



The countryside charity
Hertfordshire

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Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

James Langsmead
Development Management
East Hertfordshire District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

6th November 2020 (by email)

Dear Mr. Langsmead,

Application No 3/20/1932/FUL

The redevelopment of the site including demolition of existing buildings and erection of 5 dwellings, associated parking and altered access, and provision of informal open space.

Tree Heritage, North Road, Hertford, Hertfordshire SG13 8EQ

While CPRE Hertfordshire accept that this site constitutes previously developed land and that paragraph 145(g) of the National Planning Policy Framework applies, we have concerns regarding aspects of this application.

It is to be welcomed that the bulk of the site will revert to meadow along the bank of the River Beane. However, there is no clear statement of how this land will be managed to the benefit of both the residents and the river ecology.

As the Ecological Impact Assessment says, it is important that an ecology management plan is in place. The Design and Access Statement makes vague reference to 'communal land', but no management plan is presented and it is unlikely that the residents would have the ability to maintain the substantial area involved. Consequently, before determining the application, the Council should ascertain how this land will be managed and who will be responsible for it and, should the Council be minded to approve, a condition applied which will ensure the future maintenance of the land.

It would be to the benefit of the community if public access to the land was available and that such access was linked to the existing footpath network along the Beane and Waterford Marsh.

That existing footpath network gives clear views across this prospective meadow. As a result, the treatment of the rear boundaries to the properties is important to ensure an open prospect. Solid walls or fences would not be appropriate. Timber and post boundary treatments, with planting, shown at the front of the site (drawing PO3) would be a welcome

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replacement of the existing solid fencing, but the layout of dwellings, which don't front the main road but place gardens to the front, currently demands high solid fencing for privacy and amenity. These are important details for the appearance and character of the site which need to be reconsidered and clarified.

There is an opportunity to make the space between the rear dwellings and the river an important 'foreground' as communal space to the development, rather than a left over backland area which would have a tendency to be forgotten. The plots should be re-laid to positively acknowledge and address the landscape feature of the river and public amenity of Waterford Marsh. Entrances to new homes would be found on the same side and a defined limit to the building footprint established, rather than allow incremental infilling later by outbuildings in the proposed layout of garden areas. We appreciate the scheme has already gone through a number of iterations but believe a modest redesign of the layout could correct this, allow the dwellings to face the river in a positive relationship and provide views towards the communal space as well as a more attractive edge to the development as seen from the meadows.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving