

## **SAWB2 Land north of West Road Sawbridgeworth 3/18/1760/FUL**

Good evening Members

My name is Richard Bowran, and I'm the Sawbridgeworth Town Clerk.

Very few doubt that Sawbridgeworth as a town needs to bear a proportion of the new housing that East Herts has to provide. In the preparation of the District Plan the people of the town and the town council made many constructive recommendations which would have mitigated the impact of an additional 500 dwellings in the area.

**Some but not all** were listened to. For better or for worse the District Plan has now been adopted and this is the first major application to be tested.

Our concern is not so much that additional housing will be permitted but more of the impact that this will have on our local infrastructure and community.

The town council's detailed submissions relating to this proposal have been dismissed in the report but this does not detract from the need to have mitigating conditions in place. In this application it appears that the reports commissioned by the developer have been accepted as evidence that the provisions of the District Plan have been satisfied.

Therefore, I will highlight just **four key areas** which we feel need to be addressed as conditions to any approval.

- **Traffic.** No viable solution has been presented to the issue of traffic congestion and pedestrian safety in West Road especially at the junction with the A1184. Assumptions made in paragraph 8.27 of the case officer's report are unrealistic and must be re-thought.
- **Pollution.** Already recognised as an area of high pollution, this same junction will become even more polluted with the proposed traffic control system. The report by Templegroup concludes that Air Quality Objectives will be met after mitigating measures which seem mainly to be the installation of electric charging points at every house in the development. Again unrealistic for now and the foreseeable future
- **Sustainable Transport.** Developers have made the assumption that Sawbobus will service the site. The layout of the site is not conducive to this service nor for Blue Light access. As operator of Sawbobus we have not been consulted on this assumption and no provision has been made. The funding must form part of the planning obligation.
- **Parking.** Scant regard has been made for the provision of parking for existing residents in West Road who will be adversely affected by the increase in volume of traffic in the area. I am unable to find where this issue is addressed in the case officer's report.

**Crucially** it is of fundamental importance that the District Council demonstrates that it will take responsibility for enforcement of any conditions that may be imposed as a part of the granting of any consent.

**Lastly**, it has been proposed, on page 258 of the report, that authority should be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control to negotiate the finalising of Legal Agreements. There is no mention of the submission by the town council for s106 funding for community related projects.

We submit that there is a fundamental need for the town council to be an integral part of this process.