



6. LOSS OF RURAL CHARACTER

The proposed development would irreversibly destroy the character and visual appearance of our rural village, having an extreme negative impact on all residents' lives.

This huge development would undermine the village's cultural heritage and historical significance, erasing the unique identity that has been cherished by the community for generations.

The village was recognised in April 2024 in the Daily Mail Newspaper as being one of "Britain's Unsung Villages"; further reinforcing that the village community "offer the very best of rural life".



Notably, in our surveys, the surrounding countryside is given as a reason that people live in Albrighton by 84% of recent residents (73% of long-standing residents); and why they choose village and rural living by 81% recent (59% long-standing). This is detailed further in Grounds for Objection Item 9 and the Appendices.

The Applicants' proposed changes would not only affect the aesthetic appeal but also erode the sense of belonging and community that defines the village's spirit.

- a) **Character & visual appearance** of rural village irreversibly destroyed - extreme negative impact on all residents' lives. Undermines the culture and historical importance of our village.
- b) **The scale and design** of the project is inconsistent with the rural and historical nature of the area, threatening to replace our unique community atmosphere with an overly urbanised environment. Such a change would diminish the village's appeal, negatively impacting both residents and the broader cultural heritage of the region.
- c) **Listed buildings and character of the nearby Boningale conservation area** are severely impacted by the proposals. Also, the Albrighton Hall Conservation Area seems to have been ignored in the assessments. It is apparent that the Applicants' have not adequately considered the significant local heritage of Albrighton Hall and its surrounding woodland, which are integral to the Albrighton Conservation Area. There is a duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings and the proposals have manifestly ignored this.
- d) **Inadequate Consideration of Heritage Significance.** The assessment provided by the Applicants' significantly underrepresents the historical and architectural importance of Albrighton Hall, a Grade II listed building. The setting and context of this historic property are crucial elements of its heritage value, and any development in its vicinity requires a thorough evaluation of potential impacts. The current assessment fails to address how the proposed development might affect the Hall's historical setting, visual integrity, and cultural significance.
- e) **Insufficient Analysis of Impact on Historic Parkland and Woodland.** The historic parkland and woodland surrounding Albrighton Hall are critical to the character and historical context of the site. The Applicants' assessment lacks a detailed analysis of how the proposed development will impact these areas. Given the historical significance and the ecological importance of these woodlands, a comprehensive impact study is essential. The current assessment does not address potential disruptions to the landscape, changes in land use, or alterations to the historic views and setting.



- f) **Absence of a Conservation Management Plan.** A conservation management plan is crucial for any development affecting historic sites to ensure that impacts are properly managed and mitigated. The Applicants' assessment does not include such a plan, leaving a significant gap in the evaluation of how the development will preserve the historic and environmental values of Albrighton Hall and its grounds.
- g) **Lack of Community Conservation & Heritage Consultation.** There has been insufficient engagement with local heritage organisations and community stakeholders who understand the historical significance of the site. Proper consultation with these groups is vital to ensure that their concerns and insights are integrated into the planning process.

Given these deficiencies in the Applicants' assessment and the apparent disregard for the heritage value of Albrighton Hall and its surroundings, we strongly urge the planning authorities to consider this when determining this application. The lack of a comprehensive evaluation undermines the protection and preservation of the local heritage, which is crucial for maintaining the character and historical integrity of the Albrighton Conservation Area.

We trust that the planning authorities will uphold the importance of preserving our local heritage and take these inadequacies into consideration when determining this application.

- h) **The Green Belt Visibility assessments** appear to misrepresent and downplay the visual impact of the proposals from various locations around the village; including historically important buildings and the conservation areas. Refer also to Grounds for Objection 2. Protection of Green Belt.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) reviewed by ESP Ltd states that the severe visual effects this development will have on existing properties, particularly during winter when natural screening is minimal (24_02108_OUT-SC_LANDSCA...). We contend that this is an error:

- The report acknowledges that the western extent of the proposed development, including the local centre, would likely be visible from these properties, particularly.
- The report fails to fully assess the magnitude of this impact during the construction phase, which we believe will result in major adverse visual impacts (24_02108_OUT-SC_LANDSCA...).
- **The impact on neighbouring properties**, overlooking and unacceptable loss of privacy, as well as the visual amenity, are significant concerns. The proposed development not only risks overshadowing and overlooking existing properties, including historical Listed Buildings, but it also threatens to obstruct views and infringe upon the privacy of residents.
- **The visual impact** of this development will be massive, severely degrading the overall quality and character of the surrounding area.
- **The loss of natural light**, combined with an overwhelmingly dominant and unpleasantly encroaching structure, would create an inescapable negative effect on the overall experience of the area.
- **A Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)** would likely confirm that the development's visual impact is so great that it compromises the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

Given these factors, we urge the planning authority to reject the application, as it fails to protect residents' rights and maintain a fair balance between new developments and existing properties.