

**NHDC Meeting on Local Plan: 20/07/16**  
**Comments from the public re houses in Tea Green area**

(iv) Councillor Peter Chapman (Luton Borough Council - Wigmore Ward)

Councillor Chapman advised that he represented the Wigmore Ward of Luton Borough Council (adjacent to Luton Airport and towards Putteridge Park). He was also speaking on behalf of the Luton Borough Councillors who represented the neighbouring Stopsley Ward. He therefore represented the 15,000 residents who lived in that area (the approximate equivalent of the size of the population of Royston).

Councillor Chapman objected to the allocation of 2,100 houses to the east of Luton in NHDC's Local Plan, which included only 150 to meet NHDC's own needs. In response to the remark made by Suzanne Ornsby QC earlier in the meeting that NHDC had to contribute towards Luton's unmet housing needs, he commented that no it did not, as Luton would be able to look after itself.

Councillor Chapman stated that Luton already had numerous sites being developed to the west of the town, and a huge site was being developed between Luton and Houghton Regis to the north of the town. He considered that, should there be further development, most Luton residents would prefer this to be to the west of the town towards the M1 motorway, where access would be easy, without the potential chaos that any development east of Luton would cause.

Councillor Chapman commented that the developers of the site towards Houghton Regis had already started to challenge many of the new developments proposed in the centre of Luton because they feared it was a case of over-supply rather than fulfilling an unmet need.

Councillor Chapman considered that there was no justification for the east of Luton proposal, as the scale of development was far too high, but also that there were problems with transport infrastructure. There was currently only two single lane residential roads in and out of the proposed site, between Luton Town Centre, the M1, Wigmore Ward, and the villages of Cockernhoe and Tea Green, which had for years enjoyed the open spaces between settlements. Those roads were massively congested already. A new school recently built on Crawley Green Road, one of the roads leading to Cockernhoe, was (even before the school was open) congested during peak hours. What would happen should the 2,100 extra houses be built?

Councillor Chapman stated that there was no planned infrastructure whatsoever to go with the 2,100 houses. The 4,500 houses proposed to the west of Luton had two major roads being built to support them. How would the residents of the east of Luton site be expected to travel to Hitchin?

Councillor Chapman advised that Luton Airport was expanding to 18 million passengers per annum, which meant an extra 7 million cars on the roads east of Luton each year, with no new roads planned. There were no policies on issues such as pollution, and the one road in Luton where a survey had been undertaken had revealed that the air contained there times the level of particulates above the recommended level.

Councillor Chapman explained that next to the Airport, and adjacent to North Hertfordshire, was the new Wigmore Valley Park Enterprise Zone, designated to have 6,000 new jobs. Luton Borough Council had been persuaded that Crawley Green Road and Eaton Green Road

were so congested that access to the Zone should not be via these roads. Accordingly, access to the Zone was through the Airport.

Councillor Chapman concluded by commenting that, in the Conservative Party Manifesto, it stated “we will protect your countryside, Green Belt and urban environment”. He did not see this reflected in the NHDC Local Plan.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Chapman for his presentation.