

Mr Alex Howard
Senior Planning Officer
North Herts Council

BY EMAIL

09 September 2024

Dear Mr Howard,

Re OBJECTION, Ref : 24/01570/PNQ

**Kirby Manor Farm, Northfield Road, Ashwell, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 5JQ
Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to provide 8 residential units**

Ashwell Parish Council wishes to reiterate the objections made to the previous application 23/02019/PNQ (see attached).

With regard to this application it resolved to support the further concerns of the neighbour especially those around sustainability and highways safety, the number of dwellings, the design issues including privacy/overlooking issues, and also re 'planning creep' to extend the area.

These further concerns included highways issues (very narrow lane access and the number of houses), access points to existing and proposed properties very close together and use of the farm track adjacent to their garden; adverse design impact of red brick versus the existing Arlesey whites, the colour of render and roofing materials unsympathetic to the existing; light and noise pollution and other adverse ecological impacts; risk of damage to the foundations of their 1850's property; concerns re the adequacy of the water supply currently supplied to two properties from a local farm and with existing supply issues; privacy/overlooking issues.

The Parish Council wishes you to note in particular its objections on sustainability grounds contrary to relevant sections of the NPPF and the Local Plan.

TCPOs 2015 and 2024 have been made alongside the developing NPPF and would not have been drafted and passed in ignorance of them. Class Q regulations refer to a determination "*...whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order.*" There are clear sustainability reasons (already stated in the previous application) for considering this development "*undesirable*". There is, as far as we are aware no statutory provision that explicitly states Class Q development cannot be considered undesirable for failing to meet sustainable development requirements in the NPPF. We question the authority of any presumption that there is any form of exemption like this.

The Parish Council requests that a condition is imposed re access rights. The farm track which runs adjacent to the top and side of the garden of the adjacent property has been designated in the planning application to give access to 3 of the units 4, 8 and 7. These access rights should be restricted to units 4, 8 and 7 and farmland, and it should be ensured that access rights are not extendable to any other properties now or in the future.

The Parish Council has a fear that this application could lead to unsuitable and sustainable development in the future and would not be supportive of anything that could lead to 'planning creep'.

Please get in touch if any clarification is required.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JP' followed by a flourish.

Jane Porter, Clerk, on behalf of Ashwell Parish Council

cc. District Cllr Tom Tyson