

Dear Planning Committee

I wish to strongly object to the planning application 6/2020/3451/MAJ at Wells Farm.

There are several key elements to my objection

(1) Greenbelt considerations

- a. The greenbelt is an irreplaceable asset, the enormous benefits of which are highlighted in the all-party parliamentary paper https://www.welhat.gov.uk/media/15889/GB-6-APPG-London-Green-Belt-Report/pdf/APPG_London_s_Green_Belt_report.pdf?m=637140111559770000
Therefore any removal of land from the greenbelt, any threat to it must be seen in this context of a valuable, irreplaceable and irreplicable asset. It also must be considered that the cumulative impact of erosion of the greenbelt will be enormous, however minor any one individual proposal may seem
- b. This significantly reduces the openness of the greenbelt. The height and scale of the proposed buildings are well in excess of the farm structures they are replacing.
- c. It is inappropriate development in the greenbelt and there are no exceptional circumstances to justify the proposed development here.
- d. The development is separated from Cuffley and will set a dangerous precedent of merging the villages of Cuffley and Northaw – in breach of the Green Gap policy.
- e. It is also very obvious that this development will be used as a bridgehead for additional far larger developments and a unconscionable urbanisation of the greenbelt around Cuffley.

(2) Cuffley as a low ranked sustainable location that is already proposed to receive a disproportionate amount of new housing development

- a. Although we do not have an approved Local Plan, in the recent examinations of the draft local plan, the Inspector has noted that Cuffley is one of the less sustainable locations in the Borough from a transport perspective and I would whole-heartedly agree
- b. It is already proposed in the draft local plan for Cuffley to receive a disproportionately large amount of new housing despite the many challenges the Inspector has noted
- c. Whilst the transport consultant for the promoter highlights walking and cycling as an option, this will be the choice for a minority of journeys. Whether it be shopping, children, the British weather or simply time, the private car will be the choice here, let's be honest.
- d. If the promoters of the site (and also the owners) are so convinced of the sustainability of the location, why do they not agree to a condition of zero private cars at the development?

(3) Traffic and other infrastructure considerations

- a. The traffic situation is dreadful in Cuffley, along the B157 and through to Potters Bar. This is not only an issue in terms of the roads already being over loaded (high journey times etc.) but the air pollution impact is horrible. Whilst the Transport Consultant employed by the promoter claims there to be minimal impact, they do not consider the impact in light of the new homes proposed in the local plan or proposed in the adjacent Borough (2,000+ homes at least in the developments in Goffs Oak). The road flooding in the local area is unacceptable already, causing damage to vehicles and making sustainable journeys (by foot and bike) impossible.
- b. Train capacity – the branch of the line Cuffley sits on is already at or over capacity. The Welwyn line has more capacity and development should be focused along that as much demand for housing is coming from those leaving London but still commuting there
- c. Schools and doctors – not enough provision to keep accommodating housing development.