

Great Tey Parish Council objects to the proposed allocation of approximately 125 dwellings at Earls Colne Road, Great Tey, as set out in Policy PP36.

Our objection is based on the following grounds:

### **1. Infrastructure Capacity**

This development would exacerbate already severe infrastructure and traffic pressures. Residents currently face long queues, dangerous side junctions, and increased rat-running along narrow country lanes due to existing problems on the A120, with Junction 25 being the most significant and difficult-to-resolve bottleneck in the area. Despite these challenges, the policy offers no clear or deliverable strategy for the substantial infrastructure improvements required to support development of this scale, at a time when highways, education, health services, utilities, and community facilities are already under considerable strain. Without identified and secured upgrades, the allocation is unsustainable and risks worsening conditions for the community, and we therefore urge the Council to reconsider this proposal and explore alternative sites that do not intensify existing infrastructure problems.

**2. Lack of connectivity.** The Department for Transport's connectivity assessment clearly highlights Great Tey's fundamental unsuitability for strategic development. The village records a connectivity score of around 28, in stark contrast to the score of approximately 85 achieved in central Colchester. This significant disparity demonstrates that Great Tey is heavily car-dependent, with limited access to essential services, employment, and retail facilities (we have no village shop) by sustainable modes of transport. Any major development here would inevitably result in increased car usage, higher traffic volumes on already constrained rural roads, and greater congestion across the wider network. Residents would remain reliant on private vehicles for even basic day-to-day needs, undermining the Local Plan's objectives for sustainable growth and contradicting national policy aims to reduce carbon emissions and promote accessible, well-connected communities.

### **2. Conflict with Community Consultation and the Adopted Neighbourhood Plan**

While the adopted Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan (October 2024) does not make specific reference to the Earls Colne Road site, consultation undertaken during its preparation demonstrated clear local opposition to this location for future housing development. The allocation of this site therefore conflicts with the community's expressed views and undermines the locally agreed vision for sustainable growth. Furthermore, section 1.15 of the adopted Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan clearly identifies that only two sites for development should be supported (both of which have now been delivered). The proposed site does not form part of those allocations and is therefore contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **3. Loss of Prime Agricultural Land**

Policy E3: Agricultural Development and diversification states that proposals, apart from those for renewable energy generation, that have a materially negative impact or reduce the availability of Grade 1 or Grade 2 land for food growing use, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that there is a justified need and a landscape strategy which would compensate for the loss or harm. is secured or where there is overriding public benefits arising from the development.

In addition to that policy position set out in E3, it is important to note the clear evidence gathered through the Neighbourhood Plan survey, in which residents expressed their strong opposition to the use of high-quality agricultural land (Grades 1 and 2) for development. The community consistently supported prioritising existing brownfield sites for any necessary growth. This local evidence reinforces the need for the Local Plan to protect the parish's best and most versatile agricultural land, ensuring that proposals which would diminish its availability for food production are only considered in the most exceptional circumstances, and only where robust justification and meaningful landscape mitigation can be demonstrated.

On this basis, the Parish Council requests that Policy PP36 be reconsidered and that the proposed allocation be removed from the Local Plan. Any future development proposals should be aligned with the adopted Neighbourhood Plan, supported by demonstrable infrastructure capacity, and avoid the loss of prime agricultural land.