

## **Matter 7: Rural Housing (including North Fambridge) and Settlement Boundaries**

We are not invited to be present at this part of the hearing but, following on from and very relevant to matters raised above, we would add that the part that rural settlements (the villages of the district) might otherwise play in meeting housing need (a need they will eventually and proportionately face in any event) has been neglected; and for some villages, bearing in mind their sustainable transport links, particularly and illogically so.

Part of the problem has been that MDC have presented consultations on a district-wide basis, which has skewed the perception that residents preferred a concentration of growth around Maldon and Heybridge rather than a dispersive approach. One can see that MDC have misrepresented the results of consultation. Since 65% of the development will affect Maldon and Heybridge, a more balanced approach to localism, would have been to consult or analyse the consultation responses on an individual community basis so that the 2/3 of the population living outside of Maldon would not have had an undue influence