



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

Eilis Edmonds
Development Management
East Hertfordshire District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford SG13 8EQ

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

30th December 2021 (by email)

Dear Ms. Edmonds,

**Application no. 5/21/2908/OUT - 1 Whempstead Road, Benington, SG2 7BX
Outline permission for demolition and removal of all poultry houses and other buildings.
Erection of 10 self-build/custom build detached dwelling houses with garages and car
parking, change of use of the land to self-build residential plots, alterations to vehicular
access and driveway off Whempstead Road. Children's play space, new turning head and
associated visitor car parking - all matters reserved except for access**

I write with regard to the above application for self-build or custom build plots and note that the site is identified as Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt in the East Herts District Plan. Whereas CPRE Hertfordshire would normally object to such a development, there are several issues which influence the planning decision in this case.

The site has been previously developed with a variety of agricultural and business uses which have deteriorated over time. The presence of the skip storage business also has impacts on the residential nature of the area, albeit legally established through a Certificate of Lawfulness.

CPRE are generally supportive of local and national policies to encourage the provision of self-build and custom build houses, providing a variety of housing options for local communities. We note that there is a lack of such sites in East Herts at present.

The site lies between areas of residential use, thus having a limited impact on open countryside. However, further residential development in this location would have the effect of extending the built-up area of the village.

The applicant's agent indicates that an alternative proposal is to be made for market housing on the same site. In our view, speculative market housing, typically with standard house types, is likely to have a greater detrimental impact on the countryside than self-build or custom-build options which can promote more sensitive design solutions.

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: Allan McNab

Registered Charity 1162419



Notwithstanding the protection offered by Local Plan policies, the existing conditions on this site could enable a more flexible position with regard to self-build or custom build houses with all matters of detailed design and related issues reserved.

Our position is neutral but if the Council is minded to grant permission, we would encourage it to seek further information on potential detailed applications, and impose conditions to achieve a high quality development in this sensitive location.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Berry
Planning Manager