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Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

Emily Stafford
Planning and Building Control
Hertsmere Borough Council
Civic Offices, Elstree Way
Borehamwood
Herts. WD6 1WA

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

21st April 2023 (by email)

Dear Emily Stafford,

Application no. 22/2147/OUT

Land to the south of Aldenham Reservoir, Watford Road, Elstree

Erection of industrial / distribution floorspace (Use Class E/ B2 / B8), a flexible office/hub building (Use Class E), new vehicular access, and associated provision of car and cycle parking and landscaping. (Outline Application to include Access, all other Matters Reserved

I write with regard to the above application which has been the subject of considerable discussion and concern and apologise for the delay in responding. A number of local groups have approached CPRE Hertfordshire with regard to our views on the matter, given the site's location in the Green Belt.

Clearly we are always concerned about potential inappropriate development in the Green Belt by virtue of the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). We note that the site is open land which has variety of vegetation and wildlife and is located adjacent to the Aldenham Reservoir, a valued area of public recreation.

The reason for this application is to provide funds for improvements to the reservoir dam and we support the intentions of the land-owner to increase the level of the reservoir to increase accessibility to the public. Our primary concern is that the funds for the reservoir improvements are made available through robust legal agreement to ensure that they take place as intended.

This would be the only basis on which very special circumstances which might be demonstrated for planning permission to be granted as they relate to the specific conditions of the site. Unfortunately, the consultant's document relating to very special circumstances appears not to be available to view on the Council website but it is most unlikely that there would be any other issues which demonstrate similar exceptional factors in this location.

This makes the obligation to ensure that funds are available for reservoir improvement even more significant and should affect considerably the weighting to be applied for the determination of this application. CPRE Hertfordshire will generally oppose the loss of Green

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CPRE Hertfordshire is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

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

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Belt to development, particularly where the area affected is highly valued and used extensively by the local communities and visitors for recreation. We would ask the Council either to explore other means of funding with the land-owners or negotiate the minimum amount of the site to be released from the Green Belt to reduce the impact of future development in this sensitive landscape area.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Berry
Planning Manager

NOTE: We would request that this letter is published on the Council's website as a document relating to this application and should be grateful if you would notify us of the date of the appropriate meeting if it is to be determined by planning committee.