

Kelshall Parish Meeting

Ref. Appeal Ref 6008229. Land at Fears End AP/26/00012/Ref

Reasons in Support of the Decision of NHC Planning and Rejection of the Appeal

Kelshall Parish Meeting has consulted Parishioners and been authorised to support the decision of NHC Planning and would urge the Inspector to reject this Appeal, for the reasons stated below:

Context

Whilst this Appeal relates to Planning Ref 25/03120/OP we would respectfully suggest that it be considered at the same time as those relating to Planning Ref 25/03189/FP Fears End advertised and confirmed by NHC Planning as the subject of an Appeal (notified 9.6.26 as Appeal Ref 6006777) and Woodcotes Appeal No 6009246 & AP/26/0015/Ref, since the implications of all these planning applications are the same.

Housing Development Restrictions Kelshall

Housing development in Kelshall has since the commencement of the N Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 been strictly confined to the limitations of its category B status – infill within the core of the village. Nine applications within the core of the village have been successful, all but one supported by Parishioners, including one application related to the conversion of farm buildings (19/02388/FP Manor Farm 28/10/2020) - also within the core of the village. At all times the Planning Authority has made it clear that development is confined within the Parish to infill within the core. This is recognised in the rejection of the proposal by NHC Planning for which this is an Appeal - *‘infilling in such a remote and isolated location as proposed would be contrary to the aims of both national and local planning policy which seek to protect the open character of the countryside’*. The promise of demolition of the barn in the field opposite is we suggest not relevant to this Appeal and would soon be dropped by a Developer acquiring the site.

Open Countryside

The further comment by the Parish Meeting relates to the location of this and its adjacent proposed development in open countryside. It is considered that the whole purpose of restricting development to infill at the core precludes such development

by definition. Again the Parish Meeting notes the conclusion of NHC Planning that *'The proposed development, by virtue of its remote location in a rural setting would result in harm to the character of the countryside'*.

Local Need for Housing

The development does not fulfill a proven local rural housing need - as acknowledged by NHC Planning. Of the nine infill houses approved by NHC Planning in Kelshall since 2020 only one is complete and occupied, the others being held up by Developers through lack of demand. There are a number of infill sites still available within the built up core of the village able to satisfy local housing demand without opening up a poorly accessed housing area in open countryside.

Road Access and Adequacy

The adequacy of the road (Gannock Lane) through to Kelshall to accommodate this and neighbouring developments has been commented upon by the Parish Meeting throughout the planning process. Suffice it to say that the road is narrow, with inadequate passing bays, badly maintained and can become impassable in Winter. It is noted that on this and the other applications Highways have objected to the proposals.

Appeal Consequences

The Parish is very wary of the consequences of a successful Appeal. [Planning Application Ref. 22/01229/FP](#) involving a 4 bedroomed infill house in Kelshall went to Appeal (Ref APP/X1925/W/23/33162410 Red Brick 23/09/2023) and the Inspector allowed the Appeal and construction of a four bedroomed dwelling. Subsequent to the Inspector's decision, NHC Planning approved Developer's proposals providing for two 5 bedroomed houses on the same plot. This development at Fears End, alongside its neighbours is being advertised to Developers. Should the Inspector be mindful to agree the Appeal there should be restrictions preventing Developers and the Planning Authority allowing development beyond that contemplated under this Appeal.

Stephen Ford

Chairman

8th June 2026

Peter Gartside

Clerk