



12th October 2013

The Chief Planning Officer
Local Development Plan Preferred Options Consultation
Maldon District Council
Princes Road
Maldon
Essex CM9 5DL

Dear Sir

**Re: Maldon District Council's Revised Local Development Plan –
Preferred Options, North Fambridge**

With reference to the above, I wish to object to this proposal on the following grounds.

Housing Density

Although the consultation discusses a diversity of housing, the focus is on 1-2 bedroom dwellings, with 40% being affordable. The density is 30-50 per hectare. At 30 per hectare this would be terraced houses, or flats with terraced and some other smaller houses. At 50 per hectare this could only allow flats. This is out of keeping with the rest of the village and does not comply with the stated objective to 'retain the identity of our villages'. People living in the village do so because it is a village. Even to put an extra 75 houses here would totally destroy the life people moved here to have. Whilst villages like this could cope with, say, 25 - 30 extra houses, this 75- house development would change our village irrevocably.

Highways

The B1012 is already a dangerous road, and the turning into North Fambridge is recognised as an accident reduction zone. The combination of 75 houses in North Fambridge and 450 in Burnham would seriously increase road usage and accidents. It is very doubtful if the roads in North Fambridge would cope with the extra vehicles, considering the lack of footpaths, children not being used to heavy volumes of traffic around the area, and the wildlife who also live in the village.

Transport and Sustainability

Despite having a train service, transport and sustainability is poor. Shift workers cannot use the train as the last train from Liverpool Street departs shortly after 10pm. Many workers from the village who go to London drive to Wickford. Links to work places in Chelmsford and Basildon require a car, as do those in other parts of the county. The cost of an annual ticket to Liverpool Street is in the region of £3,500 - set to rise again next year (£4,500 including ongoing underground services) and requires employment in a relatively well paid occupation. Even getting to Maldon is extremely difficult on public transport, necessitating telephoning a village link bus – when and if, it operates. Therefore, the majority of people who would move into the village would need a car.

G.P. Services

The Local Development Plan admits that GP services in the Maldon District are oversubscribed, including the surgeries at Burnham and Maldon. Despite this, it states that in relation to North Fambridge 'there appears to be existing capacity to accommodate the demand for medical provision'. This is clearly not the case for the extra 75 dwellings. This is an insufficient number for an additional GP, but too much pressure for an offshoot of one of the practices, so it is difficult to envisage the nature of the enhanced medical provision.

Employment

Employment is virtually non-existent in North Fambridge, with only some employment in Deerlands Nursery, Yacht Haven, the Ferry Boat Inn, Roe jetting services and some related to farming. There is therefore very little employment opportunity, so new residents would have to seek positions outside the village involving difficult and expensive travel.

Schools

There is no proposal for additional school places relating to North Fambridge. Current catchment schools (both primary and junior) are oversubscribed.

Flood Risk

Much of North Fambridge is within the flood zone. In addition, the building of 75 houses would increase the risk of surface water flooding even if the SUDS (sustainable urban drainage system) approach is used. There is already flooding in many areas of the village after heavy rain. This would increase considerably if more of the surrounding fields are concreted over.

Sewerage

Since the mid 1970s, residents (and the Parish Council) have been in dialogue with Maldon District Council, Anglian Water and OFWAT regarding the inadequate sewage system in North Fambridge. Both flooding and backing up have occurred because of the inadequate infrastructure. Therefore, this level of increased housing will increase pressure on an already overloaded system, making it unfit for purpose. Surface water issues cause backing up of the sewer system and flooding of gardens in Franklin Road, causing a health hazard and damage to property. This will only increase with 75 more houses.

It is now accepted by Anglian Water that the current sewer system in North Fambridge cannot handle the extra development, and it is problematic to upgrade the system. The Local Development Plan states 'Anglian Water has indicated that there may be scope for a dedicated village level treatment works but considers that a significantly greater level of housing is likely to be required to make this viable'. The Parish Council has requested further information from Maldon Council as to exactly where such a treatment works could be accommodated as it is understood that it cannot be within 160 meters of a SSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

Environmental

North Fambridge has extensive SSI sites, a Ramsar site and an Essex Wildlife Trust reserve. The building of 75 houses would severely impact upon the wildlife in the area with the loss of agricultural land. Neither the Local Development Plan Preferred Options, nor the Local Development Plan, mentions specifically the environmental significance of these areas in North Fambridge.

Lighting

Any new development would be required to install street lighting. At a time when light pollution is not only getting worse in this country, but is continually spreading, such a development would have tremendous impact on the night sky. At present, this is often breathtaking and as such, must be protected. Many people these days have never had such

encounters with the night sky, and to put street lighting within the village would destroy any such encounters in the future. Yet another reason for living in the country would be irrevocably diminished.

Parish Plan and Village Design Statement

No reference appears to have been made to these documents, which record recent views of the residents of North Fambridge.

Government Policy

If Maldon District Council are stating that they are having to carry out government planning policy, perhaps they should also take into account that when **the Prime Minister** launched the well-being index last year, he was asked, **if a policy that he believed in was ideologically very strong, but shown to be bad for well-being, would he change his mind about it. He answered, after thought, that, yes, in the end, he would.** That is what he felt politics should be about. It will allow each local authority to compare and contrast the happiness of their residents, and David Cameron wants government policy to react to this. *(Broadcast on BBC Radio 4's Today programme).* **I can categorically advise you that the building of 75 houses in North Fambridge would indeed be bad for the well-being of residents, so I would be grateful if you would comment separately to me, about this particular emphasis on Government policy.**

The reason for the allocation of 75 houses is stated to be because of its proximity to a higher level of services in South Woodham Ferrers, North Fambridge's railway station and access to employment opportunities in South Essex. However, many of these additional facilities are only accessible by car or a long walk from South Woodham Ferrers railway station.

When extra houses are built in a town, it becomes a bigger town, when this number of houses are built in a village, it is no longer a village – or, as North Fambridge was described by the BBC, a hamlet.

Yours faithfully,

