



# COMBS PARISH COUNCIL

c/o Tony Bamber, Parish Council Clerk  
Adstone, Bildeston Road, Combs, Suffolk IP14 2JZ  
Tel: 01449 613255  
Email: combsparishcouncil@gmail.com

Planning Department,  
Mid Suffolk District Council  
Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road  
Ipswich  
IP1 2BX

6 July 2018

Dear Sirs

**Planning Application DC/18/02380**  
**Land to the east of Poplar Hill**

I refer to the above application for outline planning permission and herewith submit an objection on behalf of Combs Parish Council on the grounds that the proposed project will not be *sustainable* development.

We acknowledge that this country needs more houses, that Mid Suffolk is behind in its five-year stock of developable land, and therefore the restrictive elements of MSDC's existing development plans are deemed to be out of date. We also acknowledge that this parish must play its part in the necessary sustainable development, and that may mean not only embracing appropriate development within our own boundaries but also accepting the inevitable changes when development occurs within our neighbours' boundaries.

However, the proposed development is not sustainable for two principal reasons:

- A. it will depend for its access to all the facilities that the residents will need on a road system (Poplar Hill) which cannot, at peak times, take much more traffic than it does already before it ceases to function altogether;
- B. its location will diminish the strategic gap between Stowmarket and Combs to an unacceptable and unsustainable level.

## **A. Access between the Site and the facilities of Stowmarket and beyond.**

A.1 This planning application includes and relies on a comprehensive Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan, both of which in our view are fundamentally defective because they take an unrealistic and over-optimistic view of Poplar Hill as the main arterial route between the development and all the facilities its residents will need. As a result of taking an ill-informed and facile approach, both the Transport Assessment and the Travel Plan find themselves able to say:

3.3.1 Poplar Hill is a two-way single carriageway road and provides a connection between Combs Ford and Stowmarket to the north, and through to Combs and Moats Tye to the south...

3.3.3 The speed limit on Poplar Hill varies over its length between 20mph and 30mph. The 30mph speed limit is enforced [*sic*]from the Park Road/Tannery Road junction up until the junction of Webb Road where it becomes 20mph with traffic calming in the form of speed bumps and a narrowing of the carriageway at the junction with Webb Road. The 20mph speed limit then continues up until the mini roundabout with Combs Lane where the 30mph speed limit is reintroduced for the c180m to the junction with Ipswich Road.

A.2 The Travel Plan goes on to describe the frontage to the site and Church Road, all the sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling, bus), and Section 5 concludes with this summary:

5.6.1 This section of the report has demonstrated that the site is in a sustainable location...

A.3 In our view this is a simplistic conclusion, based on a simplistic analysis of simplistic data derived as a result of a fundamental misunderstanding of the rather more complex traffic flow system from the top (in terms of height above Ordnance Datum) of Poplar Hill, where the proposed Site entrance would be, to its northern end where Poplar Hill meets Combs Lane.

A.4 Paragraph 3.3.1 of the Travel Plan and the Transport Assessment may technically be correct, that Poplar Hill is a two-way single carriageway road, but we who live here know that for a significant part of its length it is in effect a single-track road because of the vehicles parked along its southeastern side. Never have we seen it clear of at least a handful of parked vehicles; usually the stretch that is subject to the 20 mph speed limit and traffic calming speed bumps is well populated with parked cars or vans, and at the busier times of day the traffic on the 'give way' lane (going uphill) can barely get a look-in because of the traffic flow coming down. Sometimes that flow is of single cars with substantial gaps between them, but the gaps are just too short for a 'give way' car to risk trying to make it to the next gap in the parked cars.

