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Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

James Mead
Development Management
East Herts District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford SG13 8EQ

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

18th October 2023 (by email)

Dear James Mead,

Application no. 3/23/1642/FUL
Land West of Wadesmill Road (HERT4), Hertford
Erection of 118 dwellings, including access roads, cycle and pedestrian routes, cycle and car parking, public open space, landscaping, tree protection measures, sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) and associated ancillary structures

I write with regard to the above application to express a number of concerns regarding this former Green Belt site. We recognise that the site is allocated in the adopted East Herts District Plan for residential development.

Notwithstanding the allocation of the site in the local plan, there is a long history of local community concern, initially related to the possibility of minerals extraction but latterly with regard to the proposed residential development. We believe that it is incumbent on the developer to take account of the strength of local community feeling on a proposal of this magnitude.

The Planning Statement indicates that the proposed development will be “a sustainable landscape-led development” (paragraph 4.1) but the Design and Access Statement and accompanying plans show a banal, car-based residential layout similar to surrounding development with standard housing units and some open space provision.

A significant opportunity is being lost to provide an exemplar development demonstrating a high level of environmental awareness and provision, both within the units themselves and on the site with regard to resource use and high quality urban design. The loss of Green Belt by virtue of the District Plan allocation should be mitigated by the expectation of more than a repetition of standard units which constitute an extension of urban sprawl.

Also, as CPRE Hertfordshire has noted in various submissions to planning applications and inquiries, the provision of affordable housing as a planning benefit is becoming increasingly irrelevant throughout the County. While accepting that the proposed development may be policy compliant with regard to present definitions of affordable housing, it should be noted

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CPRE Hertfordshire is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

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

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that any level of affordable housing provided by proportions of private market housing remains well beyond the means of average income households to afford.

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.