



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

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

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

20th May 2020 (by email)

Dear Mr. Hunter,

Application No. 20/00851/FP

Change of use and conversion of existing swimming pool, outbuilding and garage into one 3-bed dwelling. Erection of detached garage block with carer flat above following demolition of existing stables, greenhouse and outbuilding.
At Keepers Cottage, Rustling End, Codicote, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 8TD

CPRE Hertfordshire consider this application for residential development in the Green Belt to be inadequate.

We have no concerns regarding the change of use and conversion of the existing swimming pool into a 3-bed dwelling. As submitted, that proposal is contained entirely within the fabric of the existing structure and will have no adverse impact on the Green Belt. However, the proposed garage with carer's flat above is also residential accommodation which will.

There is no explanation in the Design and Access Statement as to why a 3-bedroom house requires a six-car garage. Using the drawn scale on the submitted drawings, the footprint of the 'garage' is two thirds that of the swimming pool complex and is, when the carer's flat is taken into consideration, about the same floor space as an average 3-bedroom house. Even when the proposed demolitions are taken into account, it represents a significant increase of new development in the Green Belt.

As such it represents inappropriate development which will impact on the openness of the Green Belt contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and the current and submission North Herts Local Plans. Consequently, it requires a case for very special circumstances which outweighs the harm through inappropriateness and to the openness of the Green Belt. Given the absence of a Planning Statement, no such case is put forward.

It may be that the unfortunate circumstances of the applicant's daughter mentioned in the Design and Access Statement justifies the requirement for the carer's flat, but that could be

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

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more appropriately integrated with the house conversion. Notwithstanding there is no explanation for the need for such a large garage. This point needs to be clarified before the Council can determine the application.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving