STATEMENT TO THE FARM VIEW, LANGLEY VALE PLANNING APPEAL

ON BEHALF OF CPRE SURREY

I am Timothy Murphy and I am making this statement on behalf of the Surrey Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE). I am a Trustee of CPRE Surrey and I chair CPRE's South East Regional Group. I also chair CPRE's group here in Epsom and Ewell. I was born in Epsom and I have been a resident of the Borough for most of my life.

CPRE Surrey supports Epsom and Ewell Council's decision to reject this application and opposes this appeal. Why? Five reasons.

First, this site is not included either in the Borough's current Local Plan nor in its new draft Local Plan as a suitable site for development. If this appeal were to be successful, this would set a dire precedent. What is the point of Local Plans if they can be ignored to allow development such as this?

Second, as recently as early 2026, the Council's planning officers prepared a document, at the request of the Epsom and Ewell Local Plan Inspector, which examined the possible case for including in the Plan additional areas of the Borough's Green Belt to be allocated for housing development. A number of such sites were identified. The Farm View area was not one of them. Officers did not consider that this was a suitable location for housing.

Third, to date the only incursions of new development on the Borough's Green Belt have been on previously developed - so-called brownfield – sites, such as that at Langley Bottom Farm, which is located immediately south of the appeal site. Allowing this appeal, in the view of CPRE Surrey, would open the 'floodgates' for other speculative development on undeveloped Green Belt land throughout the Borough.

Fourth, this is an unsuitable location for a housing development. As already stated, it lies within the Green Belt and development would result in incursion into the countryside. It is located in an Area of Great Landscape Value; this development would result in a significant reduction in amenity, the loss of good agricultural land, and a diminution of biodiversity. The adverse impact of this development on the horse training and recreational equine industries is being addressed by others. It is not surprising that 'Epsom and Ewell Council's 2022 Land Availability Assessment concluded that

“exceptional circumstances would need to be demonstrated for the site to be considered suitable” for homes.

Fifth, and perhaps most important of all, this is an unsustainable location for an extensive housing development. The National Planning Policy Framework states that development should be focused on sustainable locations through limiting the need to travel and offering genuine choice of transport modes. The adjacent Langley Vale housing has particularly high car ownership levels because of the lack of local facilities and the poor public transport connectivity of the area. there is no railway station within walking distance of this site. Cycling to stations would require the use of the existing road network which, at times, is already both congested and hazardous for those cycling. Access locally to buses is limited and the proposals to improve public transport are, in all likelihood, unrealistic. Car clubs, in CPRE’s experience, do not last. Developments such as this increase our dependency on the car and contribute adversely to traffic congestion and climate gas emissions.

In conclusion, I quote from the proposed revised wording in the Main Modifications to the Epsom & Ewell Local Plan. “In order to uphold the fundamental aims of the Green Belt, inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”

CPRE Surrey suggests that, in this case, the harm to the Green Belt is not clearly outweighed by other considerations and urges that this appeal should be rejected.