



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cllr Harvey S Cohen  
Planning Portfolio Holder  
Hertsmere Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Elstree Way  
Borehamwood  
Herts, WD6 1WA

Ref: OD/FJE

29<sup>th</sup> September 2017

**Re: Hertsmere's New Local Plan**

Thank you for keeping me updated with the Borough Council's process for updating Hertsmere's local plan.

As you know I think it is vitally important that as this process moves forward we seek to preserve what makes Hertsmere such a special place to live. We both share a commitment to maintaining and enhancing the charm and character of our area, which of course includes our green open spaces, whilst ensuring we meet the housing needs of our children and grandchildren. This is a difficult balance and I am glad that local people have the chance to engage in the consultation exercise the Council is undertaking. As Hertsmere's Member of Parliament I will be encouraging everyone affected to participate and make their views known.

I am now writing to seek a greater understanding of the Council's position on two key issues facing Hertsmere as it updates the plan.

First, as you will have seen, the Department for Communities & Local Government has produced new numbers for housing need in local authority areas across England. The Government treats these numbers as definitive and in Hertsmere's case they are lower than the numbers on which I understand the Borough Council initially based its needs assessment.

I hope these new numbers will make the task facing the Council a little less onerous and would urge it to now use them. I would be grateful if you could set out for the Council's position and how this will affect the process.

Second, many constituents continue to raise with me their concerns over our local infrastructure. As you proceed with the proposals you outlined in your email, it is important we have the infrastructure to go with any new housing development.



In particular, many people are concerned about the availability of good school places for their children. As you are aware, there is ever increasing demand for primary places across the Borough. This was something that was a significant issue amongst parents in Potters Bar during the most recent round of allocations, which saw just 85.77 per cent of pupils in the area offered a place at one of their ranked choices, compared to well over 90 per cent across Hertfordshire as a whole.

In relation to secondary school places, I know there is a great deal of demand in the Radlett and Shenley area to construct a new school. Currently, pupils at local primary schools must be dispersed across a whole range of secondary schools in other towns and villages, rather than being able to remain closer to home in Radlett and Shenley. This is something we have met to discuss previously and I would appreciate an update on how the Borough Council envisage addressing this in the Local Plan.

For your information, I will also be writing separately to Hertfordshire County Council for an up to date needs assessment of school places in Hertsmere from them.

Equally, accessibility of GP and other local healthcare services remains another serious concern for many residents, particularly in Borehamwood. I would also therefore be grateful for a summary of what the Local Plan will be doing to address this in conjunction with the Clinical Commission Group.

Thank you for taking the time to examine these questions and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'O Dowden', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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