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Dear Louise

Matter 1: Context, vision, sustainable dev;

Matter 3: Quantitative requirements for development

Matter 6: Housing Supply, including Sources of Supply; the Housing Trajectory; and the Five Year Supply.

Matter 16: Development Management Policies (DM1 – DM22)

This is my hearing statements relating to SME builders on which I made a representation in response to the submission version of the Local Plan. I have been listed to appear at after 15 Issue 2: Epping (P1). I feel the issue I raised has relevance in several areas. I do not mind when the Inspector asks me to present my points but I would not want this to be considered as only relating to Epping.

I feel my points are relevant to:

Matter 1, Issue 1

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced funding to help SME builders so it can be taken as national policy to assist them. The HoL report I referred to in my representation also emphasises the importance of SME builders and their report could be taken to amount to national policy.

There has been no engagement from EFDC on this matter. The Epping Society brought this to attention in 2016 on page 22 of its responses to the draft local plan but I cannot find any evidence the representations were considered or what was the reason for this to be rejected. It appears the consultation was conducted to “tick a box” on statutory requirements without any serious effort to take account of the ideas and representations made.

Matter 1, Issue 4

It is unsustainable to have a local plan and planning policies generally which make it more difficult for smaller building firms (and smaller developers) because it tends to drive business exclusively to the bigger firms. While many of the houses to be built here are bound to be developed and constructed by larger firms, an excessive reliance upon them reduced opportunities because their appetite might not suit certain sites allocated by the planning authority and/or their terms might be onerous (claims about viability, etc).

Matter 3, Issue 3

Encouraging SME builders at a time when a very large increase in the housing stock is proposed would go towards supporting the FEMA.

Matter 6 ,Issue 1 and 2

Small sites are generally recognised as being easier and quicker to bring to conclusion. Accordingly, SME builders have a potential to assist in delivering the five year supply identified as necessary.

Matter 16, Issue 1

While the better attempts by larger builders and developers can sometimes avoid the stereotype designs so often seen to blot our communities, these appear to often come as variations from a standard pattern list and for obvious cost reasons. Smaller builders are more likely to build to bespoke designs and accordingly add to the variety and quality of a streetscape and to the atmosphere of a market town.

This matter may also be important in the smaller rural communities where large scale developments are unlikely to be warranted, justified or permitted.

Hearings

I would like to be able to address these issues if it is helpful to the Inspector at the relevant times.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Smith