- A.5 This results, for cars and small vans at least, in high acceleration and weaving, taking what would normally be barely acceptable risks and ignoring the rare cyclist who is prepared to risk the speed bumps of Poplar Hill. The situation is much worse for heavier vehicles, for example tractors (we are a farming community), bulk lorries (especially at harvest time or when the sugar beet is lifted), flatbed lorries or tractors & trailers returning southwards to pick up physically large cargoes of straw bales, and the Akzo Noble lorries from the PPG Industries depot in Needham Road (and other HGVs) on their way to be maintained at the lorry maintenance depot at the southwest end of Bildeston Road. They either have to wait interminably, or stop the flow of ‘right-of-way’ traffic coming downhill if they are to make any headway at all.
- A.6 The other result is that much traffic now, as a matter of course, chooses to avoid that bottleneck altogether, and travels north along Verneuil Avenue and Edgecomb Road, or south along Lavenham Way, Hillside and Church Road. Those roads, which service the dense residential housing constituting much of Combs Ford, are now an integral part of the traffic flow system between the settlements and businesses south of Stowmarket – Combs, Moats Tye, Little Finborough, Battisford and Battisford Tye, Ringshall and Wattisham (including the RAF/AAC base) – and the facilities and amenities of Combs Ford, Stowmarket and the A14.
- A.7 We find it astonishing that the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan in this application barely mention those other roads, much less demonstrate an appreciation that they are integral parts of this more complex traffic flow system. From local knowledge and our own experience we know that the rat-run down Verneuil Avenue is under increasing pressure at busy times of the day from just Phase I of the Edgecomb Park/Farriers Road development, a mere 75 houses (only partly completed and occupied), mostly bungalows and therefore presumably occupied by people less likely to be travelling to and from work. We dread what it will be like when Phase II is being built and then occupied – a further 110 houses; we understand detailed planning permission will be sought later this summer.
- A.8 Curiously, the developers of Edgecomb Park came up with a substantially more realistic assessment of Poplar Hill, as they pointed out in their Development Brief submitted under planning reference 1492/15:
- 6.4 Poplar Hill is an important local distributor road providing access into Stowmarket from Combs and other rural settlements located to the south of the town. Poplar Hill also forms the principal road link into the town from the residential area located in the south of the town. Towards its northern end Poplar Hill is flanked by older residential properties which have no off-street parking and therefore some on-street parking takes place although there are double yellow line restrictions in place, particularly close to road junctions. In addition, there are road humps, a gateway chicane feature close to the junction with Hill Rise and a 20mph speed restriction designed to reduce vehicle

speeds. All of these features slow traffic and can create a perceived feeling of local congestion in this area, particularly during peak hours. **It is for this reason that the highway authority would wish to limit the size of the development served from Poplar Hill to around 50 units together with the sheltered/supported housing** (*emphasis added*).

- A.9 This is a substantially more accurate description and analysis of Poplar Hill and its traffic flow, and we urge the Planning Referrals Committee to be persuaded by this description, and to note particularly the sentence which we have highlighted in bold.
- A.10 The Transport Assessment and Travel Plan are also substantially flawed in our view because they clearly fail to understand that Poplar Hill is a hill, one which involves a significant gradient. In a linear distance of no more than 800 metres the land rises at least 20 metres which, to a cyclist or a walker on his way back from all the facilities he has been encouraged to cycle or walk to, is quite some climb, as we who have done it can confirm. Of course, to an HGV it is nothing: they just belch out more noxious fumes as they pull away round maybe a single parked car, only to have to stop and wait for clear road at the next parked car, and then pull away again.
- A.11 Verneuil Avenue/Edgecomb Road and Lavenham Way/Hillside are little better as arterial routes for ever-expanding development to the south of Stowmarket. They are heavily residential, vehicles are parked constantly along one or both sides, and frankly it will not take much more before a tragic accident occurs.
- A.12 It should also be noted that this already poor situation is exacerbated when there are roadworks anywhere nearby. During the recent closure of Combs Lane unsustainable volumes and types of traffic diverted themselves (regardless of diversion routes carefully planned by the highways authority) along wholly unsuitable minor lanes, such as Jacks Lane, and via Battsford/Mill Road and Luckey's Corner, if they needed to get to the Finborough Road. This is yet further indication that this network of roads and lanes should be regarded as a single system, and that the observations and analysis contained in the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan are over-simplified and unreliable as a tool for forecasting.

#### *Road Safety*

- A.13 Section 3.5 of the Transport Assessment is headed 'Road Safety' and discusses personal injury accident data for the 5 years from 2012 to 2017. Section 3.6 is headed 'Accident Summary':

3.6.2 Given that all of the accidents were attributed to either driver or pedestrian error, there is nothing to suggest that highway layout or design were contributory factors.

