



STOP WETHERSFIELD AIRFIELD PRISONS

REWILDING • RENEWABLES • COMMUNITY • EDUCATION

www.thefieldsassociation.org

**DO YOU KNOW HOW THE MEGA PRISONS WILL
CHANGE OUR LOCAL AREA FOREVER?**



Who Are The Fields Association?

We are a newly formed residents association for the villages of North Essex, and we are campaigning to '*Stop Wethersfield Airfield Prisons*'.

We are opposed to the unsuitable development of Wethersfield Airfield, over 800 acres of land by several conservation areas in one of the most beautiful parts of the Essex countryside.

We are working alongside **ten local Parish Councils** who have joined together to form Wethersfield Airfield Scrutiny Committee (WASC), and pledged funds to prevent unsuitable development of the airfield.

This prison is not a done deal! The Ministry of Justice will only buy the airfield if planning is approved by Braintree District Council. The movement of people working to stop this over-development is growing by the day, and we need your help!



*Parish councils involved to date include Finchingfield, Wethersfield, Shalford, Toppesfield, Great Bardfield, Panfield, The Salings, Great Yeldham, Little Bardfield and Gosfield.

What is the Problem with Prisons in Wethersfield?

If the government needs to increase prison capacity, then of course they need to go somewhere, but two prisons in this location will create more problems than they solve.

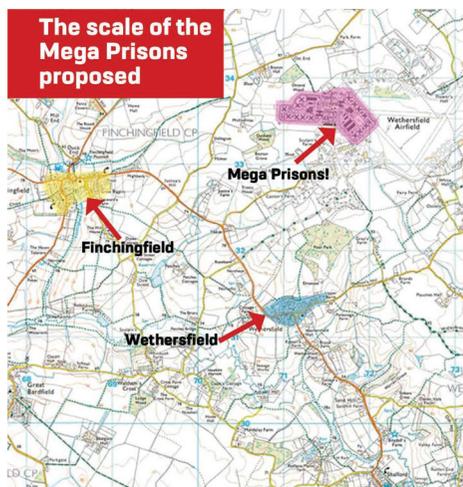
No Ordinary Prison!

What is being proposed are two Mega Prisons for 3,400 inmates (more than the population of Wethersfield and Finchingfield combined) which will be visible for miles. This will be the largest prison complex in Europe and will generate as much traffic as a small town when you consider the staff and visitor cars, HGV's, supply lorries, maintenance vans and prison transport vehicles all making their way along our country lanes and through our villages.

It Breaches National and Local Planning Policies

Government planning policies now seek to minimise travel, protect the countryside and ensure plans fit with their surroundings, which the proposal clearly fails to do.

The airfield is in a remote location and the proposal is inappropriate in scale with a significant impact on landscape, heritage, ecology and traffic.



Wait... but isn't it better than *thousands* of houses?

Firstly, a *mass development* of thousands of houses was rejected in principle due to lack of infrastructure, so that is not in any plans. However a smaller housing development is being considered *in addition to the prison complex*, as the Mega Prisons would only use around 15% of the whole MoD site.

The MoD are not being transparent about their plans for the whole site so, if we accept the prison, we risk ending up with both!

Local Impact of Two Mega Prisons at Wethersfield

Construction: Around 8-10 years of construction is to be expected with associated disruption and pollution

Permanent Traffic Increase: Servicing the prisons will generate vast numbers of staff, visitor and delivery vehicles along the lanes and through our villages, on roads that cannot be widened.

Wildlife implications: 74 species of birds identified at the site, some on International red & amber Endangered and Protected lists

Air and Water Pollution: In addition to the microscopic particles of construction dust that will spread for miles, a dramatic increase in traffic will create a permanent rise in road traffic emissions.

Light pollution: Our wildlife, can say goodbye to our starlit skies as the prison will be lit throughout the night.

What Do We Want to See Happen With the Airfield

We love our local area, and we also recognise the need for progress and that something needs to happen to the site.

We want to see local residents working together with the Parish and Town Councils to put forward ideas to the MoD that make financial sense whilst benefitting the local community for years to come.

It is still early days, but already lots of suitable ideas have been suggested:

- Solar farm
- Nature trails
- Heritage centre
- Museum
- Re-wilding
- Veteran centre
- Memorial park
- Wildlife park, and more!



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Did you know that there is a large unused school at the base? And a museum which is in danger of being closed despite huge demand?

How You Can Help

If you feel as we do, and care about where we live, you can help in a way that works for you. Here are some ways you can help:

Become a Community Member

When you become a Fields Association Community Member you are supporting the cause and helping the SWAP campaign. We ask for a £10 donation and, in return, we promise to use every penny to fight this development. You are also entitled to have your say at the AGM.

All Field Association Members are volunteering their time for free, so you can be confident that 100% of funds received will be used for:

Landscape
Assessment

Road
Traffic
Survey

Website
and
Leaflets

Legal
Support

Planning
Advice

Sign the Petition

Visit <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/603619> to sign and share across social media and email. Please help any neighbours, including the elderly, who may want to sign but are not online.

Donate What You Can

If you would like to and are able to give a little more, all funds are gratefully received and every penny will go towards expert services, professional planning advice and helping us lobby for support.

For more information visit www.thefieldsassociation.org

Fields Association Community Member Form

To become a Community Member please visit www.thefieldsassociation.org and complete the online form, alternatively you can post the form below to:
SWAP Campaign, c/o The Parish Council, 4 Beazley End, Braintree, CM7 5JH.

Please make cheques payable to The Fields Association.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____ Phone: _____

Contribution: I wish to pay a membership fee of £10
(Tick box) I wish to make a larger donation of £_____