



Simon Berkley
c/o Louise St John Howe
PO Box 10965,
Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 3BF

8th January 2018

Dear Sir

Representor ID 11732

Further to the materials, I have already submitted to this hearing I would like to make the following representation:

1. An email, which is enclosed, was sent to David Levitt (NHDC) whilst NHDC was building the local plan outlining my concerns over the Local Plan and the saturated local infrastructure. I sent this email on the 15th August and 26th September 2016. No reply was received.
2. Since the Local Plan was issued, it has become very apparent the local infrastructure is saturated:
 - a. The A600 Bedford Road queues back to Ickleford every morning
 - b. The A505/A602 junction on at Upper Tilehouse Street is gridlocked every morning and evening. This will be exacerbated by site HT1
 - c. The A505/Cambridge Road junction with Grove Road and Willian Road is a major bottleneck and will be made far worse by site HT1.
 - d. Many narrow and congested local roads with Victorian housing and no off-street parking (e.g. Oughton Head Way, Lucas Lane) will be required to provide access to sites HT3, HT5 and HT6.
3. The railway infrastructure is already saturated. Standing room is only available on peak-time services
4. The local schools already exceed capacity and expensive expansion works are underway.
5. Local pollution levels are already too high and exceed legal limits
6. Hitchin has expanded dramatically over the last 20 years with the significant development of flats around the area (e.g. Paynes Park, Nightingale Road, Walsworth Road, Grove Road). The town is now in danger of losing its character.

All of these issues have been pointed out to North Herts Council, yet they have approved a local plan that will simply make the above problems worse.

- Whilst recognising the need to provide more housing, alternative solutions must be found to the lack of or restricted infrastructure. North Herts Council has failed to provide an alternative and indeed appears to be happy to approve plans that will place a significantly larger strain on the town.
- The only viable solution will be to create more housing in areas that have the space and infrastructure to do so.
- A new town should be considered which can provide a more elegant and satisfactory solution to the local housing need.
- The lack of infrastructure planning and indeed its inability to expand in many areas (e.g. Oughton Head Way) must be recognised as a major constraint.

If this plan is to succeed, sufficient infrastructure planning and funding must be sought together with a plan that is phased and tied into infrastructure development. Without an interlocked plan, the local environment will greatly suffer.

Yours faithfully

Justin Richards

(by email)

Enclosed email is on the following page.



Justin Richards [REDACTED]

Housing in North Herts

Justin Richards [REDACTED]

15 August 2016 at 09:42

To: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Levett,

I write regarding the Council's recent decision to approve the construction of additional housing within North Herts. Whilst the need for new housing is key to support our growing population, there are several concerning and significant factors I wish to draw your attention to. These are in relation to Hitchin but are applicable in the main to Letchworth as well. They are as follows:

1. Air Pollution – recent measurements highlighted that the level of air pollution in North Herts is already above the legal maximum (measured at 54 µg versus a limit of 40 µg). Building more houses and the transport which will automatically arise, will only make air quality poorer, drive pollution and affect the most vulnerable in our society. What actions will North Herts Council take to address this please?
2. Saturated Road Infrastructure Transport – the existing road infrastructure within North Herts is already saturated. The main roads through Hitchin are gridlocked during peak hours and as you may know, road works on any of the main roads in Hitchin at any time of the day causes significant disruption and huge tailbacks. How will you expand and improve the road network in Hitchin so that this problem does not become worse?
3. Saturated Railway Infrastructure - the railways are both unreliable and saturated with standing room only on all peak time trains. The railway car park sees significant above inflation price rises every year and is already full every working day. With a heavy bias towards London based employment, what actions will North Herts be specifically taking to address the car parking capacity, car parking cost and the capacity on the railways please?
4. Providing Homes for North Herts residents – how can the Council guarantee homes for local residents and not those moving from London or elsewhere?

You may feel that the Council does not have responsibility for the issues I have raised above but I feel that the Council cannot make decisions in absolute isolation and nor can it rely on county or central government to make vague promises on addressing significant national infrastructure issues. I would urge that the Council only approves the construction of new housing on the basis that funding from central government is provided in advance. If this does not happen then we will see creeping urbanisation of our countryside, saturated towns, poor infrastructure and a much lower quality of life.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
Justin Richards