3.6.3 It is therefore considered that there are no deficiencies in the highway network, or existing safety issues in the vicinity of the site that would be exacerbated by the development proposals.

A.14 While there may be nothing wrong with the highway layout or design, common sense tells us that a substantial increase in traffic flow (and the increase will be substantial as another 310 houses-worth of traffic are added over the next 5 years – see below) will bring with it more ‘driver or pedestrian errors’, resulting in a proportionate increase in personal injuries. Given that a child was killed on Poplar Hill some ten years ago on a stretch outside the 20mph traffic calming measures, when can we expect the next child death? If yet more traffic in substantial numbers is added it will bring ever closer that appalling prospect.

*Sustainable transport: walking, cycling, bus*

A.15 The Travel Plan (and also the Transport Assessment, but under different paragraph numbers) notes that many factors are involved when human beings decide whether or not to use sustainable modes of transport:

2.6.1 This document [*‘A Strategy for Improving Sustainable Transport Integration’ (2013)*] prepared by the DfT, is part of the Improving Local Transport Policy and outlines the Government’s goal for more journeys to be made by sustainable transport which it sees as being essential for reducing transport related carbon emissions.

2.6.2 It goes one step further ... by stating that sustainable transport modes must be made more attractive not just for part of the journey, but for the entire journey. It then states that it ‘must be as convenient or straightforward to make a door-to-door journey by public transport, by bike or on foot, or by combining these different elements, as by private transport’, so the focus needs to be on the whole journey.

5.2.2 Research has indicated that acceptable walking distances depend on a number of factors, including the quality of the development, the type of amenity offered, the surrounding area and other local facilities.

A.16 The Travel Plan then goes on to quote CIHT-suggested distances and times from the Site to the retail, health, leisure, employment and other amenities of Combs Ford and Stowmarket (Tables 5.1 and 5.2 for walking, and Table 5.3 for cycling). Despite the somewhat casual and dismissive analysis of speeds of cycling and the optimistic conclusions that everywhere and everything is comfortably within walking and cycling distance, it may be – once, but after the last uphill half-mile on the return journey we suggest that many residents of the proposed development will jump into the car for preference. We speak from experience on this point.

A.17 As already pointed out above, Poplar Hill is a hill; so are Verneuil Avenue and Hillside/Church Road, the alternative routes to Poplar Hill itself. Our local knowledge and experience tell us that there are remarkably few cyclists who go up or down those roads, except for the occasional cyclist who, by his attire, is obviously out for a ride which falls into the category of ‘exercise and leisure’. As things stand at present, we have over the years seen very few cyclists using the Poplar Hill and associated system for what one might call functional transport. We cannot for certain say why this might be, but the most obvious guess is that if you cycle down to the bottom of Combs Ford, you only have to cycle (or walk, pushing your bike) all the way back up again, fighting against the right-of-way downhill traffic.

A.18 What seems to have been forgotten throughout the Transport Assessment and the Travel Plan is the gradient involved for walkers and cyclists. A 20-minute stroll on easy flat ground is a very different affair from a stiff-ish climb, particularly at the end of a working day, or with the shopping from supermarkets in Combs Ford or Stowmarket.

A.19 We only point this out because the Travel Plan states, when forecasting trip rates and trip generation for 160 homes:

6.2.5 It should be noted that no allowance has been made for any future reduction in car travel based on any increased use of sustainable modes of travel, therefore the trip generation figures can be described as robust.

A.20 As we have shown above, placing a housing development at the top of a hill is likely in the long run to result in minimal to negligible use of sustainable modes of transport. Accordingly, the trip generation figures, far from being ‘robust’, should be treated with the same caution as any other forecast.

A.21 Apart from children walking to and from the two primary schools in Combs Ford, it seems to us that, principally because of the hill, most journeys to and from the proposed site will be accomplished by car. We cannot demonstrate this scientifically or by reference to CIHT-suggested transport models, but many years of experience and local knowledge suggest very strongly to us that this will be the case.

*Modern shopping practices – home deliveries*

A.22 The Travel Plan states:

7.2.5 ...the emergence of home deliveries from large supermarkets and online retailers has the potential to further reduce the need for travel.

