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**From:** planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk  
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Application Reference No. : HPK/2026/0140 Site Address: Land Off Batemill Road New Mills Derbyshire SK22 4EW  
Comments by: Matthew Walshaw

From:

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Submission: Objection

Comments: Planning Application Reference: HPK/2026/0140

Location: Land Off Batemill Road, New Mills, Derbyshire, SK22 4EW

### Formal Objection

I am writing to formally object to planning application HPK/2026/0140 for the demolition of existing stables and construction of a bungalow on land opposite our property on Batemill Road, New Mills.

#### 1. Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt

The site lies within designated Green Belt and outside the settlement boundary of New Mills. The proposal represents inappropriate residential development in the countryside and conflicts with Green Belt policy intended to protect openness and prevent encroachment into rural land.

The application refers to the site as 'grey belt' and 'previously developed land'; however, there is nothing to suggest that the whole site is no longer Green Belt, nor is there clear evidence that the land should properly be considered previously developed land. The site remains open, rural in character, and contributes positively to the surrounding countryside.

Replacing equestrian buildings with a permanent dwelling would introduce domestic activity, lighting, parking, fencing and year-round occupation, resulting in a much greater impact on openness and rural character than the existing use.

No very special circumstances have been demonstrated that would outweigh the harm caused to the Green Belt.

#### 2. Drainage and Flooding Concerns

The field regularly becomes waterlogged, with surface water draining from higher ground onto the site. Parts of Batemill Road already experience surface water flooding and drainage problems, which have been reported to the Council many times by local residents.

Development of the site risks increasing surface water runoff, reducing natural drainage capacity and worsening existing flooding issues for neighbouring properties and the highway.

Given the site's known drainage problems and proximity to the river, the application should include a clear and robust drainage strategy at this stage. Instead, drainage matters have largely been deferred, leaving insufficient certainty that flood risk and surface water can be safely managed.

Given the absence of convincing evidence that the proposal will not worsen existing drainage problems, the application should be refused.

### 3. Harm to Rural Character

The site contributes to the open, semi-rural character of this part of New Mills. Introducing a bungalow, domestic garden space, lighting, parking and boundary treatments would urbanise the site and erode the character of the surrounding countryside.

Even if the building footprint is similar, changing the use from equestrian to residential would represent a significant intensification of use and further erosion of Green Belt openness.

### 4. Lack of Clarity on Future Development

The application does not clarify whether the existing equestrian facilities will be relocated elsewhere. This is important, as replacement stables or additional buildings on nearby land could result in further development within the Green Belt and additional harm to openness and countryside character.

The application also fails to provide sufficient clarity regarding the future use and status of the remaining land once the stables are removed. The removal of the stables raises serious concerns that the remaining land could become vulnerable to future development pressure or reclassification.

There is a significant risk of:

Expansion of domestic curtilage into the remaining field

Erection of outbuildings, fencing and other domestic structures

Future applications for additional dwellings

Gradual erosion of the Green Belt through incremental change

Robust safeguards would be required to ensure that the remaining land remains protected as open Green Belt and is not subject to further encroachment and as this has been thoroughly considered, the application should respectfully be refused.

### 5. Impact on Wildlife and Biodiversity

The site is known to support a resident herd of geese, which regularly inhabit and utilise the land. This is in addition to the site forming part of a wider green corridor connected to nearby habitats, including wet woodland areas associated with the river and the land around Watford Lodge.

Development of this site would likely:

Disturb or displace the resident geese population

Disrupt established wildlife patterns and habitat use

Reduce the ecological value of the site

Impact the wider connected habitat network

The presence of a consistent population of geese is a clear indicator that the land functions as an active wildlife habitat. The application does not include sufficient ecological assessment or mitigation measures to demonstrate that biodiversity will be protected.

In the absence of robust ecological surveys, mitigation measures and biodiversity safeguards, the proposal fails to adequately address ecological impacts and should be refused.

#### 6. Trees and Landscape Impact

There are protected trees in the vicinity of the site, and development could impact root protection areas and existing vegetation.

Loss or damage to trees would further harm the character of the area and may worsen existing drainage issues by reducing natural water absorption.

#### Conclusion

The proposal represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt and would harm the openness and rural character of the area while also creating further drainage and flooding concerns on a site that already experiences significant water issues.

The application leaves several important matters unresolved in addition to the above, including landscaping and lighting, ecology and protection of local wildlife as well as the safeguarding of and the future use of the remaining land.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that planning application HPK/2026/0140 be refused.

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