



**North
Herts
Council**

Councillor Ralph Muncer
*Member of North Hertfordshire
District Council for Kimpton*

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21 November 2022

**REPORT TO KIMPTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:
WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2022**

Adoption of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan

At a Meeting of Extraordinary Council on Tuesday, the long awaited North Hertfordshire Local Plan was adopted giving greater stability to the Planning System in our District. In May, I pledged to protect the Green Belt and Prevent Inappropriate Development from taking place in Kimpton, Peters Green and Blackmore End. I'm pleased to have delivered on that promise by voting to enhance and strengthen protections for the Green Belt Land which safeguards the Countryside surrounding our Rural Community. During the debate, I took the opportunity to highlight why *“any further development proposed in Kimpton, Peters Green and Blackmore End not contained within this plan would be completely unsuitable for a number of important reasons including a lack of infrastructure, limited amenities and services, severe flooding issues as well as the untold damage which would be caused to both the environment and landscape of Rural Hertfordshire by the size of development seen and proposed elsewhere”*. Additionally, I raised serious reservations over the impact that proposed development would have in Codicote, Knebworth and the East of Luton, stressing that should these developments go ahead *“it is vital that the Infrastructure to support these additional homes, the Roads, the Schools, the Shops, the Transport Networks, are built or upgraded concurrently and not many years later as an afterthought. Because that strategy is not only unsustainable but wholly unreasonable to expect residents to suffer as a consequence of poor planning decisions”*. Ultimately, had Councillors voted not to adopt the Local Plan, it would have led to Government Inspectors and Developers being the ones deciding on development and change within our Communities, something which I don't believe is in the best interest of Local People.

Update on North Hertfordshire Boundary Review

As the Parish Council is aware, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England is currently reviewing the North Hertfordshire Ward Boundaries. On Tuesday 1 November, the Commission Published their Draft Recommendations for the District and opened a consultation on their proposed new ward patterns. In their report the Commission stated *“Kimpton Parish Council put forward good evidence for remaining a single- councillor ward, arguing that being served by one councillor enables that councillor to have intimate knowledge of the area and its issues. It provided good evidence of community facilities and engagement with residents. The parish council also stated that it has friendly relations with neighbouring parishes, but no strong links. It argued that development was due in the parish that was not included in the forecast figures or the local plan. Finally, it stated that should expansion be necessary, it should be placed in a ward with a ‘comparable rural area’ and that any increase in size should be modest to ‘maintain strong representation for our parish area’*.

Councillor Muncer expressed support for Kimpton Parish Council's submission, putting forward similar supporting evidence". Despite representations from the Parish Council, the local Conservative Party and myself, the Commission "consider that the Council's proposals provide a more balanced set of wards. We note the good evidence from Kimpton Parish Council for remaining a ward in its own right. However, under the Council's figures this would have 18% fewer electors than the district average by 2028. This is not an electoral variance that we have been persuaded to adopt. We note the argument that some development had not been included in the forecast figures. However, we can only have regard for the figures provided by the Council. We therefore find that the Council's proposals to link it with part of Codicote provides the best solution". The Public Consultation closes on 9 January 2023 and I encourage both the Parish Council and Members of the Public to take part.

Joining our Community in Commemoration of Remembrance Sunday

On Remembrance Sunday, it was an honour to join our Community and lay a wreath in commemoration of all those who have fought for Freedom, Democracy and the Rule of Law. My thanks goes out to everybody involved in organising this event, in particular Kim Hills and Donna Brigg for their hard work as well as those who manned the Road Closures enabling our Community to commemorate this important day of Remembrance.

Planning Application: 22/02675/FP, Kimpton Grange, Luton Road, Kimpton, SG4 8HA

After reviewing this application, I have decided for a number of reasons including the fact this development is proposed on Green Belt Land within a Conservation Area, it would be in the public interest for the application to be determined by the Planning Committee at North Hertfordshire District Council. The proposal represents a significant development within the Village of Kimpton on a site not identified in the recently adopted Local Plan, and therefore I strongly encourage residents to ensure they make their views known by commenting on the application via the NHDC Planning Portal.

Planning Application: 22/00982/FP, Greenveldt Kennels, Luton Road, Kimpton, SG4 8HB

In July, I called in this application due to my concerns over inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and my opinion that it would be in the public interest for this application to be determined by the Planning Committee. Whilst Councillors who have called in an item should be notified of the item being heard by the Committee, I'm incredibly disappointed this failed to happen in this instance. The application was heard by the Committee on Thursday 17 November and Neil Burns presented the objections of the Parish Council. Unfortunately, the Committee decided to grant permission to this application.



**CLLR RALPH MUNCER
MEMBER OF NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
FOR KIMPTON**