

Mr F Ali,
Peach House, Hitchin Road, Codicote,
Herts, SG4 8TH

03 June 2025

To: Tom Rea
North Herts Council Planning Control

case ref: 24/01042/FP

**Full Planning Permission: Change of use of land to equestrian and erection of stables and covered menage.
Land At Church Wood, Three Houses Lane, Codicote, Hertfordshire**

Dear Tom

Further to your notification letter to me dated 13 May 2025

I OBJECT to this proposal due to its harm to the protected Green Belt and historic natural environment where the proposal is located, and its impact on my residential amenity as a nearby resident. Specifically:

1. Inappropriate development in the protected Green Belt

- Sections 2, 13 and 15 of the NPPF makes it clear that protections of the Green Belt and the natural environment exist to preserve the setting and special character of the countryside, and that exceptions to impact the Green Belt should only be made for activities which:
 - are sustainable (right use of land in the right place)
 - promote a strong local rural economy
 - are for the purposes of local agriculture
 - protect the natural historic environment
 - safeguard wildlife-rich habitats and improve biodiversity
 - minimise pollution
 - or are 'very special circumstances'

With the exception of the applicants' biodiversity calculations, the proposal shows no evidence supporting any of these characteristics and thus should be rejected.

- The proposal seeks to create two new covered form buildings on the existing open Green Belt which as per the applicants' supplied schematics (drawing no. GA015 / 16042025.pdf) represent an ADDITIONAL built footprint of approximately 2.7x that of the existing approved size of the grain storage barns. It is hard to reconcile this to the "modest and in-keeping additions on site" description used in the applicants' Design and Access Statement. This extensive curtailment of the existing openness of the Green Belt location with no Very Special Circumstances put forward should thus be rejected.

2. Negative impact on the historic natural environment

- The stables and menage are proposed to be constructed directly adjacent to the protected wildlife corridor which connects the Knebworth Park Local Wildlife Site to the Node Ancient Woodland. This corridor has been identified in the Codicote Neighbourhood Local Plan 2024-2031 as Wildlife Corridor WC3 / GC3. Policy COD 18 of the plan states that this wildlife corridor “will be protected from the impact of harmful development, managed and where possible enhanced for wildlife”. The plan was reviewed by the independent examiner in May 2025, and was commended. As such the proposed development should be rejected.

3. Negative impact on my residential amenity

- The large pitched roof structures significantly larger and closer to my property than the existing barns will impact my visual amenity as a neighbour approx 200m away during months where there is no tree leaf cover. Additional likely light pollution from operations and security lighting in a currently unlit area, may impact on my residential amenity.

3. Other considerations

- As per the North Herts Council planning portal, the current approved farmyard buildings at the location should only comprise:
 - i. a machinery and storage barn to support local agriculture (05/01337/1) and subsequent change of use to three bed dwelling (22/01891/FP);
 - ii. an agricultural barn for the storage of corn (14/02866/1AG)
 - iii. an open-sided barn for the storage of straw (18/01478/AG)

Should the existing appeal against the subsequent unauthorised extensions to these barns be upheld, then the cumulative harms to the Green Belt in conjunction with the proposed stables and manege would be even greater than outlined in this objection.

- Figure 5 in the applicants’ Design and Access Statement uses the sympathetic conversion of the historic original Node Park modest farm courtyard building as a precedent for the proposed equestrian facility. This conversion is not equivalent to the proposed large-scale new development.

I appreciate the opportunity to outline for the consideration of the North Herts Council Planning Department my OBJECTION to this proposed development **ref: 24/01042/FP**

Yours Sincerely
Mr. F Ali