

ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL



www.ickleford-pc.gov.uk

Mr T Howe
Planning Department
North Herts Council
PO Box 10613
Nottingham
NG6 6DW

12th November 2024

Dear Thomas,

Ref: 24/02009/FP: Erection of one detached 2-bed farm workers dwelling at Land At New Pound Farm, East Side Of Old Hale Way, Hitchin SG4 0SA

Ickleford Parish Council strongly **OBJECTS** to the above planning application for the following reasons:

- This is the same site as the proposed car park, to which the Parish Council also strongly objects.
- The exit from this site is dangerous when turning into Old Hale Way, as it is near the bend from where traffic accelerates after negotiating the pinch-point of the bridge over the River Oughton at Ickleford Mill.
- This land is wholly in the Green Belt which is essential to protect the boundary strip between Hitchin and Ickleford. The land is not designated as residential being situated beside allotments on one side and open field on the other side. A residential building here would see the irreversible erosion of Green Belt land.
- Security lights (since the building is quoted as being to provide security) would cause light pollution and affect nearby residents as well as wildlife.
- The River Oughton is also a chalk stream and a tributary of the River Hiz. After heavy rain, the run-off water regularly floods the road over the River Oughton by Ickleford Mill. The proposed development would increase the amount of water flowing off the site downhill to the flood area.
- The old railway embankment wildlife corridor, that runs from the land in question northwards behind Freewaters Close, would be compromised, disturbing the natural treeline habitats of Barn Owls, bats, buzzards, Red Kites and Little Egrets. The ground habitat is a natural and historic pathway used by foxes, deer and badgers. Otters and brown lizards have been sighted regularly in the rivers and riverbanks.

Gerry's Hole is an undisturbed wetland wildlife area beside the railway embankment on the land and is home to frogs, toads, moorhens and ducks. Unofficial paths have already been created on the land North East of Old Hale Way, which are wide enough for agricultural vehicles, have hard surfaces and have created clearings which have destroyed natural habitats and essential wildlife corridors.

The Parish Council would like to know how the Ecological Impact Assessment has been carried out in order to address the wildlife and chalk streams issues.

To confirm, for all of the reasons above, the Parish Council strongly **OBJECTS** to this application.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Judith Crosier.

Judith Crosier
Clerk to Ickleford Parish Council

cc: District Councillor Louise Peace
cc: County Councillor David Barnard