

Claire Wilson
Development Management
Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House
Northway, Rickmansworth
Herts. WD3 1RL

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

15th July 2026 (by email)

Dear Claire Wilson,

Application number no. 25/2215/OUT
Land at Dawes Lane, Sarratt, Rickmansworth
Demolition of existing structures and erection of up to 44 new homes with
associated access, parking, open space, landscaping and ancillary works

I write regarding the above application following our previous representation in February 2026 and further representations made recently by the planning consultants (Boyer) for the Applicant.

The consultants cite three recent planning appeals with regard to the relevance of grey belt to the decision made by the Inspector in each case. No new information is introduced with regard to the present application and clearly the circumstances in each appeal case differ significantly from those affecting this application.

CPRE Hertfordshire contends that, far from providing further justification for the proposed development, the decisions made in other appeals mean that it becomes more important that the Green Belt is protected, particularly where undeveloped open countryside and rural landscape is impacted detrimentally.

It is noteworthy that virtually every major planning application for residential and commercial development within the Green Belt in Hertfordshire made since the revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2024 has identified the site as grey belt, notwithstanding the quality and character of the landscape or local conditions in each case.

Whereas a proportion of such applications may warrant consideration for various reasons, the purposeful illogicality of the revised NPPF supporting five purposes of the Green Belt (para 143) and then only permitting three purposes to be considered in applications citing grey belt (NPPF Glossary definition) is unsupportable in this case.



**Campaign to Protect
Rural England
Hertfordshire**

The requirements for a grey belt justification rest on the site being a sustainable location and this is not supported by the appeals quoted. The Department for Transport has designed a web-based Connectivity Tool to provide a consistent national measure of sustainable accessibility and the three appeals cited by the Appellant's consultant score 48, 41 and 37 against 29 for this application site.

The consultation draft of further revisions to the NPPF published in Dec 2025 proposes that the Connectivity Tool be used, alongside other evidence, to inform the selection and assessment of sites for development and this provides further evidence of the unsuitability of this proposal.

This position is further emphasised by the proposed planning obligations relating to a future bus service. The proposed disbursement for the 325 bus service is a modest amount and time limited. The fact of it being proposed indicates the unsustainable nature of the location which will not be ameliorated by the temporary provision of a single bus service.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the existing definitions and guidance on grey belt are entirely inadequate to prevent the wholesale removal of highly valued and significant Green Belt protections. It is also undeniable that the planning policy context created by the 2024 revised NPPF has provoked a disturbingly high number of new applications and re-applications for sites which were previously refused permission.

South-west Hertfordshire is under unrelenting pressure for development and the value of the open countryside that remains increases for local communities and visitors, notwithstanding wider environmental benefits relating to the amelioration of the effects of climate change, maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity, and physical and mental health.

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