



Mr Tom Rea  
Planning and Building Control  
North Hertfordshire District Council  
Council Offices  
Gernon Road  
Letchworth Garden City  
Herts SG6 3JF

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

6<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (by email)

Dear Mr Rea,

**Application No. 21/01860/FP**  
**Rush Green Motors, London Road, Langley, Hitchin, SG4 7PQ**  
**Construction of battery storage facility with associated infrastructure.**

I write with reference to the above proposal for a battery storage facility and note that the proposal site lies within the London Metropolitan Green Belt as specified by North Herts Local Plan, albeit with the benefit of existing consents. CPRE Hertfordshire has a number of concerns regarding this proposal, as noted below, and would urge the Council to take notice of these issues in determining the application.

1. This application is not supported by specific appropriate technical information which would provide a justification in terms of need for battery storage in this location. The applicant's agent, in the Planning Statement, writes extensively about the national need for battery storage facilities (BSF) in general terms but does not provide evidence of the need for such a facility in this location, other than that any storage facility is useful for the national grid as a whole.
2. Inspection of the site indicates that this proposal would be the first installation of this type in this location and would thus introduce an entirely new activity into this area. Similar installations elsewhere have tended to be located in conjunction with either existing plant or be required in conjunction with specific generating capacity such as ground-mounted solar developments.
3. The historical extent of Rush Green Motors and the associated uses already make a very significant impact on the Green Belt in this area. We believe that it may be inappropriate to introduce a new commercial element which is unconnected with the existing activities.



4. There are increasing concerns regarding the safety of Lithium-ion batteries and the potential dangers of fire and major damage in the case of malfunction. The Council will need to satisfy itself that sufficient provision is made for fire safety and that local fire services have the necessary capability to deal with a potentially catastrophic malfunction.
  
5. We note the intention to provide landscaping to the boundaries facing the Green Belt and would urge the Council to seek a significantly more substantial treatment of the northern boundaries. The specification of shrubs proposed are unlikely to provide the screening necessary to reduce the impact of the facility on the open countryside.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Berry  
Planning Manager