

**From:** Karenpwatson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 April 2025 20:54  
**To:** Section 62A Applications Non Major <section62anonmajor@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Land at 84-108 Ragged Hall Lane, St Albans

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing with regards to the application lodged to build seven self-build houses on land at 84-108 Ragged Hall Lane, St Albans.

This is the third time in three years that the applicant has tried to get permission to build on this land, and it is only months since the Inspector last refused permission. Nothing has changed in that time, and this application should also be refused.

I live directly opposite the site and so we are arguably the most affected by this application, and the best placed to say whether this is a suitable development. The answer is a resounding no.

The site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt as well as part of the Watling Chase Community Forest. There is a public footpath encircling the site, which leads to a wood. The area is used by dog walkers and rambler as well as horse-riders, and the Covid lockdown increased its use considerably, which has continued.

The population of St Albans has increased by only 5.4 per cent in the past ten years, so there is no need to build all over our green spaces. These are precious rural spaces, are much beloved by local residents, and should be preserved at all costs - once they've gone, they're gone for ever. Our village already faces the prospect of more than 700 new houses being built and our lane has outline permission for more than 50 new houses on a field further down towards the end. We simply cannot cope with any more development,

This application is relying on the category of 'grey belt ', but that is absolutely not appropriate to this site. This small piece of Green Belt has never been developed; it fails to satisfy the 'within a village' criterion for infilling; and any development would not prevent urban sprawl - indeed, it would only contribute to it.

Ragged Hall Lane at this point is a one-track country lane with a national speed limit. It is already rather hazardous, not to mention the fact that many cars and lorries use our access as a passing point. Widening the lane will destroy the character of this part of the road but will not significantly improve the safety issues. Our drive, which serves three houses (61, 63 and 65 - with a total of 8 cars between us) is immediately opposite one of the access roads, and adding at least 14 new cars will be

extremely dangerous. The lane is used as a cut-through to Hemel Hempstead and is often already clogged with vehicles trying to pass one another - adding more to the mix will be a disaster.

This development will destroy the rustic neighbourhood that attracted us here 13 years ago, blighting our view and potentially blocking daylight - not to mention destroying the peace and quiet we enjoy and causing us great distress during any actual development, with noise, mess and upheaval.

Mr Holderness has hung on to this land for years (he is a former owner of our home, and bought the house to acquire the farmland that went with it), hoping the council will eventually give in and allow him to develop it. The only person who will benefit from any approval is him. I urge you to reject the application and allow the people who live in Ragged Hall Lane to continue to enjoy the peace and tiny piece of countryside we have left. Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Karen Watson