAMED OAKLEIGH PARK. Reservations are already being made but, crucially, the area has **not** been marked as a holiday site or safeguarded holiday site on the Weeley/Weeley Heath Policy Map and there is no specific mention of it in the information accompanying **Policy PP 11 (Holiday Parks).** Is this an error?

The area of which Weeley is a part has a high water table with impermeable clay soil and is prone to surface water flooding. This situation is likely to be exacerbated by such large-scale over-development as is proposed for the village and consequently there is every possibility that **Objective 9**, regarding the risk of flooding, would also not be met. The existing infrastructure whether it concerns sewage issues, surface water drainage, health services, school places, roads and pavements in dire need of repair, is failing to cope now and there is no guarantee whatsoever that the necessary improvements and updates would ever materialise. Selecting Weeley as an 'expanded settlement' would consequently be socially and economically unsustainable.

There appears to be some inconsistency in the figures quoted in Section 5.9 **(Traveller Sites)**, as the last sentence of Par. 5.36 states that to meet the residual requirement, **4** additional pitches would be required between 2014 and 2033. Yet Par. 5.38 refers to **5** additional pitches expected to be needed up to 2033 and **Policy LP 9 (Traveller Sites)** identifies **5** additional pitches.

A question that needs to be addressed in relation to the **10 pitches** now allocated to **Spring Stables**, Gutteridge Hall Lane, Weeley, (8 of which already have planning permission) concerns the fact that the owner was recently advertising caravans for rent online at the Gumtree website. The published photographs showed the existing 3 Traveller pitches, but since the advertisements originally appeared these now contain considerably more caravans than are permitted and the advertised name of the site has been changed to **Oakleigh Caravan Site**, Gutteridge Hall Lane. Furthermore, the owner has told a friend of mine that he no longer intends letting out to Travellers. Surely, this would have serious implications

regarding the nature of the permission that was granted at appeal and the Traveller pitch allocations for the District.

Overall, the proposals are certainly not on a scale that meets just a local need and do not have the support of the vast majority of residents of Weeley, who have chosen to live in a small rural settlement and enjoy being part of a thriving village community. Thus the requirements set out in **Par. 52 of the NPPF** have not been met since the proposals to drastically change Weeley into an 'expanded settlement' do not have the support of its residents or of the residents from neighbouring villages. Consequently, I would request that the vast numbers proposed, particularly near the existing centres of our delightful village are withdrawn from this emerging plan. I would also request permission to attend and speak at the Examination in Public when this takes place in 2017.

Finally, it is worth mentioning at this point that, in due course, I will be submitting a response to some aspects of the Sustainability Appraisal, which is currently undergoing public consultation and have already noted that still further sites are being considered for Weeley.

Yours sincerely

Carol Bannister