

Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

Andrew Hunter
Development Control
East Hertfordshire District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

2nd March 2018 (by email)

Dear Mr. Hunter,

Application No 3/18/0132/FUL
Erection of two detached dwellings with garages
at Beechleigh, Birch Green, Hertford, Hertfordshire, SG14 2LP

CPRE Hertfordshire opposes this application for inappropriate residential development in the Green Belt. As the proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt, contrary to the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Current East Herts Local Plan and the Submission District Plan, it is necessary to demonstrate very special circumstances.

The documentation accompanying the application contains no Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement addresses neither of those topics. Instead it is a lengthy rebuttal of the negative response which the applicant had from the case officer following their pre-application consultation.

They base their case on statements which were allegedly made at the Examination in Public of the Submission District Plan. Their concern is that the Council has chosen to exclude this site from the defined village of Birch Green and in their view it should not be. It is our understanding that the Inspector's required 'modifications' of Chapter 10 of the emerging Local Plan (para. 10.3.8) says that development should take place within the defined boundary as defined on the policies map. Whatever the applicant's view of the merits of the decision to exclude the site, the site is outside the village boundary in both the existing Local Plan and the Submission District Plan. Therefore it remains a site in the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been put forward to counter the harm to the openness and other harm to the Green Belt.

Beechleigh Farm is a substantial distance beyond the settlement of Birch Green and sits clearly within the important Green Belt corridor along both sides of the A414. Development of this site would have the effect of connecting it to the housing around the green at the junction of the farm drive with The Old Coach Road and creating ribbon development along the length of the farm drive. Equally the proposed houses are substantial 5-bedroom

properties which would have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt at this point.

The Pre-submission advice given by the Council was that the proposal contravened the Green Belt provisions in the NPPF, the current Local Plan and the Submission District Plan, and the policies for development in villages contained in the latter. We agree with that assessment and urge the Council to reject this application.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving