



The countryside charity  
Hertfordshire

31a Church Street  
Welwyn  
HERTS AL6 9LW  
[www.cpreherts.org.uk](http://www.cpreherts.org.uk)  
[office@cpreherts.org.uk](mailto:office@cpreherts.org.uk)  
01438 717587

**Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside**

Amit Patel  
Planning and Building Control  
Hertsmere Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Elstree Way  
Borehamwood  
Hertfordshire  
WD6 1WA

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

4<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (by email)

Dear Amit Patel,

**Application No. 20/0142/FUL**  
**Erection of a new detached 5-bed dwelling**  
**on Land adjacent to Heathbourne Cottage, Heathbourne Road,**  
**Bushey Heath, Hertfordshire**

This is essentially a revised submission of application 19/1277/FUL which the Council refused in October 2019. Despite the redesign of the property, increasing it from a 4-bed to a 5-bed property, and the exclusion of that part of the site which is within the Local Wildlife site, the principles applying to the site remain the same and CPRE Hertfordshire continue to oppose this proposal.

The applicant says that the design of the building is substantially different from that included in the earlier application. However the previous application claimed that the then proposed dwelling was *“an innovative and contemporary design”* which, because of *“the exceptional quality of the design”* amounted to the very special circumstances that would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. The Council determined that the earlier building was neither innovative or of exceptional quality.

The current application says that the proposed dwelling is of high quality and of innovative design. *“This, it is contended, amounts to the very special circumstances, that would outweigh the harm arising out of inappropriateness to warrant approval of the revised planning application.”* The aesthetic quality of the new design is a matter of individual judgement, but does not appear to us to be exceptional; there are many buildings of this eco-friendly type across the country. Innovation often comes in the combination of existing techniques that might not have been used together before to achieve a building that is as energy efficient as it can be, which is the argument which the applicant is using here. It is true that the current house is designed to a higher level of sustainability than the previous dwelling, but again the systems proposed are not innovative, or unique to this design. As we said in our previous response, the Council must form a view on whether in the use of materials, methods of

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



construction or its contribution to protecting and enhancing the environment, the proposal is truly innovative.

In the previous application, the applicant drew the site boundary around the whole of the site within their ownership, which included a substantial part of the Local Wildlife Site. As one of the Council's objections to the development was its impact on the wildlife site, this time they have excluded the land within the wildlife site. That does not stop the development impacting on that site. The Ecological Assessment accompanying both applications are substantially the same.

The reduced site remains in the Green Belt. It is an open site and, by definition, any development in it will adversely impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that any residential development of this nature is inappropriate and harmful to the Green Belt. The proposal does not meet any of the criteria included in NPPF para 145 which would render it appropriate.

As before, the applicant argues that other sites in the immediate area have been removed from the Green Belt, that the Ove Arup report on the Green Belt commissioned by the Council concluded that the Green Belt in this area is not meeting the criteria set out in para.134 of the NPPF and that the design of the property is of exceptional quality. These points were all dismissed in assessing the planning balance in the previous case and nothing has essentially changed.

Consequently we urge the Council to reject this application.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving