

Ms. Jane Gray

27.10.20

Dear Inspector,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to reply to the OANS document.

As you might remember, I am not a planner or agent, so although I liked the pretty charts and graphs and projections, I can only say what I think.

We are living in such different times to those in which these statistics were gathered, we are not even post-virus and our world is changing. So these figures are already out of date.

What I see on the ground is a lot more people working from home, so there should be policies for houses to have a small office or similar and good internet connection.

People are moving out of London or any large city and they want to live in the country, having more space to be out of the close proximity of others. They also want places to exercise, green spaces to enjoy when they get up from their computer, somewhere to walk the newly acquired dog.

During lockdown, people realised what was important to them and where they lived was suddenly bought into sharp focus. People took an interest in their surroundings, they had time to look about them and appreciate the skies without pollution, the wildlife and the amazing planet we inhabit.

Without the daily commute, people had time to garden, acquire an allotment, start cycling and help their community with shopping etc:

So how does this impact currently on the housing numbers ? Stansted Airport, a substantial employer for Harlow people, has laid off a large number of employees. This is replicated by many other businesses, younger people are going to be hit particularly hard. Both by losing jobs but also by rising house prices, as people move to the leave London. So the younger generation is going to find it very difficult to form households of their own. Multi-generational households will become evermore common I think.

Will deaths increase as the pandemic increases ? Does this mean that some extra housing will become vacant ?

Personally I think that second homes should be banned and this would free up a substantial amount of housing.

I think your job is particularly hard as there seems to be no end to the pandemic in sight so I am not sure how anyone can give reliable housing numbers, although I understand you have to make some sort of judgement.

I have heard nothing more from EFDC Planning dept on wanting to look again at our small site, this time getting their information correct about it. I did phone them but was told that I could submit the plan again if I wanted to but I would have thought that they should have considered it again off their own bat, evaluating it again in the light of the information I gave at the hearing. Personally, I think our site would tick a lot of boxes with it's eco-housing and environmental credentials. However, I suspect EFDC are wanting an easy life dealing with big developers.

Kind regards,

Jane Gray