

**Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside**

Cllr. Terry Tyler  
Chairman, Planning Committee  
North Hertfordshire District Council  
Council Offices  
Gernon Road  
Letchworth Garden City  
Herts SG6 3JF

Our Ref:

Your Ref: 18/01622/FP  
and 19/01758/FP

7<sup>th</sup> August 2019 (by email)

Dear Mr Tyler,

**Land to east of Bedford Road and west of Old Ramerick Manor, Bedford Road, Ickleford**

We are writing to you to express our concern at the decision taken by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 19 July 2019, not to contest the Appeal against non-determination of Application No. 18/01622/FP for the erection of 144 no. dwellings on land to the east of Bedford Road and west of Old Ramerick Manor, Bedford Road, Ickleford, Hertfordshire.

We do not intend to respond to the new application (19/01758/FP) which has now been submitted by Barratt David Wilson North Thames, as the Committee, by its action, has effectively pre-empted the decision on that application.

Our principal concern is that there is no reference in either the Officer's Report, or the Minutes of the Committee, that due consideration was taken of the letter dated 11 July 2019 (ED166), from the Inspector of the Examination in Public of the Council's Emerging Local Plan, in which the Inspector queried the Council's objective assessment of housing need, considered that there might be a 'meaningful change' in the housing situation and that exploration of the OAN at a further hearing was essential. (paras 4 - 11).

The outcome of that exploration will determine the quantum of housing which the Council will be required to provide over the plan period and whether or not this site requires to be developed. This is a material matter, especially as the Committee at its previous meeting had specifically deferred consideration of the application pending the Inspector's determination of the Emerging Local Plan.

We accept that at the time of drafting his report the Officer may not have been aware of the contents of the Inspector's letter, but that information would have been known by the date of the Committee meeting. Consequently, we would expect the Committee to have been made aware of its contents and the implications for the application site. The minutes do not record that advice being given.

As you will be aware, there has been considerable opposition to this proposal, not least from Central Bedfordshire District Council and the surrounding Parish Councils, ourselves, and local residents. We presume that those parties, like ourselves, have now received the letter from North Herts dated 31 July inviting us to comment on Application 19/01758/FP. Unfortunately, that letter does not state that the Council has, through the action of the Planning Committee, already effectively approved this proposal, and that the exercise is therefore a hollow one. We regret the democratic deficit which this represents, and the unnecessary expenditure of time, effort and public funds.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving

c.c. Simon Ellis, Development and Conservation Manager  
Tom Rea, Planning Officer