

STATEMENT OF CASE

3 March 2021

INQUIRY REF APP/B1930/W/20/3265925

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Appeals by Canton Ltd

Site Address: Land Off Bullens Green Lane, Colney Heath, AL4 0QQ

“4ColneyHeath” Residents Association was formed in October 2020. Included in our aims is to act as a collective voice in representing residents’ interests and rights.

We have taken into account views expressed by our members as well as taken note of the objections made by local residents on the Colney Heath Facebook social media platform.

“4ColneyHeath” Residents Association has already submitted objections concerning this planning application with our document “20201015-Roundhouse Farm Planning Application Objection.pdf”. It was submitted to both St Albans District Council and Welham Hatfield Borough Council and a copy is attached for your ease of reference. That document forms the main Statement Case to which is added the following comments regarding:

- The negative impact on the character of the area
- The loss of openness in the Green Belt
- Unsustainable means of access to facilities and services

We hope that our submission brings significant value to the inquiry process, being based on the local experience of the area and the proposed development site.

1 The negative impact on the character of the area

- 1.1 The aerial view of the current area shows the built-up footprint of “Colney Heath village”. It is formed of 3 distinct parts – the High Street/Park Lane/Church Lane triangle on the left, and Roestock and Bullens Green on the right. The village shop and post office is near the crossroads in the centre.

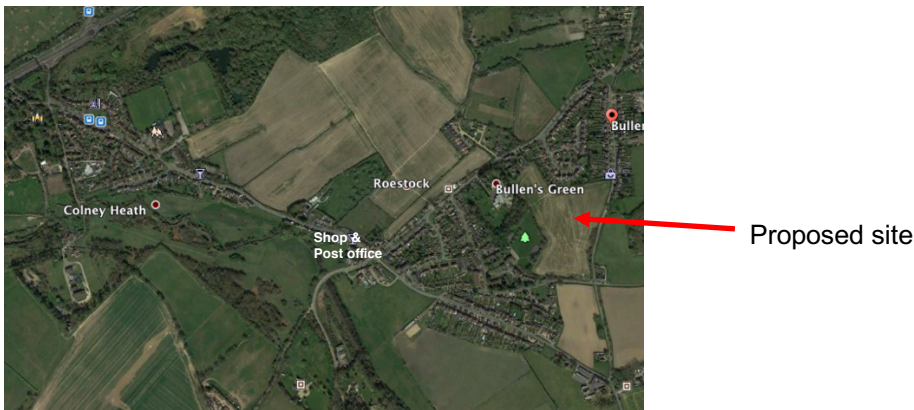


Figure 1.1

- 1.2 The map below of c1772 identifies Colney Heath and Roestock separately.



Figure 1.2

- 1.3 The map below shows development footprint in the Roestock and Bullens Green area in 1960.

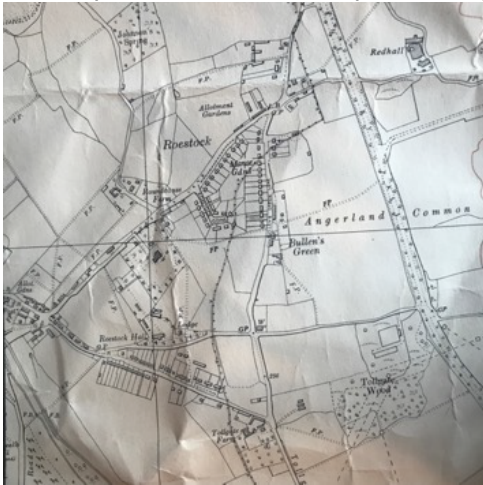


Figure 1.3

This shows ribbon development along Tollgate Road to the South and the cluster around Bullens Green to the North, with a wide expanse of open land in between, punctuated by the waterworks site.

The pattern of development which fundamentally forms the character of the area is cottages, detached and semi detached houses with (mostly) modest front gardens and substantial rear gardens.

- 1.4 The green dotted line on the current aerial view below shows the open green space between Roestock and Bullens Green



Figure 1.4

While the footprint of Bullens Green has remained, the Roestock area has expanded with development on the streets Hall Gardens and Meadway.

While there are some "closes" the majority of houses are on through streets facilitating community interaction

- 1.5 The development of up to 100 dwelling on the proposed site would result, at a local level, in the coalescence of Roestock and Bullens Green.



Figure 1.5

To accommodate 100 dwellings on the site either

- the building footprints would create a much higher density with less open space per dwelling or
- buildings of more than 2 storeys

both of which would not align with the existing character of the area and would detract from the local character and setting as a Green Belt Settlement.

Further, with one access the development would be a "mega close", and closed off from the rest of the area.

2 The loss of openness in the Green Belt

2.1 In the living memory of residents, the proposed site has been farm land and has not been previously developed. There is no footprint or volume of existing structures on the site and the proposed development would demonstrably negatively impact both the present spatial and visual openness.

The negative impact on the spatial openness is illustrated in Figure 1.5 above.

Regarding the negative impact on visual openness this can be illustrated from 3 key viewpoints where the point of openness is reached on public footpaths.

In the absence of a proposed design we illustrate the zone of impact on visual openness of the potential development.



Figure 2.1

Viewpoint A
travelling south leaving Bullens Green

Viewpoint B
At the end of the public footpath alongside the waterworks and No 69 Roestock Lane

Viewpoint C
After crossing Roestock Park travelling northeast and passing through the gate to the public footpath

2.2 Viewpoint A



Figure 2.2.1 Present view



Figure 2.2.2
Notional view of the zone of impact on visual openness of potential building development.

2.3 Viewpoint B



Figure 2.3.1
Present view



Figure 2.3.2
Notional view of the zone of impact on visual openness potential building development.

2.4 Viewpoint C



Figure 2.4.1
Present view



Figure 2.4.2
Notional view of the zone of impact on visual openness of potential building development.

3 Unsustainable means of access to facilities and services

3.1 The lack of public transport services is evident in the bus timetables and the destinations served.

In February 2021 we surveyed our members on their travel for various purposes and the mode of transport for that purpose. The survey covered travel patterns before the Covid-19 restrictions were imposed in March 2020 and travel patterns under the current “lockdown” restrictions.

The results show the predominant reliance on the use of cars to access facilities, services, and social interaction - further detail is shown in the following table

Purpose of travel	Before March 2020		In current lockdown	
	Number of responses	Car usage %	Number of responses	Car usage %
Work/volunteering	33	82%	29	79%
Junior school	7	14%	7	44%
Senior school	8	92%	8	100%
Main food shopping	36	94%	30	100%
Medical services	44	100%	45	100%
Visiting family	47	100%	36	97%
Visiting friends	54	67%	45	50%

The Community bus operated by the Parish Council, suspended in March 2020, was used by 2 respondents for main food shopping.