A.23 Although there may theoretically be the potential, we would disagree (should anyone suggest it) that there is any likelihood of a reduction in overall road journeys. While online shopping may replace a return journey by private car with a single journey by a delivery van (assuming that van goes on to make multiple other deliveries in the immediate area, which may not always be the case), the van will be much larger than a car, and will inevitably be diesel with all its polluting exhaust fumes where the car may be petrol. In addition, a single return journey out from and back to the Site by a resident may accomplish a number of purchases which would take a number of journeys by a delivery van, and as many of us know from our own experience, with the ease of online shopping we are inclined to make more purchases (resulting in more delivery journeys) than we used to make in times past. As a consequence, in our view, the volume of traffic up and down Poplar Hill will thus not be diminished, and the bottleneck will remain, or even made worse by virtue of vans replacing cars, and quite possibly more journeys than otherwise would have been the case. Far from online purchasing reducing total vehicle journeys, we suggest that there is at least an equal chance that it will encourage *more* vehicle journeys, and by larger vehicles than a resident's car.

*Cumulative effect – the Edgecomb Park Development*

A.24 Only part of Phase I is complete, amounting (as far as we are able to ascertain) to no more than 30 new homes occupied so far. There are a further 40+ homes yet to be completed and occupied. Phase II will bring the traffic from another 110 homes. If the subject application is approved, this will bring the road traffic from a further 160 homes, cumulatively **310** more homes, than there is at present down the Poplar Hill and associated roads arterial system. Those of us who already struggle with the Poplar Hill system traffic simply cannot comprehend what this will mean in practical terms – grid lock? more casualties for the few brave cyclists who risk it at the moment? another child's death?

A.25 Section 6 of the Transport Assessment uses data collected from observation of off-site *junctions* and precise mathematical models for predicting the traffic at those junctions for 2023, and concludes:

6.16.2 It has been demonstrated that the proposed site access and all off-site junctions would operate with spare capacity and would therefore be able to accommodate the traffic likely to be generated by the development.

A.26 Leaving aside that it is not just the *junctions* that need to be considered but the entire bottleneck system including its overspill routes, common sense and our local knowledge and experience tell us that adding the road traffic generated by an additional 310 homes beyond what there is now will very likely bring the whole arterial system from the Site to Stowmarket to a standstill at the busier times of day. Accordingly, we consider that the conclusion in paragraph 6.16.2 of the Transport Assessment is unrealistic and grossly over-optimistic.

## *Conclusion*

A.27 The Transport Assessment sets out its overall conclusions in Sections 6 and 7:

6.16.3 The residual cumulative impact of the development cannot be considered ‘severe’ meaning that according to paragraph 32 of the NPPF ... the development should not be refused on transport grounds.

7.2.2 Considering such ‘adverse impacts’, in accordance with paragraph 32 of NPPF, it ... [can be] demonstrated, within Section 6, that the impact of development-generated traffic on the local highway network would be minimal.

7.2.3 Paragraph 32 [of the NPPF] concludes by stating that ‘development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe’. This report concludes that the proposals would not have an adverse impact of safety and only a negligible impact in highway capacity terms. Therefore, it is concluded that there are no highways or transportation related reasons why planning permission should not be granted.

A.28 We have shown that many things about the Transport Assessment and the Travel Plan are inadequate, simplistic and unrealistic, resulting in assessments which, we suggest, arise from an excess of enthusiasm to demonstrate that all will be well with the proposed development. As we point out above, a much more realistic assessment of Poplar Hill may be seen in the Development Brief for Edgecomb Park.

A.29 For all the reasons we have set out in this letter, the additional traffic generated by this development – even if not by the completion of Edgecomb Park alone – will most likely bring the traffic flow through the Poplar Hill bottleneck and its overspill routes to crisis point at the busier times of day. As a consequence, we submit, the residual cumulative impacts of the Edgecomb Park development and this proposed development *would* be severe, and so this planning application should be refused precisely on the transport grounds referred to in paragraph 32 of the NPPF.

A.30 Unless and until something radical is done to sort out the bottleneck in the lower (northern) portion of Poplar Hill, it would be sheer madness to pile more and more traffic onto Poplar Hill from housing developments that must necessarily depend for their access to all the facilities which are supposed to serve them on an already inadequate arterial route.

