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# Maldon District Local Development Plan 2014 – 2029

Examination in Public January 2015 – Legal Compliance  
and Housing Policies

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Response to Matters, Issues and Questions raised by  
Inspector David Vickery

Matter 7 : Rural Housing (including North  
Fambridge) and settlement boundaries, S2, S7  
and S8

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Andrew Martin – Planning  
Intermodal Transportation Limited  
WSP

on behalf of

landowners, Messrs. Hughes and Sandy

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Land to the East of Broad Street, Green Road and North of Lofts  
Farm Drive, Heybridge (known as ‘Lofts Farm’).

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January 2015



## **1.0 ISSUE 1 : WHETHER POLICIES S2 AND S7 WITH THEIR ASSOCIATED TEXT DEALING WITH HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS IS JUSTIFIED BY THE EVIDENCE, CONSISTENT WITH NATIONAL POLICY, AND EFFECTIVE**

### **Points 1-6**

The work undertaken by Intermodal Transportation Ltd, as discussed under the Matter 1, point 7 is considered to be a reliable evidence based indicator that any development located in rural areas generally to the southeast and east of Maldon Town would give rise to additional vehicle kilometers being travelled and where improvements to bus services or train services would be limited. It is also considered that better prospects exist on the immediate outskirts of Maldon and Heybridge to foster a much greater change in mode shift away from the private car to more sustainable forms of travel, particularly walking and cycling.

For the same reasons as predicated in relation to the draft Burnham allocations we consider that much of the housing numbers earmarked for rural allocation should be relocated to North Heybridge.

As there is no substantive evidence from the Council to consider this important matter regarding sustainability and spatial strategies, we submit the plan is unsound.

The latest housing trajectory proposes that delivery from Rural Allocations has been adjusted backwards to begin delivering in the year 2016/2017. This is said by the Council to be timed after the completion and adoption of the Rural Allocations Development Plan Document.

A recent planning appeal in respect of a proposal for 30 dwellings in North Fambridge was dismissed in December 2014 (reference APP/X1545/A/14/2223566). This gives the clearest indication that we can find on the likely timing of the Rural Allocations DPD. The Local Development Scheme for Maldon is now very out of date. The latest version proposes adoption of the LDP in Autumn 2014 and therefore any timetable following on from this is now also out of date. The above mentioned appeal confirmed that the Rural Allocations DPD will continue to be produced following adoption of the LDP. At the Inquiry into the appeal it was confirmed that work has not yet commenced on the RADPD. The appeal inspector concluded therefore that “The timescale for its adoption is therefore likely to be significant”. The appeal is also of relevance to the examination in its identification of significant infrastructure requirements needed to accommodate development at North Fambridge. Anglian Water confirmed to the inquiry that there is no capacity in the existing foul sewerage system. Anglian Water, the Environment Agency and Essex County Council all advised that new mains and a new pumping station would be required at a cost of £2million.

The emerging plan proposes 420 dwellings in rural allocations, including 75 in North Fambridge. Proposed dwellings at North Fambridge together with 154 further dwellings in rural areas are proposed in the first five years of the plan i.e. between 2016 and 2019. This is overly ambitious in line with the above mentioned delays. In addition a recent appeal has confirmed considerable infrastructure requirements at North Fambridge that represent a significant obstacle to development.

Since the Council resolved proactively to encourage planning applications which are “sustainable in accordance with the LDP” it has received a large number, many of which relate to land in the rural areas. Consequently the Council have said that its rural allocations allowance “is likely to be considered as an under-estimation.” We contend that few of the applications received have been granted consent. Many are unlikely to be acceptable in the face of existing planning constraints. By way of example, two applications propose 334 dwellings at Southminster. This is a remote rural



location and concerns about its capacity are recorded on page 38 of SD05. The Council has accepted that capacity constraints at North Fambridge and Southminster will need to be considered further at the forthcoming Examination. Ad hoc permissions in advance of the rural allocations plan would be premature. The plan for the rural areas cannot be commenced until the spatial strategy for growth is found to be sound in the context of a new Local Plan for Maldon District.