

PRE-HEARING NOTE

Appeal Ref: APP/X1925/W/25/3362553
Hearing Date: 8 July 2025
Appeal by: Mr Bruce Parker
Proposed: Erection of a detached farm workers dwelling
At: Land at New Pound Farm, East Side of Old Hale Way, Hitchin
SG4 0SA

The purpose of this pre-hearing note is to provide guidance to those participating in the forthcoming Hearing with a view to assisting the Inspector in preparing for the Hearing and to ensure the Hearing runs smoothly and that the event will operate in a fair, open and transparent way. A draft agenda is attached which dependent on the below information, may be subject to amendment prior to the event.

Wi-fi/room

Could you please confirm if wi-fi or internet access will be available for the Inspector's use on the day. If so, please provide necessary details beforehand or as early as possible on the day of the Hearing. If available, the Inspector requests that a retiring room is reserved for the Inspectors use. Please provide further details if this is possible.

Fire drill

Could you please confirm if there are any plans for a fire drill on the day of the Hearing. Details of the Council's fire procedures should be provided on the day of the Hearing.

Parking

Could you please confirm if car parking is available at the venue on the day of the Hearing, or where alternative parking is located.

Site Visit

The Inspector will need to visit the appeal site. This will be done once the hearing has closed and may be on the following day depending on the length of hearing discussions.

The Inspector is minded to undertake an accompanied site visit and arrangements will be made during the hearing.

Provisional Main Issues

Having regard to the Council's reasons for refusal and submissions made thus far, the Inspector has identified the following provisional main issues in this appeal as:

- Whether the appeal site is grey belt land and whether or not the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and any relevant development plan policies;
- The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it;

- Whether or not an essential need for a rural worker's dwelling at the appeal site has been demonstrated; and
- Whether or not any harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the development.

This may be subject to change.

It is not anticipated that there will be any need for further additional evidence to be handed up during the hearing. You should review your cases promptly to ensure that is the case with any additional documents submitted ahead of the Hearing along with reasons why it has not been submitted yet.

Important Notes

It should be noted that the Inspector is also dealing with another appeal, reference APP/X1925/W/25/3358840, relating to a proposed altered vehicular access to facilitate the use of land as a community car park together with the installation of new gates and fencing and associated landscaping at Land to the east of Old Hale Way, Hitchin, made by the same appellant on an adjacent site. The Inspector will carry out the site visit for that case at the same time as the site visit for the case subject to this hearing. However, there will be no discussion on that other case during the hearing, as that appeal is following the written representation procedure.

Whilst a copy of the hearing notification letter sent out by the Council has been received, the list of those notified has not. Please provide this list as soon as possible.