A.31 Accordingly, the proposed development would be contrary to the principles of paragraph 32 NPPF and would fail to conserve or enhance this part of the District contrary to policies FC1 and FC1.1 of the adopted 2012 Core Strategy Focused Review.

\*



## **B. Maintaining a gap between Combs and Stowmarket**

- B.1 The gap between the clear built-up areas of Stowmarket (Church Road in Combs Ford) and Combs (Prospect Place) is currently about 460 metres at its narrowest. The crucial view is from the perspective of a traveller (whether on foot, bicycle or in a car) leaving the village of Combs at the junction of Park Road, Tannery Road and Poplar Hill, as he looks along Poplar Hill to the next settlement: Stowmarket and its suburb (as it is called in the Landscape and View Assessment) of Combs Ford. The view is across a landscape which is in effect a basin formed by an ancient stream – now little more than a ditch. The bed of that stream runs from the crest of the hill north of Combs in an easterly direction for about 500 metres, crosses Poplar Hill at the bottom of a dip known locally as the Slough, and continues for another 150 metres until it joins the stream running northeast towards the Rattlesden River and then into the River Gipping.
- B.2 The significance of this ancient stream is that it has given what would otherwise have been an east-southeast-facing slope a more southerly aspect, creating a small basin, across the contours of which the main arterial road between Combs and Stowmarket (Poplar Hill, southern end) runs. The effect of this is that, as the traveller crosses this basin he sees the whole of it as a single feature.
- B.3 Church Road, some 500 metres distant from the edge of Combs (as seen from the junction of Poplar Hill with Park Road and Tannery Road), is far enough away to define the edge of Combs Ford and gives the perception of being a ridge, although that is only a perception. But at 500 metres distance it is not seen as ‘threatening’.
- B.4 But if development were to spread southeastwards down the very visible slope of this small basin, the effect would be devastating.
- B.5 As noted above, the present separation is 460 metres at its very narrowest; but if this development were to be approved that gap would reduce to about 280 metres to the nearest line of houses, the whole spread of the development occupying that critical view of clear, undeveloped land on the southeast-facing slope of the basin.
- B.6 The applicants refer to this in their Planning Statement:
- 4.5.10 Of note is [SAAP] Policy 6.22 – Landscaping, setting and views which requires future development on the site [referring to Edgecomb Park] to address the need to protect the landscape and maintain the separation between Stowmarket and Combs, the protection on the skyline of any development at the ridgeline along Poplar Hill, the need to retain the existing mature trees and hedgerows in the area, the impact on 19 long distance views and possibility of screening as well as the provision for on-site public open space.

4.5.11 This was echoed in the pre-application advice and has been taken into account in the design of the scheme. The physical separation between Stowmarket and Combs is reduced through the [proposed] development but a substantial landscape buffer is being put in place to maintain the separate entities of the settlements themselves. The majority of trees and hedgerows are retained on site with additional planting included as part of the scheme. The new development will be viewed within the existing residential context of Combs Ford and will therefore result in Minor Adverse effects on completion where there are views from Combs.

B.7 We disagree in the strongest possible terms. Leaving aside the aesthetic appreciation of this small topographic basin, what is of very substantial concern to us is that, if development is allowed to spill over Church Road into this basin, this clear feature will cease to have the effect of a being a sustainable gap between two settlements. Unlike the curate's egg, this basin will be blighted irredeemably, allowing future planners and planning committees to shrug their shoulders and say, 'The harm has already been done'. It will therefore not be long before the remaining 280 metres (even remembering that 100 metres of that is designated Open Space which, as we see from this present application, would soon turn to houses anyway) becomes mere 'infill', and the village of Combs becomes a suburb of Stowmarket in much the same way that Combs Ford has.

B.8 The Planning Referrals Committee will recall that a constant theme running through the Edgecomb Park application (reference 1492/15) was preservation of the skyline to the north of Combs, and the separation of Combs from Stowmarket. The Planning Statement from that application (1492/15) was clear:

4.22 ...The plan highlights the sensitivity of the landscape and separation between Stowmarket and the nearby village of Combs. The SAAP highlights the importance controlling the visual impact and respects the visual setting...

4.23 The development addresses the requirements set out in policy SAAP 6.22 in respect of landscape setting and views for the following reasons: ...

