

ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL



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Mr William Thompson
North Herts Council
PO Box 10613
Nottingham
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Date 21st January 2026

Dear Mr Thompson

Re: 25/03113/FP - Full Planning Permission: Erection of two semi-detached 4-bedroom dwellings including hard and soft landscaping, parking and creation of two vehicular crossovers off Snailswell Lane. 2 Snailswell Lane, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3TP

The Ickleford Parish Council, whilst appreciating that this Planning Application will not affect No2 Snailswell Lane (the Applicant) or in fact No3, whose land consists of a similar size and therefore, will not be overlooked; we do however, represent the Residents of Snailswell Lane, who during the build will be greatly inconvenienced and after the build, will suffer the consequences that this development will bring. We therefore would like to put forward our **OBJECTIONS** and **CONCERNS** to this Planning Application.

OBJECTIONS AND CONCERNS

1. The Land

Regardless of what the Developer classes this land, it is in fact, within Ickleford's/North Herts' 'Green Belt' and therefore, should be maintained as such, as a garden or allotment.

The two semi-detached properties were built, along with a small holding to the side, and a barn/stable, for the sole purpose of being offered, in rent, to Servicemen/women, returning from the War(s), to enable a small business and self-sufficiency for their families. This was proved to be a great success.

The land is of a good grade and has produced high quality/quantity of fruit and vegetables. This has been proven at No3 for many years, which was once maintained by a retired farmer and his wife.

As the need for self-sufficiency waned and after the opportunity to purchase homes during the Thatcher years, the gardens at Nos 1 and 2, once purchased, were maintained mainly to grass and flower beds with some vegetables.

2. The Development

This part of Ickleford is very lucrative and will appeal to those who are looking to downsize and move to the country. It is therefore anticipated that the price of these houses, especially with four bedrooms, will be far out of reach of the first-time buyer, as has been the case with all other developments within Ickleford. The opportunity for families to remain local, will once again, be overlooked.

It is our considered opinion that the land available is insufficient to accommodate two four bedroomed semi-detached houses. If the Planning Department are swayed to accept this Application, then all thought must be given to downsizing the structure of these houses to two-bedroomed properties with the sole purpose of bringing them to within the first-time buyer bracket.

The development is situated on a lane, which although straight at this point and just wide enough for two cars to pass; however, each end of the lane reduces to the width of one vehicle and a narrow bend. It is therefore our concern that with the increase from this development, as is, with the possibility of ten extra vehicles, four having to be parked in the lane, movement will become very restrictive, especially for heavy goods/emergency/refuse vehicles to pass. Although the development will retain grass to the front, the Law states that no vehicle must have two wheels off the road.

The Developer has allowed for three vehicles to be parked at the side of the house, in tandem, which we consider to be a very poor design. This in itself will prove not only frustrating for the homeowner, as they have to move vehicles in and out to allow exiting for the vehicles situated at the back, but more importantly they are all reversing onto a lane, with the possibility of inconveniencing other road users with their inevitable manoeuvrability.

For a proposed four-bedroomed property, the gardens both front and back, are very small for a growing family.

3. Drainage, Sewage and Wastewater

All drainage, sewage and wastewater from this development will have to be accommodated within the old Victorian single pipe system which, known by all North Herts Planners, is incapable of coping with any additional output due to its age and desperate need for upgrading by Anglian Water to accommodate the deluge of run-off water that is becoming the norm caused by Climate Change.

Snailswell Lane, which is on a gradient, is already known by Anglian Water to have a problem with the sewerage system after a downpour. This commences at a bungalow situated on BOAT 9 (Snailswell Lane), located further West and emanating in sewage spillage in the road and front garden of Abbis Cottage, which is located near one of the narrow bends. This serious situation has been happening for many, many years and yet Anglian Water have failed to rectify the problem.

The Residents of Ickleford and the Parish Council, stand by their request made to the North Herts Council Planning Department, that all future development in Ickleford, must be

postponed until Anglian Water rectifies this serious and possible danger to health, by either replacing the old and overwhelmed Victorian sewerage system or installing a new pipe to accommodate the Climate Change weather and any future developments.

IN CONCLUSION

Whether we are looking at developments of two or two hundred houses, we must bear in mind how this will affect the Village of Ickleford and its Residents. With Developers giving no thought to the legacies they will be leaving, we as Representatives of the people, must.

- (a) Ickleford, with it having to accommodate the huge increase in traffic caused by not only our new developments, but also from every direction, including Arlesey, Stotfold, Letchworth, Henlow, Stondon and beyond, deserves, no demands, to be able to breath fresh and clean air.

Our natural Green Belt, which shields us, not only from Urban sprawl, protecting biodiversity and ecology, but more importantly, helps purify the polluted air that our children have to suffer ever day on their walks to and from school, must be protected.

- (b) In this modern day and age, we cannot afford to stand by and watch something that was installed during the Victoria era, become a danger to our lives today. Why should people suffer the indignity of watching raw sewage spread across their gardens and more sickeningly, pour into their homes, bringing the threat of disease and illness, just because it is raining, but more importantly, because a Water Company does not want to spend the money to rectify the problem.

This Planning Application is only for two semi-detached homes, but the problems they will inevitably bring, for the rest of the community, far outweigh the need. It is for the reasons given above, that the Ickleford Parish Council puts forward their **OBJECTIONS** and **CONCERNS** and urges the Planning Authority to reject or defer this Application, until all necessary action has been taken to improve the infrastructure of the Village of Ickleford.

Yours sincerely

Steven Patmore

Clerk/RFO
Ickleford Parish Council

Cc: District Councillor Louise Peace
County Councillor David Barnard
V2