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**Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside**

Tom Allington  
Planning and Building Control  
North Herts Council  
PO Box 10613  
Nottingham  
NG6 6DW

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

20<sup>th</sup> July 2022 (by email)

Dear Tom Allington,

**Application no. 21/00765/OP**  
**Land off Barkway Road and North of Flint Hall, Barkway Road, Royston**  
**Outline Planning Application for Residential Development of up to 280 dwellings**  
**(including affordable housing) with all matters reserved except for access which is to be**  
**taken from Barkway Road, green infrastructure including public open space,**  
**landscape boundaries and SUDS**

CPRE Hertfordshire first objected to this application on 14th April 2021 on the grounds that it is an entirely inappropriate speculative housing development on land designated in both the adopted and submissions North Herts District Local Plans as Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. Nothing in the additional submitted material relates to the principle of inappropriate development on land designated to maintain its rural character as required by the Local Plan.

Eight further documents have been received from the developers which relate mainly to additional statements concerning design, access, biodiversity, movement and related matters. The Planning Statement Addendum states that the purpose of the addendum report is "to address a master planning process ... to demonstrate compliance with emerging policy SP9 Design and Sustainability" and in further commentary suggests that this is a new requirement which needs addressing, or at least further clarification.

A "Masterplan Framework Document" has been prepared which seeks to "demonstrate conformity with Policy SP9 Design and Sustainability ..." and again it is suggested that this is an evolving situation with regard to the Council's position. This is entirely inappropriate as Policy SP9 has been a key strategic policy proposal since submission of the emerging North Herts Local Plan in October 2016, significantly prior to this application.

The justification text for Policy SP9 also states that "As development pressures increase in the District it is important to respect, retain and where possible enhance the existing character of both the urban and rural areas to maintain the quality of the District's environment". Large parts of the "Masterplan Framework Document" either repeat verbatim or restate policy

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**CPRE Hertfordshire is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation**

President: Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, KCVO  
Chairman: Allan McNab

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positions and proposals previously presented with no significant variation from the original submission.

This is a clear attempt by the developers to exert further pressure on the Council to determine an application which is contrary to both adopted and emerging strategic policy. It constitutes a direct challenge to Policy SP 5 Countryside and Green Belt and we urge the Council to refuse permission for this unwarranted and damaging development proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Berry  
Planning Manager