

MEMORANDUM

To: Alex Howard
Senior Planning Officer

From: Debbie Ealand
Housing Supply Officer
Ext: 4526

Your Ref: 25/01766/OP

Date: 23rd September 2025

Outline Application: Outline application with means of access for residential development of up to 30 dwellings (including affordable housing); following demolition of all existing structures; associated landscaping, drainage, car parking; infrastructure and all ancillary and enabling works (all matters reserved except means of access) Land On The South Side Of, Cowards Lane, Codicote, Hertfordshire. Case Ref No: 25/01766/OP

Dear Alex,

Thank you for your memo of 1st September 2025, following submission of further supporting information in respect of the above application for outline planning permission.

I have the following comments in response to Ms Ventham's letter on behalf of the applicant.

Whilst it is correct that 50% affordable housing is required; the tenure split is a matter for discussion between the two parties.

The advice given on the affordable housing is to meet the affordable housing policy requirements/ needs of the local authority. The Council will seek to secure the affordable housing provision, by size, type and tenure, to meet this need via a s106 legal agreement for all applications including those for outline permission.

Paragraphs 63, 64 and 66 of the NPPF talk about **establishing need, specifying the type of affordable housing required and that affordable housing required meets identified local needs.**

The Applicant has spoken with both local developers who are building out 2 of the 3 sites in Codicote. In addition, the Applicant's have also spoken with the Housing Associations who have entered into contracts with the developers on said schemes. All 4 parties have confirmed that any issues in respect of disposal of Shared Ownership homes have been caused by the Council's requirement for the Shared Ownership properties to have a local connection criteria (within Codicote).

At the end of the restricted period when they were able to offer the homes across the whole of the District – then the homes were taken up quickly.

The Council has evidence to show that on a recently completed scheme in Codicote two thirds of purchasers of the shared ownership homes had no local connection to North Herts and of the third that did have a local connection to North Herts none of them had a local connection to Codicote. The affordable housing needs of the Council have not therefore been met.

The application is not submitted on the basis of meeting housing need in Codicote – it is clearly framed around meeting District wide housing need and this applies equally to the affordable housing. On this basis, the Applicant does not support the inclusion of a local connection criteria which would restrict the disposal of the Shared Ownership homes in the face of two Housing Associations expressing a need for such homes.

The site is not allocated and is beyond the village boundary in the Green Belt; in an area of rural restraint. Policies SP5: Countryside and Green Belt and Policy CGB2a: Exception sites for affordable housing in the Green Belt apply.

Policy SP5 explains that proposals within the Green Belt will be judged against the policies of the NPPF to determine whether they are acceptable in principle.

Policy CGB2a: Exception sites for affordable housing in the Green Belt says that planning permission for limited affordable housing in the Green Belt will be permitted adjoining Category A villages; provided that the land is identified for such development in a Neighbourhood Plan or:

- a) It meets a proven local need as identified through a parish survey or other relevant study;**
- b) There are no reasonable alternate, suitable and available sites:**
 - i. within the defined boundaries of the relevant Category A settlement or the built core of the relevant Category B village;**
 - or**
 - ii. otherwise within a reasonable travelling distance (by various modes) of the location where the need has been identified;**
- c) The proposal would meet relevant criteria of Policy HS2, particularly in relation to need, affordability and retention of dwellings;**
- d) The proposed development would not have a substantial adverse impact on the openness or general policy aims of the Green Belt;**
- and**
- e) The public benefit of the proposal outweighs any harm that might arise against these aims.**

Regarding the appeal in North Somerset and the use of a local connection criteria I would refer again to Policy CGB2a of the Local Plan, as above and the Council's Developer Contributions SPD.

5.2.75 In the rural Designated Protection Areas, we normally operate the following cascade to prioritise the allocation of affordable housing:

- Applicants from within the Parish;
- Applicants from adjoining Parishes;
- Applicants from other rural parishes in North Hertfordshire;
- Applicants from elsewhere in the District.

Regards

Debbie Ealand
Housing Supply Officer