

## **PLANNING APPLICATION Reference 6/2020/1344/FULL**

### **COMMENTS BY THE NORTH MYMMS DISTRICT GREEN BELT SOCIETY**

**July 2020**

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#### **Introduction**

1. This statement has been prepared by Jed Griffiths MA DipTP FRTPI on behalf of the North Mymms District Green Belt Society. It is made in response to a planning application (Reference No. 6/2020/1344/FULL) for the “change of use of amenity land to residential driveway with new dropped curve to highway” at the Bell Bar Pet Farm, Brookmans Park, AL9 7AY.
2. The Society notes that the application site is located in the hamlet of Bell Bar, which is “washed over” by the Green Belt. Although the submitted plans show a new vehicle access to the site, there are no details of the residential driveway referred in the application form. It is clear, however, that this would be considered as development in terms of Green Belt policy. The proposed access is linked to the Great North Road (A1000), and its highways impact would also need to be considered. These issues are dealt with below.

#### **Green Belt**

3. Although no detailed alignment is shown, the proposed driveway would cross the open amenity land which forms most of the site. In the view of the Society, this would have a harmful effect on the openness of the Green Belt in this sensitive location, contrary to paragraph 144 of the National Planning Policy Framework, where no very special circumstances have been demonstrated for its development. It is also contrary to Policy GBSP2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.
4. The Society is particularly concerned about the pressures on the Green Belt in and around the hamlet of Bell Bar. In response to the consultation on the draft Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan, an area to the south of the application site has been suggested for housing development, between the Great North Road and Bell Lane. The area, known as site BrP1, has recently been assessed by the Borough Council for possible inclusion in the Local Plan, which is currently under examination. Over a period of several years, the Society has strenuously objected to housing development at Bell Lane. The continued debate about it serves to illustrate the sensitivity of the Green Belt locally.

5. As shown in the submitted plans and the accompanying photographs, the proposed access is linked directly to the A1000, which is particularly busy through Bell Bar. Despite a speed limit, there are dangers from fast-moving traffic and conflict at a number of site entrances. The proposed access is at a potentially dangerous location, less than 50 metres from the entrance to the car park at the Cock O' the North public house. To the south, there is another busy access to the Miller and Carter Steak House, which has recently been extended. Further to the east is the access to the Dutch Nursery and Garden Centre, also connected to the A1000. In addition, to the north of the site, there is the complex junction between the A1000, Bell Lane, and Woodside Lane.
  
6. Taken together, it is clear that a new access in the proposed should not be countenanced in terms of highways policy. The Pet Farm has a satisfactory existing access to Bell Lane, which is a quiet road, with is much safer. In the view of the Society, therefore, the application should be refused in there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, contrary to paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4).

### **Summary**

7. The Society urges the Borough Council to refuse this application for the reasons set out in this statement.

Jed Griffiths MA DipTP FRTPI

Hertford

13<sup>th</sup> July 2020