

14th October 2013



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

Dear Sir,

Draft Local Development Plan 2014-29

I write with objections to the LDP, specifically with reference to the proposed development in North Fambridge which I believe to be not sustainable on the following basis:

1. The number of houses allocated to North Fambridge has been reduced to 75 from 300 following comments made in the earlier consultation. This still represents a very significant increase of 27% which I would argue is too large for a small village to integrate into the community. Much of the housing proposed will be 1-2 bedroom dwellings, 40% being affordable. The density of such development, to include flats and terraced housing will be out of keeping with the rest of the village and does not comply with the stated objective to 'retain the identity of our villages'. The identity of North Fambridge will be severely compromised by these proposals.
2. Residents of North Fambridge and the Parish Council have been in correspondence since the 1970s about flooding and backing up problems with the sewerage system. Despite intervention by MDC, Ofwat, the MP and Anglian Water, flooding still occurs regularly, especially in Franklin Road because of the inadequate infrastructure. Any more housing will increase pressure on an already overloaded system. It has become a personal health hazard and damages property and consequently I believe no further development should be considered until these problems have been resolved.
3. North Fambridge is singled out for a large allocation because of its transport links. The station is on the Southminster branch line with limited service that cannot be improved. There are hourly trains except for rush hour when there are two trains per hour. Most commuters drive on the congested roads to Wickford to ensure flexibility on return. North Fambridge is very poorly served by roads. There is just one very narrow road in and out of the village, which joins the B1012 at a noted accident reduction spot. ECC Highways have been unable to find new ways to improve the safety at this junction. The increase in traffic created by 75 new houses in North Fambridge and 450 in Burnham would seriously increase road usage and accidents.

In rush hours, traffic congestion is already very acute where the B1012 reaches South Woodham Ferrers. North Fambridge is the only village on the Dengie that does not have a regular bus service other than a 'shoppers bus' once a week to South Woodham Ferrers. It is hard to consider a worse site in transport terms than Fambridge for this scale of proposal.

4. MDC's aim to support growth within the environmental limits of the District is not supported by this development in North Fambridge. Much of the village is within the flood zone and an additional 75 houses would increase the risk of surface water flooding even if the SUDS approach is used. North Fambridge has extensive SSSI and Ramsar sites and the Essex Wildlife Trust reserve at Blue House Farm. The development of North Fambridge is unsustainable on ecological, landscape and environmental grounds.

5. There is no primary school in the village and the feeder schools of Cold Norton and Purleigh are at capacity. With a proposed further 450 houses in Burnham, I question how it will accommodate the children from 75 houses in North Fambridge also.

6. Health facilities in the District are also stretched. Access to hospitals and medical facilities still requires a car.

I take the view that the rural communities, including North Fambridge, should all "do their bit" by adopting a policy of proportionate growth across the District, ie, the rural allocation of 420 should be distributed more equably in line with MDC's criteria for development.

MDC has provided no statement as to why it is not proposing an equable distribution of housing across the District. This is a necessary first step in proposing a planning policy with integrity and logic and certainly is required if a less than equable distribution is proposed. In the absence of this justification please register this note as an objection to the plan in relation to North Fambridge.

Yours faithfully,

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