

Mr. Robert Howard.

### **Matter 25 – new land proposed for allocation through the main modifications**

*Note: Because the Policies Map is not defined in statute as a Development Plan Document, I am not able to recommend main modifications to it. To avoid any confusion and for simplicity, both I and the Council have thus far ‘badged’ proposed changes to the Policies Map – such as proposed extensions to housing allocations – as main modifications, which is not technically correct. However, for the purpose of the examination, and particularly the hearing sessions, I shall continue to refer to them as such. In the event that I do decide that changes to the Policies Map are needed in order to render the Local Plan policies sound – such as those which allocate housing sites – while I am unable to recommend those changes, my final report will make the need for them abundantly clear.*

25.1 The following main modifications put forward by the Council propose to include within the Local Plan new land for development that was not included in the plan when it was originally submitted:

- MM382 – proposes to add land to Site GA2 to include an access route from Mendip Way
- **MM384 – proposes to extend Site WY1 southwards**
- MM386 – proposes to extend Site BA2 south-eastwards
- MM387 – proposes to extend Site BA3 north-eastwards and to amend the boundaries of Sites BA3 and BA4
- MM389 – proposes to extend Site BK3 southwards
- MM396 – proposes to extend Site SI1 north-eastwards
- MM139 and MM385 – propose to allocate land at Danesbury Park Road that is currently in the Green Belt as a Gypsy and Traveller site

For each of the new areas of land proposed through the main modifications:

- a) Is the inclusion of the new area of land for allocation necessary for soundness?
- b) Is the new area of land proposed deliverable? In particular, is it:
  - (i) confirmed by all of the landowners involved as being available for the use proposed?
  - (ii) supported by evidence to demonstrate that safe and appropriate access for vehicles and pedestrians can be provided?
  - (iii) deliverable, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure and services, and any environmental or other constraints?
- c) Is the inclusion of the new area of land justified and appropriate in terms of the likely impacts of the development?

25.2 If/where the new area of land proposed for allocation is currently in the Green Belt:

- a) Do exceptional circumstances exist to warrant its allocation? If so, what are they?

***NHDC have simply not shown any Exceptional Circumstances or Very Special Circumstances to develop WY1 (and new additional land) in both the Local Plan and the Main Modifications. I fail to see how NHDC can remove WY1 (and new additional land) from the Green Belt simply to meet their projected housing needs and the five-year land supply.***

- b) What is the nature and extent of the harm to the Green Belt of removing the new area of land from it? **The proposal removes the land completely from the Green Belt.**

- c) To what extent would the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent? **None**

If/where relevant:

d) If this new land were to be developed as proposed, would the adjacent Green Belt continue to serve at least one of the five purposes of Green Belts, or would the Green Belt function be undermined by its allocation? **All of WY1 would be removed from the Green Belt.**

**A referendum was held in the parish of Wymondley on Thursday, 29 August 2019 to decide on the question below:-**

**'Do you want North Hertfordshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Wymondley to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'**

**The result of the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Referendum was a YES vote in favour of NHDC using the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.**

**The turnout was 28.74% of the 901 electorate,**

**The number of votes cast in favour was 238; with 16 votes against.**

**Clare Skeels has notified me that, on 26 September 2019, Ian Fullstone (NHDC Service Director - Regulatory) formally took the decision to "make" the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan. This means it is now part of the statutory development plan for the District, (the Local Plan), and will be a material planning consideration when considering development proposals in the designated neighbourhood planning area of Wymondley.**

**As you can see the Parish of Wymondley now has a fully functional Neighbourhood Plan. There is no mention what so ever in the Local Plan and the Main Modifications to the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan, which now forms part of the planning law in regards to development within the Parish of Wymondley. All planning applications in Wymondley including WY1 must be tested against the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan. The Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan clearly states the wishes of the Wymondley Parishioners to protect the Green Belt the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan was broadly based on a survey carried taken during 2015, see below. For this reason alone, I believe the Local Plan and the Main Modifications are unsound and the WY1 should be omitted from the Local Plan.**

- **"In July 2015, we conducted a survey of each property in the Parish, providing a questionnaire which sought views on how residents would like to see their village develop over the coming years. The survey results conclusively identified the following key issues as being the top five in terms of importance to parishioners:"**
- **92% of respondents want to preserve the Green Belt in its current form.**
- **72% of respondents are concerned about flooding in Little Wymondley.**
- **70% of respondents are concerned about traffic management.**
- **The Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan is available on line for scrutiny at [www.wymondley.org](http://www.wymondley.org) or [www.wymondleypc.org](http://www.wymondleypc.org) or NHDC's website.**

