



The countryside charity
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Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

Lucy Pateman
Development Control
East Hertfordshire District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

24th July 2020 (by email)

Dear Ms. Pateman,

Application No 3/20/1252/FUL
Use of land as car park (64) spaces for village sporting and community events
and provision of surfacing
Land Adj Datchworth Village Hall And Scout Hut, 52 Datchworth Green,
Datchworth, Knebworth, Hertfordshire SG3 6TL

CPRE Hertfordshire object to this latest proposal for car park development in the Green Belt, following refusal of application 3/19/0843/FUL for 70 spaces.

This application slightly reduces the number of spaces and revises the surfacing material to make it less intrusive, but the principles remain the same and the very special circumstances put forward to outweigh harm to the openness of the Green Belt are identical to those previously presented and considered in the planning balance before refusal.

The revised application adds two earth bunds at the western end of the development and a timber rail barrier. Though minor, these add to the intrusion on the openness of the Green Belt, as will the parked cars themselves. The fact that the latter are transient does not obviate the inappropriateness. Nor is it relevant that the car park is at a lower level than the rugby pitches, it will still impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

In the Planning Statement the applicant puts forward a further 'material consideration', namely that the applicant has a fall-back position in as much as "The parking of 64 cars can take place in any event without the need for planning permission. Such parking would be ancillary and incidental to the use of the site as a rugby pitch and providing such parking took place on grass, there would be no 'development' and accordingly planning permission is not required." Though the applicant does not cite the authority for this, we assume it is Part 4 of the Town & Country Planning General Permitted Development Order, which allows such use for not more than 28 days in any calendar year. In essence this is merely stating the status quo, as such parking already happens. The extended hard surface car parking area will

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CPRE Hertfordshire is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

President: Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, KCVO
Chairman: Richard Bullen

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inevitably change the visual amenity of the area and the status of the land from greenfield to brownfield / previously developed land with all the ongoing implications for the site. The significance of the development cannot be downplayed by reference to temporary uses under 'permitted development rights'

We would also like to add another material consideration which was not referred to in the previous application. NPPF para. 148 requires the Council to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, and NPPF para. 84 says that in considering facilities to meet community needs in rural areas it must ensure that these do not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploit any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). This application does not address these issues, instead it actively promotes car usage. The applicant should at very least be taking measures to promote walking, cycling and car share to the site within a Green Travel Plan.

Consequently, we urge the Council to reject this application.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving