

Draft address to PPWG, 29 June 2017

Mr Chairman, I address you as a member of Elsenham Parish Council. I should like to speak on the allocation to Elsenham of 40 new dwellings at Rush Lane. I refer to the page numbered 28 in the white on green of the Draft Regulation 18 Plan, Table 3.5 - that's p. 38 of the continuous numbers.

The total dwellings 2011 to 2033 in the right-hand column of Table 3.5 show that the key villages fall into two groups: those with a large number, Elsenham 641, Stansted Mountfitchet 594 and Takeley 652; and those with a much smaller number, Great Chesterford 133, Newport 293 and Thaxted 223, to which should be added Hatfield Heath with none at all. At a public meeting at Stansted Mountfitchet in November 2015 you said, Sir, that of course allowance would be made for all allocations since 2011. Cllr Susan Barker observed, at a full Council Meeting in July 2016, that communities such as Elsenham and Takeley 'had already taken their fair share and that this should be taken into account when the Local Plan strategy was being agreed'.

As we all know, Sir, a leading reason for the rejection of the previous local plan was the wholly unsuitable nature of the road links to Elsenham; and the same conclusion was reached by a second Inspector, and confirmed by the Secretary of State, when rejecting Fairfield's appeal. The Inspectors' judgements ^ suggest that the Elsenham road network is inadequate for already committed developments; thus I contend that further developments of any size are unsustainable.

A year ago, Sir, I addressed this working group on the subject of the Countryside Protection Zone around Stansted Airport. It appears from close examination of Map J [p. 408 of the continuous numbering] that the Rush Lane site has now been made available for development through the simple expedient of changing the boundary of the CPZ. I know of no proposal to authorise this, and another change, and I am not aware of any contact with interested parties. My understanding is that one of the objects of this process is a clear audit trail and transparency in decision making. [I cannot believe that the green belt near to Hatfield Heath would be amended in such an arbitrary fashion.]

To conclude. When this replacement plan goes before an inspector, one obvious question will be, what new housing is proposed for Elsenham. It would help greatly if the answer was 'none at all', rather than an allocation which is objectionable on the grounds, both that policy has been amended in order to include it, and that Elsenham has already been favoured with a disproportionately large amount of new housing which, in the Inspector's words, cannot 'overcome the connectivity disadvantages of its location'.

Mr Chairman I [feel my time is up and I] thank you and the working group for your attention.

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