



Marie Laidler
Planning and Development
Broxbourne Borough Council
Bishop's College
Churchgate
Cheshunt
EN8 9XQ

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

4th February 2022 (by email)

Dear Ms Laidler,

Application no. 07/22/0027/O
Darnicle Hill Nursery, Darnicle Hill, Cheshunt, EN7 5TB
Demolition of existing buildings and provision of 27 residential custom-build plots
associated roads, footpaths, landscaping and boundary fences
(resubmission of 07/20/1171/O)

I write with regard to the above outline application for the provision of 27 plots for custom-build houses. We have written previously with regard to proposals for this site and CPRE Hertfordshire continues to object to this proposed development for the following reasons.

1. The site is located within the London Metropolitan Green Belt as defined by the adopted Broxbourne Local Plan and the proposal constitutes inappropriate development according to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This application is one of a number of similar applications for former nursery and horticultural establishments which have been promoted for housing use in this area.
1. Darnicle Hill Nursery is subject to the protections afforded by the Green Belt in the relevant planning legislation and 'very special circumstances' are required to be demonstrated for the proposed development to be regarded as acceptable. Policy GB2: Residential Development on Derelict Glass House Sites of the Broxbourne Local Plan envisages that self-build and custom build housing for derelict glass house sites in the Green Belt may be appropriate but places significant constraints on any proposed development.
2. It is our view that these constraints have still not been overcome in this application. The Planning Statement notes that the proposal covers 5.8 hectares of which only 2.8 hectares are occupied by glass houses that accommodated a specific lettuce growing system and that the activity was developed to include more commercial and industrial processes to include cleaning, sorting and packing processes, albeit within low rise sheds.



3. The applicant notes the changes in the horticultural sector in the UK as making the present businesses on the site unviable, but the glass houses are not derelict and activity is still taking place and we support the Council's pre-application advice of March 2020. No evidence appears to have been submitted regarding economic viability other than generalised statements, and this is a requirement of Policy GB2.
4. The applicant's Planning Statement refers to the provision of ten market units but seems to make no further reference to the remaining 17 unit proposed with regard to their characteristics or tenure. The information provided in the Planning Statement is inadequate with regard to the justification for a proposed development in the Green Belt.
5. The accompanying documents appear to be a re-submission of much of the previously provided information which resulted in a refusal of permission. CPRE Hertfordshire supports the Council's decision on this matter for the reasons stated on the decision notice, and on a more general point, there is reason to consider whether the economic circumstances surrounding home grown produce may not change in the future, and this should be encouraged.
6. The essence of the English Domestic Revival movement, proposed as a guiding set of design principles, was the use of a rich palette of architectural techniques within a high quality environmental setting. Proposed Government advice issued recently for consultation emphasises the importance of good housing design, particularly in the countryside.
7. The promotion of effectively standard house types is entirely inappropriate and at odds with the ethos of the English Domestic Revival movement. The proposed minimal design code appears primarily as a promotional aid rather than a serious attempt to achieve high quality design.
8. The proposed layout constitutes a gross intrusion into the Green Belt with the introduction of additional residential units which will have an impact on the open countryside and constitute encroachment onto the Green Belt in this location. This application, together with others in the immediate area, has a cumulative effect on the countryside, leading to a gradual deterioration in the quality and character of the rural landscape which has been apparent in recent years



We urge the Council to refuse this and similar applications which are leading to the degradation of this designated protected area and the loss of highly valued open countryside.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Berry
Planning Manager