



The countryside charity
Hertfordshire

31a Church Street

Welwyn

HERTS AL6 9LW

www.cpreherts.org.uk

office@cpreherts.org.uk

01438 717587

Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

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

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

24th January 2020 (by email)

Dear Ms. Reynard,

Application No. 19/02965/FP
Erection of stables, hay store, tack room and horse box garage
On Land at Gannock Thatch, Gannock Road, Sandon

CPRE Hertfordshire has concerns regarding this proposal for equine development in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt.

The proposal is for the erection of facilities for private equine use. Under Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, horses kept for recreation, sport and business are not classed as an agricultural activity.

Saved Policy 6(i) of the current North Herts Local Plan states that development in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt will normally only be allowed if it is strictly necessary for the needs of agriculture. This proposal does not meet that criterion. However Policy CGB1 of the Submission Local Plan, currently under Examination in Public, and to which the Council can give weight, permits the development of land or facilities for outdoor recreation that respects the generally open nature of the rural area. This introduces an ambiguity. It is a moot point whether or not the proposed use of stabling in this context constitutes outdoor recreation.

There is also reference in the Design and Access Statement to the site formerly being a horticultural nursery which became redundant and fell into disrepair a number of years ago. Aerial views of the site show no trace of the nursery or any structures associated with it. The definition of previously developed land in the National Planning Policy Framework specifically excludes both land which was last occupied for agriculture (which includes horticulture) or land where the remains of the permanent structure have blended into the landscape. Consequently the site cannot be claimed as previously developed land.

In our view the proposal should be considered against Saved Policy 6, with which it does not comply and should be rejected.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving

CPRE is working nationally and locally for a beautiful and living countryside

CPRE Hertfordshire is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

President: Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, KCVO

Chairman: Richard Bullen

Registered Charity 1162419