



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cllr Alec Campbell  
Leader of the Council  
St Albans District & City Council  
Civic Centre  
St Peter's Street  
St Albans, AL1 3JE

Ref: OD/FJE

17<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Alec,

**Re: St Albans Local Plan and the Proposed Radlett Strategic Rail Freight Interchange**

I am writing to you following the news last week that St Albans Council's appeal against the decision of the Planning Inspector over its Draft Local Plan was unsuccessful at the High Court, and the effect of this on proposals for a strategic rail freight interchange near Radlett.

Firstly, however, allow me to congratulate you on your new role as Leader of St Albans Council. I wish you the very best of luck for the position and I look forward to working with you in the coming months and years.

Regarding rail freight, I hope that the High Court's decision will provide an opportunity for the Council to look again at its housing policy. In particular, as we have discussed before, I believe that in order to meet the housing targets set by the Government, St Albans will need to consider additional sites for housing and conduct a green belt review to identify these. One of the sites that I believe must be included within such a review is the proposed site of the freight terminal, given that outline planning permission has already been granted in spite of the existing green belt status.

As we established in my Parliamentary Questions and our meeting with the Planning Minister earlier this year, extant planning permission on a green belt site for nationally significant infrastructure does not preclude it being included as part of a green belt review and subsequently made available for alternative bids, such as housing.

I would urge you to now consider this in order both to provide our community with much needed new homes and to prevent the construction of an unnecessary freight terminal that would blight our precious countryside.



I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue again in person and I look forward to hearing from you.

Finally, given the public interest in this issue, I have placed a copy of this letter in the public domain.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Oliver'.

With best wishes

**Oliver Dowden CBE MP**  
**Member of Parliament for Hertsmere**