

For the attention of:

His Majesty the King
Buckingham Palace
London SW1A 1AA

Mr Stephen Giles-Medhurst OBE Leader, Three Rivers District Council.
Mr Gagan Mohindra MP Southwest Hertfordshire. Mr Chris Hinchcliffe MP Northeast Hertfordshire.
Mr Matthew Pennycook MP Minister of State for Housing and Planning.
Ms Emma Reynolds MP Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The Planning Inspectorate. C/O QUADIENT. 69 Buckingham Avenue, Slough, SL1 4PN. Application
Ref:24/2073/OUT

Cc: CPRE Hertfordshire; The Ramblers Association; RSPB; Affinity Water; Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust; The Bat Conservation Trust; Butterfly Conservation; Bumblebee Conservation Trust; The Woodland Trust; The Countryside Alliance; The Environment Agency; Kings Langley & District Residents Association; Abbots Langley Parish Council; Jon Tankard; Vicky Edwards; Ian Campbell.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my deep concern and dismay at the recent decision by the Minister of State for Housing and Planning to intervene in and redirect the Three Rivers District Council Local Plan, lifting restrictions for development on multiple sites including:

- CFS26a Kings Langley Estate South
- CFS21 Land at Rousebarn Lane
- PCS4 East Green Street
- PCS47 South of Little Oxhey Lane
- NCFS12 Land East of Oxhey Lane
- NCFS6 Land to East of Watford Road
- OSPF22 Batchworth Golf Course (subject to lease resolution)

In particular, the proposed development of CFS26a Kings Langley Estate South and CFS21 Land at Rousebarn Lane is of grave concern.

The United Kingdom is widely recognised as one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. In recent decades, millions of birds have disappeared, and only 14% of England's rivers are in good ecological health. Species once common, such as hedgehogs, red squirrels, water voles, bats, many farmland & migratory birds are now in steep decline, with one in six species at risk of extinction.

Against this backdrop, it is deeply troubling that Green Belt land, (unspoiled countryside & farmland) continues to be reclassified as "Grey Belt" and opened to development. Under the Environment Act 2021 The Government has a legal obligation to halt nature loss and restore biodiversity; building on Green Belt and farmland fundamentally undermines this duty.

Three Rivers District is defined by its unique natural environment, including the Rivers Chess, Gade, and Colne which are globally rare chalk streams, vital ecological arteries that depend on clean groundwater and delicate ecological balance. These habitats are already under severe pressure from pollution and excess water abstraction. Further large-scale development, including water-intensive infrastructure such as data centres, (construction of a data centre of up to 84,000 square metres off

Bedmond Road) will only exacerbate these threats to the delicate balance needed for species such as trout, water voles & invertebrates to survive.

England is facing a projected daily water shortfall of billions of litres within the coming decades. In this context, permitting developments that place additional strain on aquifers and river systems appears both unsustainable and short-sighted.

The district's unique landscape—comprising ancient woodland, farmland, wetlands, and hedgerows—supports complex ecosystems that cannot be easily replaced. Ancient woodlands, such as Whippendell Woods, are irreplaceable habitats, having evolved over centuries. Development adjacent to such sites doesn't just destroy the land, particularly at Rousebarn Lane, it risks irreversible harm to all nature & wildlife through habitat fragmentation, pollution, light pollution, noise and increased human pressure.

Hedgerows and mature trees, especially oak, play a critical role in supporting biodiversity, with oak trees alone sustaining thousands of species. Their loss represents not just environmental damage, but a collapse of interconnected ecosystems.

Having lived in this area for nearly 40 years, I have witnessed first-hand the steady erosion of its natural character. Where once there were open fields filled with birdsong, there is now increasing development, noise, and ecological decline. The loss of our farmland, woodland & migratory birds together with many other species is not abstract, it is visible and deeply felt.

Whilst I recognise the need for housing, it is clear that alternative solutions exist. Brownfield and previously developed land identified by CPRE could accommodate significant housing demand without sacrificing Green Belt. Prioritising such sites would align development with environmental responsibility.

Furthermore, the scale of proposed housing, over 11,000 homes, raises serious concerns about food security, infrastructure capacity, including schools, healthcare, and public services, which are already under strain.

Access to nature is not a luxury; it is essential for physical and mental wellbeing, as clearly demonstrated during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Rights of Way, footpaths, bridleways and byways across many of the proposed sites which have public access are currently protected by law. The continued loss of accessible countryside risks long-term societal harm.

I urge all decision-makers to reconsider these proposals, halt further reclassification of Green Belt land, and prioritise policies that protect and restore the natural environment. The consequences of inaction are profound and irreversible.

Once these landscapes and all that depend on it are lost, they are lost forever.

Yours faithfully,
Margaret Allum. (Mrs)

8 Trowley Rise, Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire, WD5 0LW

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