

Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

Tom Rea
Planning and Building Control
North Hertfordshire District Council
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
Herts SG6 3JF

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

2nd May 2018 (by email)

Dear Mr. Rea,

Application No. 18/00794/F

Change of Use of land to use as a residential caravan site for 8 gypsy families including retention of hardstanding and existing lights.

On Land To The West Of St Albans Road Codicote Hertfordshire

CPRE Hertfordshire objects to this retrospective application for inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

This site is essentially a further extension beyond the boundary of the Pulmore Water Caravan Site which, itself, was given retrospective approval in 2013 (Application 13/01454/1EUD). There has been continued and extensive expansion of this site since the initial approval on appeal for 2 pitches in 1984 (Application 1/237/83). That expansion can be clearly seen in the aerial photographs which were included in the Planning Statement accompanying App.13/01454/1EUD. Current aerial photographs show a total of 42 caravans / mobile homes on the site. The planning history is one of various owners seeking to regularise breaches of planning control in relation to the siting of static caravans and mobile homes. This is another similar application in that sequence.

Approval was granted for 13/01454/1EUD on the basis that sufficient evidence had been presented to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that on the balance of probability there had been a continued use of the site as a caravan site for more than ten years before the date of the application. That is not the case here. This site is outside the boundary of the approval given in 2013. The current application form clearly states that the caravans subject to this application came into use in 2012, and the earlier aerial photographs demonstrate that they have not been in situ for over ten years. Whilst the earlier application contained a detailed planning statement and considerable evidence to support the continuing use of the original site, the present application contains no supporting evidence at all.

We are also concerned that the current aerial photographs show that there has been extension into and clearance of, the adjacent field to rear of Two Hollies, outlined in blue on site location plan, which may be the precursor to further development.

The Applicant cannot rely on the approval given in 13/01454/1EUD as a precedent for continuing expansion without providing very special circumstances to justify the setting aside of Green Belt policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, the North Herts Local Plan and the Submission Local Plan. No such circumstances are demonstrated in this case and we urge the Council to reject the application and take such enforcement action as necessary to address the current inappropriate development.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving