Dear Louise

North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan Examination – Ashwell

I wish to advise you that I will be attending the hearing considering AS1, Ashwell. The following information was either not available at the time we submitted our response to NHDC Local Plan 2011 – 2031 or in my opinion not considered by NHDC.

I wish to address the elements raised in the Ashwell Section of the examination papers including page 3 of the Guidance Notes 11 (d) (e).

- To make the NHDC Local Plan sound would require AS1 Ashwell to be withdrawn from NHDC’s Land Allocation and substituted with the Land/Developments identified in the Ashwell Emerging Local Neighbourhood Plan which will more than satisfy the numbers required including those for the elderly and low-cost dwellings. These would be an asset to the people and the village not a liability as proposed by AS1. Please see supporting evidence below.

- Page 14, 11.1b Supporting evidence to demonstrate a safe and appropriate access for vehicles and pedestrians (has not been provided.)

  See NHDC case officer’s risk assessment. Two independent Road Safety Audits carried out by transport dynamics do not support the view that a safe pedestrian access can be achieved.

  The Road Safety Audits also highlight that NPPF Section 4 32 and 7.11, National Transport Plan 3 and NHDC Policy 57 cannot be achieved.

- 11.2 NHDC’s matrices of the site AS1 states it is fit for able people, all others to use cars, taxis to access the village amenities. This also seems to support the above view and is discriminatory.

- Ashwell Emerging Local Neighbourhood Plan shows surveys carried out in 2016 identified problems relating to any additional parking of cars outside of the local shops would reduce the local and passing trade and could result in
businesses closing. This does not satisfy NPPF as it does not deliver sustainability.

As the roads from the proposed development to the village amenities has a gradient of 1 in 9/1 in 10 with no safe footpath would make it unsafe for some people to gain access to bus services or local amenities (see Ashwell’s Emerging Local Neighbourhood Plan)

- 11.3 AS1, Ashwell is not the most appropriate land for development as this is some 40 metres above the village amenities and located on the Baldock North Chalk Uplands, outside of the original village boundary and as identified by the Government Inspector the area is of high visual quality and any development would have a severe impact on the Grade 1 Church, St Mary’s and the Ancient Monument, Arbury Banks.

After NHDC Planning Department’s encouragement to the Ashwell Local Neighbourhood Plan Team to identify land for the future use of the village people to 2031 they ignored that land identified in the village was available, and within walking distance for all abilities to access all the services (see Housing Section, Ashwell Local Plan presented to NHDC March 2016)

- 11.4 The proposed settlement boundaries are not appropriate or justified, and only changed to accommodate the proposed development without consultation with the PC or local people.

- 14.5 CPRE’s Assessment on the impact on the Schedule Monument, Arbury Banks, Iron Age Fort and the impact on the local environment has not been given the weight it deserves.

- NHDC has not carried out any of their own assessments but have relied on those commissioned by the developer; this could be considered to favour the developer.

- 11.6 Third Party Agreement will be needed to accommodate vehicle and pedestrian access which is unlikely to be given. NHDC has not carried out an independent survey to ascertain whether or not the developer’s proposals can be achieved.

**Other Items for your Consideration**

- Local School – full, unable to admit additional pupils for some 5/6 years

- Doctors – appointments 2/3 weeks - need to predict health problems (Not a safe situation)

- Development – During the past 10 years, the village has increased the housing stock by some 10%

The above with our original comments would strongly suggest that any development on AS1 would be unsustainable and unsound.
Kind Regards

John Hare

Encs  Two additional copies + One copy forwarded electronically