



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

20<sup>th</sup>

PN 17235  
August 2019

Dear Cllr Williams,

Thank you for copying me in to your letter of 8<sup>th</sup> August to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government. I thought it would be helpful for me to outline my own view and involvement in this important matter.

The Minister of State for Housing informed me that Hart District Council (HDC)'s funding bid for studies into the feasibility of HDC's proposed 'Shapley Heath Garden Village' has been provided some limited funding from HM Government to do just that – conduct studies to assess whether such a proposal is even feasible. I am sure you would agree that this is important work that must be carried out before HDC takes such a decision.

It has long been my view that we ought to build on brownfield first – in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). However, as a Parish Councillor, you will understand that it is, legally, HDC's role and responsibility to decide local planning policy – a matter which local people can hold local district councillors to account for – and I have respected this.

To be clear, therefore, I have not supported any development but did – whilst Policy SS3 was part of the Local Plan (at the time) – support the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government providing funds to enable proper scrutiny of the realities of the proposal. My letter accompanying the HDC administration's bid was clear that I could only support funding for studies that would seriously scope the deliverability of key infrastructure improvements; commitment to which must precede any local debate and decision-making process for any new settlement that the administration at HDC might propose or choose to proceed with. These include (but are not limited to) new primary and secondary schools; a dual carriageway along all non-built up stretches of the A30 in Hart between Basingstoke (A339/M3) and Camberley (A331/M3); cycle networks and significant green infrastructure between existing settlements with long-term protection.

Cont'd/

Meyrick Williams  
Pepper Box  
Spratts Hatch Lane  
Winchfield  
Hampshire RG27 8DD



Mr Williams

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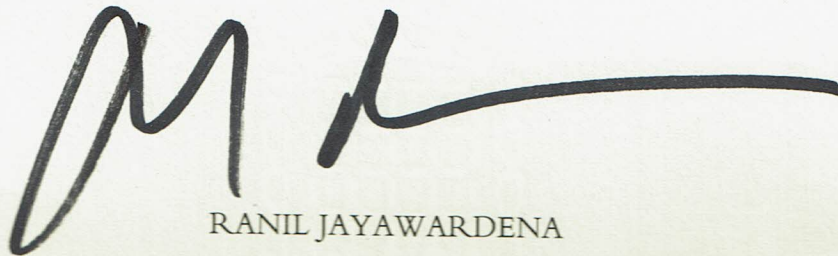
Further, should any developments go ahead, it is critically important that any such settlement includes significant provision for generous self-build and custom-build plots, and homes that young people can afford to buy (low cost market homes and/or starter homes, rather than social/intermediate rented homes), in line with the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

Given that some funding for studies has now been made available, I trust that the Liberal Democrat/Community Campaign Hart coalition who run at HDC will undertake this work towards these essential prerequisites, in order that local residents – if HDC do decide to pursue a development on this scale – can properly judge the proposals for themselves and hold district councillors to account for their decisions; whereas, at the moment, those in favour of the development are able to ‘spin’ it however they want without any real facts.

I have written to HDC to seek assurances that they will do this and I hope this letter has provided clarification on my position given the misinformation out there.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



RANIL JAYAWARDENA

cc

Robert Jenrick MP  
Cllr Anne Crampton