- The development is comprised entirely of single storey dwellings, minimising the visual impact, fulfilling criterion 2 in order to protect the views of the ridgeline on Poplar Hill.
- The development proposals make provision for 1.9 ha open space on land to the east of Poplar Hill, to comply with criterion 6.

B.9 Later in that Planning Statement it is pointed out (paragraph 6.43) that the proposed 'Public Open Space and Play Space' is an integral part of their proposed development because it complies with SAAP Policy 10.2 which seeks to ensure that 'every home is within 300 metres of at least one accessible green space of 2 hectares'. It is no part of our brief to point out that

if the present application were granted it would necessarily mean that Edgecomb Park would thereby become non-compliant, but the loss of that Open Space *in that precise location* and its replacement by housing would be of the greatest possible concern to us.

*Does the NPPF recognise gaps between settlements?*

B.10 The SAAP states:

*Maintaining a gap between Combs and Stowmarket*

6.50 [Referring to the allocated development land between Poplar Hill and Farriers Road], the feeling of openness and long distance views from the top of Poplar Hill looking South and West will need to be maintained. Suggested open space provision will help in this process.

B.11 Sections of the NPPF that support a ‘Gap policy’ include:

- Paragraph 17, which sets out various core planning principles which should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. It states, among other things, that planning should: *‘take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it’*, and *‘contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution...’*
- Paragraph 61, which requires that *‘Planning policies and decisions should address ... the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.’* Consistent with this, paragraph 109 of the NPPF makes it clear that the planning system should *‘contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes’*.
- Paragraph 156, which states that the Local Plan should have policies to deliver conservation of the natural environment, including landscape, and at paragraph 157 the NPPF requires Local Plans to *‘identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental ... significance.’*

B.12 National Planning Practice Guidance which provides additional guidance on how the NPPF should be applied states that *‘one of the core principles in the NPPF is that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Local Plans should include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. This includes designated landscapes, but also the wider countryside’* (PPG - Natural Environment Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 8-001-20140306).

B.13 The Planning Inspectorate has specifically endorsed Local Plans that *‘identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental significance.’ ... ‘The coalescence of adjoining settlements, caused by development in the largely undeveloped gaps, would clearly have an environmental effect’*, concluding that *‘The principle of such a designated area is therefore in line with national policy’* (PINS/C1760/429/5, page 31, paragraph 191).

B.14 With reference to the NPPF, in one case the Inspector noted, *‘This [gap] policy, which is broadly restrictive in nature, runs counter to the general national approach to enabling development. However that approach is qualified by the [NPPF] policy that such development should be located in the right place, and that the natural environment should be protected’* (Ref: PINS/C1760/429/5, page 31, paragraph 194).

B.15 In our view the existing gap between Combs and the edge of Combs Ford is a gap of the right size and sustainable proportions for the following reasons:

- The land lies between settlements
- The land is predominantly undeveloped
- The land is predominantly open
- The land has a coherent land management pattern
- The land has clearly defined boundaries
- The land includes a public road which provides a transition from one settlement to another
- The individual settlements show a distinctive character/urban form and have a clear urban edge.

### *Conclusion*

B.16 In view of the above, we submit that:

- i) a policy of maintaining gaps between settlements is not only consistent with the NPPF but also endorsed by it;
- ii) the present gap between Combs and Stowmarket is right and sustainable;
- iii) the proposed development would reduce the open countryside separation between Combs and Stowmarket to unsustainable proportions and would fail to recognise the intrinsic character of the countryside and our village, contrary to NPPF paragraph 17, and would accordingly fail to conserve or enhance the local character of this part of the District contrary to policy FC1.1 of the adopted 2012 Core Strategy Focused Review.

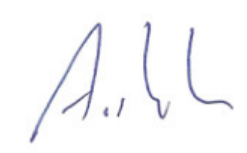
## Summary

We consider that the proposed development is not *sustainable* development because:

- a) it would cause unsustainable traffic congestion on Poplar Hill; and
- b) it would reduce the separation between settlements (Combs and Stowmarket) to an unsustainable level,

each of which is sufficient reason on its own, and we ask the Planning Referrals Committee to refuse the application.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Bamber', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Tony Bamber, Parish Clerk  
On behalf of Combs Parish Council