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Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

Anne McDonald
Planning and Building Control
North Herts Council
PO Box 10613
Nottingham
NG6 6DW

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

21st November 2025 (by email)

Dear Anne McDonald,

Planning application no. 25/02547/FP
Land to the South and East of Senuna Park, Station Road, Ashwell
Residential development of 36 no. dwellings including creation of vehicular access off
Station Road, associated parking, drainage, amenity space and landscaping.

I write with regard to the above planning application to which CPRE Hertfordshire objects for the following reasons.

1. The use of land identified for this proposed development is affected by the adopted North Herts Council Local Plan: Policy CGB1 (Rural Areas Beyond the Green Belt) which is identified on the Proposals Map. Paragraph 6.1 of the Local Plan CGB1 states: "These areas do not meet the necessary criteria to be designated as Green Belt, but it is still necessary to impose restraints on development to prevent inappropriate schemes".
2. Policy CGB1 identifies six categories of development where:
"planning permission will be granted where the development:
 - a. is infill within the built core of a Category B village;
 - b. meets a proven local need for community facilities and services or rural housing;
 - c. is strictly necessary for the needs of agriculture or forestry;
 - d. relates to an existing rural building;
 - e. is a modest proposal for rural development or diversification; or
 - f. would provide land or facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries that respect the generally open nature of the rural area."
3. The proposed speculative residential development satisfies none of the above criteria and should be regarded as inappropriate. We note that the Executive Summary and Site Summary of the Applicant's Planning Support Statement fail to mention that the site is within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt.

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: Peter Waine, OBE

Registered Charity 1162419

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4. Further, the Planning Support Statement Executive Summary states that “a new Local Plan has not been progressed to any significant stage.” This is of course untrue and the adopted North Herts Local Plan provides for a considerable housing land supply and is in process of review. In our view, the provision of 3.9 years housing land supply is appropriate at this stage of the Local Plan process.
5. The site lies in the rural area outside the boundary of the settlement of Ashwell and is not allocated in the adopted Local Plan. The benefits of the development do not significantly outweigh the harm to the open countryside and rural character of this location.

We urge the Council to refuse permission for this speculative and inappropriate development.

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.