N.H.D.C.
16 APR 2018

NO CRM

Mr T Beltram and Mrs J A Taylor
Church Farm Cottage
West St
Lilley
Luton
Herts
LU2 8LJ
Tel : [redacted]

12th April 2018

Kate Poyser
North Hertfordshire District Council
PO Box 10163
Nottingham
NG6 6DH

Dear Ms Poyser,

RE: Outline application for erection of one dwelling including double garage and double garage for use of existing dwelling, Ralphs Farm, West Street, Lilley, Luton, Hertfordshire, LU2 8LH.

I wish to register my opposition to the proposals made under planning application reference 18/00816/OP (Alternative Reference PP-06811425)

1) The proposed development, due to its size and siting immediately at the boundary with Church Farm Cottage would have an adverse impact on the amenity of the neighbouring property by reason of overlooking and loss of privacy.

2) The new dwelling, being in such close proximity to the boundary wall, would have an intrusive and visually overbearing impact on my property.

3) Development of the existing garden of Ralphs Farm House will result in a loss of public visual amenity.

4) The proposed development involves the demolition of barns adjoining Ralphs Farm House and will lead to the loss of trees and open space from the garden of the farmhouse. The barns, trees and lawn represent an important home for wildlife with herons, buzzards, red kite and bats being sighted there. The applicant has not commissioned any suitable survey and should be requested to do so.

The Council's current Local Plan, Policy 14: Nature Conservation states: "For sites of Wildlife Value, the Council will not normally grant planning permission for development proposals which do not take account of and encourage the potential nature

conservation value of the site. Elsewhere, or when a development proposal is acceptable, the Council will expect development proposals to take account of, and where possible, to show improvements to the nature conservation value of the site and its surroundings. In addition, the Council may require the preparation and implementation of a management scheme to maintain or enhance the site's nature conservation value."

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) section 11, 109 states: "The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by.. minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible". And in section 11, 118: "When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles: if significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused"

The proposed new Local Plan, Policy NE2, states: "Planning permission will be granted where development: a. Protects, conserves and where possible enhances the green infrastructure network...

d. Has suitable mitigation measures or appropriate replacement to satisfactorily address adverse impacts on the green infrastructure network."

5) Ralphs Farm House and its barns, garden and trees are a distinctive feature of the village. The barns are of traditional construction and appearance typical of the village. The removal of barns and trees and development of garden space would be to the detriment of the area's appearance, heritage and character. This places it at odds with the councils stated planning aims. In addition, the proposed site is just 160 metres from the Lilley Conservation Area and falls within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The new Local PLan, Policy D2 states: "Planning permission for replacement dwellings and outbuildings will be granted where: ..e. The proposal enhances the character and setting of the site;"

Policy 12 states "12.7 North Hertfordshire has a rich heritage of designed landscapes and historic buildings, many of which are not designated, but contribute to a strong sense of place and contribute much to the character of historic towns, villages and the wider countryside. 12.9 Buildings that do not satisfy the criteria for buildings of local interest but which have townscape merit and contribute to the special interest of a Conservation Area are identified as 'positive buildings' and often form notable groups that help to define the streetscape."

The current Local Plan Policy 57 Guideline 1 states: "The concern for the site and surroundings is equally, if not more, important for small developments or conversions. For example, single dwellings or minor changes to a barn can have a disastrous impact on the street scene or the building itself... Development proposals on sites with areas having an 'established' character will need careful consideration as to whether they are acceptable at all."

According to the Constraints to Development section of Planning Advice and Guidance pages, "within North Hertfordshire there are some 40 Conservation Areas and the Council will only permit proposals which will maintain or enhance their character".

The current Local Plan Policy 57 Guideline 1 states "Existing features should be retained as far as possible and special account taken of the site's location at the edges of towns or villages and within or adjoining Conservation Areas."

NHDC's guidance states: "Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Council seeks to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Area." The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) section 11, 115 states: "Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas"

The new Local Plan, Policy NE3 states: "Planning permission for any proposal within the AONB, or affecting the setting of the AONB, will only be granted when it:

...b. Conserves and enhances the Chilterns AONB's special qualities, distinctive character, biodiversity, tranquillity and remoteness in accordance with national planning policy and the overall purpose of the AONB designation;

...f. Avoids adverse impacts from individual proposals (including their cumulative effects), unless these can be satisfactorily mitigated."

6) The planning application states that there will be no gain or loss of residential units, however it is clear that there will be a gain in the number of bedrooms of market housing.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or clarification, or to arrange a visit.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Tony Beltram